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## AGENDA FOR THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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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 **Tuesday 30 April 2019 at 7.00 pm.**

Enquiries to : Jonathan Moore  
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Despatched : 18 April 2019

### Membership

#### **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

#### **Co-opted Member:**

Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese

#### **Quorum is 3 Councillors**

### Substitute Members

#### **Substitutes:**

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

## A. Formal Matters

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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
5. Chair's Report
6. Items for Call In (if any)
7. Public Questions

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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. Quarterly Review of Children's Services Performance (Q3 2018/19)	9 - 30
2. Education Annual Report 2018	31 - 66
3. Executive Member Update and Questions	67 - 70
<p style="margin-left: 40px;">Questions for the Executive Member may be submitted in advance by emailing <a href="mailto:democracy@islington.gov.uk">democracy@islington.gov.uk</a> by Wednesday 24 April 2019</p>	
4. Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school - draft report	71 - 108

**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 3 June 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)**

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# Agenda Item 4

London Borough of Islington

## Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - Monday, 4 March 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on Monday 4 March 2019 at 7.00 pm.

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

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

**Also Present: Councillor:** Comer-Schwartz

### Councillor Theresa Debono in the Chair

**66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM NO. A1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Woolf. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Ismail.

**67 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (ITEM NO. A2)**

None.

**68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM NO. A3)**

None.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 January 2019 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

**70 CHAIR'S REPORT (ITEM NO. A5)**

The Chair noted that Councillor Comer-Schwartz had recently been appointed as the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families and welcomed her to the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Committee for their work in developing the draft recommendations of the scrutiny review of permanent and fixed period exclusion from school.

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

None.

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

None.

73 **QUARTERLY REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE (ITEM NO. B1)**

The report was introduced by Carmel Littleton, Corporate Director – People, Mark Taylor, Director of Learning and Schools, Jeff Cole, Head of School Improvement (Secondary) and Penny Kenway, Head of Early Years and Childcare.

The following main points were noted in the discussion.

- The Committee welcomed that the number of young people diverted from the Youth Justice system had increased and the number of first time entrants had decreased. Officers were pleased with the progress made, although warned against complacency.
- The number of repeat young offenders had increased by 2% compared to the same period the previous year, however, it was expected that the end of year figure would be lower than the previous year.
- The number of young offenders receiving custodial sentences had increased in comparison to the same period the previous year, from 7 to 15. Officers had reviewed all of the offences and considered that all of the sentences were appropriate given the severity of the offending, which was generally related to violent crime.
- The number of young people missing from care for more than 24 hours had slightly increased in comparison to the previous year. Officers explained that young people missing from care were almost always with a friend, however there was a concern that these young people were being exploited to commit criminal activity. The council worked in partnership with the Police to track and locate young people missing from care. The Committee requested further details of how many young people missing from care had been criminally exploited.
- The Committee queried if the young people missing from care tended to go missing from particular residential settings. In response, officers advised that the council only used settings rated as Good or Outstanding. Officers regularly reviewed instances of children missing from care to identify any trends, however this had not raised concerns about any specific settings.
- The Committee welcomed the high number of young people taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge.
- The Committee noted the lack of progress on increasing the percentage of 2 year old places in Early Years taken up by low income families, children with special educational needs or disabilities, and those who are looked after. Officers advised that this was a London-wide issue. Islington had a diverse range of communities and it was commented that some communities preferred to be at home with their children or

leave their children with relatives rather than access Early Years provision.

- Increasing the number of young people accessing Early Years provision was a key priority of the service, as local provision was generally high-quality and it was known that young people attending Early Years provision tended to have better outcomes in the longer term.
- The number of children achieving a Good Level of Development by the end of reception had increased to 71.1%, although was still slightly behind the London and England averages. It was explained that this figure was around 60 - 65% five years ago, so progress had been made in the longer term. It was also noted that children eligible for free school meals achieved a greater level of development than the national average.
- The Committee noted that levels of persistent absence had not improved. Officers advised that they were treating this as a school improvement issue and were working closely with the schools with the highest level of persistent absence. It was advised that it was often a small cohort of pupils with very high levels of absence that affected a school's overall attendance level, and therefore targeted work with families was often required.
- A member queried if there was a correlation between non-attendance of Early Years provision and persistent absence in school. In response, officers advised that the most significant reason for non-attendance was medical reasons, however this covered a broad spectrum of conditions and it was thought that non-attendance was not always justified in all instances.
- It was commented that fining parents for pupil non-attendance was not always an effective method of encouraging attendance. It was suggested that effective engagement with early help services was more beneficial.
- A member provided examples of single parents living in his ward who had advised that they could not get their children to school if one of the child's siblings was unwell. It was advised that the school should be notified of such situations as they may be able to find a solution to such issues.
- Following a question from a member of the public, it was advised that some absence from school was due to families taking holidays inside of term time. However, the number of recorded instances of this was fairly small and fines were issued as appropriate.
- It was noted that there had been a significant reduction in the number of children attending alternative provision in recent years.
- The Committee considered the gap in attainment between Black-Caribbean pupils and White British pupils eligible for Free School Meals and the Islington average. The attainment gap had widened and work was underway to address this, however officers noted that this was a long term piece of work which could not be resolved quickly. Officers had established an Equalities Reference Group with a diverse membership and considerable experience in equalities issues to review school practices and identify examples of good practice. The council

was also carrying out focused work with school leaders; a session on racism and racial stereotyping was held at the Deputy Head Teachers Conference. This session received a positive response and was to be repeated with school governors.

- A member noted the school-level interventions aimed at reducing the attainment gap and queried how the impact of such interventions could be measured. In response, it was advised that the impact of specific interventions was difficult to measure, but the council encouraged schools to adopt best practice approaches where it was thought that the intervention was effective. It was also noted that academic evaluation of some interventions was currently underway.
- A member noted that some disadvantaged children faced additional challenges, such as illiteracy, which would have a significant impact on their academic attainment, as well as their life outside of school. It was commented that a recent film, *H is for Harry*, explored this issue in detail. The Committee considered that the work to address educational inequalities was very important, although the council had to be careful not to stereotype families when targeting interventions.
- Officers advised that further reading material on educational inequalities would be provided to the Committee at a later date.
- The number of re-referrals to social care had reduced but was still above the London average.
- The long term placement stability of children in care had not improved. The council was evaluating the training of foster carers and this work was being reviewed through the Corporate Parenting Board.
- In response to a question from a member of the public, it was advised that comparative data on exclusions was published nationally.

**RESOLVED:**

That Children's Services performance in Quarter 2 2018/19 be noted.

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**ISLINGTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
(ITEM NO. B2)**

Alan Caton, Independent Chair of the Islington Safeguarding Children Board, presented the report which summarised the work of the Board in 2017/18.

The following key points were noted in the discussion:

- Safeguarding children was a complex and challenging task. Although Islington Council was the lead authority for safeguarding in the borough, keeping children safe was everybody's responsibility.
- The Board was committed and determined to keep young people safe. During the 2017/18 year the Board was subject to an Ofsted inspection in which it was rated Good.
- The Board had three key priorities, addressing the impact of neglect on children, including to help children become more resilient; address the consequences / harm suffered as a result of domestic violence, parental

mental ill-health and substance abuse; and identification of children who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and holding perpetrators to account.

- The Board was concerned about the under-reporting of private fostering arrangements; very few placements were known, and the Board was working with colleagues in the NHS and others to increase reporting.
- 62 young people had been identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation during the reporting period. The most common form of child sexual exploitation in Islington was peer-on-peer abuse. Targeted lessons were being delivered to pupils in Year 9 about the dangers of peer-on-peer exploitation.
- An ongoing priority of the Board was tackling county lines drug dealing. Young people involved in county lines drug dealing were at significant risk of harm; it was known that gangs were exploiting young people aged ten to seventeen.
- In response to a question, it was commented that the most frequent form of neglect was emotional neglect.
- It was explained that safeguarding arrangements would change in 2019 in response to the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The Act required the local authority, CCG and Police to establish a safeguarding partnership and determine their own safeguarding arrangements. Work was underway to develop the new arrangements, which would be implemented by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019. Given that Islington already had good quality safeguarding arrangements, it was not proposed to radically alter existing processes.
- In response to a question, Mr Caton believed that the London-wide increase in youth violence was attributable to several factors, including the reduction in resources across the public sector.
- A member queried to what extent parents were involved in the work of the Board. In response, it was advised that the Board sought for young people to be involved in its work, but the involvement of parents was generally limited to participation in serious case reviews and child protection conferences.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Islington Safeguarding Children Board Annual report 2017/18 and its key messages be noted.

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**THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES RESPONSE TO PREVENT - UPDATE (ITEM NO. B3)**

Jeff Cole, Head of School Improvement (Secondary), and Mark Taylor, Director of Learning and Schools, introduced the report which provided an update on Children's Services' response to the Prevent Duty.

- The response to the Prevent Duty was coordinated by the Prevent Strategy Group. The Group included representatives from a range of

services and education settings. Work was underway to expand the remit of the Group into a more developed council-wide offer.

- There had been a positive take up to Prevent training among schools, early years providers, mother tongue supplementary schools and foster carers. The Prevent Education Officer was working with schools to embed the training into training on safeguarding and gang issues.
- An Ofsted visit in May 2018 determined that the council's response to children and young people at risk of radicalisation was 'appropriate'.
- Members reported positive experiences of the Minority Matters programme and training in supplementary schools and community settings.
- A member queried if an evaluation had been carried out of the impact of the Shadow Games programme. In response, it was advised that feedback would be sought from the relevant officer.
- A member asked if the training offer to supplementary schools would alter following changes to their funding arrangements. In response, it was advised that these arrangements were to be confirmed, however officers were optimistic that a training offer would still be available.
- In response to a question, it was advised that the prevent work encompassed all types of extremism.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To note the update on Children's Services' response to the Prevent Duty;
- (ii) To receive a further update in one year's time.

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**PERMANENT AND FIXED PERIOD EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL - PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS (ITEM NO. B4)**

The Committee considered the draft recommendations. It was agreed that a further recommendation on providing schools with a multi-disciplinary resource to help prevent exclusions at an early stage would be circulated to committee members for consideration.

The Committee noted the importance of monitoring the number of exclusions on an ongoing basis.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the draft recommendations be agreed;
- (ii) That an additional recommendation be circulated to committee members for consideration.

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**WORK PROGRAMME (ITEM NO. B5)**

Noted.

MEETING CLOSED AT 8.40 pm

Chair

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**Report of: Corporate Director, People Directorate**

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Ward(s):</b>
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	All

<b>Delete as appropriate:</b>		Non-exempt
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## **SUBJECT: Children's Services Quarter 3 2018/19 Performance Report**

### **1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 This Quarter 3 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.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To consider Children's Services performance in Quarter 3 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.
- 3.2 Note that some of the numbers identifying particular indicators have been changed from previous reports, as a result of slight changes made to the basket of KPIs.

## **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**

82% of young people triaged in the first three-quarters of 2018/19 were diverted away from the criminal justice system. This is better than performance during 2017/18, and an improvement on performance in the same period during last year. The improvement was down to a high proportion of young people triaged in the third quarter of the year being diverted away from the criminal justice system – 87% in Q3 alone, compared to 80% in each of the first two quarters of 2018/19.

The Targeted Youth Support (TYS) team primarily focuses on providing strong and effective early intervention and prevention to young people and adolescents within the borough who are in need of support, help and protection. This effectively diverts young people away from the criminal justice system. Some of the methods which are used to assist with this objective includes the duty system with Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT), which allows self-referrals and referrals to be made by other sources about young people who are in need. This duty system has recently been revised and updated. Another method is the detached youth work offer in area 'hotspots', which aims to signpost young people to appropriate services.

Much focus has also been on providing assistance to schools in recent times and a group of young people have been identified for targeted support via the transitions project which is supporting the cohort in their transition from primary to secondary school. A TYS lead has been allocated to be the conduit for most secondary schools in the borough to ensure that needs can be responded to more swiftly. In addition, staff are delivering more group work, including to young women only, and targeted sessions in schools. The transitions work will be further enhanced due to the successful bid which will enable the recruitment of an additional two workers for TYS to focus on this area.

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

There were 44 first time entrants in the first half of the year, which is the same as the number reported during the same period in 2017/18.

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 had dropped to 376 per 100,000 10 to 17 year olds, for July 2017 to June 2018 financial year. This is a 7% drop compared to the same period during the previous year, although the Islington rate remains above the London and England rates.

The reductions which were seen in 2017/18 were significant when compared to 2016/17, so it is important that improvements continue to be seen for this indicator. These need to be seen within the context of our statistical neighbours, many of whom are experiencing increases in the number of first time entrants in their respective areas. The commentary in 1.1 is also applicable to that for this indicator. The offer and availability of Triages for young people who have perpetrated first time and low-level offences has helped ensure that young people are assessed, screened and supported early on in their journey. The objective is therefore then to ensure that there is not any further progression or escalation for them within the youth justice system. The availability of high quality commissioned youth services has also contributed towards this. When young people who are First Time Entrants are worked with by the YOS, the quality of the service is also robust and comprehensive, again with the objective of preventing any further offending. The combined activity has led to a good level of performance in relation to young people entering the Criminal Justice System.

### **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, 20 had reoffended as at the end of Q3 2018/19 (45%). This is a lower percentage than what was reported at the end of Q3 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 January – March 2017 cohort of offenders, 59.4% of whom reoffended in the following 12 months. This compares to 42.5% reoffending across London and 39.9% across England as a whole. The Islington figure represents an increase compared to the previous quarter. In relation to the YJB 'frequency' measure, Islington still ranks highly out of our comparators.

This is perhaps the indicator which has caused the most concern in recent times and where improvements have not been as substantial as we would have liked. The re-offending rates – whether using the Youth Justice Board or local formulae – are quite high due to the fact that we have a small but significant cohort of young men with multiple vulnerabilities who are responsible for a large volume of offences. Subsequently, it has been more difficult to make a significant impact with the curtailing of this indicator. However, there is intensive work and action taking place to ensure that this cohort and any potential newcomers are provided with a combination of support and enforcement. For example, the Youth Offending Service has trained staff in and implemented Trauma Informed Practice to strengthen the quality of the assessment, planning and delivery of interventions to all of our young people, but particularly to this cohort (almost all of whom have experienced significant traumatic events). This is also one of the reasons why we have introduced a Clinical Specialist Panel so that specialist staff, who focus primarily on the health needs of our young people, can collectively decide on the best specialist intervention for them and the appropriate sequencing of such interventions. We also continue to work closely with police colleagues to ensure that enforcement is commensurate to each case

As research has overwhelmingly concluded that education, training and employment (ETE) is essential in keeping young people on the right path, we have increased the remit of our Educational Psychologist and we are in the process of recruiting a permanent I-Work Employment Advisor into the YOS. Strategic work is also underway with colleagues from the Employment, Skills and Culture department to improve the overall ETE offer to the YOS cohort and other vulnerable adolescents. 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, as well as continuing to seek feedback from the young people themselves, about what could be done differently to support them, via our participation groups and forums.

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, there were 4 custodial sentences in Q2, and 3 in Q3 2018/19, bringing the cumulative total for the year up to 19.

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 the 2018

calendar year, reports Islington's rate as 1.50 custodial sentences per 1,000 population, which is the same as the previous quarter. Islington's rate remains higher than London (0.58) and England (0.32).

The number of our young people who were sentenced to custody in Q1 was concerning and represented a large increase when compared to recent quarters within the past two years. It is positive to note, however, that the significant input and development of strategy to address this issue has continued to be successful due to the low numbers of custodial sentences in the subsequent and proceedings quarters. Indeed, in Q3, there were only three young people sent to the secure estate and this is evidence that inroads are still being made to keep the use of custody to a minimum and to ensure that it is only used for our young people when it really is needed and when it is a last resort. In recent times, a number of young people have been sentenced to community penalties when custody was seriously being considered by the courts. Due to the (high) quality of the Pre-Sentence Reports, the advocacy skills of the caseworker/s and the offer of the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme further custodial sentences were prevented. We are also benefiting from the embedding of Trauma Informed Practice across the partnership and this consistency and shared ethos is contributing more towards the court's understanding of the level of trauma that many of the YOS cohort has experienced. We are also continuing to work to address and tackle the disproportionality issues that exist, as BAME people are more likely to receive custodial sentences. Subsequently, the tracker continues to be used and we continue to contribute at a multi-agency, cross-borough YOS steering disproportionality group. In addition, we were one of fourteen areas in the country to be invited to bid for funding from the Youth Justice Board to tackle Serious Youth Violence and we were successful in securing this funding in a joint initiative with Haringey. The funding will be used to facilitate a project about disproportionality which will be important for future custody figures and analysis.

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

There were 13 children missing from care for more than 24 hours during December 2018. This is higher than the number at the end of the previous quarter (9) and the number at the end of the previous year (8). However, this measure was first set when, historically, the number of children missing from care was higher at around 20 children each month, so this is a relatively small increase.

The data evidences that there has been a slight increase in the number of children missing from care for more than 24 hours when compared with the previous quarter. 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 (66%) more likely to go missing than girls (34%), and children aged 16 and 17yrs going missing from care 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 3, 11 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 criminal 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 identified 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. In Q3, it remains the same with 21% of children missing from care being identified as at risk of CSE. However, 58% of children missing from care in Q3 have been identified as gangs at risk or gang nominal which is a significant increase from Q1 and Q2. This data demonstrates that a large number of children who go missing from care are 16 or 17-year-old males who are affected by gangs. The Exploitation and Missing Team identify that further analysis in relation to this cohort of young people is required, in order to build on the intervention and support available to young males, and prevent them from being groomed into exploitation.

There is 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 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 to senior leaders and council members.

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

Corporate Indicators and associated targets relating to Employment, Skills and Culture are generally 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.

### **2.1 - Corporate Indicator: Number of Islington school leavers in Year 11 who move into education or training**

There was an increase in the proportion of Year 11 Islington school leavers who move into education or training (as at the November after they left), from 95.4% for those who left in 2017 to 97.6% for those who left in 2018. The figure was above the central London average of 96.3%.

A higher percentage (1.6%) of Islington school year 11 leavers were found to be in employment with training, which includes apprenticeships and employment with part-time study/training, compared to other local authorities in central London.

The LA also had a noticeably high percentage (3%) of those found to be in a training destination which includes re-engagement activities on 1st November 2018. In Islington, re-engagement cohort on this date made up 1% of the year 11 leavers cohort.

Islington's NEET figure was 1.3%, just above the central London average. Our unknown figure was one of the lowest (0.8%) among central London LAs and noticeably below the central London average. Both NEET and Unknown figures are an improvement on Islington's 2017 figures.

The reduction of NEET and Unknown figures achieved in 2018 were a result of greater collaboration with schools to identify those 'at risk' of becoming NEET, earlier interventions and extensive tracking during August/September ensuring young people were supported into an EET destination.

In November each year Islington schools have a duty to provide the LA with information about young people who are 'at risk' of becoming NEET at the end of year 11. This data is based on factors such as low school attendance, SEN needs without an EHCP, negative peer group, health and mental health issues. In 2017-18 a total of 185 young people were identified as being 'at risk' across all Islington schools. The Progress Team engages with the schools in April/May identifying the most 'at risk' young people and an allocated adviser to the school makes early interventions to support young people with their transition and continues to be a linked adviser until the young person moves into a positive EET destination.

The Progress Team uses September Guarantee data to identify young people who may not have an offer of education for a September start. During the summer period the Progress Team follows up this group of young people and provides guidance and establishes plans with the young people, often attending with them on enrolment day to ensure they have an offer of a place.

The Progress Adviser (Vocational Pathways) works across Islington school's providing impartial advice and guidance on Vocational pathways options including traineeships, apprenticeships and BTEC academic options. In 2018 a total of 95 young people attended guidance interviews and were given on-going support regrading applications and opportunities. There were only 2 young people from this caseload who became NEET. However, they engaged in re-engagement activities to help them access EET.

Islington schools have a Progress Adviser who attends on results day and provides advice and guidance to young people who do not achieve their grades for their next planned pathway ensuring they are guided and sign posted to the next appropriate option. On results day in 2018 a total of 105 young people were seen by the progress team. This supports the target of year 11 moving into EET measures.

In 2017-18 a total of 15 young people who were unable to take up an offer of EET (or who started and dropped out before 1st November) were supported with Re-engagement activities. These bite-size programmes such as SPEAR and K&M painting and decorating courses enables young people to gain new skills and confidence to return to EET supported by their Progress Adviser.

## **2.4 – Corporate Indicator: Number of schools that have expressed an interest in the Cultural Enrichment Programme (11 by 11) by March 19**

11 By 11 is a commitment to providing all children and young people in Islington with 11 outstanding cultural experiences by Year 11 in school. It is a programme which aims to ensure equality of access to enrichment activities, particularly targeting those who are disadvantaged. This new corporate plan priority and recommendation of the Fair Futures Commission is an evidence-based response to enhancing life skills through engagement with cultural activity. At the time of writing in Q4, we have a further 11 schools who have expressed an interest in the programme, on top of the 25 at the end of Q3, bringing the total to 36 schools that have expressed an interest in the programme.

Developments to date include:

- A portal for schools to access 11 By 11 offers which will be launched on 15th March.
- A comprehensive database of cultural partners is in development for delivery which be delivered during Q4 2018/19.
- Activities for the Summer term are currently being sourced from cultural organisations.
- The Cultural Enrichment Team is working in partnership with School Improvement Service and leading cultural partner organisations to develop a suite of learning resources to ensure that Islington teachers have the necessary skills to make culture central to curriculum delivery.
- A monitoring and evaluation framework is being developed in partnership with Schools Data Team and Youth Employment; and
- An activity tracker has been set up for monitoring quantitative engagement in 11 by 11 activities by students and teachers which will be tested in the summer term.

## **2.5 – Corporate Indicator: 100 hours of the world of work - Number of secondary schools committed to an outline plan for implementation by March 2019**

and

## **2.6 – Corporate Indicator: Sectors with a local business leader committed to supporting the 100 hours initiative by March 2019**

The council has committed to ensuring that all young people in Islington benefit from 100 hours' experience of the World of Work by age 16. This will help young people to prepare for their future careers and to gain an understanding of the breadth of career options that are available locally. Islington schools have been consulted on the approach and we have initiated an overall programme design in collaboration with head teachers through the Islington Community of Schools and with businesses we currently work with.

We are delivering work with six secondary schools that is funded by the Richard Reeves Foundation, and requires the schools to develop programmes of employer led activities that support the 100 hours World of Work and a plan for achieving a Quality in Careers Standard.

While scaling up the delivery of career related activity with secondary schools this academic year, we are testing employer activities with primary schools with a view to launching next year. Progress at Q3 includes the development of a web based booking system, with 30 businesses across eight key industry sectors currently offering their support, and a further eight expected by the end of March. By March we will also have a World of Work Guarantee in place that businesses and schools will pledge their support to.

## **CES OBB Outcome: Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up**

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 600 2 year olds in funded places in the Autumn Term 2018/19. This is lower than the 630 in funded places during the previous term. However, the number of eligible parents is falling at a similar rate, so the overall proportion of places taken up is similar to the previous term, dropping only slightly and rounded down to 63%.

Low awareness of and confusion about the national offer continues to be the main barrier to take up, together with cultural barriers within certain groups. Ensuring that all local practitioners working in any capacity with young children and their families are aware of the offer and equipped to sell the benefits of taking up free early education is a priority. Following a successful information sharing session supported by Childcare Works, we will be launching sessions on a monthly basis for partners and professionals.

We also know that word of mouth and peer-to-peer recommendations are the most effective way to spread the message about the 2 year old offer. There are 18 parent champion volunteers active across Bright Start Islington, speaking a range of community languages and focusing on promoting early learning entitlements and other Bright Start services. A new cohort of parent champions will be trained in the summer term. We are also making much greater use of social media, particularly Facebook, to spread clear and simple messages about the offer. Research indicates that our target group, women aged 25-44 from social groups C1DE use Facebook more than any other social media.

Research carried out last year and published by the DfE indicated that it is beneficial to differentiate the message depending on the target group. Therefore, our marketing materials have been refreshed with messages appropriate for parents of 2 year olds alongside updated branding. We will launch the new marketing campaign this Summer, to coincide with the latest DWP list of eligible families.

A golden ticket approach has been agreed and will be implemented this year. A place will be given to all children who appear on the eligible list which we receive from the DWP. This significantly simplifies the process of accessing a place, and has been highly successful in increasing take up where it has been implemented in other boroughs.

### **3.4 – Corporate Equalities Indicator - Percentage of Free School Meals / non-Free School Meals pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile**

The gap between the results for Free School Meal (FSM) eligible children and their peers has widened due to improvement in results for non-FSM pupils.

In 2017/18, the attainment gap in Islington was narrower than across the country as a whole. In Islington 61% of FSM-eligible pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD), compared to 75% of other pupils. Across England only 57% of FSM pupils achieved a GLD, whilst 74% of other pupils achieved a GLD, so Islington is above the national average for both groups. This means the gap in Islington is 14 percentage points, compared to a national attainment gap of 17 percentage points in 2017/18.

- Published research shows the link between hours spent in early education between age 2 – 4 and children’s outcomes at the end of reception. FSM eligible 2 year olds are all entitled to 15 hours funded early education (see 3.2 above). Take-up of the universal 3&4YO entitlement of 15 hours, while higher than 2YO take-up, currently stands at 84%. We are undertaking a number of actions to improve take-up, outlined in 3.2. We expect increasing 2YO take-up will impact positively on universal 3&4YO take up.
- FSM children are only eligible for the 15 hours universal entitlement at age 3 and 4 under government funding regulations. However, the most disadvantaged 3&4 YOs in Islington, most of whom are in the FSM cohort, receive 30 hours funded early education per week via the Early Years Priority Referral scheme. In the academic year 2017-18, 233 3&4YO children eligible under the EYPR criteria, received 30 hours per week. So far this academic year, 207 3&4YO children have been funded to receive 30 hours per week.
- Islington has been approved to fund these extra hours through a disapplication request to the DFE which enables us to use Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant. The number of children who can be funded for extra hours is limited and we are considering how to pilot a 30 hours offer for more FSM children in the term before they move to reception, focusing on FSM children with multiple child and family factors which are likely to increase disadvantage and negatively impact on outcomes. This will mitigate against the impact of the government’s 30 hour entitlement for working families, which has effectively meant that children from poorer backgrounds receive fewer hours of early education.

Other activities which address the gap between FSM and NFSM include

- Working with colleagues in Early Years teaching and learning, Bright Start area teams and Libraries to roll out a dual language project, with funding from Booktrust, to encourage enjoyment of reading in under-fives from Bengali, Turkish and Somali families.
- A series of “Lite Bite” continuing professional development sessions for early years practitioners which focus on boys and writing.
- Traded work in schools by Early Years teaching and learning always starts with looking at detailed analysis of attainment data and work is rooted in closing gaps within individual schools.
- Other ideas in development include strengthening early home learning through a digital application and ensuring that there are opportunities for early years children to benefit from the borough’s 11 by 11 cultural experiences initiative.

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

and

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

The DfE have now published data for the full 2017/18 academic year. This shows that persistent absence in Islington primary schools increased to 11.0%, which is higher than the London and England averages, as it was the previous year. Persistent absence amongst Islington secondary schools decreased to 13.9%, which is in line with the national average, although it remains above the London average.

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.

PA still remains high compared with other LAs, particularly at primary level. Illness and unauthorised circumstances are the highest reason for absence in our primary schools.

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

In collaboration with Public Health and the School Nurse Team, we have produced guidance for schools and parent/carers around minor illness and school attendance. The document provides clear advice on whether a child needs to be off school.

From September 2015, an Asthma Friendly Schools Nurse worked collaboratively with participating schools in Islington to implement five asthma friendly standards. As well as ensuring schools are safer, and supporting young people with asthma to live fuller, active lives, this project has helped reduce absence due to illness. Across the 42 schools took part in the project - representing 66% of all schools and 12,517 young people – there was a 0.07% drop in rates of absence due to illness, whereas those that hadn't taken part saw a 0.02% rise over the same period. Although these sound like small margins, they do add up - 1,600 fewer school days would be missed if all local primary schools implemented the project.

To ensure a borough wide consistency we have developed with schools written guidance on a structured conversation that should be had with every parent about the importance of regular attendance and school / Local Authority expectations.

We are delivering a 6-month programme to targeted schools (i.e. those with highest persistent absence) to help them better understand their own PA profile and to support them in implementing effective procedures to reduce PA. As part of this programme we have provided schools with a data tool to support their analysis, help produce reports around cohorts of pupils causing concerns so that they can better targeted support and ensure whole school ownership.

We continue to support improved links between schools and Early Help Service particularly for schools with high number of PAs.

Recognising absence due to study leave was a contributing factor towards high absence in some secondary schools; we have provided advice and DfE guidance to schools around appropriate recording of year 11 pupils

during exam times. DfE guidance states 'Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations'. However, study leave for Year 11 in the last half term of the year is not included in the reported statistics.

### **3.10 – Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2**

The revised data for 2017/18 confirms that the proportion of Islington pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2 rose from 66% in 2016/17 to 69% in 2017/18. National data shows that across England the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in all three subjects rose from 61% to 65%, so Islington has stayed above the national average.

The underlying data shows that most of the increase, locally, was due to an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, with 78% of pupils achieving the expected level, according to the provisional data, compared to 74% the previous year. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in Writing was in line with the performance last year, which itself was the same as the year before. The proportion of Islington pupils achieving the expected level in Maths fell slightly, from 79% in 2016/17 to 77% in 2017/18, although this is still above the England average of 76% for state-funded schools.

Another encouraging outcome is that 16% of pupils achieved a higher standard in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2 (a higher standard is a scaled score of 110 or more). This is an increase on 2016/17 results, and Islington is ranked joint 6th in the country on this measure.

Reading outcomes at KS2 have demonstrated the greatest improvement over the past 3 years as a result of the demanding expectations of the tests that pupils now undertake. Reading has improved by 10% over the past three years compared to national where the rise has been 9%. Reading remains a focus across the borough and support for schools, particularly those below the national figure (75%) have been identified and targeted support will be provided for them. Writing has remained consistent over the past three years and this in part is due to the nature of teacher assessment but also reflects the consistent training and support schools have received from School Improvement. Maths has remained relatively consistent however there has been a slight dip on last year. Despite this schools have focussed on developing mathematical fluency, particularly in arithmetic to support pupils to be successful. More emphasis needs to be given to securing pupils' reasoning skills. More able pupils across all three subjects do particularly well and are consistently above national outcomes. Schools are meeting the needs of more able pupils and using data effectively to ensure progress is maximised for all pupils so that they are ready for the next stage of their learning.

Combined outcomes for reading, writing and maths have increased by 12% over the past three years, a slightly larger increase than the national average, which increase by 11% over the same period. Analysis of this trend over time has identified a number of schools who are consistently underperforming despite incremental improvements each year. Through the annual categorisation process, these schools will be challenged to provide an effective strategy of improvement that will secure outcomes in line with national figures.

Compared to Inner London, Islington ranks 10/13, which is the same position as last year, and Islington remains 2 percentage points below the Inner London average.

### **3.11 – Corporate Equalities Indicator - Narrowing the gap in attainment between the Black Caribbean pupils and the LBI average at KS2 (gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths)**

The revised results for 2018 show that the proportion of Black Caribbean pupils achieving the expected standard across Reading, Writing and Maths fell slightly, from 50% in 2017 to 49.5% in 2018. However, as the results for all Islington pupils improved from 66% in 2017 to 69% in 2018, the gap between Black Caribbean pupils and the Islington average widened, from 16 percentage points in 2017 to 19 percentage points in 2018. To give these differences some context, if 3 more Black Caribbean pupils achieved the

expected standard in 2018, the gap would have stayed at the same level as last year, and if 19 more Black Caribbean pupils achieved the expected standard in 2018, the group's results would have matched the Islington average (as there are around a hundred Black Caribbean pupils in the cohort).

Since the introduction of new assessments at KS2, schools now have access to data spanning 3 years. Black Caribbean pupils compared to Islington pupils over that time consistently underperform. Over 3 years, reading outcomes have been 12% below, writing 10% below and maths 15% below LBI figures. At the combined outcome for RWM, Black Caribbean pupils perform 17% below LBI peers over 3 years. The biggest gap in underperformance is in maths and this has a direct effect on the combined outcome. Progress for these pupils remains a challenge.

School Improvement will focus on this group through their work in schools. Practice in all schools is being reviewed and a working group has been established to support schools who consistently struggle with this issue. Achievement for these pupils will be the focus of the annual Deputy Headteacher conference and a Strategic Partnership of schools is being developed to support other schools. This is one of the work streams for the Islington Community of Schools. Work with Subject Leaders for maths and reading will also highlight this issue in schools and Y6 teachers will receive additional support.

### **3.12 – Corporate Equalities Indicator - Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for Free School Meals and the LBI average at KS2 (gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths)**

The proportion of White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals who achieved the expected standard across Reading, Writing and Maths improved, from 46% in 2017 to 50% in the revised results for 2018. As the results for all Islington pupils improved by three percentage points, the gap between White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals and the Islington average narrowed slightly, from 20 percentage points in 2017 to 19 points in 2018. To put this gap into context, 27 more White-British FSM-eligible pupils would have had to achieve the expected standard for this group's results to be in line with the Islington average.

White British pupils (i.e. including those not eligible for Free School Meals), as a group, consistently achieve better than the LBI average over the past three years. In reading these pupils outperform LBI pupils by 5%, are in line in writing and 1% better in maths. At the combined outcome White British perform 4% better than LBI peers. Progress for this group of pupils is consistently good, particularly in reading.

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

The number of pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) at the end of Q3 2018/19 was 76 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. 76 is an increase on the 59 in Alternative Provision at the end of September, but lower than the number as 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 mainstream 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.

### **3.14 – Corporate Indicator - Average Attainment 8 Score**

The revised Attainment 8 figure for Islington schools for 2017/18 is 46.3, an increase on the 2016/17 average of 45.6. Comparator data shows the average score across London rose by a smaller margin, from 48.9 to 49.4, whilst the national average fell slightly, from 44.6 to 44.5. The Inner London average rose slightly, from 48.2 to 48.3.

Attainment 8 measures achievement across 8 qualifications.

### **3.15 – Corporate Indicator - Average Progress 8 Score**

The revised Progress 8 figure for Islington schools for 2017/18 is 0.15, an increase from the 2016/17 figure of 0.13. Comparator data shows the average score across London rose slightly from 0.22 in 2016/17 to 0.23 in 2017/18, although this change was too small to be statistically significant. The national average score rose marginally from -0.03 to -0.02. Islington's performance on this measure remains in the top quartile, nationally.

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.

### **3.16 –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

### **3.17 –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)**

The average Progress 8 score for Islington's Black-Caribbean pupils in 2017/18 was -0.28, a fall from -0.09 in the 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. Nationally, the average Progress 8 score for Black-Caribbean pupils was -0.30, so Islington's Black-Caribbean pupils made more progress than the national average for this group. However, as the overall Islington average Progress 8 score was much further above the national average, the gap in Islington is wider for Black-Caribbean pupils than it is nationally.

The average Progress 8 score for Islington's White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals in 2017/18 was -0.65 in the 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 0.80 points, from 0.64 points in 2016/17. Nationally, the average Progress 8 score for White-British pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals was -0.79, so Islington's White-British FSM-eligible pupils made more progress than the national average for this group. However, as the overall Islington average Progress 8 score

was much further above the national average, the gap in Islington is slightly wider for White-British FSM-eligible pupils than it is nationally.

Since the last report, the Equalities Reference Group has met twice and made progress around our first two priorities: raising awareness in educational settings and across service providers; engaging pupils, parents and communities.

Cultural competency training was delivered and well received at the Deputy Heads' conference in February, as well as reaching a small group of school and council staff at another training event in November. This training raises awareness about unconscious bias and other issues that can affect black pupils' experience of school. It has created interest in a 'train the trainer' course to increase sustainability by equipping a cultural competency lead from participating schools to deliver the training in a whole school setting and as part of induction for new staff. The November training also gave rise to an inclusive curriculum audit tool and a suite of inclusive assemblies designed by and for schools.

Members of the School Improvement Team have visited several schools that buck the trend in relation to these two groups of pupils to find out about existing good practice, particularly in relation to engaging pupils, parents and communities. These findings are being collated into a 'Dos and Don'ts' document which will be disseminated in Head teacher and governor briefings, subject networks and targeted one to one conversations with school leaders.

Academic research into the lived experiences of White British Disadvantaged pupils continues to make progress, with fieldwork begun in two secondary schools in February 2019. The primary Deputy Heads working party on White British Disadvantaged pupils is currently using a Teacher Research Community model to investigate and improve practices that support resilience.

We are working on a plan to better align the priorities of various teams within the council as well as promoting dialogue with relevant external organisations. A member of the Islington School Improvement team is consulting Hackney about strategies used in their Young Black Men initiative. Other members of the Reference Group are in dialogue with directors and teams to find practical ways forward.

The new Ofsted focus on quality of education and equity offers an opportunity to encourage schools to think about their curriculum offer and how they support the development and experience of all pupils. At the next two meetings, the Equalities Reference group will focus on the third and fourth priorities: pupils' engagement and pupils' attainment. Progress in relation to these priorities will be reported in the next report.

### **3.20 – 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 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 15.6% at the end of Q3 2018/19. The reduction in the re-referral rate is 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, as improvements in this indicator have been sustained for two years.

### **3.21 – 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 21.3% at the end of Q3 2018/19. This is based on 36 out of 169 child protection plans starting in Q1-3 2018/19. The number becoming subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time in 2018/19 is in line with the number during the same period last year. However, the total number of plans starting has fallen significantly, which has meant the overall percentage for this measure has increased. The number of repeat plans in 2018/19 includes a significant number of young people in family groups, which have a disproportionate effect on the headline percentage.

A preliminary audit has been undertaken of repeat plans so far this financial year. Domestic violence and abuse remains by far the most common reason for repeat plans. A continuing theme is the difficulty in engaging fathers with the child protection process in a meaningful way. 19 plans had a gap of over 3 years between plans. 6 of the repeat plans concerned children who had previously experienced trauma from domestic abuse and were now at risk due to contextual abuse such as serious youth violence.

A full audit will be undertaken once end of year data is available.

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

Provisional data shows that 25 out of Islington's 327 looked after children had had 3 or more placements during the year 2018/19, as at the end of the third quarter. The proportion of all looked after children who have had 3 or more placements is 7.6%, which is lower than at the same point in 2017/18 (8.2%, relating to 29 out of 354 children). This improved performance is a reflection of improved stability for children recently entering care and is reflective of effective matching and robust planning for children at the outset.

### **3.23 - 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 Q3 2018/19, 57.7% of Islington's looked after children who had been looked after long term were in stable placements. This is the lowest level it has been this financial year, and lower than at the same time during 2017/18.

Analysis of this data shows that for a small cohort of adolescent children their stability has been compromised by placement moves following their foster carers being unable to manage the challenges that these children present and being unable to continue to care for them. The majority of these young people came into care quite late and have not had the benefit of making long term attachments which would mitigate the risks as they become older. Every effort is made to add support to these carers but the risks that the young people bring to the carers and their families is frequently too much for the carers to manage.

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.

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

At the end of Q3 2018/19 there were 327 children looked after by Islington. This lower than it was at the end of 2017/18. Coupled with the fact that the population is projected to increase by around 2% each year, we expect to see a fall in the rate of looked after children, when the official DfE statistics are published later in the year. The reduction in the numbers of children looked after is very positive and an indication of the impact of our motivational Practice model.

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

## **6.1 - Percentage of good and outstanding early years settings**

The latest published data (as at the end of August 2018) shows the proportion of Islington's settings on the Early Years register judged good or better has increased again to 93.7%, up from 92.7% at the end of March 2018. This is above the London average, but below the England average (although the gap between Islington and the national average is narrowing). With this increase, Islington has moved out of the bottom quartile, nationally. To show how tightly grouped together the figures are for each local authority, if just 6 more of Islington's 191 settings improved their inspection judgement, Islington would be in the top quartile of local authorities, nationally.

There continues to be an overall increase in the percentage of providers judged as good or outstanding in their early years Ofsted inspection. As at the end of August, there was one inadequate settings and eleven settings with a requires improvement judgement. The inadequate setting has since resigned its Ofsted registration. The eleven settings with a requires improvement judgement were comprised of an out of school club, a private nursery (which has since been re-inspected and judged to be 'Good') and nine childminders. Islington's rate of outstanding provision is well above both England and London averages at 26.7% compared with 19.0% and 16.9% respectively. Provision classed as non-domestic (i.e. not childminders or group childcare in people's homes) is particularly good with 43.2% judged as outstanding compared with 21.5% across London and 22.9% in England. 94.8% of private, voluntary and independent nurseries were judged to be good or outstanding.

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

The proportion of schools judged good or better stood at 92.5% at the end of December 2018, the same level as at the end of the previous two quarters. There were three full inspections in Q3 2018/19. New River College (Secondary) improved to be judged Good and Blessed Sacrament retained their Good inspection judgement, whilst St Aloysius was judged as Requires Improvement. Islington remains above London (91.5%) and England (85.4%) in terms of inspection outcomes – both comparators fell slightly in Q3. 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.

Two secondary and one primary school are currently requiring improvement. These schools are receiving robust support and challenge to secure a good or better judgement at the next inspection.

The breakdowns by school phase are:

- 100% of nursery schools (3/3)
- 95.6% of primary schools (43/45)
  - 100% of local authority maintained primary schools (40/40)
  - 60% of academies and free schools (3/5)
- 70% of secondary schools (7/10)
  - 66.6% of local authority maintained secondary schools (4/6)
  - 75% of academies and free schools (3/4)
- 100% of special schools (5/5)
- 100% of Pupil Referral Units (4/4)

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Financial implications:**

Not applicable.

### **4.2 Legal Implications:**

Not applicable.

### **4.3 Environmental Implications**

Not applicable.

### **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, although there are some equalities data-monitoring measures within this report, this is part of a regular set of reporting and no major changes to service provision have been recommended. A Resident Impact Assessment would be completed if there was a recommendation or decision to make a substantial change to an existing service, or to launch a new service, in light of the findings of this report. The information contained within this report may, however, form part of the evidence base for future Resident Impact Assessments as required.

## **5. Reason for recommendations**

### **5.1 In accordance with its remit:**

Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss the progress set out in the report.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Data Dashboard for Q3 2018/19

## **Background papers:** None

Final report clearance:

### **Signed by:**

18 April 2019

Carmel Littleton, Corporate Director for People

Date

Report Author: Heads of Service, People Directorate

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## Appendix A - Data Dashboard

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Frequency reported	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	Quarterly	<b>82%</b> (Q1-3 2018/19 FY provisional)	79% (2017/18 FY Q1-3)	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	Quarterly	<b>44</b> (Q1-3 2018/19 FY provisional)	44 (2017/18 FY Q1-3)	60 (2017/18 FY)	↔	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.3	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of repeat young offenders (under 18s)	Quarterly	<b>45%</b> (Q1-3 2018/19 FY provisional)	57% (2017/18 FY Q1-3)	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	Quarterly	<b>19</b> (Q1-3 2018/19 provisional)	14 (2017/18 FY Q1-3)	17 (2017/18 FY)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.5	x	Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours	Quarterly	<b>13</b> (December 2018)	9 (Dec 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>										
2.1	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of Islington school leavers in Year 11 who move into education or training	Annual	<b>97.6%</b> (2018 leavers)	95.4% (2017 leavers)	95.4% (2017 leavers)	↑	97.0% (2017)	95.3% (2017)	2nd from bottom
2.4	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Number of schools that have expressed an interest in the Cultural Enrichment Programme by March 19	Quarterly	<b>25</b>	n/a	30	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
2.5	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> 100 hours of the world of work - Number of secondary schools committed to an outline plan for implementation by March 2019	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	5	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
2.6	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Sectors with a local business leader committed to supporting the 100 hours initiative by March 2019	Quarterly	n/a	n/a	8	-	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	✓	<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	Termly	<b>63%</b> (Spring 2018/19 AY provisional)	64% (Autumn term 2018/19 AY)	63% (Summer term 2017/18 AY)	↔	61% (January 2018)	72% (January 2018)	2nd from bottom
3.4	✓	<b>Corporate Equalities Indicator:</b> Percentage of Free School Meals / non-Free School Meals pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	Annual	<b>FSM - 61%</b> <b>Non-FSM - 75%</b> <b>14 pt gap</b> (2017/18 AY)	FSM - 61% Non-FSM - 73% 12 pt gap (2016/17 AY)	FSM - 61% Non-FSM - 73% 12 pt gap (2016/17 AY)	↑	FSM - 64% Non-FSM - 75% 11 pt gap (2016/17 AY)	FSM - 56% Non-FSM - 73% 17 pt gap (2016/17 AY)	Top (for both FSM GLD and gap)
3.5	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Termly	<b>11.0%</b> (2017/18 AY)	11.4% (Autumn & Spring terms 2017/18)	9.4% (2016/17 AY)	↑	8.5% (2017/18 AY)	8.7% (2017/18 AY)	Bottom

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Frequency reported	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
3.6	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Termly	<b>13.9%</b> (2017/18 AY)	13.6% (Autumn & Spring terms 2017/18)	14.6% (2016/17 AY)	↓	12.0% (2017/18 AY)	13.9% (2017/18 AY)	2nd from top
3.10	x	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2	Annual	<b>69%</b> (2017/18 AY)	66% (2016/17 AY)	66% (2016/17 AY)	↑	70% (2017/18 AY)	65% (2017/18 AY)	Top
3.11	✓	<b>Corporate Equalities Indicator:</b> Narrowing the gap in attainment between the BCRB pupils and the LBI average at KS2 (gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths)	Annual	<b>19 pts</b> (2017/18 AY)	16 pts (2016/17 AY)	16 pts (2016/17 AY)	↑	Not available below National level	9 pts (2017/18 AY)	n/a
3.12	✓	<b>Corporate Equalities Indicator:</b> Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for Free School Meals and the LBI average at KS2 (gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths)	Annual	<b>19 pts</b> (2017/18 AY)	20 pts (2016/17 AY)	20 pts (2016/17 AY)	↔	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.13	x	Number of children in Alternative Provision	Quarterly	<b>76</b> (Q3 2018/19 FY)	59 (Q2 2018/19 FY)	Not comparable	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.14	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Average Attainment 8 score	Annual	<b>46.3</b> (2017/18 AY)	45.6 (2016/17 AY)	45.6 (2016/17 AY)	↑	49.4 (2017/18 AY)	44.5 (2017/18 AY)	2nd from top
3.15	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Average Progress 8 Score	Annual	<b>0.15</b> (2017/18 AY)	0.13	0.13	↑	0.23 (2017/18 AY)	-0.02 (2017/18 AY)	Top
3.16	✓	<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)	Annual	<b>BCRB = -0.28</b> <b>Gap = 0.43</b> (2017/18)	BCRB = -0.09 Gap = 0.22 (2016/17)	BCRB = -0.09 Gap = 0.22 (2016/17)	↑	Not available below National	BCRB = -0.30, Gap = 0.28 (2017/18 AY)	n/a
3.17	✓	<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)	Annual	<b>White British FSM pupils = -0.65</b> <b>Gap = 0.80</b> (2017/18)	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 = -0.79 Gap = 0.77 (2017/18 AY)	n/a
3.20	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months	Quarterly	<b>15.6%</b> (2018/19 Q3)	15.1% (2018/19 Q2)	16.8% (2017/18 FY)	↓	16.7% (2017/18 FY)	21.9% (2017/18 FY)	2nd from top
3.21	✓	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	Quarterly	<b>21.3%</b> (2018/19 Q3)	21.0% (2018/19 Q2)	15.7% (2017/18 FY)	↑	14.9% (2017/18 FY)	20.2% (2017/18 FY)	Top
3.22	x	Placement stability - short term - Proportion of looked after children with 3 or more placements over the course of the year	Quarterly	<b>7.6%</b> (2018/19 Q3)	8.2% (2017/18 Q3)	12.7% (2017/18 FY)	↓	11.1% (2017/18 FY)	10.5% (2017/18 FY)	Bottom
3.23	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	Quarterly	<b>57.7%</b> (2018/19 Q3)	64.0% (2017/18 Q3)	62.8% (2017/18 FY)	↓	67.2% (2017/18 FY)	69.8% (2017/18 FY)	Bottom
3.24	x	Number of Looked After Children	Quarterly	<b>327</b> (2018/19 Q3)	<b>320</b> (2018/19 Q2)	339 (2017/18 FY)	↓	Not comparable	Not comparable	n/a
3.25	x	Rate of Looked After Children	Annual	<b>82</b> (2017/18 FY)	83 (2016/17 FY)	83 (2016/17 FY)	↔	49 (2017/18 FY)	64 (2017/18 FY)	2nd from bottom

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Frequency reported	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
CES OBB Outcome: Ensuring our residents can lead healthy and independent lives										
CES OBB Outcome: Making Islington a welcoming and attractive borough and creating a healthy environment for all										
CES OBB Outcome: Continuing to be a well-run council, making a difference despite reduced resources										
6.1	x	Percentage of good and outstanding early years settings	Termly	<b>93.7% (End August 2018)</b>	92.7% (2017/18 FY)	92.7% (2017/18 FY)	↑	91.6% (End August 2018)	94.5% (End August 2018)	2nd from bottom
6.2	x	Percentage of good and outstanding Islington schools (all phases)	Quarterly	<b>92.5% (Q3 2018/19 FY)</b>	92.5% (Q1 2018/19 FY)	95.3% (Q4 2017/18 FY not directly comparable)	↔	91.5% (Q3 2018/19 FY)	85.4% (Q3 2018/19 FY)	Top

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# Education in Islington

## Annual Educational Attainment Report 2018



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## 1.0 Islington Focus Report

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This is the eighth annual report on education performance in Islington. In 2018 we continued to make progress in a number of priority areas. This is reflected in the positive outcomes of pupils in our schools; and the destinations of school leavers into education, employment and training.

### Strengths

Some 96% of primary schools; and 100% of nursery schools, maintained special schools and PRUs were judged as good or outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspection.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) results continue to rise faster than the national rate. Our best ever Phonics result, is closing the gap with Inner London.

2018 saw the third year of results for the revised primary curriculum. Islington pupils exceeded the national average across all core subjects at key stage 1; and remained firmly in the top quartile at key stage 2, for reading, writing and mathematics combined at the expected standard or above; as well as ranking 6<sup>th</sup> best in the country for pupils working at greater depth.

Islington ranked in the top quintile for the headline secondary school measure, Progress 8. Pupils on average gained about one 7<sup>th</sup> of a grade point more than pupils nationally with similar starting points and Attainment 8 was above national average. Around two thirds of pupils passed the new English and maths benchmark (grade 9-4), at 64% more than 4% points above the national rate with good performance particularly in English.

Islington's disadvantaged pupils continue to make good progress at school and perform well above their peers nationally; both at the end of primary school, and for Progress 8 in secondary schools.

A number of primary schools have completed whole school training in Trauma Informed Practice in 2017-8 and saw positive outcomes to children and families as a result of this, including reduction in behaviour incidents and exclusions. The training is run by the Healthy Schools Team in the Council and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Further schools are being

trained in 2018-9 and this includes more primary schools and secondary schools.

### Areas for further development

If the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is to be eliminated then it should be addressed in the early years. Encouragingly, the 'equalities gap' at EYFS shrank in 2018, whereas the take-up of childcare for disadvantaged 2 year-olds remains relatively low and should be addressed.

Key Stage 5 results lag behind national in terms of average point score, despite encouraging A level (without AS), technical and vocational outcomes. Also, more young people do go onto university than the national average.

### Strategic priorities

- Narrowing the gap in attainment between Black-Caribbean pupils and the LBI average at KS2 and KS4
- Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for FSM and the LBI average at KS2 and KS4.
- 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
- 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

## Main findings

- All primary schools are above national floor standards and no Islington schools (all phases) are coasting under the national criteria.
- **Y1 Phonics** remains above national; and the gap with Inner London narrowed to *less than* half a per cent in 2018
- **At KS2**, 69% of pupils reached the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths, well above national; and 6<sup>th</sup> best in the country for the percentage of pupils working at greater depth
- KS1-KS2 progress is above national and above Inner London in two of the three core subjects
- KS4 Attainment 8 and Progress 8 remain well above national averages
- Progress 8 was in the top quintile for England (29 out of 151 local authorities), and the gap with Inner London halved this year
- Disadvantaged pupils continue to do well in Islington schools
- KS5 APS results are below national and Inner London

## 2.0 About Islington

- Islington is a small, densely populated Inner London borough with around 48,000 children and young people aged 0-19, and around 77,000 0-25 year olds.
- Approximately 31% of Islington children live in low-income families, based on benefits and tax credits data, the third highest level in England. (Children Living in Low Income Families, IDACI 2015).
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
  - in primary schools and nurseries is 25.8% (the national average is 13.7%)
  - in secondary schools is 30.6% (the national average is 12.4%)
- Children and young people from Black and minority ethnic groups account for 66% of all children living in the area, compared with 32% in the country as a whole.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:
  - in primary schools is 42.2% (the national average is 21.2%).
  - in secondary schools is 44% (the national average is 16.6%).

(DfE SFR: Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2018).

(DfE SFR: Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2018).

Islington schools have a higher proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs 16.9% than Inner London (15.2%) or England (13.8%). (DfE SFR: Special Educational Needs: January 2018).

- Around 64% of eligible 2 year olds were benefitting from free early years provision in January 2018, of which, 97% are in settings judged as good or outstanding.
- Around 84% of eligible resident 3 and 4 year olds are in universal funded early years' provision. The remainder may use out-borough settings or private provision.

(DfE SFR: Education Provision, Children Under 5 years of age: January 2018).

### 3.0 Quality of Provision

92% of learners attend a good or outstanding school or pupil referral unit which is higher than the national figure of 89% (Ofsted Data View, August 2018).

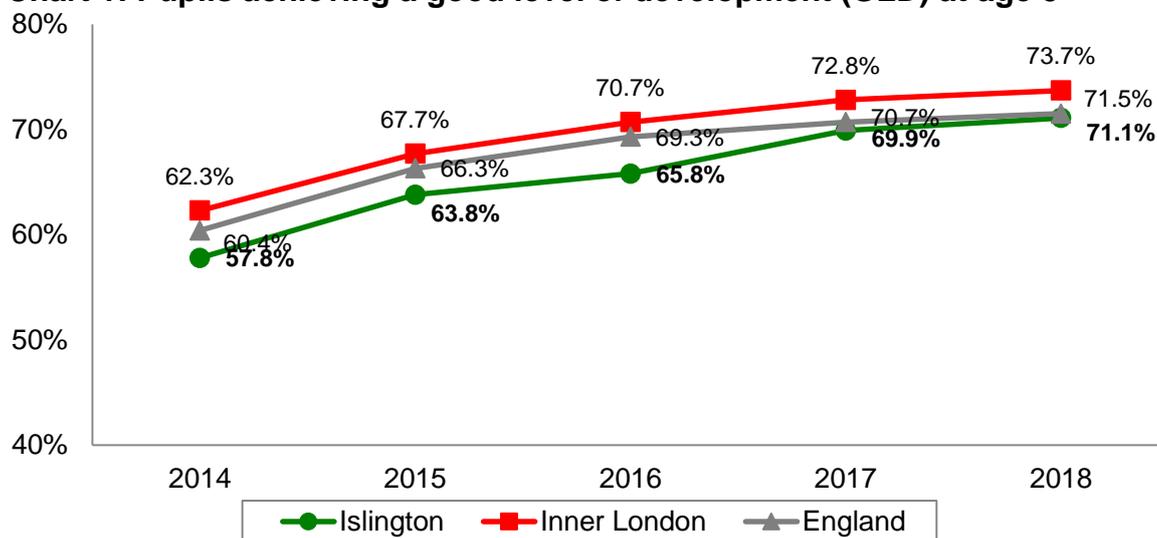
- 94.8% of private, voluntary and independent nurseries were good or outstanding
- 100% of nursery schools were good or outstanding
- 95.6% of primary schools were good or outstanding
- 70% of secondary schools were good or outstanding
- 100% of pupil referral units were good or outstanding
- 100% of special schools were good or outstanding

### 4.0 Educational Performance

#### 4.1 Early Years Foundation Stage

In 2018, 71% of the borough’s reception pupils achieved a ‘good level of development’ for the Early Years Foundation Stage which is narrower now than it has been for several years, just half a percentage point below the national rate, and three points below the rate for Inner London.

**Chart 1: Pupils achieving a good level of development (GLD) at age 5**



Looking at the 12 indicators that are included in the ‘good level of development benchmark, Islington’s performance when compared to the national is above in ‘Reading’ and ‘Number’ but below in ‘writing’ and ‘shape, space and measure’. Against Inner London, the borough has performed below for the two assessments ‘making relationships’ and ‘managing feelings and behaviour’. The local authority’s results for ‘listening and attention’ was higher than both comparators.

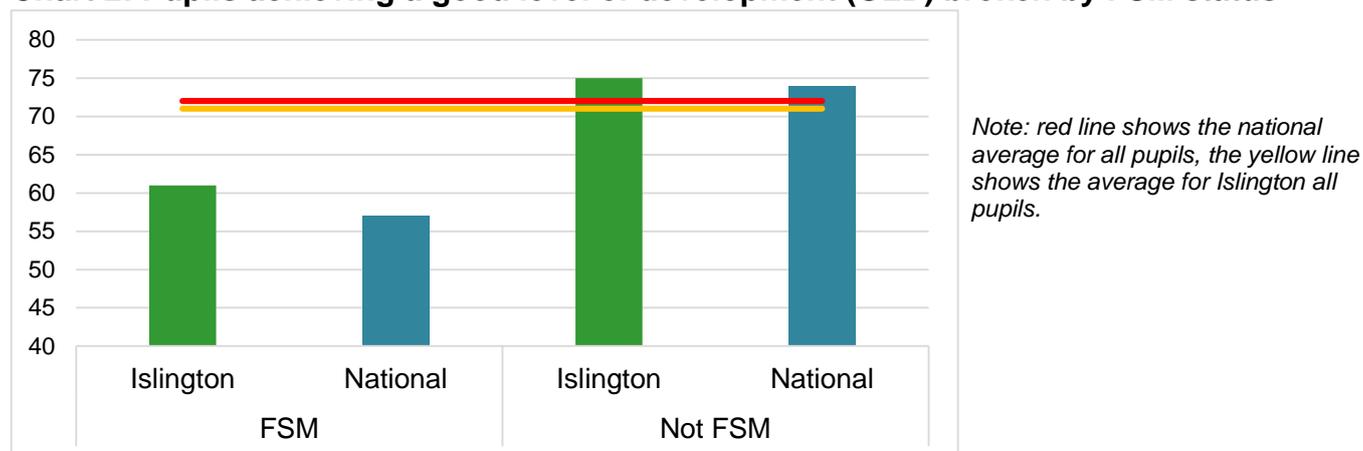
**Performance of boys is up noticeably** from 62.9% to 64.4%, although they continued to do less well than girls in 2018 both locally and nationally. This compares to 77.8% of the borough's girls (also up from 77.2% girls). Most of the reduction in the gap between the borough's GLD and that for the national since 2016 (2.2 percentage points) was due to the improvement in the performance of Islington's boys with the 2018 results for this group being 2.9 percentage points higher than their performance in 2016.

**All ethnic groups performed better** for the 3-year period 2016 to 2018 compared to 2015 to 2017 with the proportion of Black Other pupils gaining GLD rising by 12.3 percentage points to *leapfrog* the average for all pupils (at 70.8% vs. 68.9% LBI av. 2016-18). Islington's 'Turkish, Turkish Cypriot and Kurdish' pupils remain the lowest performing ethnic category, however the GLD percentage for this group also rose to 49.2% the 2016-18 three year average<sup>1</sup> (up from 47.4% 2015-17). Despite an improvement, Black Caribbean pupils remained below average scoring 63% and 4% points below national for this group. Somali pupils also scored 63%.

**The DfE's 'Equality Gap'**<sup>2</sup> between the lowest attaining fifth of pupils and all pupils, was 34.6 in 2018, which is better than the last two years (both 36.3), this benchmark was much the same as last year in 2018 for both England (31.8) and Inner London (31.7).

Islington pupils eligible for **Free School Meals (FSM)** continued to outperform FSM pupils nationally by a noticeable 4 percentage points (61% compared to 57%). Further, Islington pupils not eligible for FSM also performed better than non-FSM pupils nationally at 75%, 1% point above the national equivalent.

**Chart 2: Pupils achieving a good level of development (GLD) broken by FSM status**



Around 670 children, 64% of eligible 2 year olds were benefitting from **early education** in December 2018. This is a 4% point decline on the previous year.<sup>3</sup> Yet remains above the London average of 60% but below England (72%). Some 84% of Islington's 3 year olds and 4 year olds accessed their entitlement. Analysis of why numbers of funded 2 year olds taking up a place has fallen is available in the DfE's Natcen report, this includes low take up in London. 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.

<sup>1</sup> Because the small size of some ethnic categories make annual figures for these groups statistically unreliable results for ethnic categories have been calculated using three years of data (2016 to 2018).

<sup>2</sup> The gap is calculated as the difference between the mean of the score of the lowest 20% and the median the score for all children, expressed as a percentage of the median score for all children.

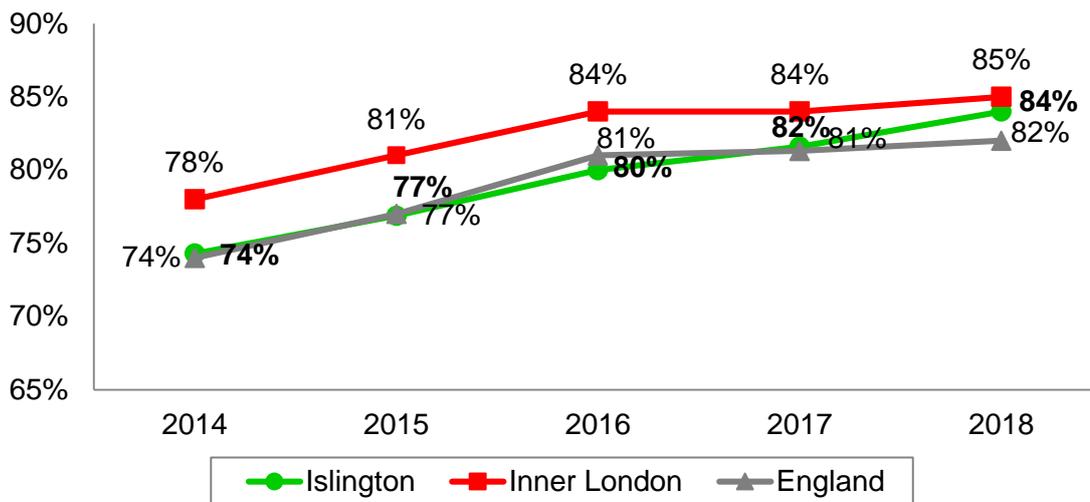
<sup>3</sup> Numbers of 2-year-olds taking up places is expressed as a percentage of the 2-year-old population eligible for funded early education.

## 4.2 Phonics

Year 1 outcomes in phonics have continued to improve. The proportion of 6 year olds meeting the required standard in 2018 rose by a further 2% points on 2017, putting the borough well above the national average and narrowing the gap with Inner London to just 1% point, for the first time.

Our local stretch target as set out in our equalities statement was for 85% of pupils at the end of Y1 to have achieved the expected standard by 2017 although missed last year, this target has effectively been met with a one-year delay.

**Chart 3: Pupils Passing the Phonics Decoding in Year 1**



Although the gap between the performance of FSM and Non-FSM pupils is slightly smaller than the national gap at 13 percentage points in 2018 (14% points nationally). The FSM gap is larger than the gap between EAL and fluent pupils; and between the sexes.

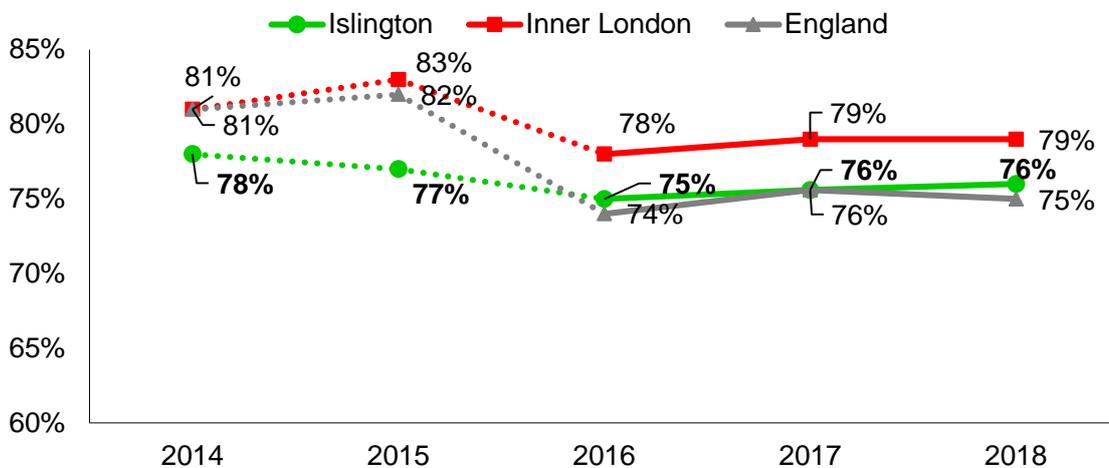
Pupils who did not take Year 1 phonics assessments or who failed it must take the test in Year 2 unless they are disapplied for reasons of SEND or non-fluency in English. In 2018, 92% of the borough's pupils were at the expected standard by the end of Year 2, the same as Inner London and England.

### 4.3 Key Stage 1

All Year 2 pupils (7 year olds) are assessed at the end of Key Stage 1. Their teacher assessments are moderated by the local authority to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Pupils were assessed against the new more challenging curriculum that was introduced in 2014 for the first time in 2016. The interim frameworks for teacher assessment have been used by teachers to assess if a pupil has met the new, higher expected standard. Because of these assessment changes, figures from 2016 are not comparable to those for earlier years and in the chart below the percentage achieving Level 2b or above is shown prior to 2016 as the best match with the new standard for the new curriculum.

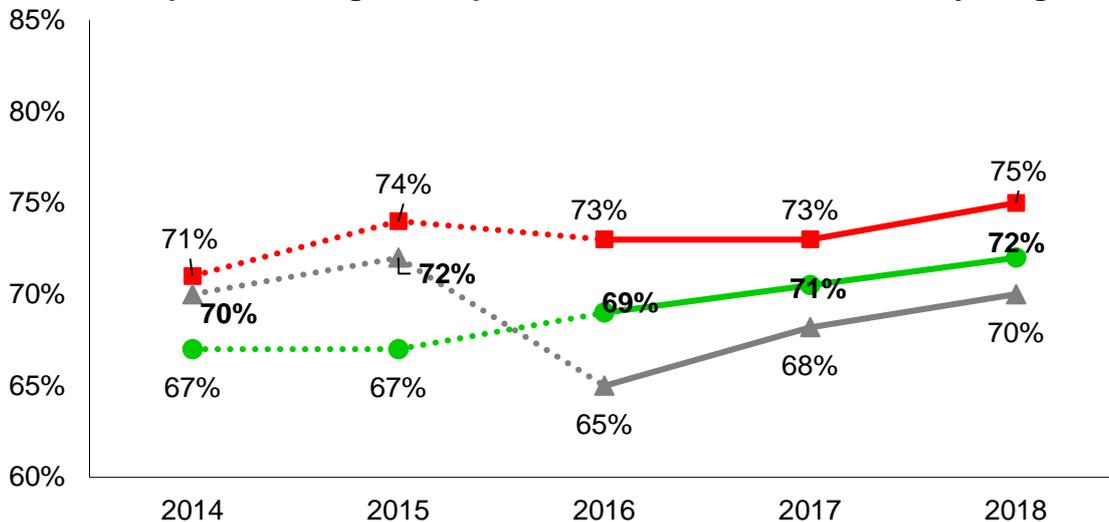
**Chart 4: Pupils reaching the Expected Standard or above in Key Stage 1 Reading**



Since 2016 the percentage of the borough's pupils at the expected standard for KS1 reading (76% in 2018) have either been above or the same as the national (see above).

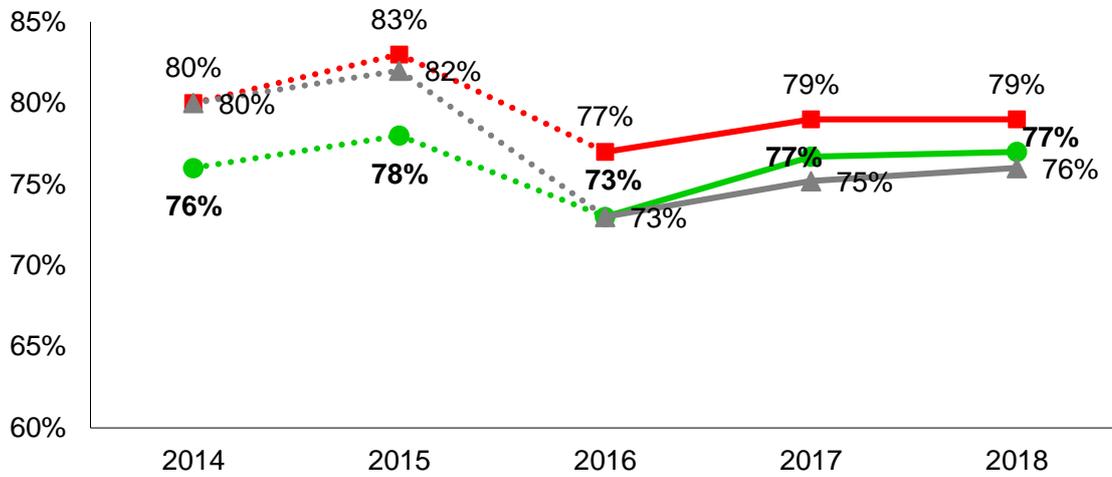
The equivalent figure for writing in 2018 (see below) was one percentage point higher than our 2017 rate and for the last two years has been better than national. Islington remains below Inner London in each year.

**Chart 5: Pupils reaching the Expected Standard or above in Key Stage 1 Writing**



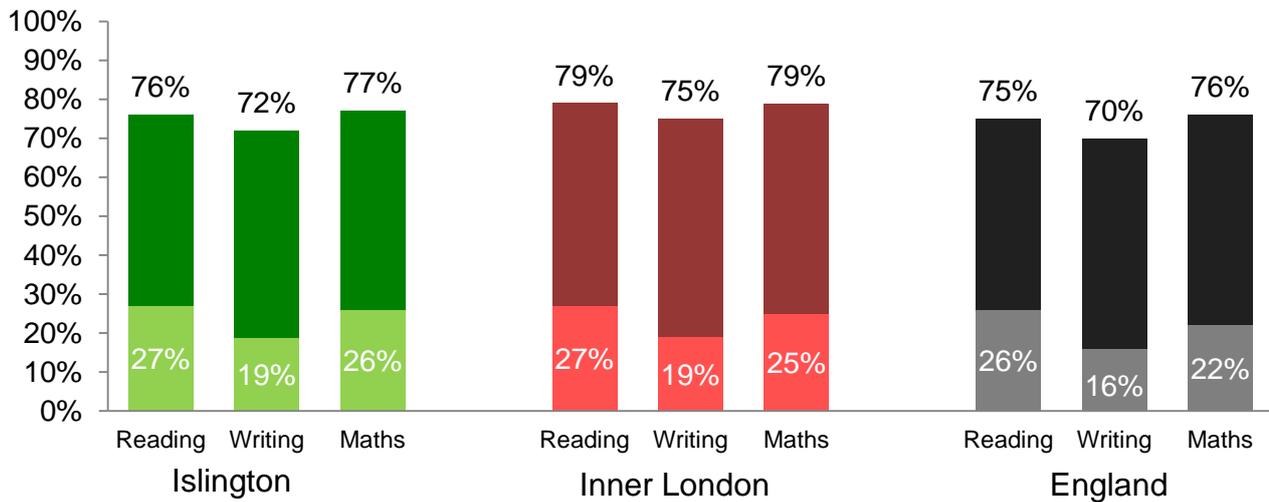
The proportion of Islington pupils gaining the expected standard for mathematics in 2018 was 4% points above the 2016 result; one point above the national; yet remains 2% points below Inner London (see Chart 6).

**Chart 6: Pupils reaching the Expected Standard or above in Key Stage 1 Mathematics**



The percentage of pupils in Islington schools at the higher standard of ‘Working at Greater Depth’ in 2018 was the same as the Inner London rate for reading and writing and one point above for maths. Islington’s rates for all three subjects were above the equivalent figures for national for all three subjects.

**Chart 7: KS1 Pupils reaching the expected standard or above and working at greater depth by subject in 2018\***



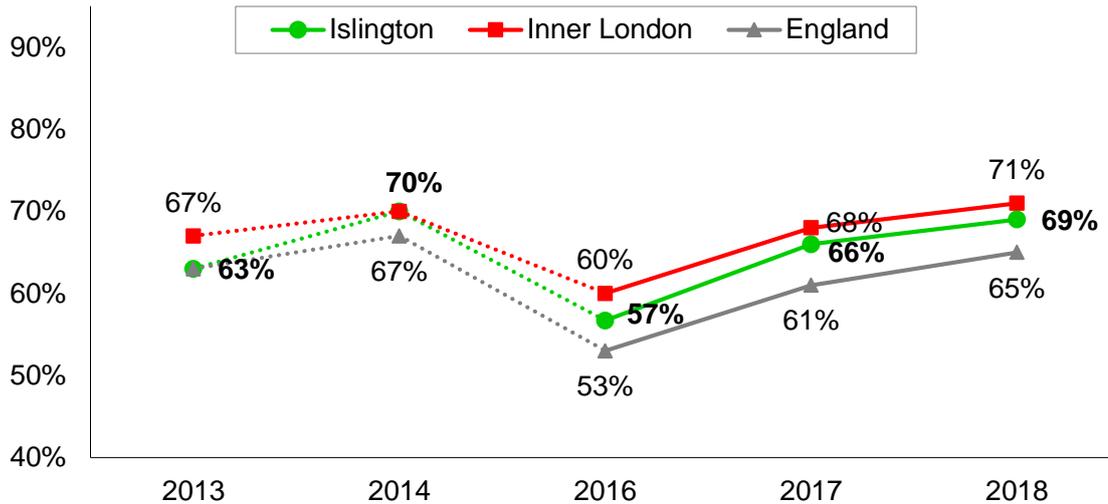
\*Note: darker shaded areas show the proportion at the expected standard and lighter areas show the proportion at greater depth

## 4.4 Key Stage 2

Year 6 pupils (11 year olds) are assessed at the end of key stage 2. The 2016 Year 6 cohort were the first to be assessed under the new national curriculum introduced in 2014, consequently figures from 2016 onwards are not comparable to those for earlier years.

In 2018, 69% of Islington pupils reached the expected standard in combined reading, writing and maths— 3% points above the previous year; and 4% points above national. Islington was in the top quartile for local authorities in England, despite being 2% points below Inner London average.

**Chart 8: KS2 Pupils reaching the expected standard or above in combined reading, writing and mathematics**



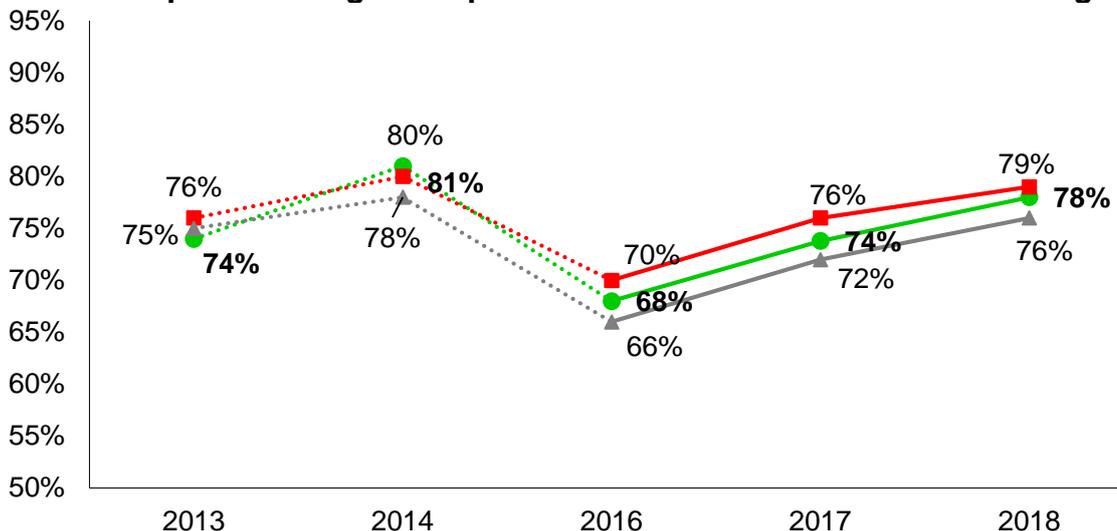
Note: Level 4B or above is shown as the most relevant benchmark for the years 2013 to 2015.

The Department for Education sets a “floor standard” for primary schools, to achieve a minimum level of attainment or expected progress. Since 2016 this was:

- at least 65% of pupils meet the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics; or
- the school achieves sufficient progress scores in all three subjects, at least -5 in reading and in mathematics and -7 in writing.

Islington is one of just 18 local authorities in England (14 are in London) – that had no primary schools below the floor for *all three years*. Nationally, 3% of primary schools were below the floor in 2018.

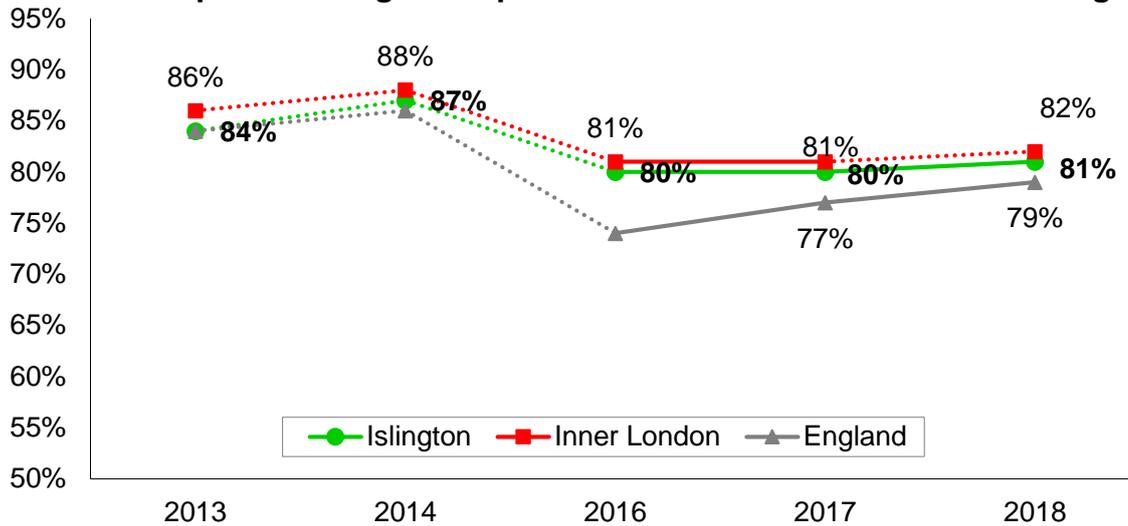
**Chart 9: Pupils reaching the expected standard or above in KS2 reading**



Islington’s reading test results have been 2 percentage points above the national since 2016 and 2 percentage points below the average for Inner London (see Chart 9 above).

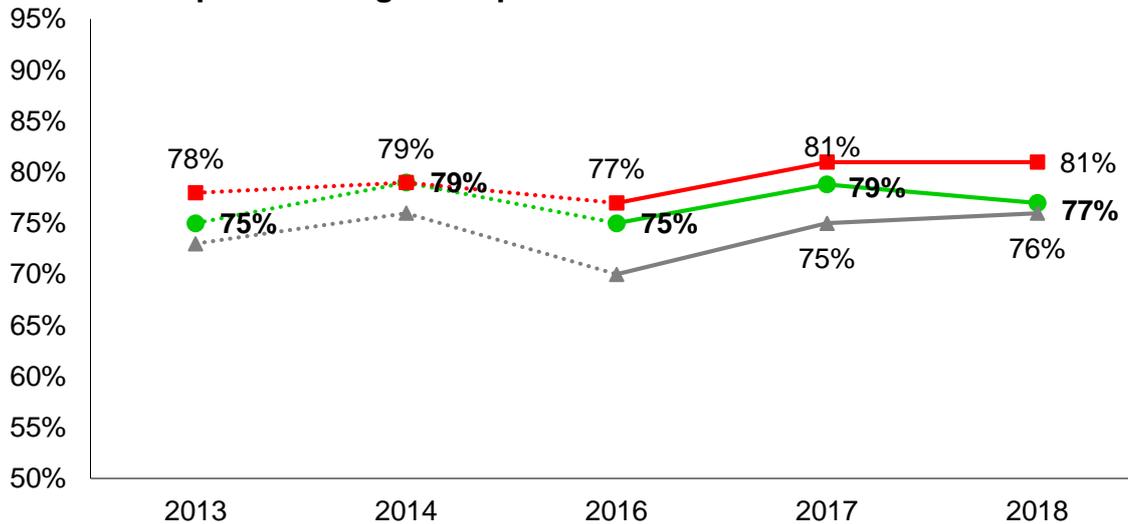
Unlike reading and maths, performance in KS2 writing is not tested, instead pupils are assessed during the year by their teacher. In 2018 both Islington’s and Inner London’s rates rose by 1 percentage point to 81% and 82% respectively while the national figure rose by two points to 79%.

**Chart 10: Pupils reaching the expected standard or above in KS2 writing**



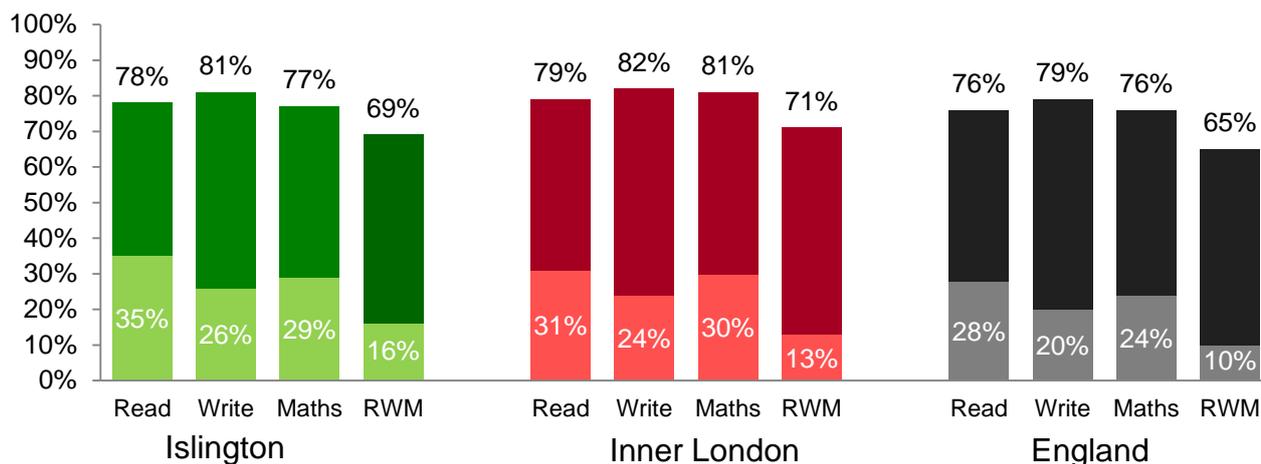
The results for maths in 2018 for the borough fell by 2 percentage points compared to 2017 putting Islington 4% points below the Inner London average and 1 point above the national.

**Chart 11: Pupils reaching the expected standard or above in KS2 mathematics**



In 2018, the proportion of children reaching a higher standard i.e. working at greater depth for their age (GDS) was above the national for reading by 7% points, writing by 6% points and mathematics by 5% points. Islington was above or near the Inner London average for all three subjects (See chart 12 below).

**Chart 12: Pupils reaching the expected standard or at greater depth 2018\***



\*Note: darker shaded areas show the proportion at the expected standard and lighter areas show the proportion at greater depth

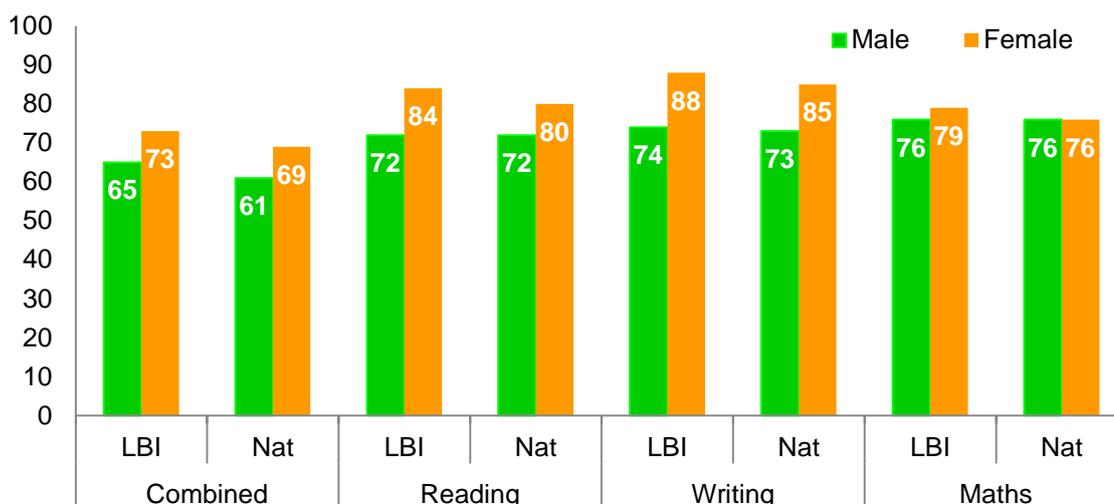
For the 2018 combined reading, writing and mathematics (RWM) benchmark, 16% of Islington pupils were working at great depth in all three subjects, which is above the rates for both England (10%) and also Inner London (13%). Our rank position was 6<sup>th</sup> best out of 152 local authorities in England<sup>4</sup>. Out of the 20 top performing local authorities for this measure 16 were in London.

### Key Stage 2 performance by pupil characteristics

Islington's girls outperformed their national counterparts in all three subjects and the combined benchmark. The authority's boys were level with boys nationally for reading and for maths and above their national peers for writing.

Girls perform better than boys both in the borough and nationally at the end of key stage 2 for reading and writing; and locally, also for maths (girls have outperformed boys at the expected level for maths in Islington since 2015). The gap is greater in Islington between girls and boys in reading and writing compared to the size of the national gap in these subjects.

**Chart 13: KS2: Percentage reaching the expected standard by subject and gender in 2018**

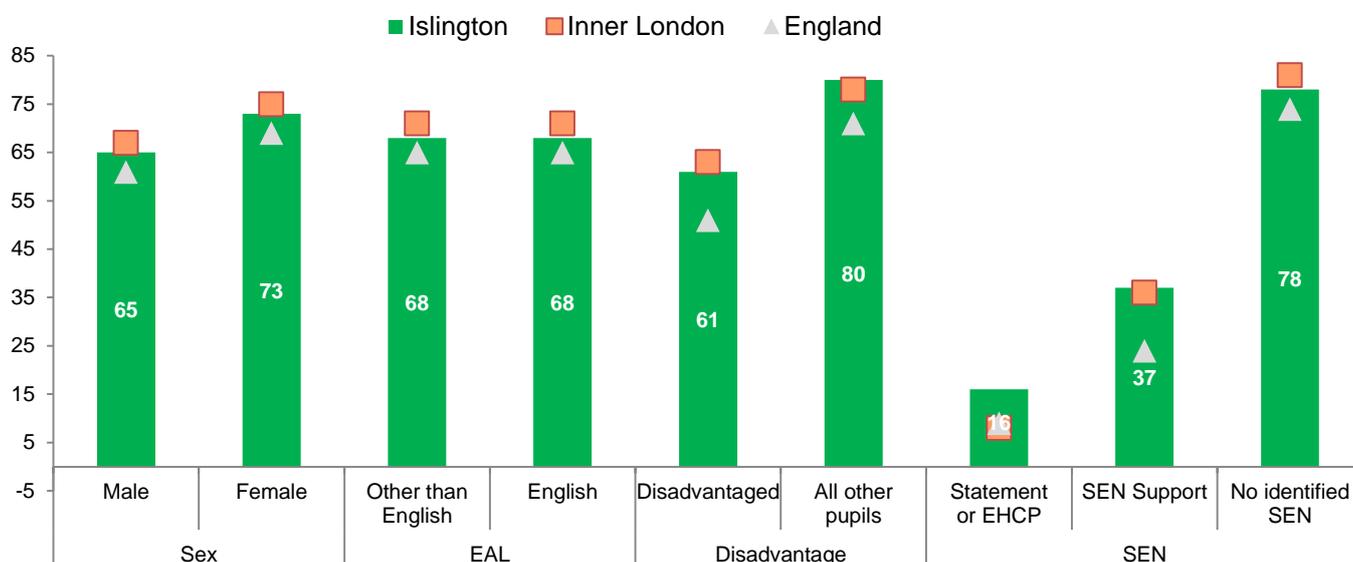


Looking at how boys and girls perform at the higher level for the combined measure we see that 14% of boys in the borough got GDS for all three subjects compared to 11% in Inner London and 8% nationally putting us among the top 10% of LA's in the country for this measure. For girls the

<sup>4</sup> Along with 4 other English local authorities

Islington figure was 17% compared to 15% and 12% respectively putting the authority in the top 5 percentile in England.

**Chart 14: % at the expected standard in KS2 Combined RWM by pupil characteristics 2018**



The attainment of disadvantaged pupils<sup>5</sup> in Islington schools for the combined measure was in the top 13<sup>th</sup> percentile for England. The performance of Islington's non-disadvantaged pupils for this measure was in the top 5<sup>th</sup> percentile for England and 21<sup>st</sup> percentile for Inner London

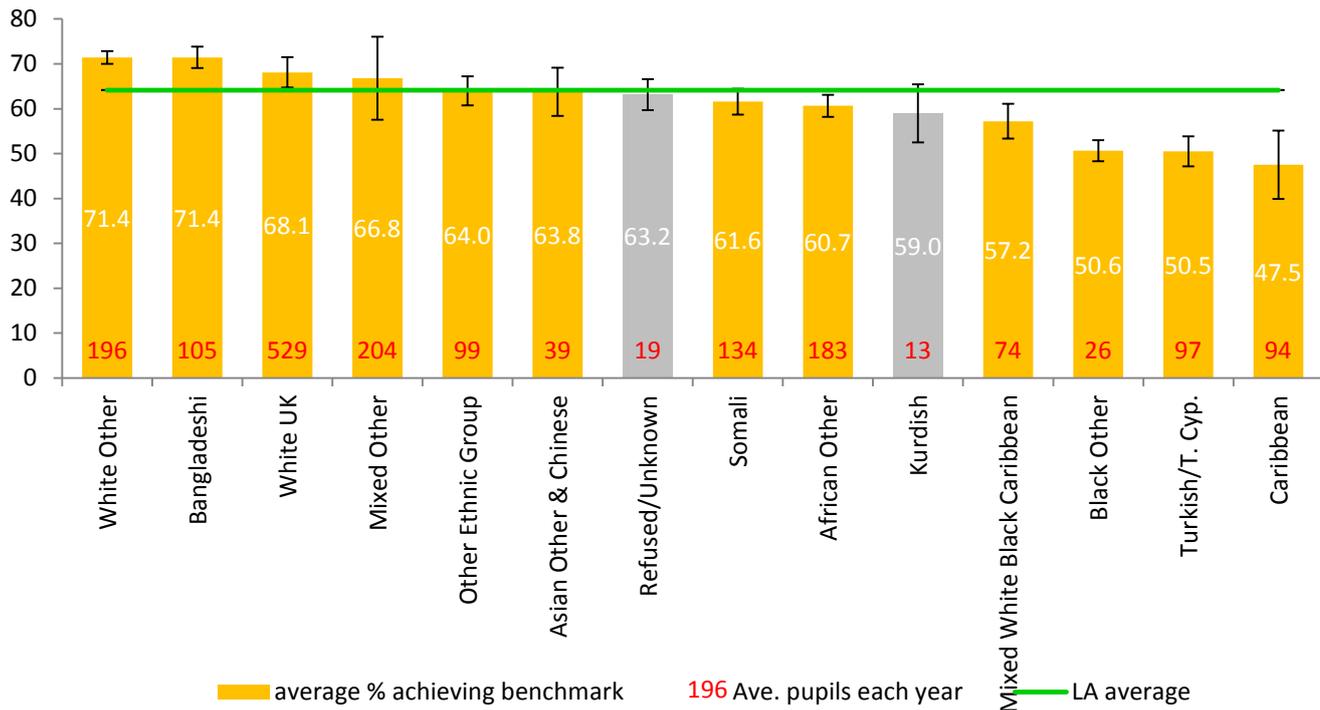
The attainment of Islington pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), at 16% was higher than Inner London (12%) and England (9%), the equivalent scores for SEN support pupils was 37% for the borough, 36% for Inner London and 24% for England. The performance of non-SEN pupils in Islington was lower than Inner London (78% compared to 81%) but higher than that for England (74%).

In recent years, the performance of all local ethnic groups has improved, in each of the three key subjects of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Given the small size of some ethnic categories, 3-year averages are often used to look at performance by broken by ethnicity (see Chart 15 below). The green line shows the three year average performance for the borough as a whole.

Note: all groups with less than 100 pupils 2016 to 2018 combined have been shaded grey. The confidence intervals for these groups show we can be 95% certain that White Other, Bangladeshi and White UK groups were significantly above the LA average while Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Black Other, Turkish/Turkish Cypriot and Caribbean pupils were performing below the 3-year LA average performance.

<sup>5</sup> The DfE, define pupils as disadvantaged if they are known to have been eligible for free school meals in the past six years, if they are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day or as having been adopted from care.

**Chart 15: 2016 -18 average: % of pupils reaching the KS2 expected standard by ethnicity**



## Children Looked After Attainment at Key Stage 2

Due to the small cohort size (fewer than 10 pupils), the percentage of Islington children who were looked after continuously for at least 12 months (known as the 'OC2 cohort') and achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths was not published in 2018.

One pupil's results have a much larger impact on the overall attainment of the CLA group than on the all-Islington and national CLA figures. This means that results will vary from one year to the next regardless of the quality of the provision and so do not provide a good basis for statistical comparison year on year or between boroughs.

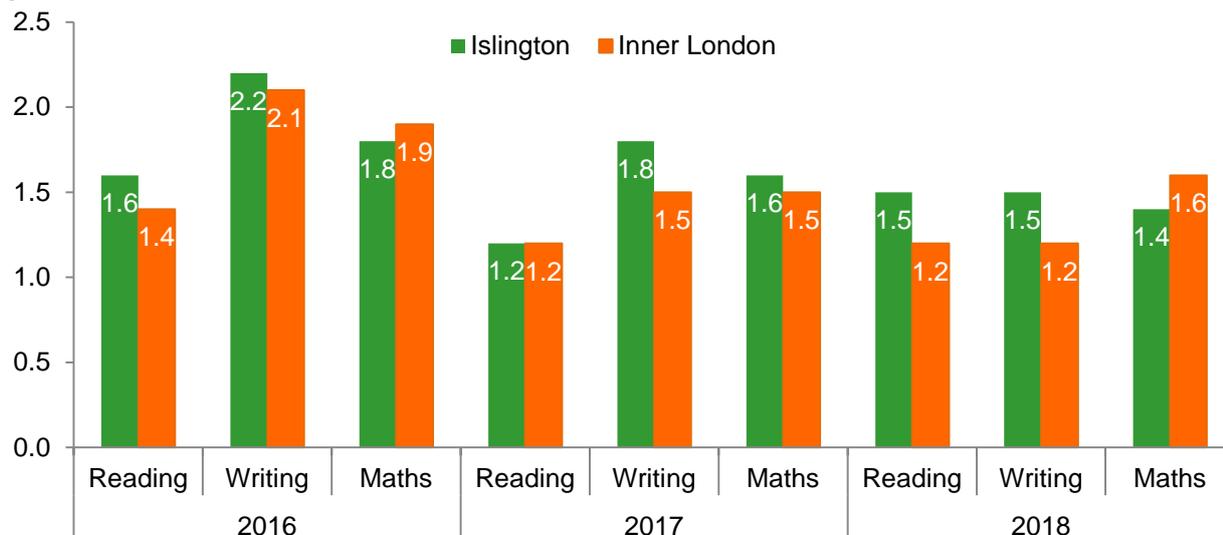
## 4.5 Progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

In 2016, the previous progress benchmarks were replaced by relative progress measures that include the progress most pupils<sup>6</sup> make from the end of key stage 1 to the end of primary school.

Progress scores are presented as positive or negative numbers. A score of zero means that pupils in a school made the same progress as those with similar prior attainment at Key Stage 1 nationally. A positive score means that they made more progress than those with similar prior attainment; a negative score means they made less progress than pupils with similar starting points nationally.

<sup>6</sup> Pupils with no prior attainment or (in the case of pupils who fail a test but have been given a relatively high TA) no end point assessment are excluded from the progress analysis.

**Chart 16: Pupil progress scores between KS1 and KS2 (aged 7 to 11) by subject in 2016 to 2018**



In 2018 the progress of Islington pupils was above the national rate. The borough’s scores were better than the Inner London averages in two of the three core subjects in 2017 (reading and writing). Progress for both Islington and Inner London fell in 2017 and again in 2018.

Islington’s disadvantaged pupils made more progress than disadvantaged pupils made nationally in all three subjects, and progress was higher than that for Inner London for reading and writing although not for maths.

#### 4.6 Key Stage 4 (GCSE and equivalent)

The new accountability system<sup>7</sup> for secondary schools started in 2016. The main measures for schools now are: Attainment 8, Progress 8, attainment in English and maths, English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry and achievement, and the destinations of pupils after key stage 4. In 2017 and 2018 the grading system for most GCSEs were changed from A\* to G to a numerical grading system (9 – 1).

**Attainment 8 (A8)** measures the achievement of pupils for up to 8 of each pupil’s best grades for certain qualifications. The eight qualifications must include:

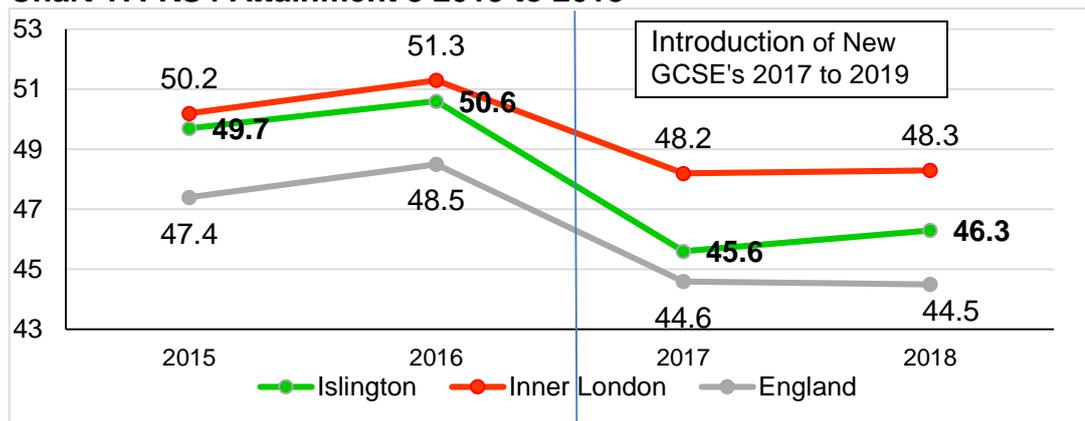
- mathematics (double weighted);
- highest English grade (double weighted if both Language and Literature were sat);
- Up to 3 qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure (known as the ‘Ebacc Slots’) and
- Up to 3 qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications not already counted or vocational qualifications from the DfE approved list (known as the ‘Open Slots’).

Because of the change in the grading of English and maths GCSEs, the A8 score for Islington fell by 5 points from 2016 to 2017, to 45.6. This was still above the national rate (44.6) but below the Inner London average of 48.2 points.

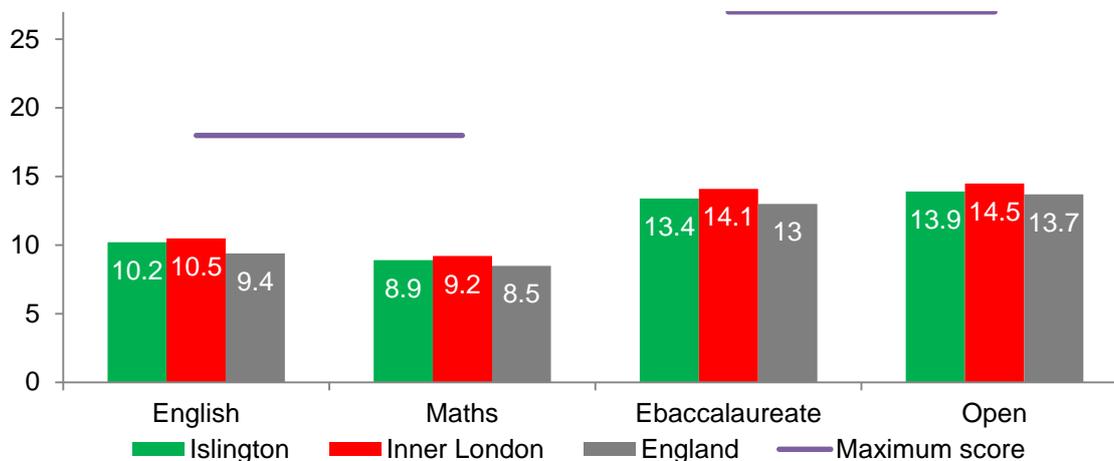
In 2018 Islington’s A8 results rose to 46.3 from 45.6, while those for both Inner London and England hardly changed.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

**Chart 17: KS4 Attainment 8 2015 to 2018**



**Chart 18: KS4 2018: Average score per pupil in each element of Attainment 8**



Average scores per pupil were below Inner London but above England for English, mathematics and the Ebacc subjects.

**Progress 8 (P8)** is the main accountability measure for secondary school performance. It is calculated as the difference between each pupil's A8 score and the national average A8 score of pupils who ended primary school with a similar key stage 2 average point score. The figures are small but are important. For example, a score of +0.5 means that, on average, assessments in a pupil's A8 score were half a grade higher than the national average of pupils with similar end of KS2 grades.

In 2018, Islington's P8 score was 0.15 (an increase on the 2017 figure of 0.13). The borough was in the top quintile for England (29 out of 151) for this standard which was well above the rate for England (-0.02)<sup>8</sup>. The Inner London P8 score dropped to 0.19 in 2018 compared to 0.21 in 2017 and so the gap between the borough and Inner London was halved (from 0.8 in 2017 to 0.4 in 2018).

Schools with a 'Progress 8' score of less than -0.5 where the upper boundary of the 95% confidence interval is below zero are deemed to be below the floor<sup>9</sup>. One Islington secondary school was below the new floor standard in 2018 (all were above the floor standards for 2015 through to 2017).

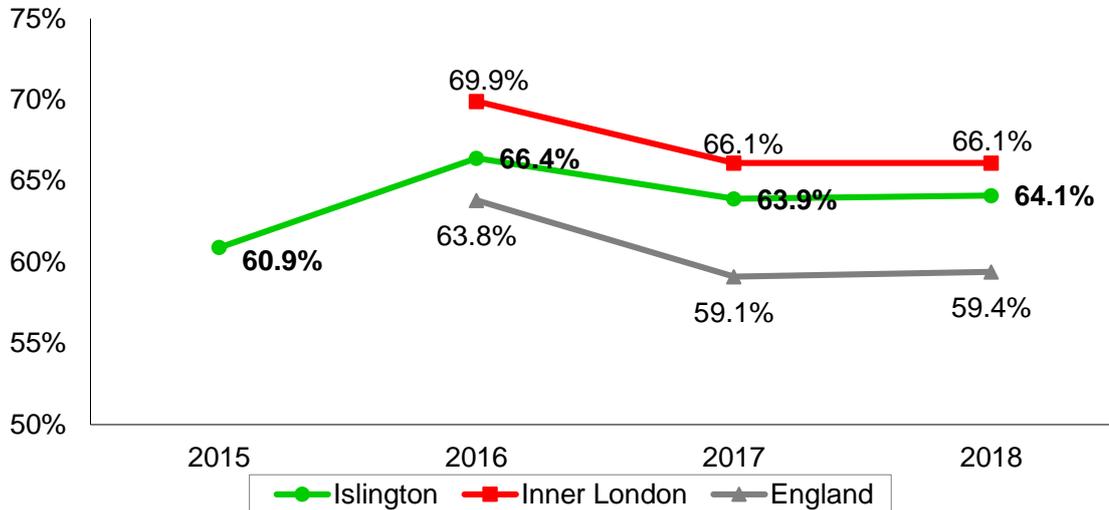
<sup>8</sup> This figure is for state maintained schools in England only. The DfE does not published national Progress 8 figures all schools in England.

<sup>9</sup> DfE: Progress 8 measure in 2016, 2017 & 2018 Guide for maintained secondary schools academies and free schools January 2016

## English and Mathematics passes

This new measure looks at the percentage of pupils achieving grades 9 to 4 in both English (literature or language) and maths, known as a 'standard pass' and also those that passed at grades 9 to 5, known as a 'strong pass'.

**Chart 19: KS4: Percentage of pupils passing the 'English and maths standard' benchmark**



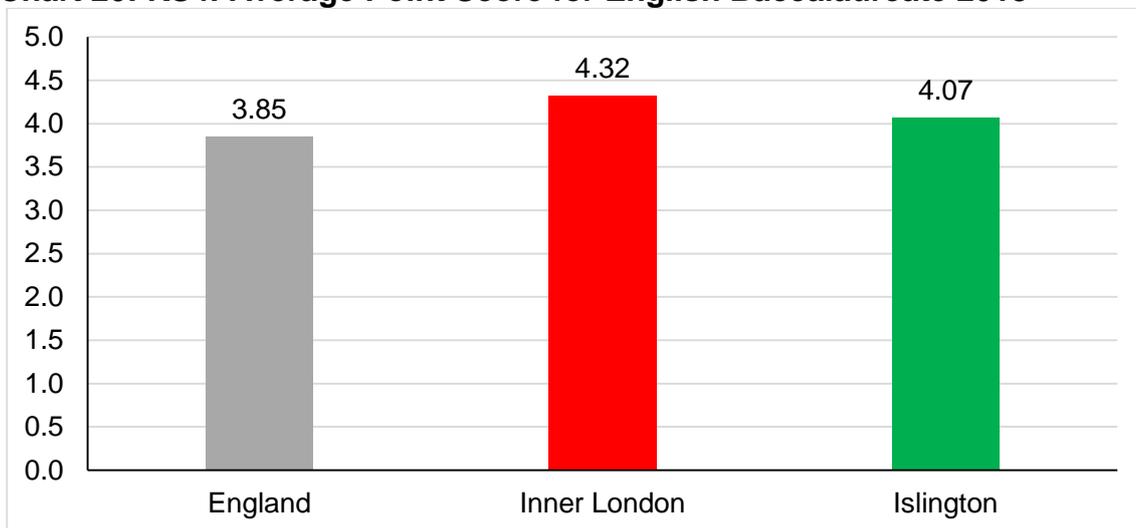
Please note: Local data has been used to calculate 2015 performance.

Islington pupils' 2018 performance was 0.2 of a percentage point above that for 2017. Inner London's figure for 2018 was unchanged on the previous year at 66.1 and the England figure for 2018, at 59.4, was a rise of 0.3 on the previous year. The DfE also published the proportion that passed at 5+. These figures show Islington at 44.2%, Inner London at 46.4%, and England at 40.2%. For this more challenging benchmark Islington is above the national average if below the Inner London average.

## English Baccalaureate

In July 2017 the DfE announced plans to change the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) benchmark from the percentage gaining a grade or above for all elements to an average point score (APS) for all pupils entered for the EBacc. In 2018, Islington's EBacc APS was below that for Inner London but above England.

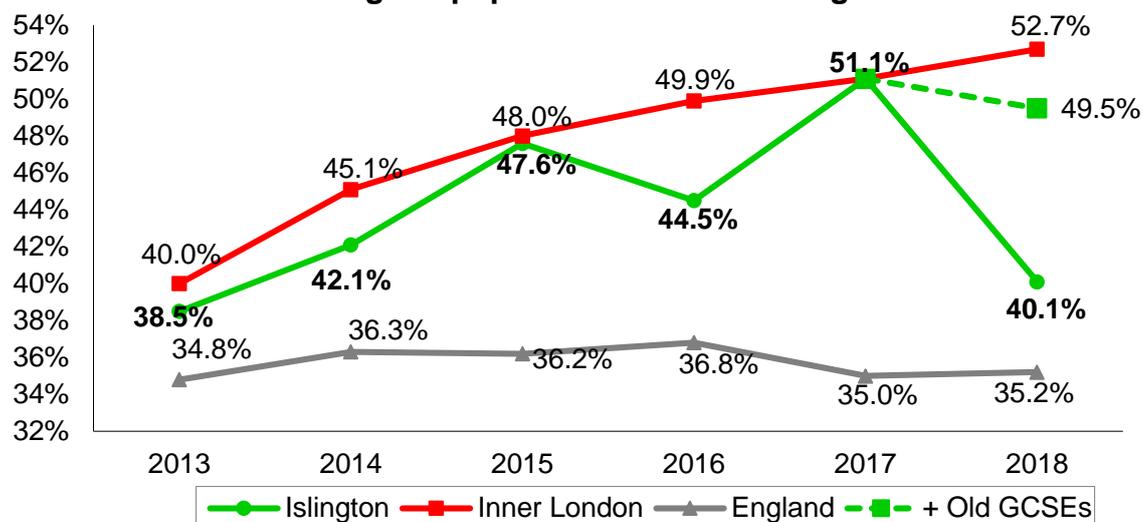
**Chart 20: KS4: Average Point Score for English Baccalaureate 2018**



The proportion of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) rose in 2017 to reach the Inner London average only to fall in 2018 by 11 percentage points. The main reason for this decline (accounting for almost 10 percentage points) was that old style 'A\* to G' GCSEs taken by pupils in Year 10 in 2017 were excluded from the DfE performance tables in 2018. This gives us confidence that the 2019 results will *bounce back* to around the Inner London average for this measure. The green dotted line in Chart 21 below shows what Islington's results would have been if the DfE had allowed old GCSEs taken in Year 10 to be included in the Year 11 results.

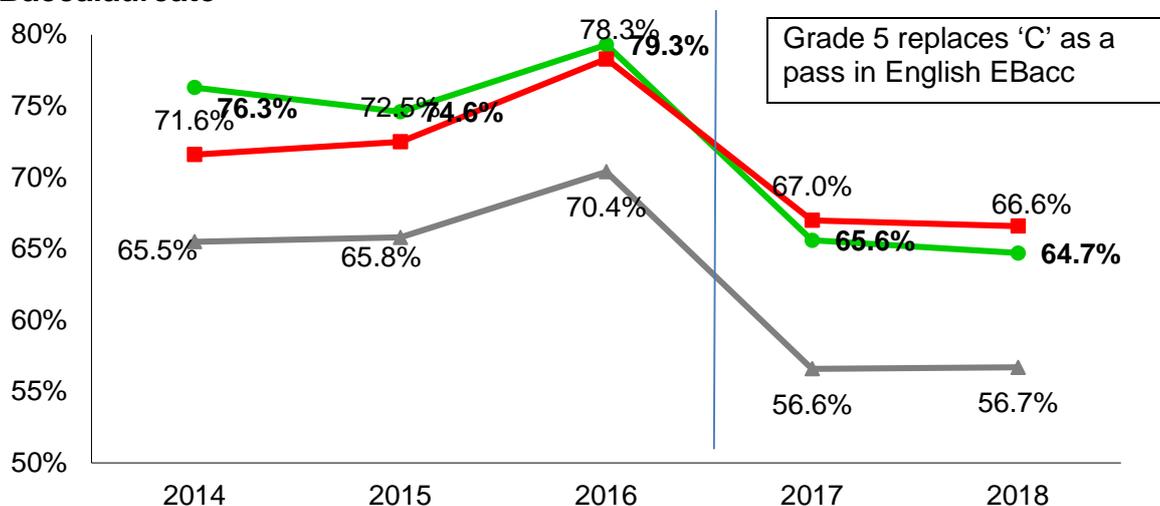
Of the five elements of the EBacc: English, maths, science, a language and history or geography, languages were the area with the lowest rate of entry (less than half of pupils) followed by history or geography with less than three quarters of pupils being entered for either of these GCSEs.

**Chart 21: KS4 Percentage of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate**



Pupils had to achieve a grade '5' or above to pass the English component of the EBacc from 2017 which is more challenging than the previous 'C' grade. Because of this the proportion of passes have fallen nationally and locally for this element of the EBacc. In 2018 Islington's pass rate was about 2% points below Inner London despite the being 8% points above national.

**Chart 22: KS4: Percentage of pupils who passed the English part of the English Baccalaureate<sup>10</sup>**

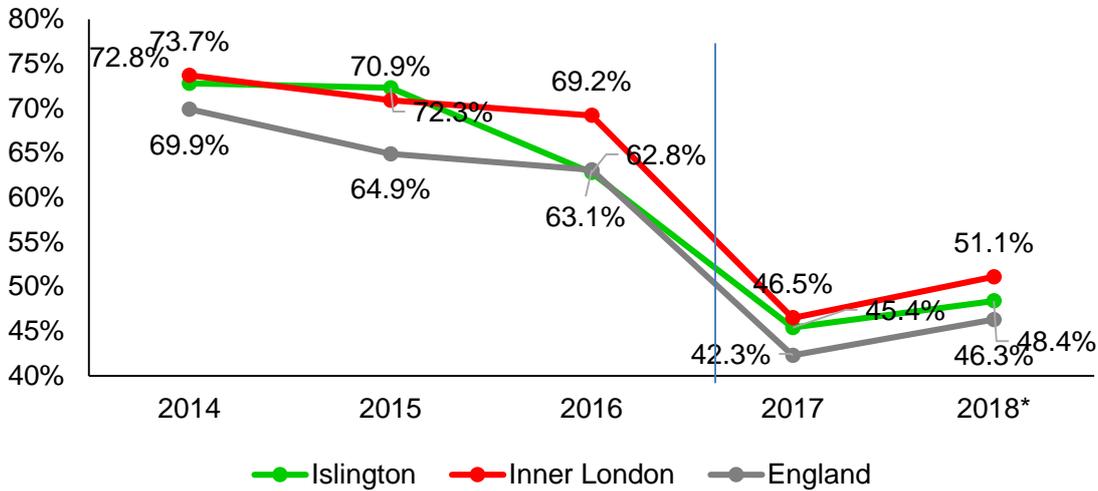


<sup>10</sup> To pass the English element of the English Baccalaureate from 2017, a pupil must be entered for both English language and English literature GCSEs and achieve a grade at 5 or above in either: of these subjects.

## Mathematics

As with English, pupils needed to achieve the new mathematics GCSE at grade '5+' to pass this element of the EBacc. Islington's 2018 pass rate (48.4) was below that for Inner London (51.1) but above the national rate (46.3)

**Chart 23: KS4: Percentage of pupils who passed the mathematics part of the English Baccalaureate**



## Coasting schools

A new 'coasting' definition was introduced in 2016, with schools identified as 'coasting' eligible for Government intervention. In 2018, the definition applies to secondary schools that from 2016 to 2018 the school has a Progress 8 score below -0.25 and the upper limit of the 95% confidence interval was below zero.

No Islington schools were coasting in 2018.

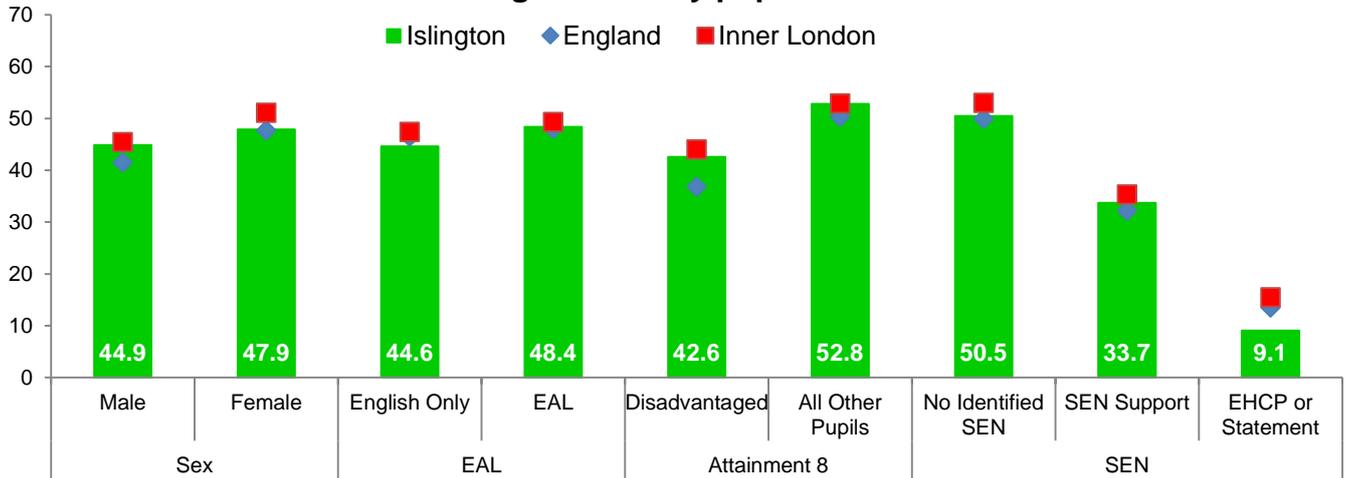
## Future Changes to GCSE grading

GCSE results in English and mathematics were published using a 9-1 scale in 2017, taking the place of the A\*-G grading system, where the border between 3 and 4 is the same as the border between the grades 'D' & 'C' and the border between 6 and 7 is the same as the border between the 'B' and 'A' grades. In the summer of 2018, most other GCSEs moved over to the new scale and in 2019 all GCSEs will be assessed against the new scale with performance (and progress) weighted towards the higher end of achievement.

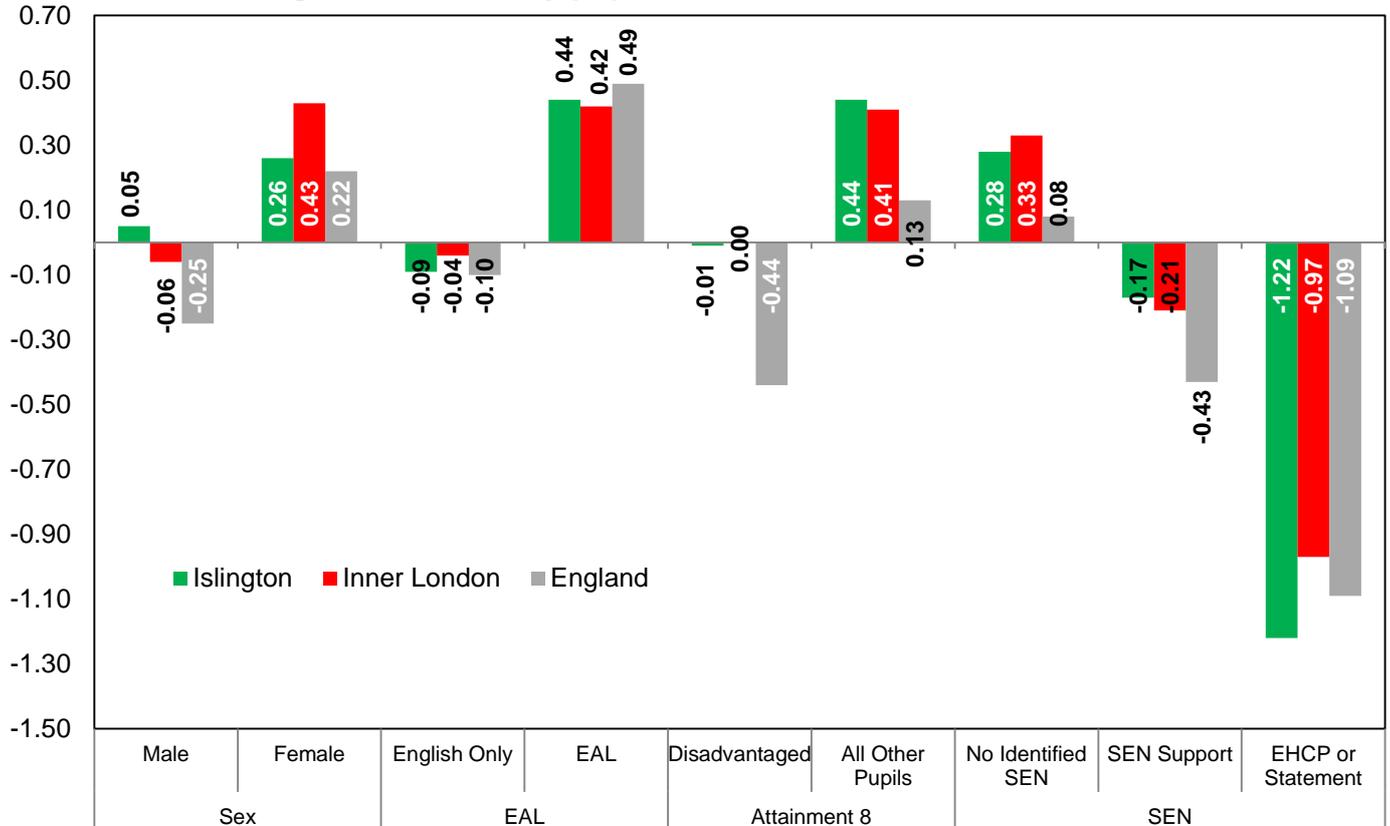
## GCSE and equivalent performance by pupil characteristics

The 2018 results of disadvantaged pupils<sup>11</sup> attending Islington secondary schools are in the top eighth of LA's in England. In 2018, disadvantaged pupils achieved an Attainment 8 score of 42.6 on average, which is well above England (36.8) but below Inner London (44.0). Islington's figures were above the national performance for all groups except: non-EAL pupils, and 'SEND EHC plan/Statemented'. Islington was below Inner London for all groups. The largest difference was for the smallest group 'SEND EHC' pupils.

**Chart 24: KS4: Attainment 8 average scores by pupil characteristics in 2018**



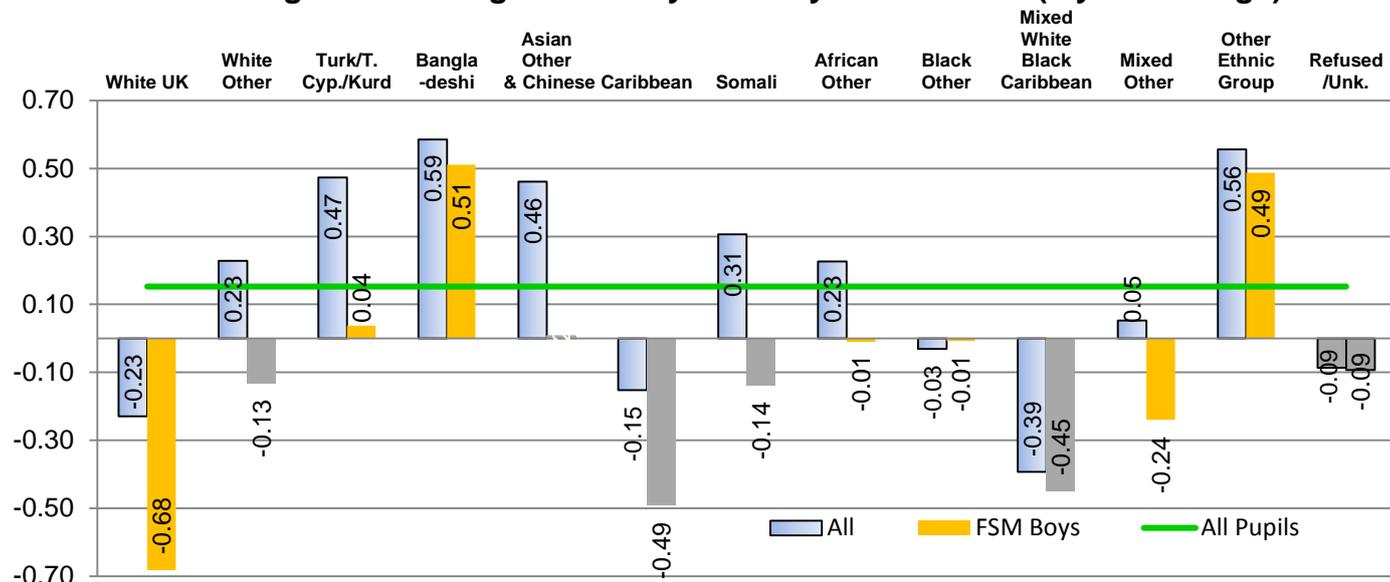
**Chart 25: KS4: Progress 8 scores by pupil characteristics in 2018**



<sup>11</sup> The DfE, define pupils as disadvantaged if they are known to have been eligible for free school meals in the past six years, if they are recorded as having been looked after for at least one day or known to have been adopted from care.

Boys and girls, disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, non-EAL pupils and those at SEN support and without SEN all had higher Progress 8 scores than their peers nationally. Further, the Progress 8 score of Islington’s disadvantaged pupils (at -0.01) was better than the Progress 8 score for all pupils in England attending state schools (-0.02) and not significantly different from progress of pupils nationally based on individual prior attainment. Out of all the groups, only SEND pupils with an EHCP made less progress than EHCP pupils nationally and significantly less progress than pupils with similar prior attainment nationally (i.e. baseline at zero).

**Chart 26: KS4 Progress 8 average scores by ethnicity 2016 to 2018 (3-year average)**



Please note: P8 figures based on small numbers are coloured grey and must be treated with caution

During the three years of the new accountability framework, the lowest performing ethnic groups are similar to previous years; with Mixed White and Black Caribbean’ pupils having the lowest Progress 8 scores, followed by ‘White UK’ pupils and then ‘Black Caribbean’ pupils. ‘Black Other’ and pupils with ‘Refused/Unknown’ for ethnicity also had a negative Progress 8 score.

Of the larger groups above average progress was made by ‘Bangladeshi’ pupils (0.59) ‘Other Ethnic Groups’<sup>12</sup> (0.56) and there continues to be good progress among the results for Somali pupils whose performance have really improved over the last 5 years at GCSE (0.31 Progress 8 in 2018).

‘White British’ boys eligible for free school meals make the least progress compared to all pupils with a similar starting point (-0.68 Progress 8 for 2016 to 2018 combined). This reflects the national picture with the 2016 to 2018 average Progress 8 for FSM boys (all ethnicities) at -0.49 (compared to -0.03 locally).

Islington Council has equalities indicators and targets to place a greater emphasis on narrowing gaps in educational outcomes for pupils in our schools.

<sup>12</sup> This group is mainly composed of pupils categorised as having a North African, Middle Eastern or Latin American ethnicity.

## Children Looked After Attainment at Key Stage 4

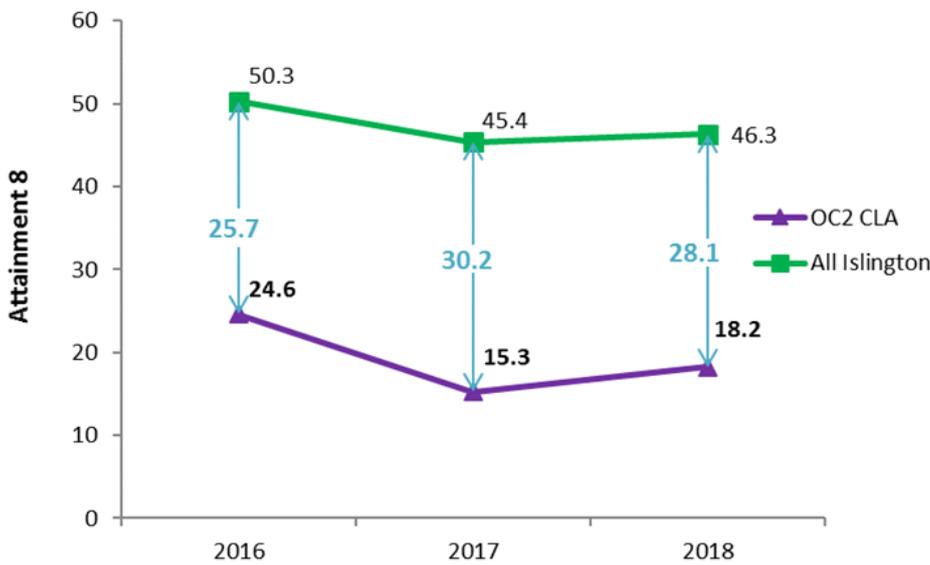
The average Attainment 8 score for Islington children looked after (continuously for at least 12 months) was 18.2 in 2018. The average Progress 8 score for looked after children was -1.1.

**Table 1: Children looked after Attainment 8 at Key Stage 4**

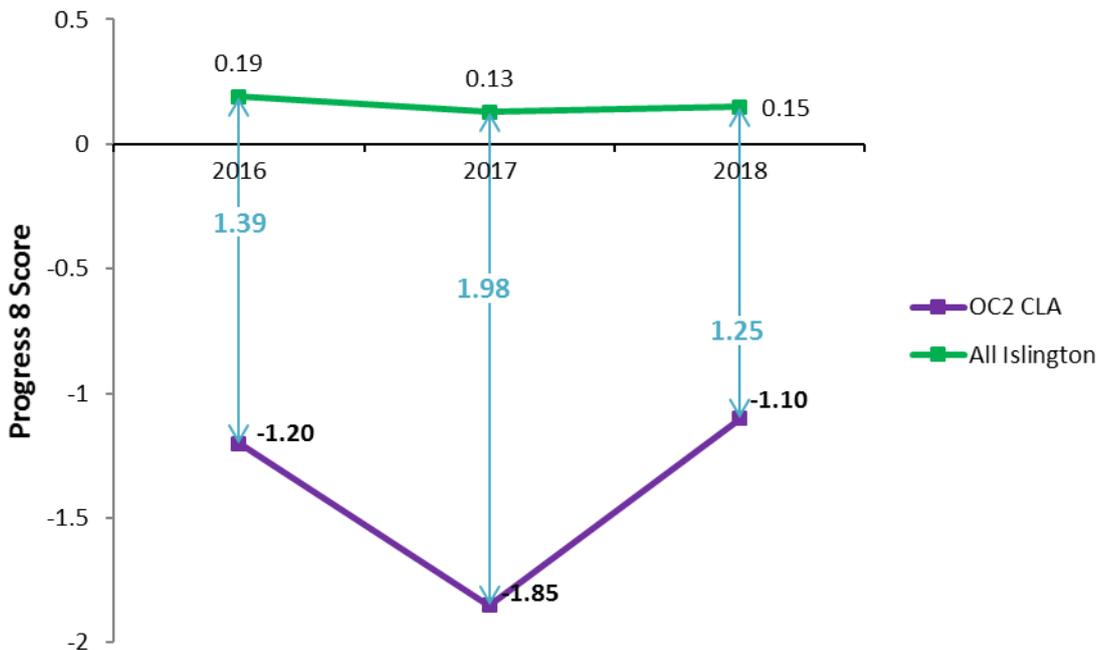
	2016		2017		2018	
	A8	P8	A8	P8	A8	P8
<b>ISLINGTON CLA</b>	22.1	-1.31	15.25	-1.85	18.2	-1.1
<b>Nat CLA</b>	22.8	-1.14	19.3	-1.18	18.9	-1.2
<b>Difference</b>	-0.7	-0.17	-4.05	-0.67	-0.7	+0.1

Source data: 2016 2017 2018 DfE SFRs

**Chart 27: Attainment 8 Gap between Islington CLA and all Islington pupils**



**Chart 28: Progress 8 Gap between Islington CLA and all Islington pupils**



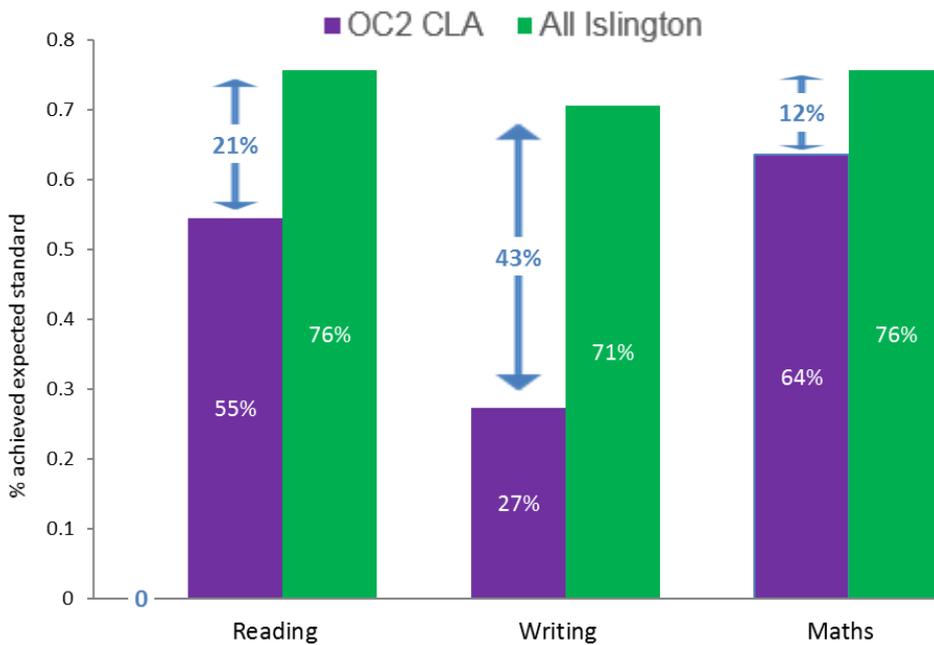
Source: 2016, 2017 2018 DfE SFRs

## Children Looked After Attainment at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

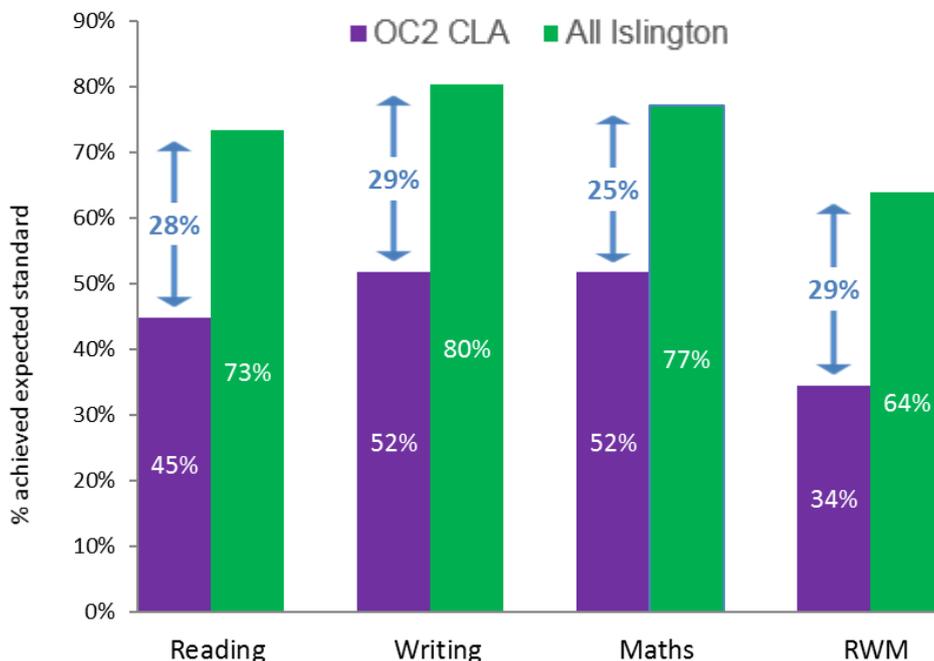
The following charts show the attainment gap between Islington CLA and all Islington pupils as an average over the past three years (2016, 2017 and 2018 results).

Due to the small cohort size (averaging at 10 pupils or fewer each year), individual pupils' results have a much greater weighting on overall attainment than the all-Islington and national CLA figures. This means that results can vary from year to year, which also means that comparisons over time of Islington CLA outcomes cannot be made unless adjusted for.

**Chart 29: Islington CLA achieving expected standard or above at Key Stage 1 compared to All Islington pupils: 3 year average 2016-2018**



**Chart 30: Islington CLA achieving expected standard or above at Key Stage 2 compared to All Islington pupils: 3 year average 2016-2018**



**Chart 31: Islington CLA progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 compared to All Islington pupils: 3 year average 2016-2018**



## 4.6 Progress in Special Schools

Islington has four outstanding special schools that cater for a wide range of needs. All four schools have both primary and secondary departments.

- The Bridge mainly provides for children with autistic spectrum conditions;
- Richard Cloudesley provides for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties;
- Samuel Rhodes mainly provides for children with moderate learning difficulties.
- The Integrated Learning Space (ILS) provides for children with severe learning difficulties and/or autism and accompanying challenging behaviour.

Two free schools for children with special educational needs are also located in Islington:

- The Courtyard School for young people with a diagnosis of autism spectrum condition and/or speech, language and communication needs, aged 14-19 – rated as ‘Good’ by Ofsted;
- The Family School, a therapeutic Alternative Provision (AP) school specialising in providing short-term placements for students with complex needs between the ages of 5 and 14, rated as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.

Special schools use a range of assessment tools to measure the attainment of their pupils. These tools need to be sufficiently granular to identify small steps in children’s progress and so have finer scoring than those used to measure progress of children without SEND. Special schools also measure progress against qualitative outcomes as set out a child’s Education Health and Care Plan, for example ‘*Preparing for Adulthood*’ outcomes - (Employment, Community Inclusion, Independent Living and Health).

In their most recent inspection reports Ofsted had the following to say about our special schools:

“The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is highly effective. Staff work very effectively to plan interesting activities that motivate pupils to learn exceptionally well. Pupils achieve extremely well because of the excellent care and support they receive.”

***The Bridge, 2017 Ofsted report***

“As a result of [this] detailed planning and assessment, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are particularly strong, with the vast majority of pupils meeting their targets, and some exceeding them. The quality of learning in the pupils’ folders is extremely high, and shows a relentless drive for high standards.” ***Richard Cloudesley, 2017 Ofsted letter***

“Pupils make at least good and often rapid progress from their low starting points.”

***Samuel Rhodes, 2017 Ofsted report***

“All pupils...make substantial progress. Pupils, including those who need to catch up, develop excellent English and mathematics skills across the curriculum.” ***ILS, 2017 Ofsted Report***

“Teachers and teaching assistants are focused on meeting the needs of all pupils, academically and personally. As a result, pupils achieve well, particularly in reading and mathematics.”

***The Courtyard, 2017 Ofsted Report***

“Pupils and their families benefit from high-quality therapeutic care and teaching, within a nurturing, safe learning environment. Therapists and teaching staff are passionate about their work and the impact they have on pupils’ well-being and achievement.”

***The Family School, 2017 Ofsted***

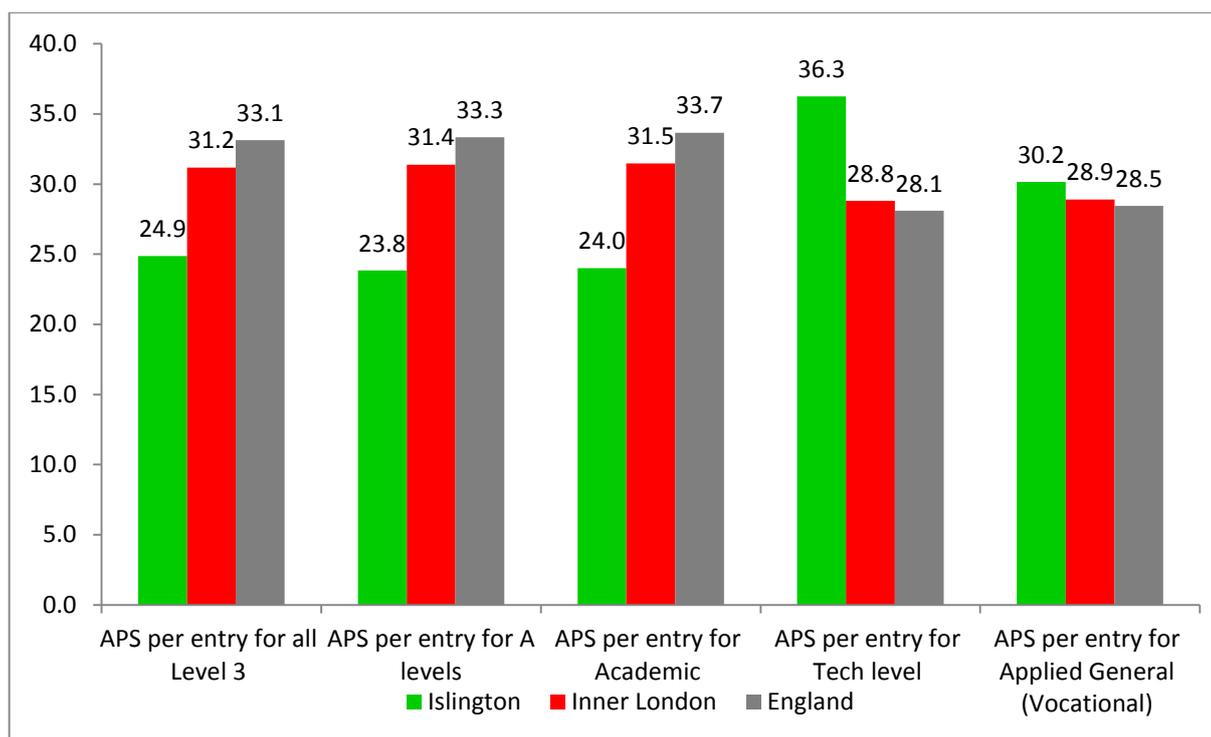
## 4.7 Key Stage 5 – A levels and equivalents

In 2017-18 Islington's post 16 provision consisted of four maintained secondary schools that comprise the Islington sixth form consortium (IC6), two academies: City of London Academy Islington and St Mary Magdalene Academy, one post 16 free school: Tech City College, one independent school and one FE college.

The attainment measure shows the APS per entry, expressed as a grade and points. It builds on the existing attainment measures by showing separate points and grades for all level 3 qualifications combined, academic qualifications, including a separate result specifically for A levels, tech level qualifications (vocational qualifications that focus on hands-on practical training and generally take two years to complete) and applied general qualifications (vocational qualifications that have a broader area of study and generally take one year to complete).

Islington has an 8.2 average point score difference with national and a 6.3 average point score difference with Inner London for all level 3 qualifications. The difference in average point scores per entries at A levels is 9.5 with England and 7.5 with Inner London. Islington average point score per entry is higher for entries for technical qualifications, at 8.2 points above the national APS per entry and 7.5 above Inner London. See chart 32 below.

**Chart 32: KS5 Average point score per entry comparison by category**



Islington's score for Average Point Score (APS) per entry - Best 3, when converted to a grade is a 'C' which is below the national average of a 'C+'. At individual school level, four of Islington schools have a 'C+' grade in line with the national average.

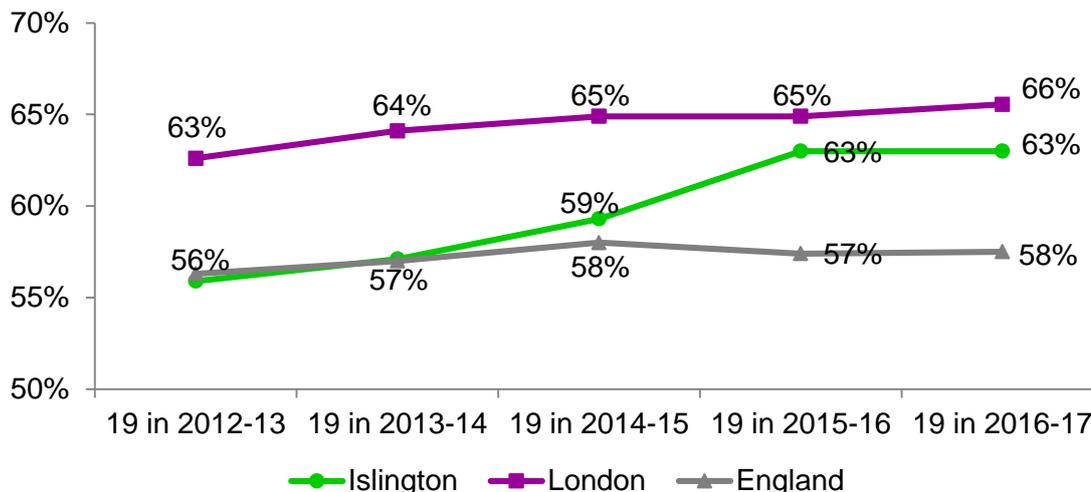
The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level at Islington schools is 7% compared to the national rate of 21%. The percentage of students achieving grades AAB or better at A level subjects of which two are facilitating subjects, at Islington schools is at 5.1%, compared to the national rate of 16.2%.

The percentages of students achieving 3 A\*-A grades or better at A level at Islington schools is 2.8% compared to 12.9% nationally.

#### 4.8 KS5: Qualifications by age 19

The Level 3 by 19 measure looks at students who were in Islington schools in Year 11 and then at their attainment level by the time they are aged 19. Attainment at Level 3 equates to the achievement of 2 or more A-levels or an equivalent sized vocational qualification. Performance has held at the higher rate of 63% of students at Level 3 by age 19.

**Chart 33: Percentage of 19 Year Olds Qualified up to Level 3**



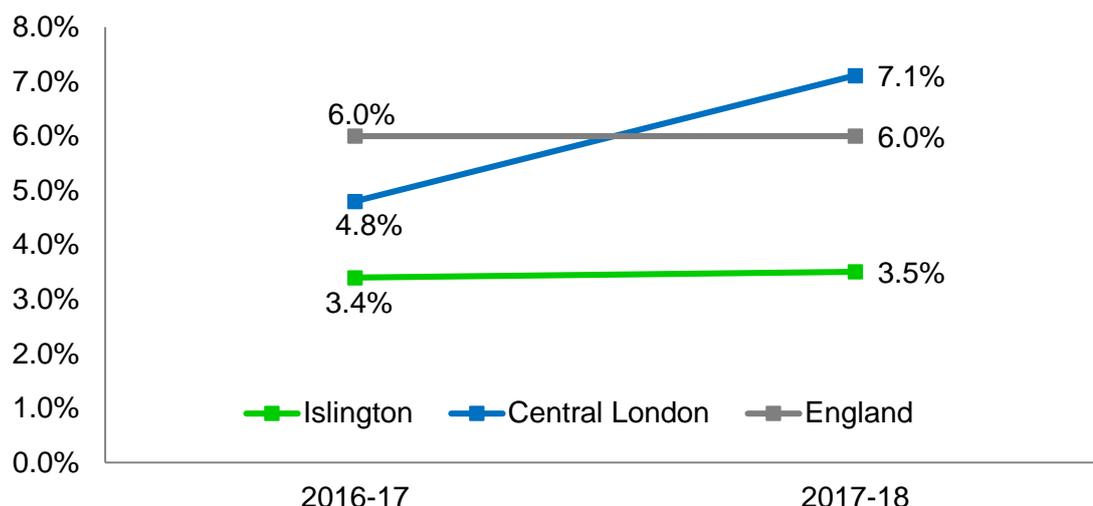
After key stage 5, around 60% of IC6 students went onto sustained higher education (level 4 and above) during 2016/17, which is above the national average (50%). Of which: this includes 17% at the most selective higher education institutions and 10% at Russell Group universities such as Oxford and Cambridge.

#### 4.9 Education, employment and training (EET)

##### Islington residents

In 2016, a new DfE benchmark was published. It reports on the percentage of 16 and 17 year old residents whose destinations are NEET or unknown for the December to February 3-month average. Using the new methodology, the borough percentage of those not in education, employment and training or in a 'not known' activity was 3.5% in 2017 compared to 3.4% in 2016. The 2017/18 Islington figure was better than the all England and Central London averages of 6.0% and 7.1% respectively.

**Chart 34: Percentage of 16 & 17 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training**



**Islington School Pupil destinations on 1<sup>st</sup> November after the end of Year 11**

The vast majority (97.6%) of young people who attended Islington schools and settings remained 'in learning' after leaving Year 11, and this is higher than in the previous year.

Furthermore, the percentage of Islington pupils with NEET or unknown destinations remains low and better than the previous year. The percentage of Year 11 leavers who were found to be NEET on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 was 1.3% (2.3% in 2017) and the percentage of those with an unknown activity was 0.8% (1.6% in 2017).

There are EET opportunities that started after 1 November which we expect some of these young people will have taken up.

**Table 2: Destinations of local authority school leavers - Islington 2018**

Local Authority	Survey Total	In Learning*		Employment - No Training		NEET		Other		Unknown	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Islington 2017	1,510	1,440	95.4%	11	0.7%	34	2.3%	1	0.1%	24	1.6%
<b>Islington 2018</b>	<b>1,487</b>	<b>1,451</b>	<b>97.6%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
Camden	1,626	1,579	97.1%	8	0.5%	20	1.2%	0		19	1.2%
Hackney	2,173	2,114	97.3%	2	0.1%	22	1.0%	0		35	1.6%
RBKC	814	796	97.8%	0		14	1.7%	0		4	0.5%
Lambeth	2,148	2,021	94.1%	0		25	1.2%	0		102	4.7%
Southwark	2,527	2,404	95.1%	6	0.2%	36	1.4%	1	0.04%	80	3.2%
Wandsworth	1,818	1,730	95.2%	2	0.1%	19	1.0%	0		67	3.7%
Westminster	1,539	1,521	98.8%	1	0.1%	9	0.6%	0		8	0.5%
<b>2018 Total</b>	<b>14,132</b>	<b>13,616</b>	<b>96.3%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.01%</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>2.3%</b>

Source: IYSS destinations, data for 2018

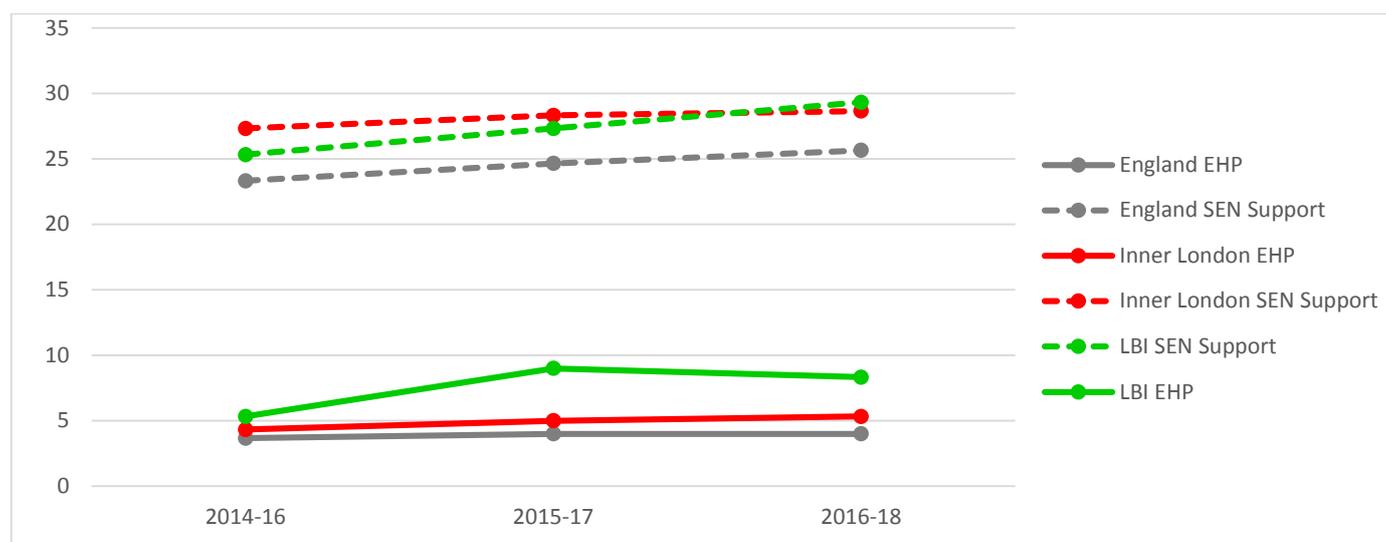
\*In Learning category includes post compulsory education including Year 11 repeats, employment with study or training and training destinations.

## 5.0 The Performance of SEND pupils

Because of the small number of pupils with EHCP the graphs below all use 3 year rolling averages. The performance of Non-SEN pupils has been excluded to enable the reader to see the relative performance of SEN support pupils and EHCP pupils for Islington and our comparators more clearly.

### SEN Performance at end of Reception

**Chart 35: Percentage of 5 Year Old's reaching the EYFS 'Good Level of Development': SEN support and SEN EHP pupils three year rolling averages: 2014-16 to 2016-18**



Graph A1 above shows the percentage of five year olds that were SEN EHP<sup>13</sup> or SEN support<sup>14</sup> at the EYFS benchmark of a 'Good Level of Development (GLD) for the 3 year periods 2014-16, 2015-17 and 2016-18. The dotted lines show the percentage at GLD for SEN support pupils and the unbroken lines show the rate of GLD for EHP pupils (also pupils with a statement of SEN). Looking at the performance of pupils with SEN support we can see that Islington's figures were below Inner London's but above England's in 2014-16 but by 2016-18 it was marginally above the rate for Inner London. The percentage of SEN EHP pupils reaching the GLD benchmark in Islington for all three year averages shows Islington above both of our comparators.

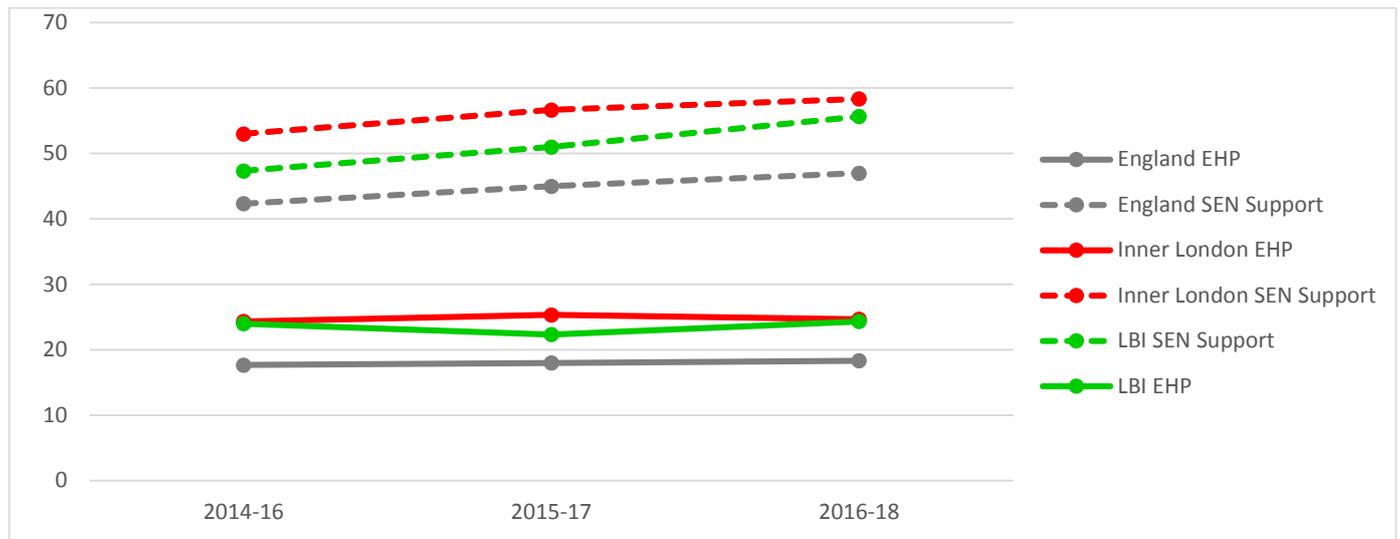
### SEN Performance at end of Year 1

Graph A2 overleaf shows the percentage of EHP pupils and SEN support pupils in Year 1 (usually aged six) that passed the phonics test held at the end of Year 1 for 2014-16, 2015-17 and 2016-18, the same 3 year rolling averages as above. The proportion of pupils with SEN support passing the phonics test in the borough for this measure has always been above the national rate for this period and has been rising faster than our comparators although it is still below the rate for Inner London as a whole. The proportion of EHP pupils in the LA passing the test in Year 1 has also been above the rate for England for the time periods shown and has been a little below that for Inner London.

<sup>13</sup> This category also includes pupils with a statement of SEN

<sup>14</sup> This category also includes pupils who were School Action or School Action Plus for 2014 data set alone

**Chart 36: Percentage of 6 Year Old pupils passing the Phonics Test: SEN support and SEN EHP pupils three year rolling averages: 2014-16 to 2016-18**

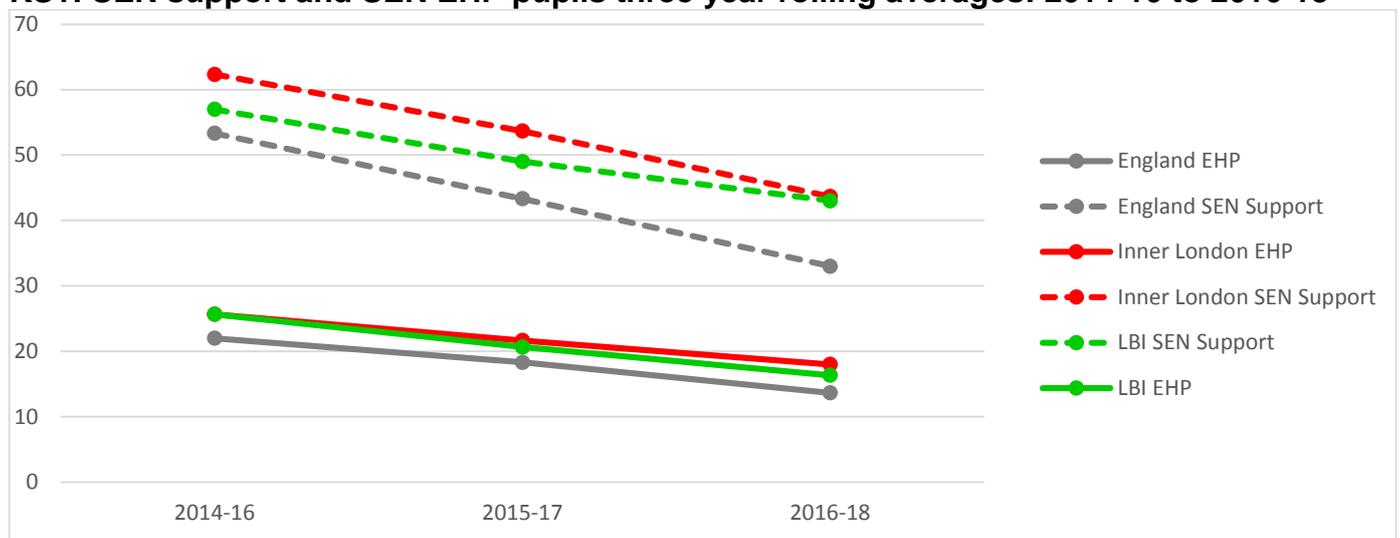


### SEN Performance at end of Year 2

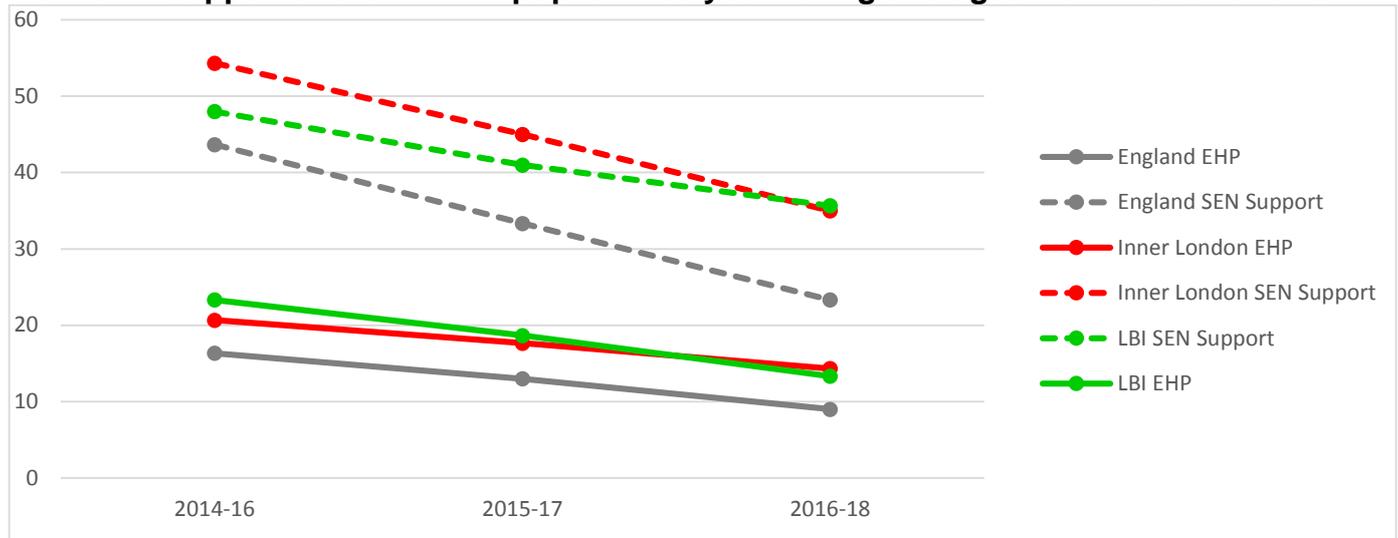
At the end of Year 2 (when pupils are usually 7 years old) pupils are assessed for the end of Key Stage 1. As mentioned in the main body of this report, the DfE reformed the curriculum and the first assessment of this reformed curriculum took place in 2016. The assessment criteria used to define the expected attainment was made more difficult and as a consequence the percentage of pupils reaching the expected attainment for all three subjects fell sharply in 2016 which is why the next three graphs will show a fall in performance for England, Inner London and Islington.

Graph A3 below shows the 3 year averages for the three year rolling averages for 2014-16, 2015-17 and 2016-18 for pupils with SEN support and for pupils with an EHCP (formerly a statement of SEN) for reading. The three year trend shows Islington's results as above those for England but below or at the rate for Inner London for both SEN support and EHCP pupils.

**Chart 37: Percentage of 7 Year Old pupils reaching the Expected in Reading at the end of KS1: SEN support and SEN EHP pupils three year rolling averages: 2014-16 to 2016-18**



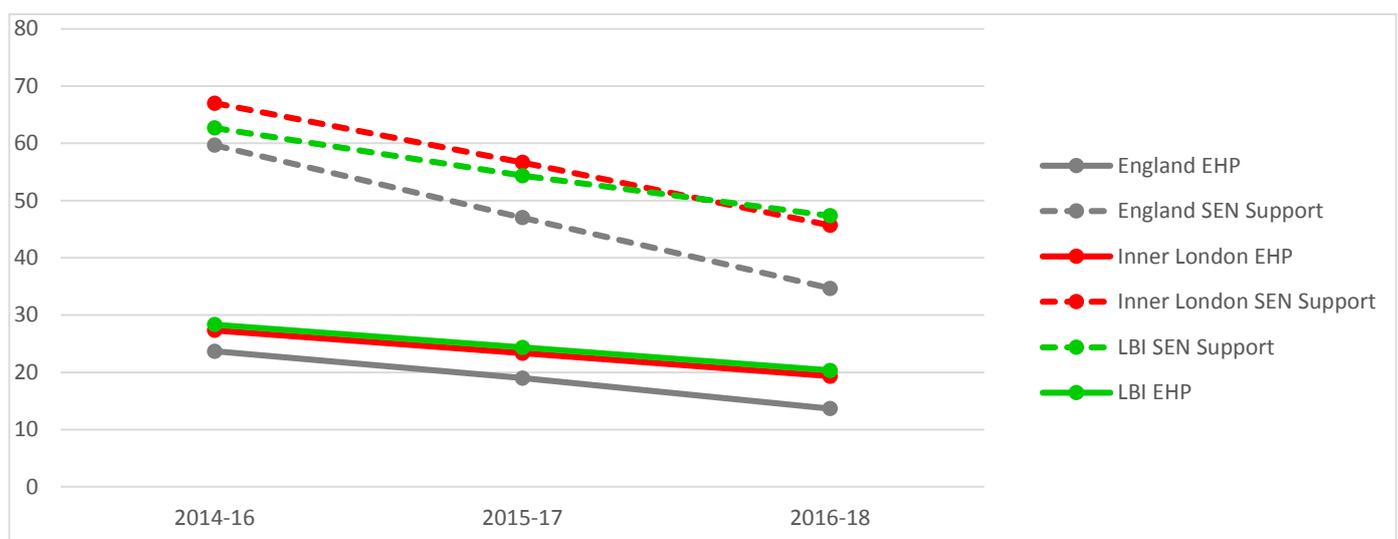
**Chart 38: Percentage of 7 Year Old pupils reaching the Expected in Writing at the end of KS1: SEN support and SEN EHP pupils three year rolling averages: 2014-16 to 2016-18**



Graph A4 above shows the 3 year averages for the three year rolling averages for 2014-16, 2015-17 and 2016-18 for pupils with SEN support and for pupils with an EHCP (formerly a statement of SEN) for writing. The pattern shown is similar to that for reading but with Islington closing the gap with Inner London for pupils with SEN support with England falling further behind for this measure.

Graph A5 below shows the 3 year averages for the three year rolling averages for 2014-16, 2015-17 and 2016-18 for pupils with SEN support and for pupils with an EHCP (formerly a statement of SEN) for mathematics. The graph shows a similar pattern to that shown for reading and writing, with Islington very close to the results for Inner London and a widening gap between Islington and England.

**Chart 39: Percentage of 7 Year Old pupils reaching the Expected in Maths at the end of KS1: SEN support and SEN EHP pupils three year rolling averages: 2014-16 to 2016-18**

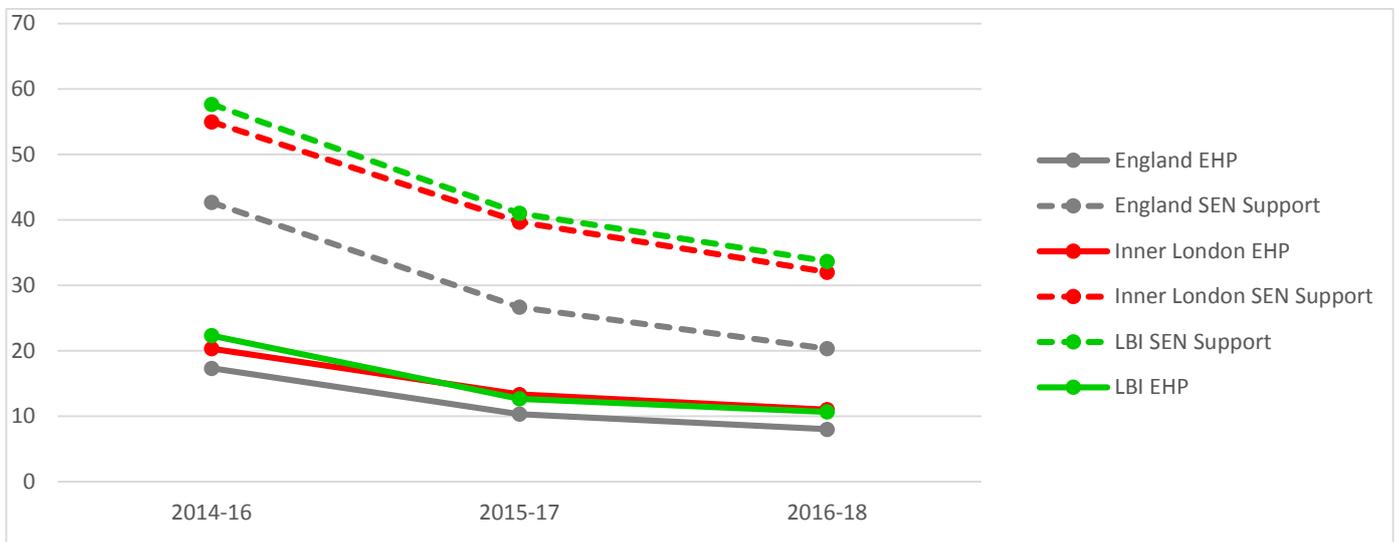


## SEN Performance at end of Year 6

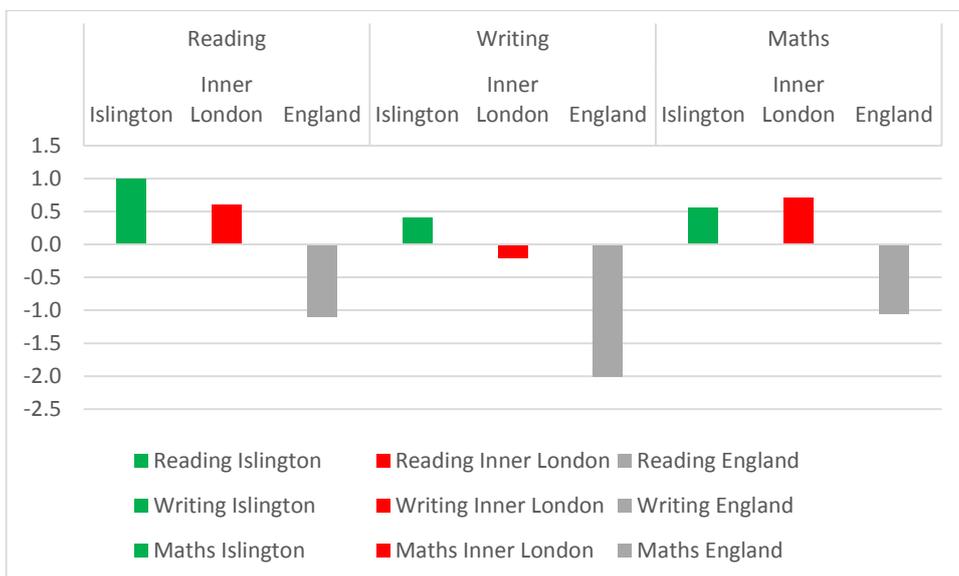
At the end of Year 6 when pupils are usually 11 years old pupils are assessed in the three core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who reach the expected standard or higher for all three subjects are said to have reached the expected for the 'combined' benchmark.

As was the case with KS1, in 2016 the first cohort taught under the new curriculum was assessed against new and more challenging criteria. This resulted in only 54% of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected benchmark for the combined measure for that year, compared with 80% at or above the expected attainment under the old curriculum in 2015. As a consequence, as was the case with KS1, the three year average lines are sloping downwards as each subsequent rolling average includes one more year of the new more difficult assessments.

**Chart 40: Percentage of 11 Year Olds reaching the Expected in Reading, Writing & Maths Combined at the end of KS2: SEN support and SEN EHP pupils three year rolling averages: 2014-16 to 2016-18**



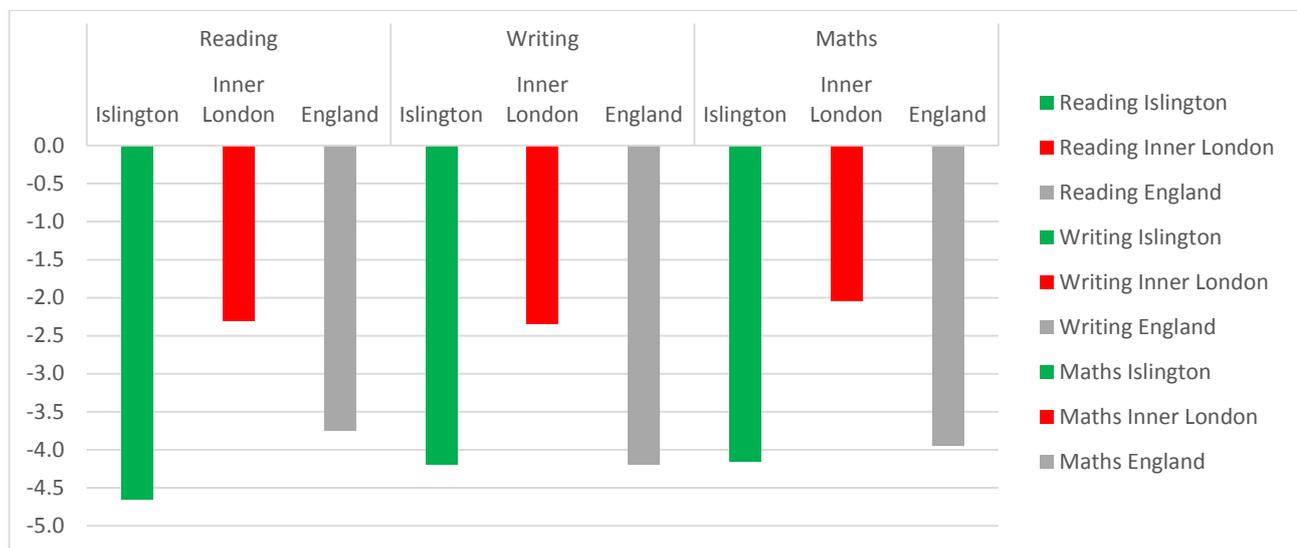
**Chart 41: Progress scores 11 Year Olds for Reading, Writing & Maths at the end of KS2: SEN support 2017 & 2018 average**



Graph A7 above shows the relative progress figures for Islington and our comparators for each of the KS2 core subjects (reading, writing and mathematics) for SEN support pupils for the years 2017 & 2018 combined. Islington had positive scores for all three subjects whereas the national figures were all negative. The progress made by Islington SEN support pupils was higher than that for Inner London for reading and writing and a little lower for mathematics.

Graph A8 below shows the relative progress figures for Islington and our comparators for each of the KS2 core subjects (reading, writing and mathematics) for SEN EHCP pupils for the years 2017 & 2018 combined. EHCP pupils made relatively less progress for all subjects and for all comparators when compared to the average progress made by pupils in the country. The progress made by Islington EHCP pupils, however is worse than both our comparators.

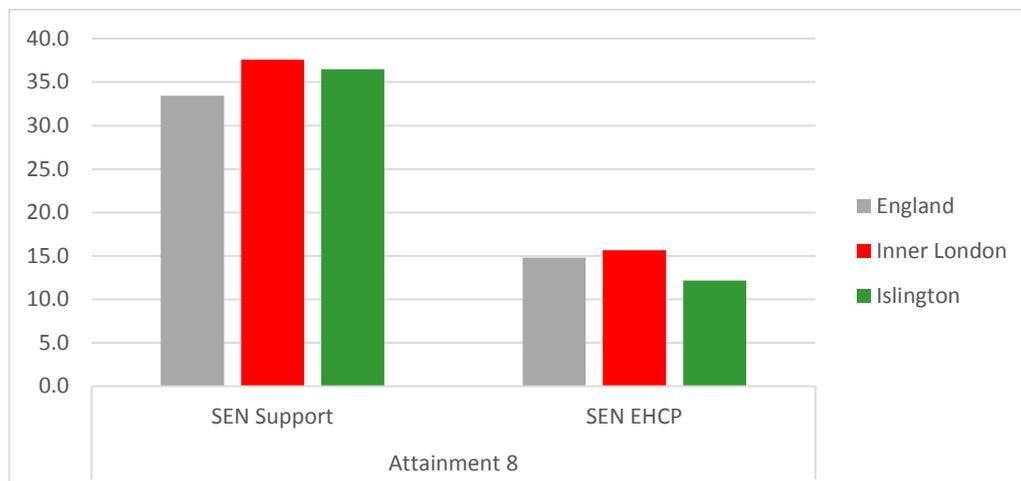
**Chart 42: Progress scores 11 Year Olds for Reading, Writing & Maths at the end of KS2: SEN EHCP 2017 & 2018 average**



**SEN Performance at end of Year 11**

At the end of Year 11 most pupils will be 15 years old. Below are two graphs showing the attainment and the relative progress of SEN support and SEN EHCP pupils.

**Chart 43: ‘Attainment 8’ scores 15 Year Olds for GCSE & Maths at the end of KS4: SEN EHCP 2016 – 2018 three year average**



Graph A9 shown above shows that for the average Attainment 8 score for the years 2016-2018 Islington's Attainment 8 score for SEN support pupils was above the national rate but below the rate for Inner London. The borough's average Attainment 8 score for 2016-2018 for EHCP pupils was below both our comparators, however.

**Chart 44: 'Progress 8' scores 15 Year Olds for GCSE & Maths at the end of KS4: SEN EHCP 2016 – 2018 three year average**

Graph A10 below shows the relative measure 'Progress 8' for Islington and our comparators for both SEN support pupils and those with an EHCP. Unsurprisingly all measures shown are negative. Islington's rate for SEN support, however, at -0.09, is clearly less negative than the rate shown for Inner London and is less than a quarter of the national figure of 0.41.



The figures for SEN EHCP pupils for this three year period shows Islington (at -0.94) and Inner London (at -0.92) at practically identical scores both of which are better than the national figure of -1.05.

## 6.0 Conclusion

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This report provides an overview of educational attainment in Islington. It is clear that good progress continues to be made in many areas and that the Islington Community of Schools is in a strong position to realise the vision of a highly effective, school led, self-improving system that benefits all members of the community. We will continue to support and challenge each other to continue our progress to achieve this vision.

Mark Taylor  
Director of Learning and Schools

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## Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

30 April 2019

### Executive Member Update and Questions

The Committee is invited to question the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families on her work and the work of the Committee. An update from the Executive Member is set out below. The procedure for Executive Member questions is appended to this item.

**Questions for the Executive Member may be submitted in advance by emailing [democracy@islington.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@islington.gov.uk) by Wednesday 24 April 2019**

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#### **Secondary School Places offers**

At beginning of March the placements for the autumn 2019 Secondary Schools were sent around to parents and carers. Overall the picture was positive. The number of applications we had for secondary school places was up 3% on last year and despite this increase, 2% more residents got their first choice of place (or one of their top three choices) and our residents were more likely to get their choice compared with residents in London, on average.

#### **Islington Education Awards**

It was an unmitigated joy to attend Islington's first Education awards. The Islington Education awards was an opportunity to recognise the dedicated teachers and staff of our local schools. They make an enormous contribution to making Islington the best place for children to learn and grow.

The enthusiasm our staff have for teaching is amazing to see, they are the backbone of education in the borough and it was wonderful to be able to come together and recognise their hard work. Our ambition is to give all children the best start in life, our talented school teams play major role in achieving this, that's why it's so great that we are now going to celebrate them annually.

#### **Looked After Children Achievements Awards**

I was so honoured to be asked to attend and help present awards to our looked after children. It was a really lovely event which allowed families, carers and council staff to celebrate the amazing progress our looked after children are making. Children aged 5-17 proudly accepted awards in the Emirates Stadium.

It was a great opportunity for me to meet representative from Children's Active Involvement Service; I was blown away by how proactive they are and how much work they do in partnership with council.

At the awards there was also a presentation by a group of our older male looked after children who had gone to Gambia to teach children skills that they had, including health and fitness and dance. It was clear that this project had a profound experience on these young men. It was brilliant that the council could support them to do something that is usually only reserved for middle class children on gap years.

### **Meeting with the new Borough Commander**

Cllr Watts, Hull and I recently had a chance to sit down with the new Borough Commander Chief Supt Raj Kohli. It was very welcome to hear that his top priority coming into the role is tackling youth crime. He seemed to take a positive approach to not criminalising young people. He has experience of working with Music and Change in Camden an organisation who have a good reputation in working with young people engaged with high risk activity to support their mental health needs and divert them from criminality. We also discussed the use of section 60s in the borough, which he believes should be used to disrupt and prevent young people from engage in criminality. As well as a systematic approach to dealing with the complex issues relating to the drugs economy in Finsbury Park.

### **11 by 11 and Music Education and Islington**

It has been very exciting to launch of 11 by 11 and Music Education and Islington. The launch of 11 by 11 was a great success due to the council's collaboration with Islington Community of Schools and cultural organisations like All Change, Paul Lyall and Park Theatre. Jeremy Corbyn, the Mayor, the left lieutenant and Cllrs sat with the leaders of dozens of cultural institutions and Islington head teachers; to be treated to performance by Islington pupils including samba, Shakespeare and poetry.

Similarly, Music Education Islington was recently launched which aims to ensure every child can discover and develop their musical skills under the guidance of some of the best music teachers in the world. The new partnership with lead delivery organisation Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the internationally renowned conservatoire in the City of London. This is the first such partnership of its kind and the first time a conservatoire has led the delivery of music education for a local authority, as part of a wider partnership involving several other outstanding music education providers.

## **Procedure for Executive Member Questions at Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

- (a) Elected members and members of the public may ask the Executive Member for Children, Schools and Families questions on any matter in relation to the executive portfolio or the work of the committee.
- (b) The intention of the session is to complement and enhance the work of the committee. The Executive Member may submit written information in advance of the meeting to advise of his recent work and other topical and timely matters of relevance. The session is not intended to replace or replicate the questions sessions held at each ordinary meeting of the Council.
- (c) Questions should be submitted in writing to the committee clerk no later than three clear working days in advance of the meeting. Such questions will be notified to the Executive Member which may facilitate a more detailed answer at the meeting. Details of how questions should be submitted will be detailed on the agenda for the meeting.
- (d) Questioners should provide their name to enable this to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes of the meeting will include a summary of the question and the response.
- (e) The Chair may permit questions to be asked at the meeting without notice.
- (f) The time set aside for questions shall be no longer than 15 minutes.
- (g) No individual may ask more than two questions at each meeting.
- (h) Where there is more than one question on any particular subject or closely related subjects, the Executive Member may give a joint reply to the questions.
- (i) The committee clerk shall have power to edit or amend written questions to make them concise but without affecting the substance, following consultation with the questioner.
- (j) An answer may take the form of:
  - A direct oral answer;
  - Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
  - Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner within 5 working days provided the questioner has given contact details.
- (k) Priority shall normally be given to questions notified in advance.
- (l) The Chair may permit supplementary questions to be asked. Supplementary questions must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- (m) A question may be rejected by the committee clerk, or the Chair at the meeting, if it:
  - does not relate to the executive portfolio or the work of the committee;
  - is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
  - is substantially the same as a question asked to the Executive Member at any meeting within the last six months;
  - requests the disclosure of information which is confidential or exempt; or
  - names, or clearly identifies, a member of staff or any other individual.

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**ISLINGTON**

# **Permanent and Fixed-Period Exclusion from School**

## **DRAFT REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**London Borough of Islington  
April 2019**

## **Foreword:**

Islington has a high rate of exclusion. The exclusion rate is higher than the Inner London and England averages and comparatively higher than Islington's statistical neighbours. This is not acceptable.

Exclusion is an equalities issue. Nationally, disadvantaged students, those with special educational needs and disabilities, and pupils from certain ethnic minority groups are significantly more likely to be excluded. Boys are far more likely to be excluded than girls.

Exclusion is a fairness issue. There is a significant variation in the exclusion rates of Islington schools which cannot be justified. It is unfair that children attending some schools are far more likely to be excluded than their peers attending other schools in the borough.

Exclusion penalises young people who have vulnerabilities, additional needs and experiences of trauma. Exclusion can have significant personal and financial impacts on young people and their families.

Exclusion has financial implications for the local authority which detrimentally impacts on our ability to provide services to children and young people.

The Committee believes that Islington's young people deserve better.

Education should be inclusive and exclusion should be prevented wherever possible. Exclusion should only be used as a last resort. Fixed period exclusion is rarely an effective method of managing behaviour; permanent exclusion is often avoidable.

The Committee's recommendations seek to prevent exclusion, help our schools to develop best practice, ensure that young people and their parents and carers are supported when faced with exclusion, and challenge central government on factors that are outside of the council's control.

**Cllr Theresa Debono**  
**On behalf of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Permanent and fixed period exclusion from school

### **Aim:**

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.

### **Evidence:**

The Committee commenced the review in July 2018. Evidence was received from a variety of sources:

#### Evidence from Council Officers:

- Candy Holder, Head of Pupil Services
- Gill Sassienie, Principal Educational Psychologist
- Ruth Beecher, Head of Early Help Services
- Gabriella Di-Sciullio, Head of Admissions and Children Missing from Education

#### Evidence from young people and their families:

- Visit to New River College and focus group with excluded pupils
- Focus group with parents of excluded pupils
- Follow-up focus group with parents of excluded pupils

#### Evidence from others:

- Peter Gray, Independent Expert and Government Adviser
- Dr Helen Aspland & Jane Stephenson-Glynn – Child and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Patrick Mildren, Head Teacher, Canonbury Primary School
- Jamie Brownhill, Head Teacher, Central Foundation Secondary School
- Nigel Smith, Head Teacher, New River College Pupil Referral Unit

#### Documentary evidence:

- Exclusions Data
- Briefing note: Government review of pupil exclusion, and a statement on alternative provision
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England: Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion (September 2017)
- Department for Education: A Review of School Exclusion: terms of reference
- Behaviour and discipline in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff (January 2016)
- "They never give up on you" Office of the Children's Commissioner School Exclusions Inquiry (2011)

## Summary of Main Findings:

Islington has a high rate of exclusion in comparison to other London boroughs and its statistical neighbours. The borough does not compare favourably in national rankings. Although Islington has a high level of exclusion, there is a significant variation between the exclusion rates of Islington's schools.

While it is accepted that exclusion can be necessary in some instances, there is no need for Islington's exclusion rate to be as high as it is. All schools have a broadly similar cohort and any variation in the demographic profile of schools is not significant enough to validate such substantial differences in their exclusion rates.

The Committee believes that exclusion is a fairness issue. Exclusion can have serious negative consequences for young people and their families; exclusion impacts on educational attainment, family wellbeing, and limits the opportunities available to young people. It is unfair that children attending certain schools are far more likely to be excluded than their peers attending other schools in the borough.

The Committee received evidence on the range of support services available to young people at risk of exclusion. Overall the Committee was satisfied with the range of support services available, however, the Committee considers that schools should be further encouraged and supported in making referrals to support services at the earliest possible opportunity. The Committee also considers that schools should be further encouraged and supported to make best-use of the whole-school transformation programmes offered by support services.

The Committee heard concerns that some pupils with special educational needs and learning disabilities may not be receiving adequate support to stay in mainstream education. The Committee consider that closely linking special educational needs and behaviour management functions would assist schools in supporting pupils with additional needs that also have challenging behaviours. This may also result in an earlier diagnosis of special educational needs.

The Committee would like to see a more joined up approach to managing behaviour and exclusion in schools. Establishing behaviour and attendance partnerships would provide a forum for schools to share best practice and problem-solve together. Additionally, this may help to standardise practices between schools and develop a shared culture of managing behaviour.

School governors are crucial to the exclusions process, but the Committee heard that not all governors were confident in dealing with exclusion issues. The Committee suggests that governors would benefit from specific training on exclusion issues and on reviewing school behaviour policies, ethos and culture.

More sophisticated data sharing arrangements, developed with due regard to Data Protection requirements, would help school staff to better understand the needs of young people.

The Committee recommends that the council produce a 'Good Practice Guide' for schools; a practical document which provides schools with relevant information on exclusion matters, including clear expectations and a strategic vision for schools to reflect on.

In addition to the Good Practice Guide, the Committee recommends that all schools should affirm their commitment to inclusive education by signing a 'Charter for Inclusion'. This should be developed in consultation with schools, New River College, and young people.

The Committee was impressed with the work of New River College. The Committee welcomes that New River College Secondary received a 'Good' rating in its most recent Ofsted inspection. The Committee would like the council to support New River College in challenging the stigma associated with attending a pupil referral unit.

Many parents felt that they needed help in navigating school and local authority processes and did not know how to access independent sources of advice and advocacy. Further work is needed to support parents in accessing advocacy services.

The Committee believes that the national increase in school exclusions is partially attributable to national education policy. The Committee would welcome coordinated lobbying with teaching unions, neighbouring local authorities and others to highlight the impact of the government's education policy and to campaign for changes that would support children to remain in mainstream education.

## **Conclusions:**

The focus of this review has been on exclusion; the impact that exclusion can have on young people and their families, the exclusion practices of local schools, the services available for pupils facing exclusion, and the reason why the number of exclusions has increased in recent years. Considering the range of evidence received, there is no single straightforward solution to prevent exclusion; exclusion reflects a plethora of complex and interconnected factors, both institutional, personal and social, that lead to a child facing the trauma of exclusion from school. However, what seems clear is that exclusion can be challenged by focusing on **inclusion**. Taking an inclusive approach is key to supporting pupils with additional needs and challenges. Inclusivity should underpin the work of all services involved in ensuring that young people remain engaged in education. The Committee hopes that its recommendations will contribute to an inclusive approach to supporting young people across the borough.

The Committee concludes that Islington's exclusion rate is too high. The significant variation of the exclusion rates of Islington's schools is not justified and further focused work with the highest excluding schools is needed. This work is important; exclusion is a fairness issue that is having a real impact on young people and their families.

14 recommendations have been made in response to the evidence received. These are related to preventing exclusion, developing best practice in schools, supporting young people excluded from school and their parents, and urging central government to act in the best interests of young people. The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses that gave evidence in relation to the review. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

## Recommendations:

### Helping our schools to prevent exclusions and support young people at risk of exclusion

- Schools should be encouraged to make referrals at the earliest opportunity to support services such as Educational Psychology, CAMHS, the New River College outreach service and Early Help services.** Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should liaise with service providers to ensure that they provide further guidance to schools on when it is appropriate to make a referral, including how making a referral can benefit the young person, their family, and the school. Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should do further work to continue to raise this as a priority issue with school leaders through relevant forums, conferences and meetings, as appropriate.
- Schools should be further encouraged to make best use of the whole-school transformation programmes offered by CAMHS, Educational Psychology, and the New River College outreach services.** In particular, schools should be encouraged to implement trauma informed practices in consultation with CAMHS as a method of better supporting children at risk of exclusion. To achieve this, officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should highlight the benefits of these transformation programmes through relevant forums, conferences and meetings with school leaders, as appropriate. If required, these services should review how their transformative services are promoted to schools.
- Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should encourage schools to closely link their Behaviour Management and Special Educational Needs functions.** This will help to ensure that pupils with behavioural difficulties are assessed for special educational needs and can access support if required, and the special educational needs of pupils can be recognised in school behaviour management practices. Officers should encourage schools to make this change through relevant forums, conferences, and meetings with school leaders, as appropriate.
- Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should encourage and support all schools to form Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships.** These would support schools in taking a collaborative and strategic approach to addressing behaviour and attendance issues through the sharing of best practice. This may reduce the variation between school behaviour policies and practices, help to establish local standards for when exclusion should be used, and develop a shared culture of managing behaviour in Islington schools.
- School governors should receive training on how they can help to shape their school's culture and ethos, their role in the exclusion process, and how they can scrutinise school behaviour policies and practices.**

6. **To ensure that all school staff are well equipped to support young people at risk of exclusion, officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should explore how information on pupil needs can be shared widely between support services and school staff whilst meeting confidentiality requirements.** This could be achieved through adopting a 'pyramid of need' approach, where a young person's needs are categorised without explicit reference to their individual circumstances.
7. **The Securing Education Boards should consider if any of their processes can be amended to offer further support to pupils at risk of exclusion.** The Committee heard evidence of local schools working effectively to promote inclusion and avoid exclusion. The Committee would welcome the support of the Securing Education Boards in promoting examples of good practice to all schools so that all of Islington's pupils can benefit from this preventative work. For example, the Boards should consider if they can help schools in identifying support for pupils at risk of exclusion at an earlier stage, and if they can further support schools in identifying and implementing trauma-informed and solution-focused approaches for pupils at risk of exclusion. The Boards should also consider if their processes can be expedited for pupils at imminent risk of exclusion.

### **Developing best practice in our schools**

8. **Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should use the Committee's findings to produce a Good Practice Guide for schools.** Specifically, this should include:
- An **aim** for Islington's schools to exclude no pupils;
  - An **objective** for schools to avoid exclusions wherever possible, and not to use alternative provision as a substitute;
  - A **challenge** for schools to work in collaboration with each other and the local authority to reduce Islington's exclusion rate;
  - Details of the **support services** available to young people at risk of exclusion, how they can be accessed, and the benefits of making a referral at the earliest possible stage;
  - Details of the **transformation programmes** available to schools and how they can help support pupils, including those at risk of exclusion;
  - Examples of **successful inclusion and behaviour management practices** adopted by schools;
  - The importance of **teacher wellbeing** and how to support teachers to manage behaviour effectively;
  - The importance of **listening to young people and their parents** on behaviour and exclusion issues;
  - That behaviour **policies and practices should be flexible** for pupils with additional needs;
  - That schools should closely link their behaviour management and special educational needs functions;
  - That **governors should receive training** on exclusion and behaviour issues;
  - That parents have a right to **transparent information** on their child's exclusion, and issues related to school behaviour policies and practices;

- That schools should signpost pupils and their parents or carers **independent advocacy services** when they are at risk of exclusion (i.e. when they are excluded for more than five non-consecutive days in a school year);
- That schools excluding pupils should **provide comprehensive information to the pupil referral unit** on a pupil's behaviour, attainment, progress and needs.
- A **practical toolkit or checklist** to help schools in assessing and identifying support for pupils at risk of exclusion;
- A summary of the Committee's conclusions, the impact that exclusion can have on young people and their families, and the cost of exclusion.

Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should promote this guidance to head teachers, school staff with responsibility for behaviour management and special educational needs, and school governors.

9. **A 'Charter for Inclusion' should be developed with Islington Schools and New River College to affirm their commitment to supporting Islington's young people to stay mainstream education.** The Charter should make explicit links to the principles set out in the Good Practice Guide and should be developed in consultation with young people.

#### **Supporting children and young people excluded from school**

10. **Officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should review the feasibility of attaching a named social worker to New River College.** Providing New River College with this resource, even for a few hours a week, would enhance the support that is available to excluded pupils.
11. **To remove the stigma associated with attending a pupil referral unit, officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should work with New River College to widely promote the successes of its pupils.** Targeted information should also be provided to parents at the point of their child's exclusion, emphasising that New River College provides a supportive and nurturing learning environment, and summarising the findings of New River College's most recent Ofsted inspection in which it was rated 'Good'.
12. **Officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should engage with neighbouring authorities and schools in neighbouring boroughs close to the borough boundary, making them aware of this review and the support that is expected for pupils who are Islington residents.**

### **Supporting parents and carers**

In response to evidence received during the review, officers have already implemented the following service changes:

- (a) The council now provides more comprehensive information on independent sources of support available to parents and carers on its website and in the initial letter which is sent to parents and carers informing them of their child's permanent exclusion from school.
- (b) Officers have asked Islington Law Centre to hold free parent workshops on the exclusions process. The first session was held in November 2018.
- (c) Islington Law Centre has offered to hold a series of monthly drop-in sessions, at no cost to the council, for parents and carers seeking independent advice on issues arising from their child's exclusion.

### **Urging Central Government to act in the best interests of young people**

13. **Islington Council should lobby for national policy changes that would support children to remain in mainstream education;** including a broader curriculum, increased funding for schools to better support children with additional needs, addressing educational equalities issues, and reforming school league tables which encourage schools to compete rather than collaborate and incentivise schools to exclude. Lobbying efforts should be coordinated with teaching unions, neighbouring local authorities and others, if possible.
14. **Officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should report back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on the findings of the national School Exclusions Review led by Edward Timpson CBE, and detail if it is possible to implement its recommendations locally.** The Committee would also welcome information on the Government's response to the Timpson review and any implications for Islington.

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MEMBERSHIP - 2018/19**

#### **Councillors:**

Councillor Theresa Debono (Chair)  
Councillor Vivien Cutler (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Santiago Bell-Bradford  
Councillor Rakhia Ismail  
Councillor Michelline Safi Ngongo  
Councillor Marian Spall  
Councillor John Woolf  
Councillor Kadeema Woodbyrne (to December 2018)  
Councillor Phil Graham (from December 2018)

#### **Co-opted Member:**

Mary Clement – Roman Catholic Diocese Representative

#### **Substitutes:**

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

#### **Acknowledgements:**

*The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence to the review.*

#### **Officer Support:**

*Candy Holder – Head of Pupil Services  
Gabriella Di-Sciullo – Head of Admissions and Children Missing from Education  
Jonathan Moore – Deputy Manager Committee Services*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The review was held between July 2018 and April 2019. The overall aim of the review was 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.

The Committee also agreed the following objectives:

- To understand how the school exclusion process operates and the work undertaken at school and local authority level to prevent exclusions.
  - To review the support available to excluded pupils, and to scrutinise if this is effective.
  - To explore the reasons for exclusions, and the reasons why Islington schools have higher rates of exclusion than the Inner London average.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - To evaluate provision for children and young people for whom mainstream education may not be appropriate.
  - To review how all Councils services and functions can be utilised to reduce exclusions.
  - To understand if and how the council can work with academies and Trust Boards on their exclusion practices.
- 1.2 In carrying out the review the Committee met with young people, parents, head teachers, council officers, independent experts and representatives of support services to gain a balanced view. The Committee also considered statistics, statutory guidance and other documentary evidence.

### **National context**

- 1.3 Exclusion from school is a national issue with significant implications for young people and their families. Nationwide, 7,700 pupils were permanently excluded in 2016/17. This was an increase of 1,000 over the previous year and continued a trend of year on year increases since 2010/11. Fixed period exclusions increased to 382,000 in 2016/17, an increase of 40,000 on the previous year. Nationally, boys are almost four times more likely to be permanently excluded than girls.
- 1.4 Nationally, exclusion disproportionately affects ethnic minority pupils, pupils from lower income households and pupils with special educational needs. In 2016/17, Black Caribbean pupils were permanently excluded at nearly three times the rate of White

British pupils. Pupils eligible for free school meals were four times more likely to be permanently excluded than their peers. Pupils with special educational needs were five times more likely to be permanently excluded than those without a diagnosed special educational need.

- 1.5 In response to concerns around school exclusions, in March 2018 the Government appointed Edward Timpson CBE to lead a review of school exclusions. This review will make recommendations to the Government and will conclude in 2019.

### **Local context**

- 1.6 Islington has a high rate of exclusion in comparison to other London boroughs. There were 34 permanent and 1,251 fixed period exclusions in 2016/17. 679 pupils received one or more fixed period exclusions. Islington’s overall permanent exclusion rate was 0.14%, higher than the Inner London average and the average of Islington’s statistical neighbours (both 0.09%). The number of fixed period and permanent exclusions in Islington increased annually between 2014/15 and 2016/17 and the borough does not compare favourably in national rankings.

	National Ranking 2015/16	National Ranking 2016/17
Secondary fixed period exclusion as a percentage of school population	128 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities	109 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities
Secondary pupils with one or more fixed period exclusions as a percentage of school population	136 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities	124 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities
Secondary permanent exclusion as a percentage of school population	125 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities	101 <sup>st</sup> /150 local authorities
Primary fixed period exclusion as a percentage of school population	107 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities	133 <sup>rd</sup> /150 local authorities
Primary repeat exclusion as a percentage of school population	107 <sup>th</sup> /150 local authorities	143 <sup>rd</sup> /150 local authorities
Primary permanent exclusion as a percentage of school population	Not ranked.	102 <sup>nd</sup> /150 local authorities

- 1.7 In Islington, the most common reason for exclusion is “persistent disruptive behaviour”. This is consistent with the national picture. There is no common definition of what constitutes persistent disruptive behaviour; this will be determined by individual school behaviour policies and staff expectations.
- 1.8 In Islington, the majority of exclusions are issued to boys, however a higher proportion of girls are excluded in comparison to national statistics. A disproportionate number of Black Caribbean and White British pupils are excluded in comparison to national averages. Pupils eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs tend to receive fewer exclusions in comparison to national averages.
- 1.9 Although Islington has a relatively high level of exclusion, there is a significant variation between the exclusion rates of Islington’s schools. Not all schools are high excluders; 13 of the borough’s primary schools did not issue any fixed period exclusions in 2017-18;

whereas two issued fixed period exclusions to over 10% of their school roll. Five of the borough's secondary schools issued under 100 fixed period exclusions in 2017/18, whereas one issued almost 300 and another almost 800. There is a similar variation in the number of permanent exclusions.

- 1.10 Nationally, sponsored academies have a higher rate of exclusion than local authority maintained schools. However, in Islington, there is no particular trend in academies, faith schools or community schools being more likely to exclude than other types of school.
- 1.11 Evidence received from council officers suggested that there was no justification to the significant variation between the exclusion rates of different schools. All schools have a broadly similar cohort and any variation in the demographic profile of schools is not significant enough to validate such substantial differences in their exclusion rates. The main difference between high and low excluding schools therefore seems to be a matter of culture, ethos and approach to behaviour management, rather than other factors.
- 1.12 Islington Council is committed to fairness. The Fairness Commission in 2010 and the Fair Futures Commission in 2018 examined the serious challenges and inequalities faced by Islington residents and made recommendations to make Islington a fairer place. Islington Council's Corporate Plan sets out a vision of fairness for the borough:

*We're determined to make Islington fairer and to create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the same opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.*

The Committee believes that exclusion is a fairness issue. Exclusion can have serious negative consequences for young people and their families; exclusion impacts on educational attainment, family wellbeing, and limits the opportunities available to young people. It is unfair that children attending certain schools are far more likely to be excluded than their peers attending other schools in the borough. The disproportionate effect that exclusion has on young people from Black Caribbean and White British backgrounds is unacceptable.

- 1.13 Given that the borough's high exclusion rate seems to be attributable to a small number of schools, it is considered that targeted work with the highest excluding schools would be more effective than radically altering the borough's approach to supporting schools and pupils at risk of exclusion. However, the Committee also considers that all schools could benefit from further guidance and the sharing of best practice. It is hoped that the Committee's recommendations will be helpful in guiding future work with schools and will result in a reduction in the borough's exclusion rate, as well as helping to address the fairness issues connected to school exclusion that have a real impact on young people and their families.

## **2. Findings**

### **The impact of exclusion from school**

- 2.1 The Committee reviewed the impact of exclusion on young people and their families. The evidence received indicated that exclusion can have a very serious negative impact on young people and can last for many years. Some children who are excluded do not successfully re-engage with education; their lack of qualifications limits their life chances and imbeds a disadvantage in comparison to their peers. National statistics indicate that young people who have been excluded from school are more likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) and are more likely to be involved in offending.
- 2.2 The Committee held focus groups with young people and parents to learn about the impact that exclusion had on them. A number of examples were given of exclusion having a serious detrimental impact on young people. Some parents said that their child had withdrawn entirely from education following their exclusion and were experiencing mental and physical health issues. Some parents said that their children were not set work while serving fixed period exclusions and their parents were concerned about the impact that this would have on their education. Some parents were concerned that exclusion from school had made their children vulnerable to grooming by gangs. Parents were worried about their child's future, their education and employment prospects.
- 2.3 Parents also said that exclusion had a negative impact on their life, their employment and their wellbeing. It was commented that exclusion could feel like a punishment for parents. Parents had to stay at home with their children while they were serving a fixed period exclusion; this meant that parents could not go to work, attend appointments, or take part in other activities outside of their home. Some parents said that their employment was in jeopardy because they frequently had to stay at home with their child while they were serving repeat fixed period exclusions. This was putting families at financial risk, and was putting parents under considerable stress, which could impact on their physical and mental health.
- 2.4 The Committee asked young people about their experiences of the exclusions process. Many of the young people interviewed accepted and understood why they had been excluded from school. They were reflective about their experiences and spoke with regret about the incidents that had led them to be excluded. Some said that they did not accept the reasons for their exclusion. Some said that they had served multiple fixed period exclusions prior to their permanent exclusion, and cited seemingly trivial incidents to which fixed period exclusion appears to be an excessive and unjustified response. It is not possible or appropriate for the Committee to form an opinion on particular cases without having full knowledge of the circumstances, however, fixed period and permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort and the Committee would be concerned by schools using exclusion as a punishment for minor breaches of the behaviour policy.
- 2.5 Some of the young people interviewed said that they felt powerless and frustrated by the exclusion process; they felt that they did not have a voice in the exclusion process or an adequate opportunity to defend themselves.

- 2.6 Some pupils said that following their exclusion they did not trust schools or teachers. One young person said that he had been told by a teacher at his school that the teaching staff wanted him to be excluded. Another young person commented that his mother did not speak fluent English and he felt the school “tricked” his mother. The Committee heard examples of young people being promised additional support prior to their exclusion, such as access to a mentor, however this support either did not materialise or was not implemented successfully prior to their exclusion.
- 2.7 Parents were keen to emphasise that fixed-period exclusion was not an effective punishment for their children. Parents of children with certain special educational needs, or of young primary age children, said that their child could not comprehend why they had been excluded. It was commented that these pupils considered having time off school was a reward rather than a punishment. One parent said that their child had been issued with multiple fixed period exclusions and suspected that they may be purposefully misbehaving to spend more time at home. Some parents said that they respected the school’s decision to exclude and wanted to discipline their children at home, however could not do this effectively without having school work or educational activities to set them. Some parents commented that their children were not supported when returning to the school after a fixed period exclusion and said that a reintegration process would be beneficial.
- 2.8 Exclusion can also have an impact on siblings. Some parents reported that the siblings of pupils who had been excluded were unfairly stigmatised by their school. Some siblings had been warned not to misbehave, otherwise they could be excluded also. This was causing them unnecessary worry and stress.
- 2.9 Exclusion also has a detrimental financial impact on the local authority. While the impact on young people and their families is the most pressing concern, it must be noted that exclusion comes at a cost to local authority budgets. The administration of the exclusion process and the cost of placing young people in the pupil referral unit is considerable. In the context of decreasing local authority budgets and increasing demand for services, the expenditure on exclusion is effectively diverting much needed funding from other services for young people.

### **Why is Islington’s exclusion rate so high?**

- 2.10 The Committee was keen to explore why Islington’s exclusion rate is so high in comparison to its statistical neighbours and other London Boroughs. The Committee received evidence from a range of witnesses on the factors which may be contributing to Islington’s high exclusion rate.
- 2.11 Islington has relatively high levels of deprivation; the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that Islington is the 24<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in the country. 35% of children under the age of 16 live in low income households, the third highest nationally. Over a quarter of children live in households where no one is in employment. National statistics indicate that schools in the most deprived areas have the highest levels of exclusion.

- 2.12 The Committee also heard that schools which adopt a 'zero tolerance' behaviour management approach tend to have higher rates of exclusion. Some of Islington's schools have adopted such approaches in recent years. The Educational Psychology service thought that schools should allow a level of flexibility in their behaviour policies for pupils with additional needs. Similarly, CAMHS representatives commented that behavioural systems that don't allow for differentiation based on children's individual needs effectively sets vulnerable children up to fail. This is consistent with evidence received from parents. Parents considered that some schools were not adequately meeting the requirements of those with special educational needs and disabilities and said that their children had been excluded for behaving in a way that was consistent with their additional needs.
- 2.13 Witnesses spoke of the importance of school ethos and culture. Representatives from the Educational Psychology Service commented that schools which had a nurturing ethos and involved parents in their work tended to exclude fewer pupils than schools that had a stronger focus on enforcing rules. It was also advised that schools with higher rates of staff wellbeing tended to have lower rates of exclusion. Similarly, evidence from CAMHS suggested that stressed and overwhelmed teaching staff could lead to escalating, reactive and punitive behaviour management practices. CAMHS officers said that some behaviour management techniques can be triggering to young people with mental health issues.
- 2.14 The Committee heard evidence on the new challenges that schools faced in Islington. Schools had observed that the behaviour of pupils had become increasingly challenging in recent years. There had been an increase in the number of violent incidents, 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, emphasising the importance of the health and safety of school staff and pupils.
- 2.15 The Committee also received evidence on why there had been a national increase in exclusions over recent years. One such reason was thought to be changes to the exclusion appeals process. Under the previous process the Independent Appeals Panel was able to review a school's decision to permanently exclude and overturn the decision if they considered it appropriate. New regulations introduced in 2012 gave school governors greater responsibility for exclusions and replaced the Independent Appeals Panel with the Independent Review Panel. The Independent Review Panel may only quash a decision to exclude when public law principles are contravened. The Panel can request that governors reconsider the decision to exclude, but have no power to compel them to do so. Since the change in regulation, the number of successful exclusion appeals in Islington has reduced from 57% to 21%.
- 2.16 The Committee also considered that national policy changes may have introduced perverse incentives for schools to exclude pupils. For example, it was suggested that the increasingly limited funding available to schools may contribute to decisions to exclude. Supporting a disengaged child to remain in mainstream education is very resource intensive, whereas excluding a pupil does not present any additional costs to schools. Similarly, it was suggested that the introduction of the new school curriculum and the increasing focus on academic performance in school league tables may incentivise some

schools to exclude low attaining pupils, although issuing an exclusion for academic reasons is unlawful. The current framework for ranking school performance does not reward schools for being inclusive. The Committee did not receive any specific evidence of these issues being a contributing factor to exclusions in Islington, however it may not be coincidental that the national increase in the number of exclusions since 2010 has occurred alongside sustained government cuts to school budgets and major changes to the curriculum. This context may be useful in helping to understand the factors which have led to a national increase in school exclusions.

- 2.17 The above factors may have contributed to Islington's high rate of exclusion; however, the Committee does not consider that these reasons justify Islington having a higher rate of exclusion than its statistical neighbours. As already noted, there is a high level of variation in the exclusion rates of Islington's schools, but there is not a sufficient difference in their cohort to justify such significant variation in their number of exclusions. In addition, evidence from the Educational Psychology Service suggested that some exclusions appeared to be avoidable. It was commented that a lack of support for teaching staff and training on how to manage behavioural issues in an inclusive way may be contributing to the borough's exclusion rate.
- 2.18 Although it is accepted that exclusion can be necessary in some instances, the Committee concludes that there is no need for Islington's exclusion rate to be as high as it is. The Committee respects the autonomy of local schools and understands that the council cannot direct schools to revise their behaviour management practices. However, it is not acceptable that young people are being excluded, with serious implications for the young person and their family, if there are alternative courses of action available. Exclusion should only be used as a last resort and should be prevented wherever possible. The Committee would therefore want to set a challenge to the whole borough to accept that the current situation is not good enough and to find solutions that will support schools in preventing exclusion and offer greater support to excluded pupils and their parents. Islington Council cannot achieve this alone; improvements will only be achieved through comprehensive and constructive partnership work between the local authority, school leaders, governing bodies, teaching staff, support services and others. The remainder of this report focuses on possible solutions identified by the Committee in relation to the evidence received.

### **Finding solutions: Helping our schools to prevent exclusions and support young people at risk of exclusion**

- 2.19 The Committee received evidence on the range of support services available to young people at risk of exclusion. These included Early Help services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Educational Psychology, the New River College Outreach service, and services commissioned or provided by schools themselves.
- 2.20 Early Help services work collaboratively with schools, council services and partner organisations to support the early identification of children and families requiring additional support, but who do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention. Practitioners work with families on a range of issues, including access to education. Early Help services are able to mediate and advocate for families in schools; facilitate meetings between young people, their parents, the school and other services; and

support parents in implementing boundaries, routines and appropriate responses to their child's behaviour. The services sought to take a positive approach and focus on a family's strengths rather than their weaknesses. An Early Help worker is linked to every school in the borough; the service is present at parent evenings and sometimes informal engagement events are held, such as coffee mornings for parents.

- 2.21 CAMHS is a multidisciplinary service with representation from a range of psychologists and psychotherapists. The service has a basic core offer for schools which is funded by the Islington Schools Forum. This provides all primary schools with access to a CAMHS worker for half a day a fortnight for 5/6 half terms, and all secondary schools with access to a CAMHS worker for a day a week for 5/6 half terms. In addition to the core provision, schools may buy in additional CAMHS services. 6 secondary schools and 12 primary schools in the borough had agreed an SLA with CAMHS which expanded on the core offer. The service provided support to young people, including direct clinical assessment and intervention, intervention groups, workshops for parents and individual parent consultations. CAMHS officers advised that young people at risk of exclusion were particularly vulnerable and often had multiple and complex needs, which could include mental health issues. This could include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autistic spectrum conditions, developmental issues and issues developed in response to experiences of trauma.
- 2.22 The Educational Psychology service provides a core funded service which includes assessments of pupils at serious risk of exclusion, assessments of vulnerable young people, assessments of children under 5 with complex needs and contribution to the development of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Additional traded services could be purchased by schools, including consultations and assessments for pupils with special educational needs and direct interventions for individuals and groups. Assessments were used to inform interventions which may be delivered by the school or other services. This could focus on developing a young person's social interaction skills, how they regulate their own behaviour, emotional development and building positive relationships with adults in the school.
- 2.23 The Committee heard that schools also make use of the outreach service offered by New River College. The head teacher of New River College advised that the service was received well by schools and the schools that used the service the most tended to have lower rates of exclusion. This was supported by evidence from Canonbury Primary School, which considered that the support offered by the outreach service had been very effective in helping to prevent exclusion. The support offered included assessment of children with behavioural and emotional needs and interventions with individual pupils and groups of children. Some pupils at risk of exclusion in mainstream schools also had temporary placements at New River College, attending for two days a week.
- 2.24 All of the support services providing evidence to the Committee emphasised the importance of early intervention. The Committee was advised that pupils engaging with support services were less likely to be excluded, and if they had to move school then this process would be managed more carefully with professional involvement. However, some services also expressed concern that pupils were not being referred for support at an early enough stage. In particular, the Educational Psychology service noted that they only had contact with 5 of the 32 permanently excluded pupils in 2017-18 and two of

those had only accessed the service after their exclusion. Although this limited involvement could suggest that the service was effective at preventing pupils from being excluded, officers thought that they should be involved in more cases. It was commented that services were sometimes asked to develop interventions for young people already on the cusp of exclusion, when it was often too late for the intervention to make a meaningful difference.

- 2.25 The evidence received from schools indicated that head teachers understood the benefits of early intervention. In particular, it was agreed that providing support to pupils with additional social, emotional and behavioral needs from a young age would help to minimise the development of more severe behavioral issues. However, it was advised that schools could find it challenging to identify the pupils in need of support at an early stage. Sometimes it was only apparent that young people needed additional support after their needs and behaviour had escalated.
- 2.26 Overall the Committee was satisfied with the range of support services available for young people. However, the Committee considers that schools should be further encouraged and supported in making referrals to support services at the earliest possible opportunity. This may require the council to provide further guidance on when and how to make a referral. In some instances, it may be necessary to restate the benefits of early intervention.
- 2.27 **Recommendation 1:** **Schools should be encouraged to make referrals at the earliest opportunity to support services such as Educational Psychology, CAMHS, the New River College outreach service and Early Help services.** Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should liaise with service providers to ensure that they provide further guidance to schools on when it is appropriate to make a referral, including how making a referral can benefit the young person, their family, and the school. Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should do further work to continue to raise this as a priority issue with school leaders through relevant forums, conferences and meetings, as appropriate.
- 2.28 The CAMHS, Educational Psychology and the New River College Outreach services emphasised that they did not just provide interventions for pupils, but whole school transformation programmes which seek to develop the policies and practices of schools to enable them to better support pupils with additional needs.
- 2.29 The New River College Outreach Service helped schools to develop their own support and interventions for pupils at risk of exclusion. This was beneficial to teaching and non-teaching staff, who would feel better equipped in supporting young people with challenging behaviours. Work with schools could include staff training on behaviour management strategies; development of behaviour support systems; the development of small groups focused on anger management, social skills, and self-esteem; and support with developing a more nurturing environment in school. One school had used the outreach service to carry out a behavior 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.

- 2.30 The Educational Psychology Service provided workforce development and policy development sessions to schools. The service also worked directly with teachers on how to embed different approaches for pupils with additional needs. It was particularly useful for teaching staff to have a basic understanding of adolescent psychology as this helped them to recognise and understand their pupils' behaviours. The service also helped to support staff wellbeing by giving them the capacity to manage stress, the emotional impact of their role, and to help them to de-escalate situations in the classroom. The service also worked with head teachers on developing a school ethos that was inclusive and supportive for vulnerable pupils. This could include developing pastoral care and improving relationships with parents.
- 2.31 The Committee noted the bespoke transformation work offered by the CAMHS service. In particular, CAMHS staff were passionate about taking a 'whole school approach' which involved working with schools, public health and school improvement officers to develop trauma informed practices in schools. Officers commented that this had a real impact on how schools worked with young people and helped to promote wellbeing and resilience.
- 2.32 During the course of the review CAMHS was working with 9 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and New River College on the Islington Trauma Informed Schools Pilot (ITIPS). This pilot was working to embed trauma informed approaches in schools to enable them to better support vulnerable young people, including those at risk of exclusion. Trauma informed approaches recognised that young people with additional needs, including those at risk of exclusion, tended to have experienced traumatic events earlier in their life. This could include domestic violence, parental substance abuse, neglect, family break up and a range of other adverse experiences. Traumatic events impact on child development as they result in the young person prioritising skills and responses which help the child to survive their environment; for example, self-defense, provoking conflict, controlling behavior and attention seeking. The result of this is that children do not prioritise learning skills which are less immediately relevant to survival; this includes social skills such as sharing and listening, problem solving and learning to manage their emotions. The trauma informed approaches pilot was therefore working with school staff so that they could recognise the symptoms of trauma and more effectively support young people who had traumatic experiences.
- 2.33 CAMHS also provided more generalised training to school staff on how to support young people with mental health issues. However, CAMHS officers had noticed that the same staff routinely attended their sessions. It was suggested that it would be beneficial for a wider range of school staff to develop their skills by attending the training on offer.
- 2.34 Evidence received by the Committee indicated that transformative work with schools was an effective and sustainable way of supporting young people at risk of exclusion. Furthermore, embracing trauma informed approaches is likely to have a broader beneficial impact on young people and may help to prevent young people's needs from escalating further. However, evidence from support services also indicated that not all schools were accessing the transformation programmes available, or were not using them as extensively as they could be. The Committee therefore considers that schools should be further encouraged and supported to make best-use of these programmes.

- 2.35 **Recommendation 2:**  
**Schools should be further encouraged to make best use of the whole-school transformation programmes offered by CAMHS, Educational Psychology, and the New River College outreach services.** In particular, schools should be encouraged to implement trauma informed practices in consultation with CAMHS as a method of better supporting children at risk of exclusion. To achieve this, officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should highlight the benefits of these transformation programmes through relevant forums, conferences and meetings with school leaders, as appropriate. If required, these services should review how their transformative services are promoted to schools.
- 2.36 The Committee heard concerns that some pupils with special educational needs and learning disabilities may not be receiving adequate support to stay in mainstream education. Some parents advised that their child had been disciplined, or even excluded, for behaving in a way that was consistent with, or a result of, their additional needs. Some parents believed that their school had not successfully implemented their child's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and said that some schools were not willing to make reasonable adjustments to their behaviour policies for children with special educational needs and disabilities. One parent had raised this with their child's school, who had responded to say that they would consider making adjustments to their punishment methods, but not to how their rules are enforced.
- 2.37 Some parents advised that their children were only diagnosed with special educational needs after their exclusion from mainstream school. Parents thought that if their child's special educational needs were diagnosed earlier then they would have received support in school and may not have been excluded. This was supported by representatives from Educational Psychology and CAMHS, who indicated that some pupils at risk of exclusion had undiagnosed special educational needs. It was commented that some of these young people had multiple and complex needs, but they may not have previously met the criteria for formal diagnosis, or may not have been referred or engaged with SEND services.
- 2.38 CAMHS officers noted that some schools had a structural disconnect between their special educational needs and behaviour management functions. These schools may not see a child's behaviour in the context of their special educational needs and therefore may not provide them with the support they need to manage their behaviour effectively. Similarly, pupils with challenging behaviour may not be assessed for special educational needs when they may be eligible for additional support. The Committee consider that closely linking special educational needs and behaviour management functions would assist schools in supporting pupils with additional needs that also have challenging behaviours. This change may also lead to the earlier diagnosis of special educational needs in young people at risk of exclusion.

- 2.39 **Recommendation 3:**  
**Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should encourage schools to closely link their Behaviour Management and Special Educational Needs functions.** This will help to ensure that pupils with behavioural difficulties are assessed for special educational needs and can access support if required, and the special educational needs of pupils can be recognised in school behaviour management practices. Officers should encourage schools to make this change through relevant forums, conferences, and meetings with school leaders, as appropriate.
- 2.40 Evidence received from Peter Gray, an independent expert on school exclusion, advised that there had been a nationwide decrease in exclusion between 2006 and 2010. There were various factors which contributed to this, one of which was the formation of 'Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships' in which schools took collective responsibility for coordinating and commissioning services for young people at risk of exclusion. Since 2010 the majority of these partnerships had been disbanded or incorporated into other forums.
- 2.41 The Committee welcomes that Islington already has well established school partnerships through the Schools Forum, the Community of Schools, and other forums. However, the Committee received evidence that it would be beneficial for schools to take a more collaborative and strategic approach to behaviour issues. Given that some Islington schools have high levels of persistent absence; it would be beneficial for these partnerships to cover attendance issues also.
- 2.42 Officers from the council's Early Help services explained that it was challenging to work across schools that had very different behaviour policies. Different rules at different schools made it difficult to give parents consistent and helpful advice on how to support their child in managing their behaviour. In addition, some parents queried why some behaviours were punished more severely in some schools than others. The fact that schools have such different approaches to managing behaviour may be indicative of the high variation in the exclusion rates of Islington schools.
- 2.43 The Committee would like to see a more joined up approach to managing behaviour and exclusion in schools. Establishing behaviour and attendance partnerships would provide a forum for schools to share best practice and problem-solve together. Additionally, this may help to standardise practices between schools and develop a shared culture of managing behaviour. It is important for these partnerships to be school-led, to ensure that the partnership addresses the issues which are important to schools and takes collective responsibility for behaviour and attendance issues.
- 2.44 **Recommendation 4:**  
**Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should encourage and support all schools to form Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships.** These would support schools in taking a collaborative and strategic approach to addressing behaviour and attendance issues through the sharing of best practice. This may reduce the variation between school behaviour policies and practices, help to establish local standards for when exclusion should be used, and develop a shared culture of managing behaviour in Islington schools.

- 2.45 School governors are crucial to the exclusions process, however the Committee heard that not all governors were confident in dealing with exclusion issues.
- 2.46 Schools are required to convene a Governor Hearing to review a head teacher's decision to permanently exclude. The governors may decide to either uphold the head teacher's decision or reinstate the pupil. If the decision is upheld, the parent can request a review by the Independent Review Panel. The Independent Review Panel does not have the power to reinstate a pupil, unless the governors' decision is quashed for reasons of illegality, irrationality, or procedural impropriety. The Panel can recommend that governors reconsider their decision to exclude, however it was thought that some governors would always choose to support a head teacher's decision.
- 2.47 Governing bodies also have a key role in shaping a school's culture and ethos, particularly in relation to behaviour management. Governors are responsible for setting objectives for the school, agreeing the school's behaviour policy and holding the head teacher to account. A school's culture and ethos appears to be a crucial factor in determining whether a school is a high or low excluding school. A school's ethos will shape how support for pupils is commissioned and provided, standards for behaviour and how rules are enforced.
- 2.48 The Committee suggests that governors would benefit from specific training on exclusion issues and on reviewing school behaviour policies. If there are concerns about the high level of exclusion in Islington schools, then these concerns should be shared with governors so they can challenge and review their school's practices in a constructive and informed way.
- 2.49 **Recommendation 5:**  
**School governors should receive training on how they can help to shape their school's culture and ethos, their role in the exclusion process, and how they can scrutinise school behaviour policies and practices.**
- 2.50 CAMHS officers suggested how support for pupils at risk of exclusion could be improved. It was suggested that more sophisticated data sharing arrangements, developed with due regard to Data Protection requirements, would help school staff to better understand the needs of young people. CAMHS officers advised that some areas had adopted 'pyramid of need' approaches, where a young person's needs were categorised without explicit reference to their individual circumstances. This allowed a wide range of school staff to be aware of a young person's needs and how best to support them, without having sensitive information or details of their personal circumstances.
- 2.51 Some of the parents interviewed suggested that there should be greater information sharing between schools, the police and the local authority, commenting that schools may be able to better support pupils if they had a more detailed understanding of the challenges they faced outside of school. The Committee would welcome greater information sharing if it would lead to school staff being better informed on how to support young people at risk of exclusion.

2.52 **Recommendation 6:**

**To ensure that all school staff are well equipped to support young people at risk of exclusion, officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should explore how information on pupil needs can be shared widely between support services and school staff whilst meeting confidentiality requirements.**

This could be achieved through adopting a 'pyramid of need' approach, where a young person's needs are categorised without explicit reference to their individual circumstances.

2.53 The Committee considered what else could be done to support schools in identifying support for young people at risk of exclusion. It is suggested that the Securing Education Boards may be able to offer further assistance in promoting best practice and identifying solutions at an early stage, with particular reference to trauma informed practice.

2.54 There are two Securing Education Boards, one for primary schools and another for secondary. The Boards include representatives from Children's Social Care, New River College, CAMHS, Targeted Youth Support, Pupil Services, School Improvement, the Educational Psychology Service and Schools. The Primary Board is chaired by a head teacher on a rotating basis, and the Secondary Board has an independent Chair. The Boards meet monthly to consider the placement of pupils in difficult circumstances. This includes those at risk of exclusion, those with medical needs, and who have disengaged from education. Schools make referrals to the Board and the Board makes a recommendation on how the child can be supported to stay in education or where the child should be placed if it is necessary to arrange a move. Sometimes this results in a move to another mainstream school, or a managed move to New River College, rather than through exclusion. Officers commented that all schools are well engaged in the work of the Boards.

2.55 The Committee welcomes that schools have access to a multi-disciplinary board for assistance with difficult to place young people. However, it is queried if the Boards could amend their processes to offer further support to young people at risk of exclusion at an earlier stage. It would be helpful if schools could call on the Board for advice on best practice and to help them problem-solve for pupils who are not engaging with other interventions. The Committee recommends that the Boards are asked to consider this further, including if their processes could be expedited for pupils at imminent risk of exclusion.

2.56 **Recommendation 7:**

**The Securing Education Boards should consider if any of their processes can be amended to offer further support to pupils at risk of exclusion.**

The Committee heard evidence of local schools working effectively to promote inclusion and avoid exclusion. The Committee would welcome the support of the Securing Education Boards in promoting examples of good practice to all schools so that all of Islington's pupils can benefit from this preventative work. For example, the Boards should consider if they can help schools in identifying support for pupils at risk of exclusion at an earlier stage, and if they can further support schools in identifying and implementing trauma-informed and solution-focused approaches for pupils at risk of exclusion. The Boards should also consider if their processes can be expedited for pupils at imminent risk of exclusion.

## 2.57 **Finding solutions: developing best practice in our schools**

- 2.58 The Committee received a great deal of evidence that does not directly lend itself to a specific recommendation, but would be helpful for the council to communicate to school leaders and governors. The Committee also considers that it would be helpful for the council to set clear expectations in relation to exclusion and a strategic vision for schools to reflect on. The Committee recommends that this information is codified into a 'Good Practice Guide' for schools; a single, accessible and practical document which provides schools with relevant information on exclusion matters.
- 2.59 The guide should include an aim for Islington's schools to exclude no pupils. While it is accepted that some exclusions are necessary, the expressed aim should be to keep all of Islington's young people in mainstream education. This should be supplemented by an objective for schools to avoid exclusions wherever possible, and not to use alternative provision as a substitute for exclusion. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has previously reviewed alternative provision and has made recommendations to reduce its use.
- 2.60 The guide should include clear information on the support services and transformation programmes available to schools, as well as examples of successful inclusion and behaviour management practices. The Committee considered examples of good practice in Islington schools, however other schools may also have effective or innovative practices that should be shared with our schools. Examples of good practice considered by the Committee included: the use of 'nurture hubs' in schools where children with high levels of need can learn in a different environment with more intensive support from school staff; the use of therapeutic interventions; restorative justice approaches; evaluating behaviour incidents and changing school practices to 'design-out' such incidents; the use of digital 'help buttons' so teaching staff can discreetly call on additional staff to assist with a behaviour incident; and the use of mentors for pupils so they have a positive relationship with a trusted adult.
- 2.61 The Committee also heard that some schools made use of 'inclusion' as an alternative to exclusion, with pupils effectively serving a fixed period exclusion in isolation within the school. Serving an exclusion within school may be appropriate in some instances, however the Committee also heard from parents that pupils can find this very challenging and this is not an effective punishment if they are not invited to reflect on their behaviour, are not provided with adequate work and are not supported when reintegrating into the classroom. While 'inclusion' is preferable to fixed period exclusion, guidance should be provided on how to make such practices work effectively.
- 2.62 The guide should emphasise the importance of teacher wellbeing. Teaching staff may need emotional and wellbeing support in order to manage challenging behaviour effectively. CAMHS and Educational Psychology are able to provide support in this area, although other sources of support are available.
- 2.63 The guide should emphasise the importance of listening to young people and their parents. Some of the young people interviewed said that they felt powerless and frustrated by the exclusion process. Some parents felt that they were not being listened to, or their views were being ignored. Some of the parents interviewed suggested that

schools should have 'Parent Panels' to work with the school on developing their processes and policies. Developing positive relationships with young people and their parents is important to allow honest conversations to take place.

- 2.64 The guide should emphasise that parents have a right to transparent information on their child's exclusion. Some parents provided the Committee with letters from their child's school which did not provide a detailed explanation of why their child had been excluded. Parents felt that they could not work with their child on improving their behaviour without having detailed reasons of why their child had been excluded.
- 2.65 The guide should specify that schools should signpost pupils and their parents and carers to independent advocacy services when they are at risk of exclusion. Some of the parents interviewed did not know how to access advice or support and felt that they needed independent support on navigating school and local authority processes. It would be helpful for schools to signpost parents to this support when necessary.
- 2.66 The guide should highlight the importance of providing comprehensive information to New River College on a pupil's behaviour, attainment, progress and needs. New River College took a highly 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. New River College commented that the information received from Islington schools was generally very comprehensive, although from time to time further information was necessary.
- 2.67 The guide should also include a practical toolkit or checklist to help schools in assessing young people's needs and identifying possible sources of support.
- 2.68 The Committee recommends that the guide should be promoted to head teachers, school staff with responsibility for behaviour management and special educational needs, and school governors.
- 2.69 **Recommendation 8:**  
**Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should use the Committee's findings to produce a Good Practice Guide for schools.** Specifically, this should include:
- An **aim** for Islington's schools to exclude no pupils;
  - An **objective** for schools to avoid exclusions wherever possible, and not to use alternative provision as a substitute;
  - A **challenge** for schools to work in collaboration with each other and the local authority to reduce Islington's exclusion rate;
  - Details of the **support services** available to young people at risk of exclusion, how they can be accessed, and the benefits of making a referral at the earliest possible stage;
  - Details of the **transformation programmes** available to schools and how they can help support pupils, including those at risk of exclusion;
  - Examples of **successful inclusion and behaviour management practices** adopted by schools;

- The importance of **teacher wellbeing** and how to support teachers to manage behaviour effectively;
- The importance of **listening to young people and their parents** on behaviour and exclusion issues;
- That behaviour **policies and practices should be flexible** for pupils with additional needs;
- That schools should closely link their behaviour management and special educational needs functions;
- That **governors should receive training** on exclusion and behaviour issues;
- That parents have a right to **transparent information** on their child's exclusion, and issues related to school behaviour policies and practices;
- That schools should signpost pupils and their parents or carers **independent advocacy services** when they are at risk of exclusion (i.e. when they are excluded for more than five non-consecutive days in a school year);
- That schools excluding pupils should **provide comprehensive information to the pupil referral unit** on a pupil's behaviour, attainment, progress and needs.
- A **practical toolkit or checklist** to help schools in assessing and identifying support for pupils at risk of exclusion;
- A summary of the Committee's conclusions, the impact that exclusion can have on young people and their families, and the cost of exclusion.

Officers in Pupil Services and School Improvement should promote this guidance to head teachers, school staff with responsibility for behaviour management and special educational needs, and school governors.

- 2.70 The Education Select Committee, in their report 'Forgotten children: alternative provision and the scandal of ever increasing exclusions' recommended that a 'Bill of Rights' be adopted for pupils and parents. It was recommended that this specify that schools should not rush to exclude pupils; parents and pupils have a right to know how often schools resort to exclusion; parents deserve more information when their children are excluded; pupils and their parents should have someone in their corner. The government has not yet adopted a 'Bill of Rights' approach, however the Committee considers that Islington Council could develop something similar locally to confirm the rights of parents and pupils.
- 2.71 In addition to the Good Practice Guide, the Committee recommends that all schools should affirm their commitment to inclusive education by signing a 'Charter for Inclusion'. Schools should be nurturing environments where everybody is welcome, which support pupils to remain in mainstream education, and which are flexible to pupils with additional needs. The Charter should link to the principles set out in the Good Practice Guide and should be developed in consultation with schools, New River College, and young people. It may be appropriate to consult with New River College pupils and the Youth Council. It is hoped that the Charter will lead to a more unified and fairer approach to exclusion across the borough.

2.72 **Recommendation 9:**

**A 'Charter for Inclusion' should be developed with Islington Schools and New River College to affirm their commitment to supporting Islington's young people to stay mainstream education.** The Charter should make explicit links to the principles set out in the Good Practice Guide and should be developed in consultation with young people.

**Finding solutions: supporting children and young people excluded from schools**

- 2.73 The Committee received evidence on the role of pupil referral units and visited New River College to talk with students and staff about their experiences.
- 2.74 The Committee was impressed with the work of New River College and had positive discussions with staff and students. The school has implemented personalised and trauma informed approaches and has high aspirations for its pupils. New River College is clearly committed to supporting young people with additional needs and has achieved good academic results in a challenging context. Staff work hard to identify pathways for young people; 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 also involved parents in their work and held sessions to develop their relationships with parents as well as pupils. The Committee welcomes that New River College Secondary received a 'Good' rating in its most recent Ofsted inspection, dated November 2018. Approximately 30% of pupils attending New River College were reintegrated into mainstream education. These were typically pupils in Year 9 or at the start of Year 10. It was unlikely that pupils in Years 10 and 11 would be re-integrated, as they would struggle to catch up with their GCSE studies.
- 2.75 The pupils interviewed said that they liked New River College, that they felt supported, and they welcomed the additional flexibility they had in comparison to mainstream school. Some parents spoke very highly of New River College; one parent said that their child was excluded from primary school and had been in New River College since Key Stage 2. New River College had taught their child to read and write, had helped the child receive a special educational needs diagnosis and was now providing the pupil with additional support as detailed in their EHCP. Another parent said that their child was excluded at age 16. Although they were initially worried about their child attending a PRU, they were now very happy with the provision, commenting that New River College was welcoming and supportive and gave their child the additional help they needed. Parents said that New River College engaged with pupils in a way that they could relate to and teacher-pupil relationships were based on mutual respect.
- 2.76 New River College works closely with support services. A CAMHS worker is fully integrated into New River College, working with pupils three days a week. The Committee asked New River College if they needed any further support from Islington Council. In response, it was commented that it would be helpful to have support from a social worker. This would enhance the offer of support available to young people. The Committee recommends that this be explored and provided from within existing resources if possible.

- 2.77 **Recommendation 10:**  
**Officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should review the feasibility of attaching a named social worker to New River College.** Providing New River College with this resource, even for a few hours a week, would enhance the support that is available to excluded pupils.
- 2.78 The Committee heard that young people face stigma for being excluded and attending New River College. Some parents said that they were worried about what they would tell friends and family, what their child would list on their CV, and how other people would view them. If children are re-integrated into mainstream education, some then had a reputation for having attended "a unit".
- 2.79 The Committee found that there was a misunderstanding of New River College, and of pupil referral units more generally. The Committee spoke with parents whose children were at risk of exclusion who expressed concern about PRUs; they were worried about the quality of the provision and of the impact of placing a large number of excluded children together in the same setting. This contrasted with parents whose children already attended New River College, who generally spoke positively about their experiences.
- 2.80 New River College acknowledged that some people had negative perceptions of pupil referral units. Although pupil referral units could be challenging settings, the reality was that New River College was a nurturing and supportive school. However, New River College was concerned that this negative perception was having an impact on their students and was detrimental to their wellbeing. New River College was working to challenge the perception of pupil referral units; but this was not an easy task.
- 2.81 The Committee would like the council to support New River College in challenging the stigma associated with attending a pupil referral unit. The successes of New River College should be promoted in the local community and targeted information should be provided to the parents of excluded pupils to reassure them and explain that New River College is a nurturing and supportive environment.
- 2.82 **Recommendation 11:**  
**To remove the stigma associated with attending a pupil referral unit, officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should work with New River College to widely promote the successes of its pupils.** Targeted information should also be provided to parents at the point of their child's exclusion, emphasising that New River College provides a supportive and nurturing learning environment, and summarising the findings of New River College's most recent Ofsted inspection in which it was rated 'Good'.
- 2.83 The Committee heard that only around half of New River College pupils had previously attended Islington schools. Children are only eligible to attend a pupil referral unit in their home borough and around half of New River College's pupils had attended schools in neighbouring boroughs prior to their exclusion.

2.84 The Committee recognises that many pupils living in Islington attend schools beyond the borough boundary. Although the council does not have a formal relationship with those schools, it is recommended that the council engage with neighbouring authorities and schools close to the borough boundary to make them aware of this review and the council's expectations for pupils living in Islington.

2.85 **Recommendation 12:**  
**Officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should engage with neighbouring authorities and schools in neighbouring boroughs close to the borough boundary, making them aware of this review and the support that is expected for pupils who are Islington residents.**

#### **Finding solutions: supporting parents and carers**

2.86 The evidence received from parents was very useful in understanding the impact that exclusion had on young people and their families. During the focus group, parents were clear that they needed more support. Many parents felt that they needed help in navigating school and local authority processes and did not know how to access independent sources of advice and advocacy.

2.87 Officers attending the focus group considered that there were actions that could be implemented immediately to help parents. Approval was received from the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families to immediately implement three actions, listed below.

#### **In response to evidence received during the review, officers have already implemented the following service changes:**

- (a) The council now provides more comprehensive information on independent sources of support available to parents and carers on its website and in the initial letter which is sent to parents and carers informing them of their child's permanent exclusion from school.
- (b) Officers have asked Islington Law Centre to hold free parent workshops on the exclusions process. The first session was held in November 2018.
- (c) Islington Law Centre has offered to hold a series of monthly drop-in sessions, at no cost to the council, for parents and carers seeking independent advice on issues arising from their child's exclusion.

#### **Finding solutions: Urging Central Government to act in the best interests of young people**

2.88 The Committee recognises that schools and the council cannot prevent all exclusions in Islington. Nationally, the number of exclusions has increased in recent years and this is largely due to factors beyond the control of local authorities.

2.89 Schools face increasingly severe financial pressures which is having a real impact on staff resources, as well as access to support services and extra-curricular activities. A recent national survey found that only 2% of head teachers believed that the top-up funding they received was sufficient to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. The move

towards a narrower curriculum leading into exams and the decline in opportunities to study arts and vocational subjects has led to some young people disengaging from learning. League tables are incentivising schools to compete rather than collaborate, and may be providing perverse incentives to exclude lower attaining pupils.

2.90 The Committee believes that the national increase in school exclusions is partially attributable to national education policy. Some of the changes to the education system introduced since 2010 have been detrimental to the wellbeing of young people, their families, and school staff. The Committee would welcome coordinated lobbying with teaching unions, neighbouring local authorities and others to highlight the impact of the government's education policy and to campaign for changes that would support children to remain in mainstream education.

2.91 **Recommendation 13:**  
**Islington Council should lobby for national policy changes that would support children to remain in mainstream education;** including a broader curriculum, increased funding for schools to better support children with additional needs, addressing educational equalities issues, and reforming school league tables which encourage schools to compete rather than collaborate and incentivise schools to exclude. Lobbying efforts should be coordinated with teaching unions, neighbouring local authorities and others, if possible.

2.92 The national review of school exclusions, chaired by Edward Timpson CBE, was due to conclude in late 2018. It was hoped that its conclusions would be published within the review period and the Committee would be able to consider its findings. However, at the time of writing the Timpson review has not yet concluded. The Committee would be very interested in the findings of the review and the government's response and would welcome a report on this to a future Committee meeting.

2.93 **Recommendation 14:**  
**Officers in the Children, Employment and Skills directorate should report back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on the findings of the national School Exclusions Review led by Edward Timpson CBE, and detail if it is possible to implement its recommendations locally.** The Committee would also welcome information on the Government's response to the Timpson review and any implications for Islington.

### 3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The focus of this review has been on exclusion; the impact that exclusion can have on young people and their families, the exclusion practices of local schools, the services available for pupils facing exclusion, and the reason why the number of exclusions has increased in recent years. Considering the range of evidence received, there is no single straightforward solution to prevent exclusion; exclusion reflects a plethora of complex and interconnected factors, both institutional, personal and social, that lead to a child facing the trauma of exclusion from school. However, what seems clear is that exclusion can be challenged by focusing on **inclusion**. Taking an inclusive approach is key to supporting pupils with additional needs and challenges. Inclusivity should underpin the work of all services involved in ensuring that young people remain engaged in education. The Committee hopes that its recommendations will contribute to an inclusive approach to supporting young people across the borough.
- 3.2 The Committee concludes that Islington's exclusion rate is too high. The significant variation of the exclusion rates of Islington's schools is not justified and further focused work with the highest excluding schools is needed. This work is important; exclusion is a fairness issue that is having a real impact on young people and their families.
- 3.3 14 recommendations have been made in response to the evidence received. These are related to preventing exclusion, developing best practice in schools, supporting young people excluded from school and their parents, and urging central government to act in the best interests of young people. The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses that gave evidence in relation to the review. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

<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>

## **Scope of the review:**

The review will focus on:

- 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?
- If pupils eligible for free school meals or with special educational needs are more likely to be excluded than the remainder of the cohort
- The effectiveness of exclusion in addressing disruptive behaviour, both for the excluded young person and across the school.
- 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**

#### **Committee Meeting – Monday 16 July 2018**

<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.

#### **August Recess**

<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 – 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 – 21 November 2019</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>Patrick Mildren, Head Teacher, Canonbury Primary School</li> <li>Jamie Brownhill, Head Teacher, Central Foundation Secondary School</li> <li>Nigel Smith, Head Teacher, New River College Pupil Referral Unit</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>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>Scrutiny Visit – 5 April 2019</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – The views of parents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up focus group with parents of excluded pupils</li> </ul>	To discuss the progress of the review with parents.

<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.

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