



AGENDA FOR THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee are summoned to a meeting, which will be held in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on, **20 September 2021 at 7.00 pm.**

Enquiries to : Zoe Lewis
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Despatched : 10 September 2021

Membership

Councillors:

Councillor Sheila Chapman (Chair)
Councillor Kadeema Woodbyrne (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Santiago Bell-Bradford
Councillor Janet Burgess MBE
Councillor Paul Convery
Councillor Toby North
Councillor Gulcin Ozdemir
Councillor John Woolf

Co-opted Member:

Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese
Zaleera Wallace, Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)
Claire Ballak, Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
Vacancy Church of England Diocese

Quorum is 3 Councillors

Substitute Members

Substitutes:

Councillor Valerie Bossman-Quarshie
Councillor Sara Hyde
Councillor Bashir Ibrahim
Councillor Anjna Khurana
Councillor Angelo Weekes

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)

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7. Public Questions

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

B. Items for Decision/Discussion	Page
1. Scrutiny Review - Witness Evidence - Presentation on Transition for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	9 - 26
2. Child Protection Annual Report	27 - 46
3. Quarter 1 Performance Report	47 - 76
4. Work Programme	77 - 78

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 19 October 2021

Please note that committee agendas, reports and minutes are available from the council's website: www.democracy.islington.gov.uk

The chair reported that she was aware from the news, that one quarter of pupils were not in school in the previous week and most of the absence was due to self-isolation.

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

None.

266 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. A7)

None.

267 SEND SCRUTINY REVIEW - SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT AND INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION (ITEM NO. B1)

Candy Holder, Head of Pupil Services gave an introductory presentation on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

In the presentation and discussion the following points were made:

- The SEND Code of Practice provided statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Code applied to all children and young people with SEND age 0-25.
- Where the text used the word 'must' it referred to a statutory requirement under primary legislation, regulations or case law.
- All relevant bodies (including local authorities, governing bodies and all schools and settings) must fulfill their statutory duties towards children and young people with SEND in light of the guidance set out in the Code.
- When considering an appeal from a parent or young person, the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) ('the Tribunal') must have regard to the Code of Practice. The Tribunal expected Local Authorities and schools to be able to explain any departure from the Code.
- The key principles of the Code were: 1) Full participation of parents, children and young people in assessment, planning and review, 2) Collaboration between Education, Health and Care Services, 3) A focus on inclusive practice and 4) Supporting successful transition to adulthood.
- The Children and Families Act 2014 secured the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEND should be educated, and the Equality Act 2010 provided protection from discrimination for disabled people.
- Where a child or young person had SEND but did not have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan they must be educated in a mainstream setting.
- The School Admissions Code of Practice required children and young people with SEN to be treated fairly. Admissions authorities: 1) must consider applications from parents of children with SEN but not an EHC plan on the basis of the school's published admissions criteria as part of normal admissions procedures; 2) must not refuse to admit a child with SEN but without an EHC plan because they did not feel able to cater for

those needs; 3) must not refuse to admit a child on the grounds that they did not have an EHC plan.

- Where a child had an EHC plan, the child's parent (or the young person if over 16) had the right to request a particular school, college or other institution to be named in their EHC plan and the local authority must comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless to do so would be:
 - unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEND of the child or young person, or
 - incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.
- In mainstream schools, school-based provision was called SEND Support. Schools were expected to follow a 'graduated approach' to SEND Support intervention that took the form of cycles of 'assess, plan, do, review' as an ongoing process to make sure provision was meeting identified needs. They should also consult relevant external agencies, make use of assessment tools and materials, record observations and evidence of progress.
- For children with significant or complex needs, where levels of support and intervention did not lead to expected progress, schools or parents could request a statutory Education Health and Care assessment. If needs were assessed as beyond a level that could be met from resources normally available to schools, an Education, Health and Care Plan might be issued.
- The national model had three levels of funding for SEND, with Elements 1 and 2 paid through school budgets, and Element 3 directly from the local authority. All schools received funding for each pupil as part of their delegated funding - the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) or Element 1. Support which was in addition to/different from the general was covered by another source of funding which was part of a school's delegated budget, known as Element 2. For children with more complex needs, Element 3 'top-up' funding (i.e. to top up already available Element 1 and 2) funding was managed by the local authority, normally through an EHC plan.
- The local offer included schools for physical and sensory need, social, emotional and mental health, communication and interaction and learning and cognition. Where a child had more specialist needs, these could be provided out of borough.
- Islington had 'SEN Support in Islington' handbooks for: 1) the Early Years and Primary Local Offer, 2) Secondary and Post 16 Local Offer, 3) Advice, Guidance and Expectations and 4) Behaviour.
- There were currently 1,509 children with an EHCP, 178 of whom had no additional education top up. Of the remaining 1331, the total Islington cost (mainstream & special) was £14,609,451. This related to 991 children/young people at an average cost of £14,742 per pupil and the total out of borough cost (mainstream & special) was £5,225,996. This related to 334 children/young people at an average cost of £15,515 per pupil. Of these 334 children/young people, 44 (13%) were looked after

children at a cost of £775,993 (£17,634 average cost per pupil) and 140 (41%) were in Further Education.

- Of the 255 children/young people in out-borough mainstream education, 117 (around 50%) were in Further Education colleges.
- Of the £2,383,607 spent on out-borough special provision, 31 children/young people (2%) were in independent schools at a cost of £1,164,565 with an average cost of £35,566 per pupil). However Islington's spend was lower than comparators.
- Of those in out of borough (mainstream and special provision) 193 (57%) were attending school / college in adjacent boroughs (Camden, Hackney, Haringey). Another 44 (13%) were Looked After Children.
- 22% of Islington resident children/young people with SEND attended schools out of borough. 25% of non-SEND children/young people attended schools out of borough.
- 40 county councils in England were warning of a £1.3bn SEN deficit which threatened to derail their finances and undermine capacity to support recovery efforts after the pandemic.
- The SEN Green Paper was expected in mid-July, but this would no longer be the case. The Minister of State for Children and Families had stated that systemic change was needed and acknowledged issues with the current system. She stated that work would continue and proposals for public consultation would be published as soon as possible.
- A SEND Strategy 2018-21 was in place and there was a Self-Evaluation detailing progress to March 2020, prior to the Covid disruption. A needs assessment (March 2021) and an Impact of Covid-19 Self-Evaluation (June 2021) were informing the development of an updated strategy.
- It was important to create a local system that could be trusted. There was a need to look at provision due to increased need and complexity. There was also a need for inclusive practice as this was not currently fully embedded across all settings. Fairness and equity were therefore of high priority in considering whether the system could be funded differently.
- In response to a question from a member about Element 3 funding and how Islington compared to neighbouring boroughs, the officer advised that Islington was in the top quartile of local authorities and funded to a higher level than neighbours.
- In response to a member's question about how life chances could be improved, the officer advised that culture, ethos and philosophy were important. It would be a challenge to ensure consistency of practice across provisions but work would be taking place on this in the next few months.
- In response to a question about the evidence that was helping to create a local system, the officer advised that this would be made available to committee members during the course of the scrutiny review.
- A member raised concern about the disparity between boys and girls with autism. The officer advised that Islington's average of girls to boys was better than the national average. However, often girls presented as adolescents and sometimes this manifested as self-harming or eating disorders.

- A member raised concern about disparity in relation to ethnicity and was advised that Black African groups were overrepresented early and this reversed at secondary school. There was double the average number of EHCPs amongst Black Somali young people. Work was taking place with Somali groups and consideration was being given to whether diagnostic tools were accurate. It was recognised that trauma and inherited trauma could also be factors in the overrepresentation.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That the Scrutiny Initiation Document (SID) be approved.

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EXECUTIVE MEMBER ANNUAL REPORT (ITEM NO. B2)

Cllr Michelline Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families presented the report which covered the period October 2020-July 2021 and gave a presentation entitled "Their Ambitions, Our Future: Children and young people at the centre".

Councillor Ngongo thanked Councillor Comer-Schwartz for her work prior to Councillor Ngongo taking over as Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families in January 2021.

In the presentation and discussion the following main points were made:

- During lockdown council services supported children and young people in the following ways:
 - The children of critical workers, vulnerable children with a social worker and those with an EHCP were supported to attend school;
 - Free Wi-Fi was given to care leavers;
 - Devices were organised and allocated to support children with their learning;
 - Food parcel deliveries were given to vulnerable families in partnership with voluntary sector partners;
 - There was investment in supporting the increasing need for social, emotional and mental health support;
 - Key services for children and young people including early years and childcare settings, adventure playgrounds, youth centres and hubs and libraries were open to those who needed them;
 - Face to face contact with children during the pandemic was based on a dynamic risk assessment of the need for multi-agency support;
 - Face to face contact with children, young people and their parents/carers for other services was resumed gradually;
 - Programmes of work aimed to ensure that groups such as Black Caribbean pupils made good progress and attained as well as their peers;
 - Actions were taken forward from the joint study with the Youth Justice Board to address the disproportionality of Black, Asian and other minority ethnic young people in the youth justice system;
 - Community safety issues for young people were addressed.
- Councillor Ngongo had set five priorities as follows:

- 1) To have a Parent Voice Forum to guide parents to find support, to provide training and help parents to learn from each other. The group met once a month and chose the topic for each meeting.
 - 2) To have a Young People's Forum led by young people. Subjects included GCSES and help with CVs. Someone from the Job Centre had recently attended along with a member of the Youth Employment Team to give advice.
 - 3) Book boxes. 100 books had been distributed to the Mother Tongue Supplementary Schools.
 - 4) Youth procurement and provision. Meetings between local councillors, parents, young people, schools and the community could help improve services.
 - 5) No Need to Exclude involved looking at what could be done differently to look at the root cause of a child behaving badly and how the child could be helped.
- Work was taking place to "Imagine, Ignite and Inspire" a Fair Islington for children and young people ensuring they were safe, cared for, could succeed in learning and thrive post-Covid.
 - It was important to build relationships and work in full collaboration with children and young people at the centre as well as rebuilt back better after Covid.
 - An away day had been held for members of the Corporate Parenting Board and lifelong parenting had been discussed.
 - Councillor Ngongo would be having a meeting with government officials about funding and support for children and young people in a post-Covid Islington.
 - There would be a future focus on helping young people with employment and skills.
 - Lifelong learning and enrichment would enable and empower children, young people and adults with the learning and skills for life, work and the future of work supported by a high quality and high performing, inclusive education and skills system.
 - Early help and working together for a safer Islington would enable and deliver system-wide approaches with local partners to intervene early and prevent problems from escalating among children, young people, their families and the wider community.
 - There would be a holiday activity and food offer with several school willing to facilitate activities.
 - Work was taking place to empower children, young people and adults to have choice and control over their care and support based on what mattered to them, their individual strengths and needs to build on the expertise of people, families and communities.
 - An event had been held to thank foster carers.
 - Work was taking place to maximise independence to enable young people and adults who required support to either transition to and/or live healthy, independent and fulfilled lives with strong networks.
 - As part of the Children's Social Care Transformation Programme families willing to foster but with insufficient space were being assisted to address this.

- Where putting children and young people into care was likely to increase risk and/or not improve their outcomes, prevention services worked intensively with each family to maintain their child in the community.
- As part of the work to reinvent and rebuild, the talents of staff and learning from Covid-19 would help design forward differently to help Islington recover.
- Working would take place in partnership with schools to identify and facilitate their work to support children in a post-Covid community
- Work would take place with Early Years, Childcare and Bright Start to help the take-up of places for early years and childcare recover to pre-Covid levels and return to high levels of face to face Bright Start activity for families with young children.
- A member commented on the exceptional response during the pandemic and stated that although Covid restrictions had been lifted, there was still much uncertainty and sustained efforts would be required to help children move on from Covid-19.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

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CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT (ITEM NO. B3)

Laura Eden presented the Annual Report which was an overview of achievements, progress and challenges in meeting the needs of Islington's children looked after and care experienced young people from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

In the discussion the following main points were made:

- In March 2020 there were 366 care leavers. The figure was now 426.
- In response to a member's question about the numbers of care leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET), the officer reported that the EET figures had improved despite Covid. The Youth Employability and Skills Team had been successful in improving the figures and this work would continue.
- In response to a question about the role of the Children's Active Involvement Service, the officer stated that there was a chair and vice-chair, the young people conducted surveys to obtain views and improve services and ran activities and training. Prior to Covid, the young people had run sessions to enhance the understanding of young people's experience as residents at semi-independence units with staff there. This had led to some of them becoming young commissioners undertaking contact monitoring of semi-independent provisions. They also had a role on the Corporate Parenting Board influencing service delivery and being the voice of children in care and care leavers. Whilst every council was required to have an In Care Council with a chair and vice-chair, it was less usual for CAIS (Islington's name for its In Care Council) to have such a vital role on Corporate Parenting Boards.
- A member reported that prior to Covid, some looked after children had given a presentation to councillors and this had been useful in

reminding councillors of their role as corporate parents. An officer stated that some local authorities held a corporate parents' evening but care had to be taken as some young people had had difficult life experiences they did not always want to share. A co-optee raised concern about asking young people to present to councillors when they had often had to talk to lots of people about their experiences over the course of their lives. An officer suggested that any councillor was welcome to go to CAIS, the In Care Council where there would be young people willing to speak to them.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

270 WORK PROGRAMME (ITEM NO. B4)

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

271 SEND SCRUTINY REVIEW - SID AND INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION - APPENDIX (ITEM NO. E1)

RESOLVED:

That the appendix be noted.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.15 pm

Chair



Transition for children with SEND

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Agenda Item B1

The council's [guidance on transition planning](#) recognises that all children may need support at some time to enjoy the new opportunities and meet the challenges they will face as they move through different stages of their life. Some children and young people, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are likely to need more support however, particularly at key transition times.

Our guidance is predicated on four over-arching principles:

- Effective planning to support children and young people and their families in managing change
- Engagement and participation of children and young people and their families in assessment, planning and review
- Ensuring information exchange – with children and young people and their parents as well as across services and between institutions
- Effective commissioning - so that the right provision and support is in place for the right children at the right time

[Islington Multi-Agency Progression to Adulthood protocol](#) sets out the role of each agency and processes for accessing support for those transitioning to adulthood.

- The following applies to children and young people with EHCPs across all phases:
- The child's parent (or the young person over the age of 16) has the right to request a particular school / college (including an independent school) be named in their EHC plan
- Where this happens, the local authority **must** comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless:
 - it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or
 - the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources
- The local authority **must** consult the school or college concerned and consider their comments before deciding whether to name it in the child or young person's EHC plan
- Where a parent or young person does not make a request for a particular school or college, the local authority **must** specify mainstream provision in the EHC plan
- Mainstream education cannot be refused by a local authority on the grounds that it is not suitable.
- A local authority can rely on the exception of incompatibility with the efficient education of others only if it can show that there are no **reasonable steps** it could take to prevent that incompatibility.
- The SEND Code of Practice sets out in some detail with examples, what 'reasonable steps' might look like (para 9.91 to 9.94)



Children with SEND Early Years to Primary School

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- Children with SEND are supported across our Early Years provision by well trained staff, with advice and guidance from Area SENCOs, Educational Psychologists, CAHMS, Therapists and other support services
- There are also 36 specialist (additionally resourced) places across Early Years; early years providers can also apply for additional funding to put in place additional support for identified children
- Early years, the SEND Team and Health colleagues work closely together to identify those children who may have special educational needs that will require support over and above what is normally available, and therefore may need an Education Health and Care Plan to support them when they transfer to school through well established multi-agency systems
- Transition is carefully planned and managed between the Early Years provider and destination school, with support from the Area SENCO Team. This will normally include exchange of information, visits and joint planning that fully involves parents and carers
- For those children who may require an Education Health and Care Plan, every effort is made to ensure this is in place before they transition to school so that the school has a clear understanding of needs, outcomes and provision for that child as well as any Top-up funding assessed as necessary to support the delivery of the plan.
- The school will always be consulted before they are named in a plan, but as for all cases, the local authority must comply with parental preference unless there is concrete evidence that this would not be compatible with the efficient use of resource or the education of others.

- **Rapid increase in the number and complexity** of children with SEND in Early Years.
- This has led to **more demand for specialist places** at transition, placing both immediate and longer term implications for the local offer. 25 additional places have been made available at The Bridge Special School (for children with Autism) from September 2021, while we work on longer-term solutions through the current SEND Review.
- All schools are therefore seeing a **higher number** of children with EHCPs and SEND Support needs across key stage 1, and for a small number of schools, 10% or above of children in one class have complex needs.
- We are looking again at SEND funding arrangements through the **SEND Review** to see how we might better 'front load' funding for predicted intake. In the meantime, schools can apply for exceptional needs funding in individual / unforeseen circumstances.
- There are also some strongly held views among Headteachers that decision making regarding placement of children is **not transparent or fair**. We have therefore invited Headteachers to join moderating panels and will share school-level information more widely across all schools.



Children with SEND Primary to Secondary School

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- To support transition, the primary school should share information with the secondary school the child or young person is moving to. This is achieved in a number of ways including visits, through review meetings and/or at an annual SENCO conference organised by the LA.
- There are some examples of very good practice in across Islington schools, e.g. one secondary school has all children with SEND in attendance for a week before term starts to enable them to get the know the building, rules and the staff who will be supporting them.
- The school should agree with parents and pupils the information to be shared as part of this planning process.
- For children with an EHC plan:
 - As stated, the plan **must** be reviewed and amended by 15 February in the calendar year of the transfer
 - The SEND Team has an officer dedicated to Secondary transfer who guides parents through the process. Each secondary transfer cohort includes approximately 100 children. Parents are encouraged to identify more the one preference
 - Where the parent's preferred school is not named in the plan, the parent has the right of appeal to the independent First Tier (SEND) Tribunal.
 - Within the context of the requirements of the Code of Practice, the SEND Team keep oversight of parental choice to identify any school that may have a disproportionately high number of EHCP preferences. In such cases, and where the school may not be the closest to the home address, we will consider carefully whether naming the school would be compatible with the efficient use of resource or the efficient education of others, although the burden of proof on this is high.

- Different schools operate different practices in transition arrangements
- Despite the good transition practice, the majority of schools (Islington and out-borough) respond negatively to the initial consultation (which normally takes place in early January)
- Parents may not give consent to information sharing
- Children with an EHC Plan will receive confirmation of the school named in their plan by 15 February while all other children will receive their offer on 1 March
- The First Tier (SEND) Tribunal finds in favour of Local Authorities who do not name the parents' preferred school for only 8% of cases
- Again, some Islington secondary schools feel that that decision making regarding placement of children is not transparent or fair. For the 2021 exercise we will invite Secondary School SENCOs of other representative to join Officers when they consider the cohort, preferences and placement.
- Where a parent identifies an out-of-borough school, we must consult not only the school, but also the home local authority for that school – negotiations can sometimes be more challenging, therefore.
- Similarly, other Local Authorities must consult Islington before naming an Islington school for one of their residents. This must also be taken into account in our planning therefore.



Young People with SEND – Transition to Adulthood

- The Code of Practice expects that high aspirations about **employment, independent living and community participation** should be developed from the earliest possible stage.
- It also expects schools to seek **partnerships** with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations and arts and sports groups, to help children understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve.
- Local authorities **must** ensure for those with SEND that the relevant services they provide co-operate in helping them to prepare for adulthood. This may include housing services, adult social care and economic regeneration. There are good examples of these relationships through our special schools and New River College (PRU), supported by wider Council services such as iWork, iSet (Islington Supported Employment Team), 100 hours of Work.
- For teenagers, preparation for adult life needs should become a more explicit element of their planning and support, focused on what they want to achieve and the best way to support them. Considering the right post-16 option is part of this planning.
- Local authorities have a range of other duties which are particularly relevant to this area, including:
 - to offer advice and information **directly to young people** over the age of 16
 - together with health services, to make joint commissioning arrangements about the education, health and care provision of children and young people to secure positive adult outcomes
 - to co-operate with FE colleges, sixth-form colleges, 16-19 academies and independent specialist colleges
 - to include in the Local Offer provision which will help children and young people prepare for adulthood and independent living
- Also, EHCPs cover Education, **Health and Care**, so that transition to adult health and where necessary, social care services is also a very important part of this planning.

Careers advice for children and young people

- Maintained schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) have a statutory duty (section 42A of the Education Act 1997) to ensure ALL pupils from Year 8 until Year 13 are provided with independent careers guidance. Academies, including 16-19 academies, and free schools are subject to this duty through their Funding Agreements.
- All young people should be helped to develop the skills and experience, and achieve the qualifications they need, to succeed in their careers, with the expectation that the vast majority of young people with SEND are capable of sustainable paid employment. All professionals working with them should share that presumption.
- One of the most effective ways to prepare young people with SEND for employment is considered to be through work-based learning that enables them to have first-hand experience of work, such as:
 - 19
20 **Apprenticeships:** paid jobs that incorporate training, leading to nationally recognised qualifications. Young people with EHC plans can retain their plan when on an apprenticeship.
 - **Traineeships:** Education and training programmes with work experience, focused on giving young people the skills and experience they need to help them compete for an apprenticeship or other jobs.
 - **Supported internships:** Structured study programmes for young people with an EHC plan, based primarily at an employer. Internships normally last for a year and include extended unpaid work placements of at least six months. Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. Young people with EHC plans will retain their plan when undertaking a supported internship. Local examples include Project Search Whittington Hospital – in conjunction with Ambitious College (for young people with autism), Project Search Moorfields (for young people with learning difficulties and / or autism)

- Local authorities **must** ensure that the EHC plan review at Year 9, and every review thereafter, includes a focus on preparing for adulthood.
- Preparing for adulthood planning in the review of the EHC plan should include:
 - support to prepare for higher education and/or employment. This should include identifying appropriate post-16 pathways, training options such as supported internships, apprenticeships and traineeships, or support for setting up your own business. The review should also cover support in finding a job, and learning how to do a job (e.g. through work experience opportunities) and help in understanding any welfare benefits that might be available
 - support to prepare for independent living should also include discussing where the child or young person wants to live in the future, who they want to live with and what support they will need.
 - support in maintaining good health in adult life, including effective planning with health services of the transition from specialist paediatric services to adult health care.
 - support in participating in society, including understanding mobility and transport support, and how to find out about social and community activities, and in developing and maintaining friendships and relationships
- The review should identify the support the child or young person needs to achieve these aspirations and should also identify the components that should be included in their study programme to best prepare them for adult life.
- For young people moving from secondary school to a post-16 institution or apprenticeship, the review and amendments to the EHC plan **must** be completed by the 31 March in the calendar year of the transfer



Goals and aspirations (education, employment and training)

- Promoting adjusted apprenticeships, supported internships, traineeships and work placements
- Develop equitable FE and training options, pathways and processes
- Shaping employment options, pathways and processes, including engaging employers and promoting the benefits of employing a young person with additional needs

Independent living

- To create a system and processes that are easy to understand with regards to housing - Working with residents to review provision of easy read information on benefits, adaptations, repairs and utilities
- To effectively collate and analyse data to enable planning for the future, including a cross cutting Housing needs analysis

Health and wellbeing

- Develop and implement clear, agreed pathways between health settings and teams, including for transition from children's to adults services
- To actively promote access and reasonable adjustment within services
- Offering a variety of strategies to manage behaviour that challenges
- Improving early identification and better target interventions of young people with autism who are most at risk of developing mental health needs

Community inclusion

- Encouraging a range of local community activities that do not divide people by diagnosis
- Creating opportunities to raise disability awareness and acceptance amongst CYP
- To better understand and utilise opportunities within universal services
- To develop and implement a robust training framework about the basic needs of people with disabilities.
- Linked to accessible transport strategy/project
- Linked to adult day opportunities changes

PTA pilot and service transformation:

- Building on learning from pilot;
- Developing/shaping new transition offer including:
 - Social work team;
 - Shaping health pathways;
 - Opportunities to further strengthen employment

Data and commissioning:

Develop an integrated approach across CYP and Adult commissioning to strategic planning, commission and resource management for SEND, with actions driven by robust analysis and interpretation of shared data, performance and quality outcomes and feedback from children, young people and their families and young adults

Co-design approaches

- The government's refreshed the national strategy for improving the lives of autistic people and their families (published in July 21) has for the first time extended its scope to include children and young people
- The revised Strategy also takes account of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with Autism, backed by research from the Policy Innovation and Evaluation Research Unit (LSE) ([autistic people's experiences during the pandemic](#)) and by the National Autistic Society and others ([Left Stranded](#)) which confirm the view that the pandemic has exacerbated challenges many autistic people already faced, such as loneliness, social isolation and anxiety, with those with higher support needs, autistic women and non-binary people particularly impacted.
- The strategy sets out changes across six areas, the following two of which may have particular relevance to the Scrutiny Committee in the context of this review:

Improving autistic children and young people's access to education and supporting positive transitions into adulthood:

- The SEND system should enable autistic children and young people to access the right support within and outside of school
- Schools should provide better support to autistic children and young people so they are able to reach their potential
- Improvements to the support autistic people get in their transitions into adulthood.

Supporting more autistic people into employment:

- The employment gap is closed as more autistic people who are able and want to work can do so.

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Questions to ask

For parents/carers:

- How were you able to express your views and did you feel listened to?
- Where relevant, did your child have the opportunity to express their views? If so, how was this achieved?
- Was there the opportunity for a phased transition programme? If so, what did this look like?
- Did you/your child have the opportunity to meet key members of staff prior to the move?
- What information was provided about the transition process and the receiving school?
- Was there any further information you would have liked to have?

For schools:

- How do you engage parents/carers in expressing views about the transition of their children?
- How do you engage young people, where relevant, in expressing their views?
- How do you liaise with the current/next school and other professionals on planning the transition?
- What information do you provide to parent/carers and their children? To the current/receiving school?

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Report of: Interim Director of Children’s Services

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee		All

Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
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1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the Committee on the progress being made in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Islington’s most vulnerable children from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the committee scrutinise the headline performance outcomes
- 2.2 That the Committee scrutinise the governance arrangements for safeguarding children.
- 2.3 That the Committee scrutinise the findings of quality assurance activities.

3. Background

- 3.1 The welfare of Islington’s vulnerable children is rightly one of the Council’s highest priorities. As of March 2021, Islington Safeguarding and Family Support Service is currently working with 979 children in need, 349 children who are looked after, of which 25 are disabled children and 55 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), 586 care leavers and 194 children with child protection plans. The majority of child protection plans are due to emotional abuse or neglect. Characteristics of parents whose children have child protection plans include domestic violence and abuse (47%), adult mental health (36%) and adult alcohol or substance misuse (26%). 5 children were living in a Private Fostering arrangement at some point during the year 2020/21. Islington’s Young Islington Service is currently working with 57 Youth Offending interventions. This includes zero custodial interventions, five remand interventions and 52 community interventions.
- 3.2 In 2020 Islington had 1 full inspection. The inspectors considered the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families, the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection and the experience and progress of children in care and care

leavers. This was in accordance with the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services framework (ILACS). The inspection concluded Islington's overall effectiveness as Outstanding and that:

"Children in Islington benefit from services that have gone from strength to strength since the last inspection in 2017, when they were judged good overall, and outstanding for leadership, management and governance. Senior leaders and members of the council demonstrate an unwavering commitment to improving and enriching the lives of children and their families. This is evidenced by the significant and sustained investment in children's services, and by the wide range of highly successful initiatives that are having a positive impact on children and their families, whatever their level of need. Highly skilled and experienced staff listen carefully to children to understand their needs and ensure that plans are effective.

Senior leaders promote a strong culture of learning and development and have built on the findings of the focused visit and the joint targeted area inspection in 2018. Partnership working is strong and well established and has contributed to the development and successful implementation of many creative and innovative services. Senior managers have an accurate picture of the quality of practice and services delivered in Islington and the improvements that are still required, through highly effective performance information and quality assurance systems. Staff receive high-quality support and take great pride in their work."

3.3 Our routine Annual Engagement Meeting with Ofsted was held on 11th June 2021. This annual conversation is used to jointly identify areas for further scrutiny / inspection and is informed by the annual self-evaluation. This was a very positive meeting with no areas of concern or challenge identified. We do not expect any further Ofsted inspection activity in Children's Social Care until next year when we are likely to receive a focused visit.

3.4 We are awaiting our Youth Offending Service and Special Educational Needs and Disability inspections.

4. Governance Arrangements

4.1 The governance and scrutiny of the arrangements for safeguarding children take place through this Committee and the following inter-agency fora:

4.2 **Safeguarding Accountability Meetings** chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by the Leader of the Council, Executive Member for Children and Families, Corporate Director of People, Independent Chair of the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Director of Safeguarding. The meeting is held eight weekly and allows senior members to hold senior officers and the chair of the Safeguarding Partnership to account, to scrutinise performance related to vulnerable children, to be appraised of any concerns about the safety and welfare of children and to drive improvement.

4.3 **Corporate Parenting Board** co-chaired by the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families and the In Care Council (Children Looked After and Care Leavers) and attended by four elected members and senior officers in the council as well as across the partnership. The Board meets eight weekly and scrutinises performance and strategic planning related to children in care and care leavers, sets direction and drives improvement

4.4 **Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership (ISCP)**, formerly *Islington Safeguarding Children Board* is chaired by an independent chair and scrutineer. The *ISCP Executive* meets quarterly to set the strategic direction of the ISCP which also meets every quarter. The three statutory safeguarding partners, *London Borough of Islington, MPS Central North Borough Command Unit* and *North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group* have established a local

protocol for the functioning of safeguarding arrangements and is working well. The Government has announced a transfer of responsibilities from CCGs to *Integrated Care Systems*, which means the safeguarding responsibility that currently sits with the CCG's *accountable officer* will transfer to the *Chief Executive Officer* of the *Integrated Care Board*; work is under way to make the necessary amendments to the local safeguarding arrangements.

4.5 During the previous 12 months LBI informed the ISCP of four *serious child safeguarding incidents* which produced four *Rapid Reviews*, one of which led to a *Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review* (Thematic Review of Children Looked After Placed at a Distance). A fifth notification of an Islington child was also made by London Borough of Croydon but a *Rapid Review* was not required in that instance. The ISCP have also overseen the completion of two *Serious Case Reviews* (Child P and Child Q). This year, the *National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel* has endorsed all the ISCPs recommendations.

4.6 In July 2021 the partnership reviewed and agreed its new priority areas for the next 3 years:

- Addressing the impact of neglect on children, including by helping them to become more resilient.
- Adolescents at Risk of Sexual and Criminal Exploitation
- Addressing the consequences / harm suffered because of domestic violence, parental mental health, and substance abuse.
- Impact of inequality and structural racism on vulnerable children and to create a better understanding of data across the partnership

The strategic work-plan is being developed with the chairs of the ISCP sub-groups to take this work forward. The sub-groups are Quality Assurance, Training and Workforce Development, Missing and Child Exploitation, Case Review, Education and Early Help Subgroup.

4.7 The ISCP annual report evaluates the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection in Islington and the ISCP August 2019 – September 2020 report was presented to the Committee in February 2021.

5. Islington's Motivational Practice Model and Partners in Practice Work

5.1 The DfE granted nearly £5m to children's social care in three Phases to transform services to improve outcomes for children and their families. Phase 1 involved building a practice model- "Motivational Social Work" and Phase 2 expanding the reach to include children who receive an early help service, children who are known to the Criminal Justice System, gang affiliated or at risk of criminal exploitation and Looked After Children- "Motivational Practice Model". Phase 3 now involves working with other Local Authorities to improve their practice and outcomes for their children- Partners In Practice.

5.2 The practice model is relationship based and feedback from children, families, staff, services and Ofsted has been very positive; "*A stable workforce and manageable caseloads enable social workers to develop positive and enduring relationships with children. The local authority's preferred social work model is well embedded, and workers demonstrate a good understanding of the impact of trauma on children's lives. Practitioners build effective relationships with parents and provide appropriate challenge*". This Practice Model has demonstrated impact on our data for example the reduction in re-referral rates to Children's Social Care. Islington is now undertaking Partners in Practice work with 3 Local Authorities.

6. Performance Management and Quality Assurance

6.1 In order to ensure that Islington's most vulnerable children are safe and that our services continuously improve, a range of quality assurance measures are employed to continually test

the quality of our service provision and to learn lessons about how to improve. It should be noted that during this reporting period that the impact of Covid-19 has been a factor and some of the data collected, and audits carried out throughout the year were designed to understand the impact and ensure services were continuing to safeguard vulnerable children and families.

6.2 Through performance management we are able to use key performance indicators as a proxy measure for quality of service and to support service improvement. Caution needs to be exercised in relying on performance indicators in isolation as it is possible to have good performance indicator but poor quality of service; although conversely it is unlikely that there could be good quality of service and poor performance. Therefore, to ensure that there is a comprehensive understanding of the quality of service both quantitative and qualitative information must be reviewed.

6.3 The data tells us that:

- We received 11,147 contacts requesting a service for children in 2020/21, an increase from 2019/20.
- The most common source of contacts was the police (34.4%), followed by schools (10.2%)
- The most common reasons for contacts were domestic violence (15.6%), information requests (10.9%), parenting capacity (10%), child mental health (7%), specific concerns regarding a sibling (6.9%), parental mental health (5.3%), and parental dispute (5%).
- 3,843 (36.2%) went on to receive an early help service and 1,918 (18.1%) went onto receive a social care service
- We had the 23rd highest rate of assessed Children in Need in the country in 2019/20.
- We had a higher rate of children with child protection plans per 10,000 compared to our statistical neighbours (SN) in 2019/20 (47 per 10,000 for Islington, 38 per 10,000 for our SN)
- We have carried out a much higher rate of child protection enquiries than statistical neighbours
- We had a lower proportion of repeat child protection plans compared to our SN in 2019/20 (18% compared to SNs 20%). The figure for Islington for this year end 20/21 is 10.5%.
- Children do not have child protection plans for lengthy periods of time, this means that the harm they suffered is resolved as quickly as it can be - over 50% ended within nine months in 2020/21
- We applied to court for orders to protect children more than most other boroughs, we had the 25th highest nationally.
- Islington has more children looked after per 10,000 than the SN average, and only one SN had a higher rate in 2019/20
- The proportion of Looked After children who had to move more than three times during a year is slightly lower than our SN (9.8% compared to 11.0% in 2019/20)
- 89 children in our care moved 2 or more times in 2020/21. Children and young people with the most complex needs (are more likely to be older when they come into our care, have an Education, Health & Care Plan, known to be physically violent, have exploitation risks or those who have experienced complex trauma in their parents' care) are likely to have the most moves.
- Fewer children 16+ are becoming looked after (from 86 in 2019/20 to 55 in 2020/21), and fewer 11-15-year olds (from 57 in 2019/20 to 41 in 2020/21)- this is in line with our transformation programme
- 16.5% of young people are remaining with their foster carers after their 18th birthday and 36% move to semi-independent accommodation
- Placements for children looked after are becoming much more difficult to find, there is a national shortage of foster homes and significant challenges of supply within the

children's homes sector

- 66 children were placed more than 20 miles away (19%)
- No children were subject to secure orders to protect them from absconding and harm related to Child Exploitation (sexual or criminal). For the 2 years preceding this was 4 children.
- 5 children were adopted in 2020/21 (6 in 2019/20) and 15 made the subject to a Special Guardianship Order (21 in 2019/20). Looking at just looked after children with Special Guardianship Orders, 9 were made the subject of an order in 2020/21, down from 18 in 2019/20.
- Covid 19 meant that school attendance data could be collected and shared by cohort, the average attendance for the academic year for CIN was 86%, CP 81%, CLA 88% & YOS 56%.

6.4 A monthly meeting is held within the Safeguarding and Family Support Service and Young Islington Service that holds all Senior Managers to account on the key performance data and the quality of the intervention to families. From monitoring key performance indicators, we are able to identify that:

- 10% children who received early help in 2020/21 went on to receive a social care service (reduced marginally from 11% in 2019/20).
- 89% of children who received a Triage in 2020/21 were diverted from the Criminal Justice System (increased from 2019/20 at 80%).
- Children have an allocated social worker within 48 hours of being referred to the service and following assessment have a plan that sets out the actions required to improve their outcomes; children newly allocated to a social worker are seen within 10 days (sooner if needed). This is monitored weekly
- Offence gravity for the YOS cohort has increased in 2020/21, despite a drop in the overall number of offences.
- Children who have child protection plans have a core group of professionals who have prescribed tasks in respect of their involvement with the child
- 97.8% of children who have child protection plans have their plan reviewed after three months and six monthly thereafter as per London Child Protection Procedures and where the review doesn't take place in time there are clear reasons for this
- 10.9% of the children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan have a disability in 2020/21, while national figure is 3%.
- 27% of children in the Criminal Justice System reoffended in 2020/21 (based on the Q4 2019/20 cohort)
- Only 2 young people received a custodial sentence in 2020/21, a significant reduction from 7 the previous year and 26 the year before. This drop moves us in line with our closest comparators
- Children looked after are seen at four weekly, six weekly or at 3 monthly intervals in accordance with their needs and placement stability, this was both face to face and virtual depending on risk assessment and need during lockdown
- All children looked after are independently reviewed every six months, this has been conducted virtually in most cases during Covid
- Practitioner caseloads vary from an average of 12 - 15 children per worker for Children in Need, 11 per worker for Disabled Children, 7-18 children per worker for Children Looked After and 5-7 in the Youth Offending Service. This variance is due to staff turnover and the need for newly qualified staff to have protected caseloads. A caseload of 15 children maximum is the accepted standard
- All cases are subject to supervision and management oversight at least monthly.

- 6.5 A key theme that these monthly meetings have focused on during the latter half of the year has been disproportionality in Safeguarding and Family Support. Whilst services were keenly aware there was disproportionality between different ethnic groups amongst the cohorts of Children in Need, Child Protection Plan and Looked After Children, compared to the Islington population, a detailed 'deep dive' looked at the journey through the social care system for young people from different ethnic groups, and differences in outcomes. Amongst the findings were:
- Black-Caribbean and Mixed ethnicities are over-represented amongst children's social care contacts and referrals compared to the Islington population of children.
 - A higher proportion of contacts from Schools and Police are for children from a Black ethnic group, compared to contacts from other agencies.
 - Black young people referred by schools are more likely to be referred due to abuse or neglect than other ethnic groups.
 - However, once we look at the key factors identified during assessment, the factors that are recorded significantly more often for Black young people are 'gangs' and 'socially unacceptable behaviour'.
 - It took on average around 200 days longer for an Islington child of Mixed ethnicity to move in with their adoptive family after they became looked after, compared to White-British children. This is consistent with the findings from a 2000 study across England.
 - Black-Caribbean children and young people are more likely to come into the social care system repeatedly – this ethnic group has the highest rate of re-referrals and the highest rate of becoming subject to child protection plans for a second or subsequent time.

Following these findings and others, services are now considering what can be done to affect this disproportionality. This includes work with our partners and the findings were shared at an ISCB Away Day in July 2021.

- 6.6 To assure the quality of our safeguarding services we routinely review qualitative information alongside performance data through our Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). There are a wide range of activities which constitute the Quality Assurance Framework for Islington Council's Safeguarding and Family Support Service and Young Islington. This enables the services to build a clear picture of the effectiveness of our practice with children, young people, and their families. During Covid-19 some Quality Assurance Activity has been very fast paced and focused on gaining an immediate understanding of the service delivery on children and young people.
- 6.7 The Motivational Practice model articulates a clear vision of good practice and sets out how practice quality should be measured against it. The child's databases are a system that allows us to collect and analyse a wide range of simple data, which over time allows us to track changes in demand and service delivery. Covid-19 interrupted this but not to a significant as the data collected was still meaningful.
- 6.8 Good quality assurance ensures that we are doing the right things to a high standard. It helps us notice and attend to new challenges, build on and replicate our successes, and plan for future needs.
- 6.9 Usually twice a year, all senior managers and the Chief Executive, Executive Member for Children and Families and the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership chair spend a week on the frontline observing practice and talking to social workers and practitioners about the children, families, and carers they work with. In 2020/21 due to Covid-19 restrictions there was one Practice Week in the main carried out virtually by Senior Managers.

The aims of practice week are:

1. Ensure Senior Managers understand what it is like for front line practitioners and gaining a

- deeper understanding of current frontline practice.
2. To help understand the impact of Covid-19 on the delivery of services to families and to measure support staff were able to access while working remotely.
 3. Assist in consistency of understanding and practice throughout the organisation.
 4. Gather a deeper understanding of practice in relation to a particular theme.

Activities include:

- Gathering feedback directly from families and children
- Auditing case files along with social workers
- Virtual observations of group supervision and one to one supervision
- Virtual observations of home visits and professional's meetings
- Parental and staff feedback

6.10 This year Practice Week was undertaken in November 2020. Due to Covid-19 Children's Social Care had to make some adjustments to how work with children and families was carried out. For some children and families face to face visiting and meetings moved to Virtual meetings, visiting on Microsoft Teams, FaceTime, and WhatsApp. The aim of this year's practice week was to ensure senior managers understood the experiences of frontline practitioners during the Pandemic by gaining a deeper understanding of the experiences of front-line practice and how it has impacted on the children and families they worked with during Covid-19.

The areas of focus was also looking at the interventions for children aged 13 to 17 years old who were at risk of becoming looked after or who had recently become looked after. Managers were asked to look at interventions to learn what preventing or coming into care has meant for those children and measure the impact of the intervention. Bright Start 0-5s and Bright Start 5-19 audited the interventions offered to families during the Pandemic with 0-5 having a specific focus on parental mental health and 5-19 auditing the level of engagement and the quality of the service.

In total 121 auditing activities was undertaken across Children's Social Care, Bright Start 0-5 and 5-19.

The overall findings were that practice across the services was good or outstanding. Despite Covid-19 restrictions families still received a good service, children were regularly visited, and staff continued to receive a good level of management support through supervision and oversight. The voice of the child was evident in files. For children at risk of coming into care, the provider services like AMASS was seen as an effective intervention that both parents and practitioners found useful. Covid-19 was not seen to have an enormous impact on the delivery of service and auditors found evidence of direct work and effective interventions being carried out creatively by staff during the Pandemic.

Children aged 16 and 17 years old came into care for reasons other than homelessness, and where that was a reason other factors such as exploitation, mental health or long-term parental issues were also factors. For all young people, other than those entrenched in exploitation, outcomes improved as a result of coming into care. The feedback of staff was rated highly, and young people felt supported. Overall Covid-19 did not impact on service delivery, and children looked after and at home were visited in accordance with the level of need.

6.11 **Quality Assurance Activity:**

The Safeguarding and Family Support Service and Young Islington Service also undertakes a substantial number of themed audits in response to what the data tells us, feedback from children and families, feedback from staff and partners and following the introduction of legislation or guidance. Action Plans from each audit are then developed and monitored by the Senior Management team. The following gives examples of findings that have been used to improve practice throughout the year:

6.12 **Repeat CP Plans**

An audit of 17 repeat Child Protection Plans (for 22 children) in 2020/21 looked at the times lapse between plans.

Most Plans were repeated after a time gap of over two years. 41% were repeated within a 2 year period. Like previous years, the most common risk factor in repeat plans was Domestic Violence and Abuse.

53% of the repeat plans also had parallel escalation and planning, meaning that there was no drift or

delay and children's cases were within a legal framework - Court or Pre-Proceedings

6.13 **Children Isolated at home due to Covid-19.**

This audit was of children who had been in isolation due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Audit looked at whether their RAG rating matched their need and whether safeguarding measures were being carried out in accordance with their RAG rating. The findings were:

- All children rated RED were seen face to face in line with their high risk level and risks were managed well.
- Amber rated children seen in person or via video
- Evidence of social workers demonstrating creativity in seeing children and meaningful work with children and their families, even via video.
- Risk ratings on the whole matched need.
- Network checks carried out for most children.

6.14 **FGCs and identifying alternative care**

This audit was in response to Islington's Ofsted inspection in 2020, which suggested that although

Family Group Conferences routinely take place and respond to children's immediate support or care

needs, they do not consistently consider or identify alternative carers within the family.

The findings were:

- 42 referrals were made for an FGC in 2019/20 where the primary reason was looking for alternative
- care.
- 31 (74%) progressed to an FGC (Higher than the London rate at 66%)
- 29 of these resulted in a plan that included detail about alternative carers.

Therefore, 94% of family plans considered or identified alternative carers.

6.15 **Supervision Orders**
This audit was undertaken in response to a rapid review action plan regarding a child who was on a Supervision Order who suffered serious harm, to review whether Islington's protocol and minimum standards were being adhered to. The findings were:

- Areas of good practice included use of chronologies, continuity of social workers, good rapport with
- Children and families, good understanding of children's lived experience and good supervision.
- Areas in need of improvement were multi-agency involvement in devising plans, lack of
- Supervision Order (CIN) meetings, lack of purpose and momentum in working with children on
- Orders
- Need for assessments that reflect children's needs and greater management oversight.

Subsequently an improvement plan was put in place and included:

- Case file upgrade to include a supervision order flag
- Monitoring data about children on supervision orders at performance meetings.
- Regular Audits of cases independently

Supervision Order policy updated to emphasize greater management oversight.

6.16 **CP Plans over 18 Months**
This audit was undertaken in response to an increase in CP plans over two years with following findings:

- Of the 19 child protection plans, 16 had undergone parallel family court proceedings, which contributed to the length of the CP plan.
- There were just three children from two families that were not subject to family court proceedings but had long plans due to the chronic nature of the risks.

6.17 **Re-Referrals**
This audit was carried due to an increase in re-referrals from the previous year. While the majority of re-referrals were deemed unpreventable, the following practice themes were identified:

- **Information sharing:** some assessments were incomplete because of a misconception that Social workers and their manager's had needed consent for agency checks.
- **Refusal of Service:** A considerable proportion of families refused a service first time around, even though social care identified that one was required.
- **Adolescents at risk:** Social care is the principal agency responsible for safeguarding but is the last agency young people or their families wish to engage with. Specialist agencies like TYS or YOS may be tried initially but if there is a safeguarding need, this is re-referred to CSC.
- **Domestic violence and abuse:** Re-referrals are a reflection of the cyclical nature of abuse women are caught in but also the trauma it causes contributes to children and young people developing problems such as vulnerability to exploitation and serious youth violence later in life.

- 6.18 **Timescale in initial child protection conference:**
 This audit was carried out in a response to the lower level of conferences held within statutory timescales than the rest of London. There were 44 initial CP conferences for 79 children that were over the 15 working day timescale from the strategy discussion (65% - the London average is 75%). The findings were:
- 58% were late by just a few days, most between one and seven days.
 - 40% were late bookings by social workers, most of which could have been avoided since they were families already receiving a service.
 - 45% were late due to illness or other availability issues, which has been more marked due to the pandemic.
 - No child was left at risk due to delay
 - Delaying a conference at times may be preferable in order to ensure the meeting is more meaningful and purposeful.
- 6.19 **Care Planning for Children Under the age of 6 years old;**
 The aim of this audit was to evaluate the use of permanency planning in reducing drift and delay in securing permanency for these children and to look at their outcomes. The findings were:
- There is evidence of good practice and the permanency planning for children is evidenced on their records.
 - Where there are sibling groups, there is evidence of assessments being undertaken to inform where and how to place those sibling groups.
 - Some improvement is needed on the consistent application of the Permanency planning protocol.
 - The audit recommended that the implementation of the permanency planning protocol is strengthened to ensure more timely referrals.
- 6.20 **Young People's participation in CLA Reviews:**
 Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic social workers had to modify the way they worked. The move to virtual meetings also meant the way children's wishes and feelings were captured changed from paper consultation forms to electronic forms which were sent to young people in care via email, or to their phones.
 The aim of this audit was to ensure that despite the Pandemic, IROs and SWs understood experiences of our Children Looked After during lockdown, the audit key findings were:
- The use of electronic correspondences saw an increase in children completing their consultation forms.
 - Children and young people still raised the same issues, with their future placements and contact with family the most consistent issues raised.
 - The majority of children were happy in their placements and were able to express their concerns in respect of living in a pandemic.

- 6.21 **Children Looked After under the age of 15 years old under Section 20**
 The aim of the audit was to establish whether children accommodated under S.20 aged 15 or younger are under the appropriate legal framework to care for them, the findings were:
- The audit found in all cases the use of Section 20 was appropriate and the LA is adequately care planning for all the children.
 - In 20% of cases the legal status was not recorded correctly on LCS, therefore raising with managers the need to ensure more robust systems are in place to update LCS of change of legal status.
- 6.22 **Repeat Episodes of Care**
 The aim of this audit was to review the decision making and factors which led to a child coming into Care a subsequent time. There were 7 children who re-entered care during April, May and June 2020. The findings were:
- The complex nature of some of the circumstances children and families live in were highlighted making care the best option at the time to safeguard those children.
 - The decision to accommodate those children was proportionate and kept them safe.
 - The use of Family Group Conferences should be considered earlier.
 - The child and family assessment should explicitly identify the support provisions required to help with reunification.
- 6.23 **Young People in Secure accommodation**
 This audit looked at 13 children who had been the subjects to welfare secure accommodation in the previous years. The audit was to analyse the data and the circumstances which led to them being placed in a secure placement. The audit showed 7 children were placed in a secure provision for secure welfare and 6 in secure for criminal grounds. All children from that cohort had suffered early childhood trauma where they were exposed to prolonged domestic violence and abuse, substance misuse and parental mental health.
 There was a disproportionate number of black children, and their families were on low incomes. The audit highlighted the need to consider a multi-agency wrap-around response to managing risk and providing support in the community as an alternative to care and reduce the need for a secure provision.
- 7**
7.1 Contextual Safeguarding
 Continued analysis undertaken over the last two years consistently highlights that Islington's profiles of children and young people at risk, or a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation, harmful sexual behaviours, trafficking and modern slavery, gangs, and serious youth violence are intrinsically linked through vulnerability, peer groups and offending networks. The cohort of children and young people vulnerable to exploitation overlaps significantly with children and young people that go missing from home and care. In response to our profile, we have focused on developing a less siloed, and more flexible model of assessment, intervention and governance; ensuring that children and young people across the spectrum of risk receive timely and targeted interventions, and that those children at acute risk receive a consistent safeguarding response. Islington's shift toward a more fluid approach to Exploitation and Missing risk supports a trauma informed practice model; focusing more on the experience, vulnerabilities, strengths and needs of the individual child, rather than on the specific type of risk label and subsequent intervention pathway.

- 7.2 The response to Exploitation and Missing is currently led by:
- The Exploitation and Missing Team are managed by the Exploitation and Missing Safeguarding Manager. The team consists of three Specialist Social Workers, a senior administrator and two Missing and Intervention Workers.
 - All three social worker cover Exploitation, Serious Youth Violence, Harmful sexual behaviour and missing. One of the social worker posts is the named social worker for the Integrated Gangs Team but the tasks and responsibilities are split between all three of the specialist social workers through the duty system.
 - The Exploitation and Missing Intervention workers are managed by the exploitation and missing safeguarding manager. The two workers complete the return home interviews, deliver targeted intervention for vulnerable adolescents who are frequently missing, deliver training and assist with designing specialist interventions plans for young people at risk of exploitation and missing.
 - The CSE and Gangs analyst, this post works across services and data systems to develop the understanding of exploitation networks and risk profiles. Since February 2020, the manager for the Integrated Gangs Team has managed the post. This has been a positive move which has benefited both teams and the service.
 - The Integrated Gangs Team (IGT) is a multi-agency team co-located with the police gang's unit, consisting of specialist intervention workers, St. Giles Trust, victim support, the Abianda project and clinical input. The IGT work with children and young people up to age 25 and are at risk of, or involved, in gangs and serious youth violence
- 7.3 The above teams also work closely with the local Police teams and the Community Safety Unit.
- 7.4 There is a clear and consistent format to the sharing of information to support safeguarding children and young people and recognise that this is crucial to developing an understanding of peer networks and exploitation profiles. Information is shared at a practitioner level across the partnership through the co-location of staff, safeguarding meetings, consultations, Integrated Gang Team tasking meetings and community safety briefings etc. and fed back into safeguarding meetings to inform the response to children and families. This information is collated by the Child Sexual Exploitation and Gangs analyst and feeds into to practice panels such as the Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel (formally known as the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Panel) and the Exploitation and Missing subgroup. This also includes the council's response to contextual safeguarding focus areas such as creating safe spaces for young people through work with departments such as licensing and estate management.
- 7.5 Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Exploitation and Missing team had to make changes, and for most of the year all worked from home. The Return Home Interviews were carried out over the telephone/virtually with young people. All meetings and training moved online.
- 7.6 Due to the Lockdowns the Exploitation and Missing team were not able to deliver group work in schools. This is something that will be picked up again in 2021/2022 as in previous years the team were delivering sessions to more than 500 children a year. This year the team did manage to deliver training across the partnership to include children's social care, Early Help, Targeted Youth Support and both National and local GP forums. The on-line training delivered over the last year included Child Exploitation, Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Trafficking and County lines, SYV and Philomena protocol missing.

- 7.7 Children who are in need of a targeted service receive this through the early help offer. Our Targeted Youth Support team provide a range of interventions through a number of outreach programmes individually and group based to prevent escalation of contextual safeguarding. Through the parenting programme offer, parents of vulnerable adolescents receive advice and guidance on areas such as boundary setting, the adolescent stage and managing the balance between the push for freedom and the need still for protection. Our Early Help teams work closely with young people and parents to educate them on risks, prevent missing episodes, manage social media safely as well as to ensure that parents are well informed about what to do if their child goes missing.
- 7.8 When a child is identified as at risk, a safeguarding strategy meeting is held. Strategy meetings are held across exploitation and missing risk areas, and dependent on the situation and risk may focus on a single child or a number of children. If a peer group, network or location of risk is identified by practitioners, through safeguarding meetings or practice panels, a mapping meeting will be organised. A mapping meeting is held with partners to pull together agency information, develop a better understanding of the network or location, and to develop an action plan to disrupt exploitation and improve the safeguarding of children and families. Children and young people from other Local Authorities are also considered as part of mapping meetings, and the relevant professionals are invited to attend and contribute.

8 Missing Children

8.1 Performance Information

During 2020/21, the total number of children missing from home and from care including away from placement without authorisation was 156. This is a reduction from 200 in 2019/20. This year, children aged 15 and 16 year olds were most likely to go missing from home and children aged 17 years old were most likely to go missing from care. 60% of instances of children missing from home involved males which was the same last year, whilst 72% of instances of children missing from care involved males. This is a decrease from 2019/20 where 75% of cases where children were missing from care involved males. 27% of children reported missing from home were White British. This is an increase from 34% in 2019/20. 8% were Black British Caribbean and 30% were Black British African (up from 22% the previous year). 19% of young people reported missing from care in 2019/20 were White British. 14% are children who have mixed parentage, 8% are Black British Caribbean and 21% are children who are Black British African. This data continues to highlight the disproportionate number of black children reported missing each year, and work in ongoing across the service to understand this, and to address this.

8.2 Children Missing from Home - Length of Missing Episode:

In total 52 of the missing episodes involved young people going missing for less than 24 hours, and 21% involved children returning the following day. 1% of the missing episodes related to children going missing for more than one month. During these missing episodes, strategy meetings were held regularly, chaired by the Exploitation and Missing Team, and referrals to Rescue and Response (County Lines) and the National Referral Mechanism (Human Slavery and Trafficking) were made.

8.3 **Children Missing from Care - Length of Missing Episode**

In total 75% of the missing episodes involved young people returning the next day or earlier, an increase of 5% from last year. This figure supports the development being put in place through the Philomena protocol as previously young people had been recorded as missing but were returning to their placements late. 4% of missing episodes were for young people who went missing longer than a week, this is a reduction from 7% last year. This equates to 30 separate incidents where young people went missing from care for longer than 1 week. In previous reports there has been exploration around the difficulty of producing statistics for how many young people who have gone missing have been identified as at risk of exploitation and or serious youth violence. This is because young people could be identified at different risk levels throughout the year producing duplicate results.

For example, out of 927 missing episodes throughout 2020/21, 294 of them were relating to a child that was considered at risk of serious youth violence and 359 of them were children who were at risk of child criminal exploitation. It is therefore more useful to explore further the vulnerabilities of the children who have gone missing most frequently throughout the year, especially as 10 children accounted for 41% of the total missing episodes. In the 2019/20 report all 10 young people who went missing most frequently were considered at some point throughout the year to be at risk of exploitation or serious youth violence. However, in 2020/21 there were 2 young people who were not, one of whom was a young person who went missing most frequently.

8.4 In response to the connection between missing and additional vulnerabilities the initial sit-down strategy meeting for missing young people is chaired by the exploitation and missing team so that a contextual and multi-vulnerability approach is taken. If a young person is at risk of being exploited in a gang linked setting then they are included in the IGT search stream document meaning if they are missing it will be monitored in discussions with IGT, Exploitation and missing team and gangs police.

8.5 Senior managers are immediately notified when a child goes missing. The Director of People Services and the Lead Member for Children and Families are briefed every Friday on children who are currently missing. This ensures oversight at the most senior level, the collection and scrutiny of these briefings is undertaken by the Exploitation and Missing Safeguarding Manager.

8.6 **Return Home Interviews (RHI's)**

Where possible, every child that goes missing from home or missing from care is offered a Return home Interview. Between April 2020 to March 2021, 776 RHI's were offered to children missing from care and those that were missing without authorisation. 72% have been completed, in 93 episodes (18%) the child refused the interview, in 45 episodes, 9% it was not possible to contact the child for the interview to go ahead after several attempts, in 4 episodes (1%) were not required due to it being an unauthorised absence, in 264 episodes, (34%) were not possible as the child was still missing. When a return interview is requested but not completed (ie. the child refused, or multiple contact attempts were unsuccessful), the allocated social worker is contacted so that they can make alternate arrangements to discuss the missing episode directly and at times complete the return home interview.

8.6 **Missing from Education**

Children fall out of the education system for a variety of reasons which include:

- a) Failing to start appropriate provision and hence never entering the system at all;
- b) Ceasing to attend, due to exclusion (e.g. illegal unofficial exclusions) or withdrawal;
- c) Failing to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new local authority).

A range of robust procedures are in place for preventing pupils from going missing from education at these key transition points. For the financial year 200/21, there was one young person where they had not been located and all avenues had been exhausted and there were 4 ongoing investigations.

9 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

9.1 **Performance**

The number of contacts Children Services Contact Team (CSCT) received with regard to CSE has reduced, from 75 in 2019/20 to 53 in 2020/21.

9.2 In 2020/21, 41 children were assessed as at risk of CSE. The majority of children who have been identified as at risk of CSE over the year 2020/21 were female, 38 with 2 males and 1 transgender young person. A larger proportion of those identified in 2019/20 were male compared with this year. Regarding the age of children at the time they were assessed at risk of CSE, the most common age is 15, followed by 17 and then 14 and 16 year olds. With regard to the ethnicity of children assessed as at risk of CSE, 39% come from a White ethnic background, 37% come from a Black ethnic background and 17% were from a mixed ethnic group.

9.3 Between April 2020 to March 2021 25 young people who were considered to be at risk of CSE and received intervention were assessed as having their CSE level reduced or they were no longer considered at risk of CSE

9.4 **Themes**

Throughout the year themes are identified, analysed and responded to by the partnership. The theme this year was still young people being exploited via the internet and has remained a significant pressure issue throughout the year. It is an ongoing challenge to safety plan against adolescents' need to seek out sexual contact, respond to attention and express themselves sexually when they have such free access to the internet. The Exploitation and Missing team regularly send out up to date resources for young people, families and professionals on internet safety

10 **Modern Slavery / Trafficking**

10.1 **Modern Slavery** is the term used within the UK and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categories the offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking. Human Trafficking is the trade and/or movement of someone from one place to another for the purpose of enslavement and exploitation through: Forced labour, domestic servitude, organ harvesting, child related crimes such as child sexual exploitation, forced begging, illegal drug cultivation, organised theft, related benefit frauds etc and forced marriage and illegal adoption (if other constituent elements are present

10.2 Islington Council and Police have identified SPOCS to lead on developing a joint response to modern Slavery/Trafficking. There are named SPOCS across Children's Services. Training in Modern Slavery and Trafficking (including county lines) has been delivered through the Exploitation and Missing Team across Safeguarding and Family Support and Young Islington. This training covers the safeguarding response to children at risk of or victims of Modern Slavery and

Trafficking including those at risk of county lines. Incorporated within this response are referrals the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and the Rescue and Response team (for county lines cases).

In January 2021 Islington and Camden Social Care were successful in a bid they made to Home Office to be part of the pilot project to explore how decision making for the NRM could be devolved and built into local safeguarding procedures. The year long pilot will see the formation of a monthly panel attended by representatives from Islington and Camden children's social care, YOS Central North Police, Community Safety, Rescue and Response and Health. The Home Office will continue to filter the NRM applications, but the majority will be sent to this Monthly panel to make a Reasonable or Conclusive ground decision.

11 County Lines

11.1 Between April 2020 and March 2021, a total of 16 National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals were made for children identified as at risk of criminal exploitation. From the 16 referrals, 15 involved males and one was for a female. The Exploitation and Missing Team are of the view that the training and awareness that has been provided across Safeguarding and Family Support and Young Islington, and the safeguarding response being embedded across the service, has contributed to earlier identification of county lines indicators. The ethnicity breakdown of young people identified as at risk of CCE has stayed very similar across the year. Data is reliant on the accurate recording and open to cross over, for example someone choosing mixed parentage or white and black British. For 2020/21, 51% of the young people identified as at risk of CCE were Black, 29% White and 13% mixed. The data around ethnicity helps the exploitation and missing team think about what young people may be more vulnerable to exploitation, but also who may be referred into services, how they are assessed and how risks are identified.

The team have continued to have good working relationship with the British Transport Police and there are effective communication routes between the services. BTP have contributed to meetings focusing on the vulnerabilities of Finsbury Park relating to young people being criminally exploited and trafficked. If a young person is at risk of criminal exploitation the threshold may be met for an NRM application under the Modern-Day Slavery Act 2015. Professionals across the whole service have a good understanding of the process and reason for applying for an NRM.

11.2 Strategy meetings and consultations in relation to County Lines are currently included within the data for gangs and Serious Youth Violence. For a number of children identified as at risk of county lines, they are also assessed as at risk of other forms of exploitation, including gangs and Serious Youth Violence, and CSE. The MACE identified a gap in terms of the MPS response to children at risk of Criminal Exploitation (CCE) as they do not fall into the current remit of the CSE or gangs Police unit. This, alongside pan-London discussions regarding the safeguarding responses to child victims of CCE has led to a positive shift in the Police response to children at risk of criminal exploitation. Currently the Safeguarding Unit respond to any referrals in relation to CCE and will attend a strategy meeting as required. Decisions are currently being made within the MPS London wide, in terms of which unit in the Police will hold CCE cases moving forward, which will allow for further proactive work to be completed, as with CSE cases.

12 Serious Youth Violence (SYV)

12.1 Over the year 2020/21, a total of 76 children and young people were referred to the Children's Services Contact Team in relation to gangs or Serious Youth Violence. This is a decrease on the 125 in 2019/20.

12.2 From April 2020 to March 2021, 32 under 18-year olds have been identified as being at risk of SYV and 42 young people aged between 18-24. Out of the 74 children and young people identified as being at risk of being affected by SYV 3 were female. During Lockdowns and due to Covid, young people were more identifiable when congregating in groups. Young people were staying at home more rather than being in locations where they could be groomed into gang linked violence. However, we know that a lot of grooming and rivalry between groups has moved online during this year creating challenges on being able to fully assess whether individuals had made positive choices and were no longer at risk of being involved in SYV. IGT, gangs and the exploitation and missing team will review all SYV flags on the system in 2021 to see if the intel is still relevant.

In looking at ethnicity and SYV over the year 58% of the young people were black 29% White, 13% Mixed parentage backgrounds. A large proportion of young people considered at risk of serious youth violence in Islington are Black, which mirrors what is being seen across London. Ethnicity is an important factor to consider when thinking about risk of SYV. Studies have looked into

how perpetrators of SYV pick their victim when undertaking ride outs into rival areas. It appears that

it is not just due to the physical location of the victim, they also pick someone they think is likely to be

affiliated with a gang and their view is influenced by what age, gender and race of a stereotypical gang member media projects on society.

12.3 **Practice**

Strategy meetings are attended by the partnership, including, police, health and education and any other services involved with the family such as IGT, housing and probation etc. A multi-agency approach is agreed at the strategy meeting in order to safeguard the young person at risk of gangs/SYV. When a child has been a victim of SYV or are at risk of gangs and are in hospital, the strategy meeting is held in the hospital, so that a discharge plan can be incorporated into the safety plan for the child and their family. Where the risks to a child and their family are so significant that they are not able to remain residing at the family home due to the location being known, immediate action is required in order for the family to move out of the borough for their immediate safety. Housing will be consulted prior to the strategy meeting and a housing representative will attend to provide advice and guidance. A rapid response is then provided by Safeguarding and Family Support and Young Islington, housing partners and police in order to move the family as part of the safety plan.

12.4 Since the lockdown the police and social care have seen a very large increase in young people being stopped with "prescription" drugs. Young people have been found with large amounts of Xanax and diazepam. It is a significant concern that it appears young people are also taking the drugs alongside being exploited to deal them. Some young people have had to be hospitalised due to taking these drugs. Young people and families do not understand the medical impact of taking this sort of medication without a prescription and when it is mixed with alcohol and other drugs.

The pandemic has affected the ability to pull out themes and data for this year report as it will take some time to notice the patterns and be able to attribute them to the pandemic and/or the changing nature of exploitation. For large periods of the year it was more difficult for organised crime groups to get drugs in and out of the country and there was a thought this would reduce the need to exploit young people to run drugs. However, what the service has observed was young people running drugs were more obvious on transport and out in the community so were coming to police attention when possibly before they would have gone undetected meaning numbers have evened out. When the lockdowns were lifted drugs were once again needing to get to different parts of the country and this meant our young people were exploited to run the drugs. The drugs people were taking also changed throughout lockdown, Heroin addicts were noticeably engaging in treatment programmes which was a positive and also due to the quality and strength of the street

heroin being so poor. People were also taking less party drugs such as ecstasy due to clubs and pubs being closed which may be a reason there was as demand for drugs such as Xanax, which also may have been easier to get into the country during lockdowns.

- 12.5 Since the scope of MACE was broadened in November 2018, the partnership has been better placed to consider the links between gangs and SYV, CSE, and CCE in terms of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership. This has also supported the partnership to consider contextual safeguarding including specific locations in the borough which require intervention in order to reduce risks and safeguard children. Community Safety is now part of the MACE and we have seen some very positive examples of partnership working as a result of this

13 Implications

13.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report

13.2 Legal Implications

- 13.3 The Children Act 1989 as amended, and the Children Act 2004, place a number of statutory duties on Local Authorities, including overarching responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. The Children Act 2004 introduced the requirement to set up Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The Act also places partner agencies (including the police and health services) under a duty to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. A range of other agencies are also required to cooperate with Local Authorities to promote the wellbeing of children in the local authority area.

- 13.4 The Children and Social Work Act 2017, (CSWA 2017), sets out how agencies must work together by placing new duties on the police, clinical commissioning groups and the Local Authority to make arrangements to work together and with other partners locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in need within their area.

- 13.5 The Council must have regard to the Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, which is currently in the process of being amended to take into account the provisions of the CSWA 2017.

- 13.6 The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended) place further duties on Councils with regard to looked after children.

14 Environmental Implications

- 14.1 None

15 Resident Impact Assessment:

- 15.1 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.

- 15.2 A very high proportion of vulnerable children known to children's social care live in workless households. All social care interventions aim to address the needs of the whole family which include maximizing benefits and supporting routes into employment, education and training.

The Pandemic has had an impact on those families who will find employment opportunities difficult to access.

As a council we are committed to recognizing and readdressing the disproportionate numbers of children from black minority Ethnic families represented in our Youth Offending service, who are subject to child protection plans, and who make up our looked after children population. We are committed to addressing all inequalities and supporting our workforce with tackling these issues and to promote better understanding of the diverse community we serve.

15.3 **Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

The Council rightly places a high priority on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable children in Islington. This report provides assurance about the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding and looked after children's services provided through a range of performance and quality assurance measures that are in place to ensure that services to Islington's most vulnerable children are as safe as they can be.

Appendices

- None

Background papers:

- None

Signed by:

Cate Duffy Interim Director of Children's Services	Date
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**People Directorate
222 Upper Street, London N1 1XR**

Report of: Interim Director of Children’s Services

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee	20 th September 2021	All

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SUBJECT: Children’s Services Quarter 1 2021/22 Performance Report

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The council has in place a suite of corporate performance indicators to help monitor progress in delivering the outcomes set out in the council’s Corporate Plan. Progress on key performance measures are reported through the council’s Scrutiny Committees on a quarterly basis to ensure accountability to residents and to enable challenge where necessary.
- 1.2 This report sets out Q1 2021/22 progress against targets for those performance indicators that fall within the Children and Young People outcome area, for which the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee has responsibility.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note performance against targets in Q1 2021/22 for measures relating to Children and Young People.

3. Background

- 3.1 A suite of corporate performance indicators had been agreed for 2018-22, which help track progress in delivering the seven priorities set out in the Council’s Corporate Plan - *Building a Fairer Islington*. Targets are set on an annual basis and performance is monitored internally, through Departmental Management Teams, Corporate Management Board and Joint Board, and externally through the Scrutiny Committees.

- 3.2 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee is responsible for monitoring and challenging performance for the following key outcome area: Children and Young People. The Committee also reviews performance related to children and young people under the Safety outcome area, e.g. key measures for the Youth Offending Service.
- 3.3 The Corporate Indicator set were reviewed at the end of 2020/21 and a revised set of measures have been put in place for 2021/22. The changes took into account measures that were not reportable under some of the lockdown restrictions in 2020/21, but that will be reportable for at least part of 2021/22 (e.g. school attendance), as well as performance during the previous year. The set of measures used for quarterly Children's Services Scrutiny performance reporting has been updated to reflect these changes.
- 3.4 The following measures have been added as Corporate Indicators for 2021/22:
- 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 (previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny)
 - Number of Children and Young People accessing Early Help
 - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months, plus sub-measures for two groups that have consistently had higher rates than the Islington average in recent years:
 - Black-Caribbean ethnic group
 - White-British ethnic group
 - Number of Looked After Children (previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny)
 - Percentage of mainstream school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance), with sub-measures for primary and secondary school phases (sub-measures previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny)
 - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions from mainstream schools, with sub-measures for primary and secondary school phases (sub-measures previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny), and a sub-measure for Black-Caribbean secondary school children, who have historically had the highest rate of exclusions

A Corporate Indicator sub-measure on re-offending, using the Youth Justice Board's latest published data, has also been added, although there is currently no update to the published data, so this will only be reported when the Youth Justice Board's reporting resumes.

- 3.5 The Corporate Indicator set also includes additional 'directorate-level' measures that only get reported by exception. These have also been added to the set of measures for the Children's Services Scrutiny performance reporting, where relevant to children and young people.

The following additional measures have been added:

- Percentage of children's social care assessments completed within time
- Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan
- Percentage of primary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals
- Percentage of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals
 - These two measures replace the measure 'Applications for Free School Meals', as, with the School Census restarting, we can measure actual eligibility, whereas applications do not necessarily result in someone being eligible
- Number of Electively Home Educated pupils

- 3.6 The following indicators are no longer Corporate Indicators, but are still included in the Children's Services Scrutiny performance updates as they are directorate-level measures:
- Children's social care contacts in the past month, including equalities sub-measures on the % of contacts for specific ethnic groups who have historically been over-represented in these contacts – Black-Caribbean, the overall Black ethnic group and Mixed ethnic groups
 - Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time
 - Number of custodial sentences for young offenders, as the numbers have reduced so much in recent years, plus an equalities sub-measure on the custody rate for young people from a Black ethnic group
- 3.7 The following indicators have been removed from the Children's Services Scrutiny performance reporting (some temporarily as we cannot report on them at present):
- Number of children attending Alternative Provision, as numbers have dropped considerably in recent years, and it was felt the increase in Electively Home Educated pupils was more of a priority to focus on.
 - Number of children completing the summer reading challenge
 - All attainment measures relating to the cancelled assessments for 2021
 - Number of early years children attending settings – this was added in 2020/21 to track attendance during and immediately following the lockdown restrictions
 - Percentage of 3 & 4 year olds uptake of entitlement – analysing the published data on this measure found that the population estimates used by the DfE are significantly higher than the more accurate and timely estimates used locally for the School Roll Projections, and this meant the percentages looked much lower than they should have really been. It is hoped that once data from the latest national census is available, the population estimates used for the published DfE data will be more accurate and the published data will be usable.

4. Outstanding issues and queries from Q4 2020/21 Performance Reports

- 4.1 The Committee discussed the Q4 2020/21 performance reports at its meeting on 22nd June 2021. There are no outstanding queries to be resolved.

5. Quarter 1 performance update – Outcome: Creating a safe and cohesive borough for all

5.1 Key performance indicators relating to 'Creating a safe and cohesive borough for all'

PI No.	Indicator	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Target	Q1 2021/22	On target ?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
1.1	Percentage of young people (aged 10-17) triaged that are diverted away from the criminal justice system	80%	89%	n/a	89%	N/A	94%	No
1.2	Corporate Indicator: Number of first time entrants into Youth Justice System	61	38	60	12	Yes	4	No
1.3	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of repeat young offenders (under 18s)	37%	27%	37%	27%	Yes	45%	Yes
1.4	Number of custodial sentences for young offenders	7	2	10	2	Yes	0	No
1.5	Number of Domestic abuse offences	2,501	2,537	2,664	650	No	644	In line

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

5.2 The diversion rate for Q1 2021/22 was 89%, which relates to eight out of nine young people triaged not going on to receive a substantive outcome. As this performance relates to a small cohort of young people, there is no significant difference between performance this quarter and the previous couple of years.

Targeted Youth Support (TYS) continues to improve outcomes in relation to the percentage of young people diverted from the criminal justice system with a significant improvement in the cumulative measure for all three quarters. High quality assessments with these young people, ensure the delivery of the interventions including targeted interventions to address risk of further offending and to promote desistance. This has included the prioritisation of continued face to face contact with young people throughout the pandemic prioritising children's complex needs including those at risk of offending and/or being excluded from school.

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

5.3 There have only been 12 First Time Entrants (FTEs) into the Youth Justice System in Quarter 1 2021/22, compared to the target of 15 by this point in the year. Although this was higher than the same quarter in 2020/21, offending levels dropped significantly around the coronavirus restrictions, and so are not directly comparable to the same period in 2021/22. Therefore, the targets for 2021/22 have been set in line with the targets for 2019/20.

No new comparator data has published by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) since the start of the initial national lockdown in 2020. Once new comparator data is available, it will be included in these performance updates to allow comparisons against other local authority's performance to be made.

Reducing the number of first-time entrants remains an important priority and as such we are continuing to prioritise targeted early intervention to reduce the numbers. Early intervention and identification of young people at risk of offending has been a key priority during the pandemic in recognition of young people being adversely impacted by the pandemic and the predicted increase in youth offending. We continue to prioritise and respond to the needs of those at risk of offending with the continued support of commissioned services, interventions and other parts of the partnership. Triage interventions continue to be prioritised by way of improved assessment frameworks, quality assurance and tailored interventions.

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

5.4 Only three of the 11 young offenders from 12 months ago had reoffended by the end of Q1 2021/22, so performance for this period was 27%. This is better than the target of 37%, which is based on performance during the 12 months of the 2019/20 financial year. As with the First Time Entrants measure, as the coronavirus social restrictions have had an impact on the levels of offending in 2020/21, targets for the youth offending measures for 2021/22 have been based on 2019/20 targets.

This measure is based on the re-offending over the previous 12 months for the cohort of offenders from the quarter immediately prior to this 12-month period (i.e. those who offended between 15 and 12 months ago), so is looking at a different cohort each quarter.

Across the cohort of 11 young offenders, there were seven re-offences, making an average of 0.64 re-offences per offender. This is a fall from last year, when there was an average 1.32 re-offences per offender.

As with the FTE data, there are no further updates on the comparator data released by the YJB.

Indicators in relation to re-offending continue to move in a positive trajectory with the rate now below the re-offending rates of comparable YOTs. There has been a focus, within the service, to identify and respond to this cohort to ensure robust intervention and enforcement where appropriate. Re-offending tracker data is reviewed to identify those young people who pose a high risk of further offending and to ensure appropriate oversight and allocation of resources to reduce risk of further offending. Interventions have been strengthened and targeted by way of a dedicated interventions lead and enforcement overseen by the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Multi Agency Risk Panel and the Islington Group Offending Partnership Panel. We also continue to ensure that there are robust multi-agency responses to young people risk of re-offending. We continue to work closely with police colleagues to ensure that enforcement is commensurate to

each case whilst providing targeted intervention. However, there are still young people with significant and multiple vulnerabilities that remain entrenched in their offending which presents challenges in relation to reducing re-offending rates for this cohort.

1.4 - Corporate Indicator: Number of custodial sentences for young offenders

5.5 There have been two custodial sentences of Islington young people in the first quarter of 2021/22. The target for the year was to have fewer than ten custodial sentences (in line with the target for 2019/20), so this target has been met. The number for Q1 2021/22 is higher than the same quarter in 2020/21, during the height of the first national lockdown, which likely had a big impact on the number of custodial outcomes.

The YJB publish custodial figures as rates per 1,000 10-17 year olds, to allow comparisons to be made between different areas. The latest published Islington rate for the 2020/21 financial year was 0.06, equalling the lowest ever rate for Islington. The Islington rate remains lower than the England (0.13), London (0.20) and the YOT Family (0.25) rates.

The number of young people receiving custodial sentences has fallen and this is reflected in a year-on-year decline from 2018 to date. This has in part been achieved by improved court practice and targeted interventions to reduce both the likelihood and seriousness of offending. Whilst significant progress has been made in reducing the number of young people who receive custodial sentences there remains an entrenched but reducing cohort of young people who will inevitably receive custodial sentences in the future. The pandemic has also led to the perpetration of some very serious offences by young people.

1.5 - Number of domestic abuse offences

5.7 In the first quarter of 2021/22, there have been 650 domestic abuse offences reported, which is broadly in line with the 644 reporting in Q1 2020/21. This is a 1% rise, year-on-year. Across London as a whole, there was a 3% rise in domestic abuse offences for Q1 2021/22 compared to the same period in 2020/21.

Domestic abuse has historically been under-reported, so the target for this measure is an increase in offences being reported to the police. The target has been set as a 5% increase, so with a 1% rise, we are off target for Quarter 1 2021/22.

The sanction detection rate for Islington's domestic abuse offences (where offences have been resolved through a formal sanction, including being charged or receiving a caution) was the fourth highest in London during Quarter 1 2021/22.

While Islington has not seen a substantial increase in DA offences reported to police since the start of the pandemic, there has been a worrying rise in the complexity and severity / risk levels of cases reported to services during this period. There has also been an increase in referrals, to Islington's VAWG (Violence Against Woman and Girls) services who worked with 424 survivors and families in Q1. The VAWG Service Transformation programme and additional investment has meant that commissioned services have been well placed to respond to the increased number of survivors who have been reaching out directly for support particularly around emotional health and well-being and counselling services. There has also been an increase in requests for housing advice, and legal support for example Stalking Protection Orders, and applications for Destitution Domestic Violence (DDV) concessions for women who have No Recourse to Public Funds.

Islington's multi-agency DA Daily Safeguarding Meeting (DSM) has now been fully operational for 6 months and supported 309 survivors (April-June) with 834 outcomes achieved including 101 children safeguarding notifications. In Q1 the VAWG Workforce Development Team provided 38 DA case consultations and delivered training to 131 professionals including Met Police, Better Lives, Adolescent Support Intervention Project, and Children Social Care.

6. Quarter 1 performance update – Outcome: Delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and financial independence and helping them with the cost of living

6.1 Key performance indicators relating to 'Delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and financial independence and helping them with the cost of living'

PI No.	Indicator	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Target	Q1 2021/22	On target ?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
2.4	100 hours of the world of work - Number of schools engaged with the programme	25	22	40	9	No	20	No
2.5	Number of page views for 100 hours of the world of work	New indicator in 2020/21	4,504	2,000	879	Yes	690	Yes

2.4 - 100 hours of the world of work - Number of schools engaged with the programme

6.2 Schools' virtual careers activities declined in Q1 as many careers leads reported students getting fatigued with online activities alongside challenges with 'school bubble' closures. In response, in person activities were offered (where possible) and a significant increase in face to face events are anticipated for the start of the new academic year. In total, 9 schools have been engaged this quarter against a target of 10, with a further increase expected at the end of Q2 (Sept) and Q3 when schools are back and collaborating with the programme

At present, a review of the 100 hrs activity menu is underway alongside an enhanced level of employer engagement. Both are designed to ensure a wide range of employers and opportunities for all year groups, particularly primary aged children, by the start of autumn term. This will include some targeted careers activity to support SEND young people and work with New River PRU, due to go live in September.

2.5 - Number of page views for 100 hours of the world of work

6.3 The team has been regularly updating its web pages with new content including partner careers fairs, online resources and bookable activities for the autumn term. There has also been a push on promotional activity of the menu through social media channels. As students return to school, we expect to see a further increase in visitors to the career resources and activity pages, with a decline in the use of the home learning site.

7 Quarter 1 performance update – Outcome: Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up – where children and families can thrive and reach their potential

7.1 Key performance indicators relating to 'Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up – where children and families can thrive and reach their potential'

PI No.	Indicator	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Target	Q1 2021/22	On target?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
3.2	Corporate Indicator - Number of children being supported through our Bright Islington family support offer – rate of assessments per 10,000	1,035	985	n/a	1090	n/a	1,016	Higher
3.2	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	63%	70%	TBC (at or above Inner London)	67% (Summer 2020/21 Academic Year)	TBC	Not available	n/a
3.6	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of mainstream school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Not available due to Covid	TBC Published March 2022	At or below Inner London (14.1% in Autumn 20/21)	15.2% (Autumn 20/21 AY)	No	12.6%	No
3.6a	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Not available due to Covid	TBC Published March 2022	At or below Inner London (12.7% in Autumn 20/21)	11.5% (Autumn 20/21 AY)	Yes	11.3%	Yes
3.6b	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Not available due to Covid	TBC Published March 2022	At or below Inner London (15.9% in Autumn 20/21)	20.7% (Autumn 20/21 AY)	No	14.6%	No
3.7	Corporate Indicator - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - mainstream schools	5.71%	Published 2022	2.99% (2019/20 AY)	5.71% (2019/20 AY)	No	8.00% (2018/19 AY)	Yes

3.7a	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - primary schools	1.34%	Published 2022	0.59% (2019/20 AY)	1.34% (2019/20 AY)	No	1.67% (2018/19 AY)	Yes
3.7b	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - secondary schools	13.26%	Published 2022	6.29% (2019/20 AY)	13.26% (2019/20 AY)	No	19.19% (2018/19 AY)	Yes
3.7c	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - Black-Caribbean secondary school pupils	25.49%	Published 2022	39.63% (reduction from 2018/19)	25.49% (2019/20 AY)	Yes	39.63% (2018/19 AY)	Yes
3.8	Number of Electively Home Educated pupils	182	247	253	273	No	187	No
3.18	Children's social care contacts in the past month	976 (March 2019)	971 (March 2020)	n/a	1,128 (March 2021)	n/a	971 (March 2020)	Higher
3.18a	Equalities Sub-measure - % of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from the Black-Caribbean ethnic group compared to overall population	+3.5%	+2.8%	Lower than +2.8%	+3.2%	No	+2.1%	No
3.18b	Equalities Sub-measure - % of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from any Black ethnic group compared to overall population	+6.9%	+7.2%	Lower than +7.2%	+5.6%	Yes	+5.2%	No
3.18c	Equalities Sub-measure - % of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from a Mixed ethnic group compared to overall population	+6.0%	+8.7%	Lower than +8.7%	+4.8%	Yes	+7.3%	Yes
3.19	Corporate Indicator - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months	17.5%	17.5%	16.5%	21.1%	No	21.2%	Yes
3.19a	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months -	18.2%	22.1%	Less than 22.1%	22.4%	No	20.8%	No

	Black-Caribbean ethnic group							
3.19b	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months – White-British ethnic group	18.8%	19.8%	Less than 19.8%	20.2%	No	32.6%	Yes
3.20	Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan	199	194	200 or fewer	182	Yes	190	Yes
3.21	Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	18.3%	10.5%	16.5%	34.3%	No	13.2%	No
3.22	Percentage of children's social care assessments completed within time	91.0%	87.0%	89.0%	87.8%	No	92.6%	No
3.23	Placement stability - short term - Proportion of looked after children with 3 or more placements over the course of the year	9.8%	15.0%	11.0%	1.7%	N/A	3.3%	Yes
3.24	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	73.1%	69.1%	70%	65.6%	No	64.7%	Yes
3.25	Number of Looked After Children	366	342	357	349	Yes	366	Lower
3.27	Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours	15 (Mar 20)	13 (Mar 21)	n/a	13 (June 2021)	n/a	15 (June 20)	Yes
3.28a	Percentage of primary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals	30.3% (Jan 20)	37.9% (Jan 21)	n/a	37.9% (Jan 21)	n/a	30.3% (Jan 20)	Higher
3.28b	Percentage of secondary school pupils eligible for	34.3% (Jan 20)	37.5% (Jan 21)	n/a	37.5% (Jan 21)	n/a	34.3% (Jan 20)	Higher

	Free School Meals							
3.29	Number of schools engaged in the 11 by 11 Cultural Enrichment Programme	65	66	60	24	Yes (15 for Q1)	15	Yes
3.30	Number of unique page views - Creative & Music pages	New indicator in 2020/21	20,192	10,000	3,888	Yes	1,314	Yes

3.2 - Corporate Indicator - Number of children being supported through our Bright Islington family support offer – rate of assessments per 10,000

7.2

This new Corporate Indicator has been added to show the number of children and young people accessing early help services. The rate of assessments per 10,000 under 18s has been used as the measure to allow us to make comparisons with other areas. This information is collected quarterly as part of the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance quarterly collections, so comparator data is available with a time lag of one quarter.

No targets are set for this measure, as an increase could be a positive move, if more families are willing to work with our services, or a negative move, if this is reflecting an increase in levels of need below social care thresholds.

The latest local data shows that the rate of early help assessments per 10,000 under 17s was 1,090, which is higher than 2020/21 as a whole and also higher than Q1 in 2020/21.

The latest comparator data is for Q4 2020/21, including 2020/21 as a whole. In Q4, the Islington rate of early help assessments was 1,039 per 10,000, which was the highest in London by a considerable margin, and above the London average of 206 per 10,000. Over 2020/21 as a whole, there was a similar picture, with Islington's rate of 985 per 10,000 the highest in London, and above the London average of 230 per 10,000. Note that some of the differences between local authority rates may reflect differences in the ways early help services are set up in different areas, and some changes in figures may reflect changes in reporting. Nevertheless, this comparison suggests that Islington has a strong early help offer, reaching a considerable proportion of the community.

Early Help Assessments are undertaken voluntarily by families. Despite the challenges of the past year, it is positive that Islington has continued to engage families in the process, working with all members of the family and the network around them to understand and address their needs.

20/21 saw 50 fewer children (per 10,000) receiving an early help assessment. There are several reasons for this. Complexity of need has increased during this year and cases have tended to stay open for longer with families and practitioners being anxious about closing. Some families have not wanted home visits during this period, and at some points home visits have not been on offer except to families where there is high risk, which makes engagement in the service and the early help assessment more challenging, and interventions more protracted. Services have adapted to

what families need during this time which has meant more rapid response practical help such as helping with food parcels, advice on the helpline rather than early help assessments and plans.

3.3 - 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

7.3 As performance on this measure can be affected by changes in restrictions around coronavirus, a new target has been set to be at or above the Inner London average, rather than set a specific figure.

In Summer 2020/21 academic year, 565 2 year olds were taking up funded places, out of 839 eligible children on the DWP list from the previous term, meaning 67% of places were being taken up. The number of children taking up funded places increased on the previous term, whilst the actual number who were eligible had fallen. The comparator data for the equivalent period is not yet available, but should be published in time for the Q2 2021/22 report.

In the last set of published data, for January 2021, Islington's level of take-up was only just below the national average, whereas London overall had a significantly lower level of take-up than the national average. Islington had the fifth highest level of take-up in London, and the second highest in Inner London (not including City of London).

Take up in January was disappointing following the increase back up to 70% in Autumn 2020. At least 30% of this cohort changes each term and lockdown will have undoubtedly affected new starters. This was compounded by the fact that despite the government keeping early years provision open, many schools were closed to most children and some parents would have chosen not to send their children. This is particularly the case for the cohort of 2 year olds whose eligibility is dependent on a very low family income who are therefore likely not to be working. A similar strategic approach which saw the increase in uptake for the Autumn term will be used again to encourage greater take up in the summer term. The aim is to move swiftly back to the level of take up seen last Autumn and to develop a focused approach to encourage better take up from any groups who are disproportionately not taking up the offer at the moment.

3.6 - Corporate Indicator - Percentage of mainstream school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)

3.6a - Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)

3.6b - Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)

7.4 As schools have re-opened, and there have been no further cancellations to School Census collections, the measures on persistent absence have been re-introduced. No data for the full 2019/21 academic year is available due to the school closures in the second half of that year. The DfE have published data for the Autumn term 2020/21. During this term, new absence codes were introduced so that absence relating to coronavirus, e.g. when pupils self-isolated when someone in their class bubble tested positive, was not counted as part of the standard absence and persistent absence calculations.

Persistent absence levels across Islington's primary and secondary schools were 15.2% in Autumn 2020/21. This was above the London and England rates. The target for these absence measures is to be at or below the Inner London average. Islington was above the Inner London average of

14.1% in Autumn 2020/21. In Islington and across London, persistent absence levels increased compared to Autumn 2019/20, whereas nationally, the persistent absence rate dropped slightly. However, the trends were very different across Islington's primary and secondary schools. Islington primary school persistent absence rate in Autumn 2020/21 was 11.5%. This was better than the target, based on Inner London, of 12.7%. It was at the same level as the overall London average, although Islington and London were above the national average. The Islington persistent absence level only rose marginally compared to Autumn the previous year, whereas across London as a whole, persistent absence levels rose from 10.1% to 11.5%.

Over 20% of Islington's secondary school pupils were persistently absent in Autumn 2020/21, a rise from less than 15% the previous Autumn. This was above the Inner London, London and England persistent absence rates.

Although it was not used in the persistent absence calculation, the DfE have also published details on Covid-related absence. This showed the Islington primary school pupils missed slightly more school due to Covid-related absence than the London and England averages, but Islington secondary school pupils missed considerably less school than the comparators (6.1% compared to 8 - 9% for the comparator averages).

Work continues with partner agencies (children's social care, youth offending team, health) to ensure a joint and collaborative approach around the role of key practitioners working with children/young people and families where poor attendance is an issue, including how best they can support them and provide appropriate challenge. This has particularly focussed on persistent absence at primary school.

Focused work with twelve schools with the highest levels of absence has seen sustained improvement in all but one of those schools. We are currently working with a new group of primary schools using the same approach.

Improving and sustaining attendance remains a key priority, focussing on four key deliverables:

- All parents meet their responsibilities to ensure their child attends school regularly
- All schools have effective leadership and management of attendance in place
- All partners provide needs based support to improve attendance at school
- The Local Authority continues to challenge and support schools to ensure measures taken to improve attendance are effective.

For the new academic year, there will be a particular focus on persistent absence in secondary schools, where performance has dipped significantly. This work will include:

- Communication with secondary schools regarding statutory action and the use of fines for non-attendance
- Focused work with secondary Academies
- A programme of work with three identified schools, adapting the format successfully developed with primary schools Request and advise on school action plans for reducing persistent absenteeism for all schools performing below inner-London average
- Audit of secondary school websites, including identification of good use of social media to effectively improve attendance

- Monthly monitoring and reporting on attendance at Alternative Provision commissioned by individual schools
- Work with School Improvement and Youth and Community Services to develop further initiatives to improve persistent absenteeism.

3.7 - Corporate Indicator - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - mainstream schools

3.7a - Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - primary schools

3.7b - Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - secondary schools

3.7c - Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - Black-Caribbean secondary school pupils

7.5

Exclusion's data is published with a time-lag, to allow for the results of appeals.

The DfE have now published data for the 2019/20 academic year, which was interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. As such, fixed period exclusion rates are down on the previous year across the country, generally in the region of around a third lower than 2018/19 rates.

The fixed period exclusion rates fell in Islington for both primary and secondary schools, but remained above the Inner London targets, and also remained above the London and England rates.

There is an equalities sub-measure on fixed period exclusions involving Black-Caribbean secondary school pupils. This ethnic group historically has had very high exclusions rates in Islington and across the country as a whole. With the reduction in exclusion rates across all ethnic groups, due to pupils being away from school due to the lockdown restrictions, the fixed period exclusion rate naturally fell for Black-Caribbean secondary school pupils. However, it is encouraging that the rate for Islington's Black-Caribbean secondary school pupils fell at a faster rate, proportionally, than the overall Islington rate.

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee identified exclusion from school as their main area of focus for 2018-19. In their final report (June 2019) they made 14 recommendations. At about the same time, the national Timpson Review of Exclusion from School reported with 30 recommendations, with good synchronicity across the two sets of recommendations.

The Council Executive received an update in July 2020, confirming that fixed period exclusion had reduced, while permanent exclusion from secondary school has also reduced and remained at the same level (i.e. 4 permanent exclusions) for primary schools over the previous 12 months.

Since July 2020, the following work has taken place: :

- The development and implementation of an Equalities action plan involving a wide programme of work
- A co-ordinated support programme involving public and voluntary sector organisations, focusing on vulnerable pupils transitioning to new secondary school provision in September
- Supporting school audits / review of processes within identified schools that may lead to unequal outcomes (e.g. UCL's Inclusive Curriculum Health-check tool, Culturally Competent Curriculum tool)
- Recruiting more Black and minority ethnic governors (detailed action plan)

- Encouraging schools to adopt behaviour policies that are trauma informed and underpinned consistent application
- Encouraging schools to strengthen engagement with local community groups (e.g. 'Father to Father') as a way of building consensus
- Promoting mentoring opportunities for families from within their communities
- Ensuring pupil voice includes a range, including those who do not engage
- The lead member for Children's Service has prioritised 'no need to exclude' as one of her strategic priorities, and has met with schools to discuss approaches.

Partner agencies (children's social care, health, youth services) have also prioritised support for those young people who may be at risk of exclusion, working alongside schools.

Beacon High school successfully bid for and received a grant from the Evening Standard to reduce exclusion. Using the grant, they have developed a 'Pathways' 12 week intervention programme for those thought to be at risk of exclusion; in 2018-19 there were 6 permanent and 177 fixed period exclusions from the school. For 2020-21 there have been no permanent and only 12 fixed period exclusions.

For 2020-21, local data confirms that there were only two permanent exclusions from Islington secondary schools and none from primary. Primary fixed period exclusions have also much reduced, as have secondary, although still too high in a smaller number of secondary schools. Work is planned along the lines outlined above for a targeted group of secondary schools for the Autumn Term 2021.

3.8 - Number of Electively Home Educated pupils

7.6 During the pandemic, there has been an increase in the number of pupils being electively home educated. This is not a local phenomenon – we have reports of significant increases being reported in other local authorities via professional networks. This is now being monitored more closely, with an initial target set relating to the level seen during April 2021. However, since this time, numbers have continued to increase.

Although parents are responsible for ensuring their child, if he or she is of compulsory school age, is properly educated, the Education Act 1996 explicitly states that this does not have to be at school, and so parents have a right to educate their child at home.

Given that parents are entitled in law to opt to electively home educate, there is little we can do to actively decrease numbers. However, we do have a responsibility/duty to proactively monitor the suitability of arrangements, and ensure at least annual follow-up with families, and given the ongoing increases, it is important to continue to report on this area. In addition, we will work with schools to ensure that any parents/carers considering elective home education are fully aware of the responsibilities they will be taking on and the implications for securing a school place in the future should they wish to.

3.18 – Children's social care contacts in the past month

7.7 A new Corporate Indicator looking at the number of children's social care contacts was introduced in 2020/21 as a result of the pandemic. In the initial weeks of lockdown, there was a considerable drop off in contacts. However, by the end of the year, the overall number of contacts in the year

was in line with the number in 2019/20. Therefore, this measure is no longer a Corporate Indicator, but it continues to be monitored, after an increase in March 2021 as restrictions started to ease.

In Q1, numbers of contacts have continued to remain high. The number of contacts in June 2021 was over 50% higher than in June 2020, although numbers were lower during the first national lockdown. The three highest monthly total numbers of contacts in the last two years have occurred in March – June 2021.

No target set - safeguarding numbers are not suitable for targets.

The view of the contact team is that contacts made are appropriate and indicate increasing need due to the pandemic.

Equalities sub-measures to the contacts measure were added in 2020/21, focussing on those ethnic groups who make up a significantly higher proportion of children's social care contacts than would be expected, based on our best estimates of the proportion of under-18s in Islington from these ethnic groups.

3.18a – Equalities Sub-measure - % of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from the Black-Caribbean ethnic group compared to overall population

7.8 An estimated 4.4% of the Islington under-18 population in 2021 are Black-Caribbean. Excluding those cases where ethnicity hasn't been recorded, 7.6% of contacts in Q1 2021/22 involved young people from the Black-Caribbean ethnic group, an over-representation of 3.2%. This is a slightly higher over-representation than in Q1 2020/21, or 2020/21 as a whole, although it is less of an over-representation than during 2019/20.

The target for this measure is based on a reduction in the over-representation of Black-Caribbean young people from 2020/21 levels.

3.18b – Equalities Sub-measure - % of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from any Black ethnic group compared to overall population

7.9 An estimated 22.6% of the Islington under-18 population in 2021 are from a Black ethnic group. Excluding those cases where ethnicity hasn't been recorded, 28.2% of contacts in Q1 2021/22 involved young people from a Black ethnic group, an over-representation of 5.6%. This is a slightly higher over-representation than during Q1 last year, but less of an over-representation than during 2020/21 as a whole.

The target for this measure is based on a reduction in the over-representation of Black young people from 2020/21 levels.

3.18c – Equalities Sub-measure - % of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from a Mixed ethnic group compared to overall population

7.10 An estimated 17.6% of the Islington under-18 population in 2021 are from a Mixed ethnic group. Excluding those cases where ethnicity hasn't been recorded, 22.4% of contacts in Q1 2021/22 involved young people from a Mixed ethnic group, an over-representation of 4.8%. This is a lower over-representation than during Q1 last year, and a lower over-representation than during 2020/21 as a whole.

The target for this measure is based on a reduction in the over-representation of young people from a Mixed ethnic group from 2020/21 levels.

The CSCT accept contacts from professionals and service users. Currently work is taking place regarding greater awareness of cultural context of need and unconscious bias within organisations. This may in the longer term result in a reduction in the over representation of service users from these ethnic groups being referred and greater culturally appropriate interventions in place early on to negate onward referral.

3.19 – Corporate Indicator - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months

7.11 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 previous auditing of these cases suggests that the majority of these children relate to children living with domestic abuse where either the level of risk had apparently diminished or where the family no longer wanted social work intervention and the needs were not so great as to warrant statutory child protection processes being instigated. Audits of the cases when they are referred is indicative of new incidents of domestic abuse or an escalation of the original concerns.

Historically, our re-referral rate had been fairly constant at about 20%, which has been similar to the national average. However, the proportion of re-referrals within 12 months has reduced in recent years, and was 17.5% in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years. We have been meeting the long term targets set as part of the Children and Families Outcomes Framework, as agreed with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The rate had been above the target for most of 2020/21, but the three lowest monthly re-referral rates in the year all took place in Q4 2020/21, and this lowered the annual overall rate to 17.5%, better than the target of 18.0%. The target for 2021/22 is more challenging at 16.5%.

162 out of 768 referrals in Q1 2021/22 were re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral. This equates to 22.1%, which is above the target. However, it should be noted that early in the year the percentage can be very volatile as it is based on relatively low numbers of referrals. In fact, the figure for Q1 is lower than it was for the same period last year.

The latest comparator data we have is for London only, as this measure is part of the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance quarterly collections. In Q4 2020/21 on its own, the Islington proportion of re-referrals was 12%, better than the London rate of 18%. Over 2020/21 as a whole, Islington was in line with the London rate of 18%. Generally, London boroughs saw higher re-referral rates in the first half of 2020/21 than the second half, a pattern also found in Islington.

Recently one of the CIN teams that had a higher number of re-referrals has audited the cases – there were no concerns about cases being closed prematurely. Re-referrals were mainly related to cases that featured Domestic Violence & Abuse and contextual safeguarding as reason for referral.

3.19a – Corporate Sub-Measure - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months – Black-Caribbean ethnic group

and

3.19b – Corporate Sub-Measure - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months – White-British ethnic group

7.12 As part of work looking at disproportionality around children's social care, it was found that re-referral rates for children and young people from the Black-Caribbean and White-British ethnic

groups have been significantly above the Islington average over the last few years. Therefore, equalities sub-measures have been added to this Corporate Indicator to monitor this more frequently.

It should be noted that the percentages involved can relate to very low numbers of children and young people in the early part of the year, so performance can be volatile in quarters one and two.

15 of the 67 referrals involving Black-Caribbean young people in Q1 2021/22 were re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral. This is a rate of 22.4%, higher than the rate of 20.8% in the same period last year and marginally higher than the 22.1% rate in 2020/21 as a whole.

35 out of 173 referrals involving White-British young people in Q1 2021/22 were re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral. This is a rate of 20.2%, much lower than the rate of 32.6% in the same period last year, but slightly higher than the 19.8% rate in 2020/21 as a whole.

Please see commentary for paragraphs 7.8 - 7.10

3.20 - Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan

7.13 Long term targets have been set as part of the Children and Families Outcomes Framework, agreed with the MHCLG, for the number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan to remain below selected levels each year. In 2021/22, the aim is for the number of plans at any one time to remain below 200. At the end of Q1 2021/22, this target was being met, as there were 182 children who were the subject of a Child Protection Plan at the end of June 2021.

Despite an increase in contacts to the service, the number of children who are the subject of child protection plans remains stable. This shows that while there has been a build-up of demand during the pandemic, service response has prevented such need leading to significant harm to children.

3.21 - Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time

7.14 12 of the 35 children who became subject of Child Protection Plans in Q1 2021/22 did so for the second or subsequent time. Although this equates to 34.3%, a relatively high percentage, the numbers involved are relatively low at the start of the year, and so the percentage can be very volatile to small changes in the numbers. The 12 children with repeat plans come from just four families, one of which comprises of five children. Overall, around 16% of the children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan at the end of Q1 2021/22 had previously had a plan.

A smaller number of children on child protection plans may result in a higher concentration of families with chronic needs. Nevertheless, the following actions remain in place:

- Alerts raised of potential repeat plans before a conference is booked
- Child protection consultation to divert children who may not require a plan or if they do, ensure parallel plans are in place to ensure that the risk of drift is reduced
- Ensuring child protection plans end only once positive change for the child has been sustained.

3.22 - Percentage of children's social care assessments completed within time

7.15 By the end of Q1 2021/22, 87.8% of assessments completed in the year had been completed on time (540 out of 615). This is an increase on performance in 2020/21, but still slightly lower than

the target of 89%. Assessment timeliness has historically been very strong in Islington, with the latest comparators for 2019/20 showing Islington being above the London and England rates for that year. The proportion completed on time dropped during 2020/21 but is now recovering.

The service believes that the pandemic has had some impact on performance on this indicator, in that sometimes difficult to meet with families due to isolation. Performance is expected to continue to improve in the next quarter.

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

7.16 Only six looked after children have experienced three or more placements in the year, at the end of Q1 2021/22. This is half the number at the same point in 2020/21. This measure is cumulative and the figures reset at the start of each financial year.

A comprehensive analysis was completed into the reasons 15% of the children in our care had experienced 2 or more placement moves in the last financial year. Some placement moves are expected and planned for, for example, children moving to long term placements, moving to live with their siblings or returning to live with their parents, and 27% of the moves this year were for this reason. However, the main reason for placement moves was that carers (either foster care or residential care) were unable to manage children's emotional or behavioural needs – 54% of placement moves. The moves took place from and to a wide range of placements, but moves were most common in relation to foster placements (35%) and residential placements (24%).

Most of the children (85%) who experienced placement short term placement instability are aged 12-17, and most came into our care in the last 3 years. Of the 51 children and young people who experienced placement stability last year, 15 (29%) are now in stable placements. The remaining 36 children are in a range of placements from secure welfare, to custody, to foster care and residential care. They are all likely to experience further moves in the next year, and so we can anticipate that some of them are likely to continue to experience further short term placement instability during 21/22.

Across the CLA Service there continues to be a focus on trying to improve placement stability for all children, making sure that we identify the right placements for our children as early as possible and that when carers start to struggle we offer early robust, multi-agency packages of support to the carer and the child.

3.24 - 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

7.17 The proportion of looked after children in long term stable placements was 65.7% at the end of Q1 2021/22. Although this has dropped slightly since the end of 2020/21, it is above the proportion in stable placements at the same point in 2020/21.

A comprehensive analysis was completed as to the reasons why 69% of the children aged 0-16 in our long term care were in stable placements as of 31.3.21. Our current target is that at least 70% of the children in our long term care are in stable placements and whilst there is a slight decrease in long term stability compared to last year, this has been influenced by moving siblings to ensure that they can grow up together. Of the 29 children being considered as not having been in a stable placement for 2 years, 23 children (79%) are now in stable placements. 9 children (31% of the

children in the N163 cohort) experienced a move to be reunified with or remain with their siblings in a more suitable placement, and all of these placements are considered stable and are long term placements for them. The average age that the children in this cohort entered our care, was aged 6 and the average current age is 11. Currently, 6 of our children continue to be in unstable placements where there is a real risk that they will move again, all for very different reasons. Comprehensive, multi-agency packages of support are being offered to the carers and children, and long term care plans for the children are being carefully monitored. The majority of our children who have been in our care for more than two and a half years are in stable placements. A number of placement moves took place to support siblings to be reunited or to remain together and this is positive, given the research evidence about the benefits of siblings being placed together when they are in care. Where we have not yet been able to identify the right placement for our children, they are carefully reviewed by our Head of Service.

3.25 - Number of Looked After Children

- 7.18 After peaking in early 2020/21, the number of looked after children has reduced, and over the last six months has been fairly stable at around 350. There were 349 children looked after at the end of Q1 2021/22. We have long term targets for a gradual reduction in the number of Looked After Children over time, as part of the Children and Families Outcomes Framework. The target set for the end of 2021/22 was to have 357 or fewer children looked after, so this target has been met.

3.27 - Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours

- 7.19 13 different Looked After Children were missing from care for 24 hours or more in June 2021. This is the same number as at the end of March 2021, but a reduction on the number in the same month in 2020 (15).

No target has been set for this measure as it is not a Corporate Indicator, but it is reported to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee as it remains an area of focus for Safeguarding and Family Support, to ensure there is no sustained increase in numbers.

Children that are identified as missing from care and at risk of exploitation continue to be overseen by the Specialist Social Workers in the Exploitation and Missing Team who chair the initial strategy meetings for children missing from care. This allows for risks to be independently monitored, greater oversight of contextual risks and profile and ensures a specialist lens through which interventions are delivered.

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. In 2021 the training has been developed in conjunction with the police to reflect the changes to the police's reporting system for 13 – 17-year-olds in semi-independent or residential placements in London who are missing. There is continuous scrutiny at senior management oversight of children who do go missing with briefings provided every Friday to senior leaders.

3.28a – Percentage of primary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals

3.28b – Percentage of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals

- 7.20 Applications for Free School Meals (FSM) were being reported in 2020/21 as there has been a substantial increase in the number of applications since the Covid-19 lockdown. However, now the

collection of the School Census has resumed, we are focussing in on eligibility levels, as not all applications necessarily result in someone being found to be eligible.

No target has been set for these measures, but generally we would want the figures to be low as they reflect the economic status of local families.

The proportion of Islington primary school pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals in January 2021 was 37.9%, an increase of 7.6 percentage points from the previous year. Across London, eligibility rose 4.2 percentage points to 22.2% across the same period, and eligibility rose by 3.9 percentage points to 21.6%. Islington already had a higher rate of eligibility than these comparators in January 2020 and the increase has been higher in Islington than London and England. Islington now has the second highest proportion of primary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals in the country (up from the ninth highest in January 2020).

The proportion of Islington secondary school pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals in January 2021 was 37.5%, an increase of 3.2 percentage points from the previous year. This was a slightly larger rise than across England as a whole, where eligibility rose 3.0 percentage points to 18.9%, but a slightly smaller rise than across London as a whole (3.4 percentage point increase to 22.4%). Islington now has the fifth highest proportion of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals in the country, down from the fourth highest in 2020.

It is worth noting that eligibility rates may look artificially high up to March 2022, due to transitional protections related to the rollout of Universal Credit. Pupils eligible on or after 1 April 2018 retain their free school meals eligibility even if their circumstances change.

The DfE have also published some statistics showing the proportion of pupils who have become newly eligible for Free School Meals since the first national lockdown on 23rd March 2020. 10.6% of Islington's primary school pupils and 9.1% of Islington's secondary school pupils had become newly eligible since March 2020. Both were higher than the comparator averages, and both were the second largest figures in the country. However, as different local authorities had the largest increases in the country in the primary and secondary phases, Islington had the largest proportion of pupils overall who had become newly eligible for Free School Meals since 23rd March 2020.

3.29 - Number of schools engaged in the 11 by 11 Cultural Enrichment Programme

7.21 **Target is met.** 24 schools engaged in Q1, ahead of the target set of 15 schools for this period.

While capacity gradually rebuilt from Spring term towards the end of the academic year, restrictions impacting school's ability to access in-person enrichment activity were still in the process of easing.

The 11 by 11 menu activity shifted focus in Spring and Summer terms to prepare for the 11 by 11 Festival which took place in Q2 from 5-9 July. School engagement in Q1 therefore was focused on the teacher CPD and Cultural Lead programmes, while CET will see a big increase in school CYP engagement in Q2.

By offering a blended option of CPD training and school activity, we have succeeded in increasing school engagement to levels prior to the pandemic, we look forward to improving upon this over the coming year. We have also maintained 77% engagement by schools that we identified as target schools before the pandemic, due to their historic lack of provision of arts activities.

Teacher professional development sessions also continued in Q1, highlights included:

- **“Thinking Differently: Race and Identity in the Classroom with Ali Eisa”**, a session with Autograph ABP, a collective of Asian and Black Photographers, in which teachers explored ways of using photography and images to support pupils to think differently about race, representation, identity, citizenship and human rights, to facilitate visual analysis and critical thinking for pupils and to raise awareness of British history, including Empire.
- **“Supporting Creativity”**, a session led by Richard Phoenix, in which teachers explored ways to embed young people-led practice into creative projects, particularly within Special Educational Needs and Disabilities settings, supporting young people’s creative agency and confidence to flourish through art, music, video and podcasting activities

The 11 by 11 partnership with Islington Council Children in Need services continued throughout Q1, the second family project targeting primary aged children took place, Little Angel Theatre performed p ‘Reach for the stars’ and a two-part puppet making workshop in May and June. In total over 100 children and families were engaged.

The Primary PRU spent Q1 building a partnership project with Angel Shed Theatre to culminate at our 11 by 11 Festival. The project worked across all years at New River College Primary, delivering 4 o play based workshops themed to match the national curriculum on the theme of Exploring.

Throughout Q1, we planned and recorded a Youth Voice podcast series called Young Minds, which engaged a diverse group of 25 young Islington residents aged 13-20 years. The series is made up of individual podcasts - CultureCast, MusicCast and CareerCast. Company Three youth theatre group has also completed a project about youth voice with 12 KS3 and KS4 students from Beacon High’s Wellbeing and Inclusion Unit.

3.32 - Number of unique page views - Creative & Music pages

7.22 Target is **met**.

3,888 UPVs were registered in Q1, greatly ahead of the target set of 2,500 views. Unique page views have been high this quarter with lots of new activity from both 11 by 11 and Music Education Islington being engaged with online. For 11 by 11, this high level of online engagement is reflected in the increase of school engagement in Q2.

Total YTD unique page views: 3,888

8. Quarter 1 performance update – Outcome: Continuing to be a well-run council, making a difference despite reduced resources

8.1 Key performance indicators relating to 'Continuing to be a well-run council, making a difference despite reduced resources'

PI No.	Indicator	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2019/20 Target	Q1 2021/22	On target?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
6.3a	Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks – excluding exceptions	81.8% (2019)	54.5% (2020)	49.1% (Inner London average for 2020)	54.5% (2020)	Yes	n/a	n/a
6.3b	Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks – including exceptions	75.8% (2019)	36.9% (2020)	45.8% (Inner London average for 2020)	36.9% (2020)	No	n/a	n/a

6.3a - Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks – excluding exceptions

8.2 Excluding exceptional cases, Islington issued 54.5% of new EHC Plans within the target timescale of 20 weeks in 2020 (calendar year). This was a decrease on the previous year, when 81.8% of new plans were completed within timescales. The Islington figure was still above the target, based on the Inner London average, of 49.1%.

6.3b - Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks – including exceptions

8.3 Including all cases, Islington issued 36.9% of new EHC Plans within the target timescale of 20 weeks in 2019. Again, this was a decrease, and on this measure, Islington was below the Inner London target of 45.8%.

The dip in performance this year is largely as a result of a significant increase in requests received for EHC assessments (a 75% increase in the previous year), coinciding with the COVID-19 disruption and reflected nationally. Immediate measures have been put in place to address the increase in volume, including a review and streamlining of process to reduce bureaucracy and additional staff resources as an immediate measure. Longer term and as part of a borough wide SEND Review, we are exploring different ways to alternatively fund school-based stages of SEND provision to reduce reliance on statutory process. Current performance is currently running at 75% completed within timescales, with plans for further improvement.

8. Implications

Financial implications:

8.1 The cost of providing resources to monitor performance is met within each service's core budget.

Legal Implications:

8.2 There are no legal duties upon local authorities to set targets or monitor performance. However, these enable us to strive for continuous improvement.

Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:

8.3 There is no environmental impact arising from monitoring performance.

Resident Impact Assessment:

8.4 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).

8.5 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.

9. Conclusion

9.1 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out a clear set of priorities, underpinned by a set of firm commitments and actions that we will take over the next four years to work towards our vision of a Fairer Islington. The corporate performance indicators are one of a number of tools that enable us to ensure that we are making progress in delivering key priorities whilst maintaining good quality services.

Signed by:

Interim Director of Children's

Date: [add date]

Report Author: Various – co-ordinated by Adam White, Business Intelligence Project Manager
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Appendix A - Data Dashboard

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
Outcome: Creating a safe and cohesive borough for all									
1.1	x	Percentage of young people (aged 10-17) triaged that are diverted away from the criminal justice system	89% (Q1 2021/22)	80% (Q1 2020/21)	89% (Q1-4 2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.2	✓	Corporate Indicator: Number of first time entrants into Youth Justice System	12 (Q1 2021/22)	4 (Q1 2020/21)	38 (Q1-4 2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.3	✓	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of repeat young offenders (under 18s)	27% (Q1 2021/22 provisional)	45% (Q1 2020/21)	27% (Q4 2020/21)	↓	YJB measure on reoffending uses a different cohort so is not comparable		
1.3a	✓	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of repeat young offenders (under 18s) - YJB measure	27.3% (Q3 2019/20)	58.1% (Q3 2018/19)	44.4% (Q4 2018/19)	↓	40.9% (Q3 2019/10)	37.3% (Q3 2019/10)	Top
1.4	x	Number of custodial sentences for young offenders	2 (Q1 2021/22)	0 (Q1 2020/21)	2 (Q1-4 2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.5	✓	Corporate Indicator: Number of Domestic abuse offences	650 (Q1 2021/22)	644 (Q1 2020/21)	2537 (Q1-4 2020/21)	↔	n/a	n/a	n/a
Outcome: Delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and financial independence and helping them with the cost of living									
2.1	✓	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of 16 & 17 year olds (year 11 and 12 leavers) with an offer of a suitable place, by the end of September, to continue in education or training the following year	97.1% (2020 leavers)	96.6% (2019 leavers)	96.6% (2019 leavers)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
2.4	x	100 hours of the world of work - Number of schools engaged with the programme	9 (Q1 2021/22)	20 (Q1 2020/21)	22 (End 2020/21)	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
2.5	x	Number of page views for 100 hours of the world of work	879 (Q1 2021/22)	690 (Q1 2020/21)	4,504 (2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
Outcome: Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up – where children and families can thrive and reach their potential									
3.2	✓	Corporate Indicator: Number of children being supported through our Bright Islington family support offer – rate of assessments per 10,000	1,090 (Q1 2021/22 FY)	1,016 (Q1 2020/21 FY)	985 (2020/21)	↑	TBC	n/a	n/a
3.3	✓	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	67% (Summer 2020/21 AY)	Not available due to Covid	61% (Spring 2020/21 AY)	↑	50% (January 2021)	62% (January 2021)	2nd from bottom
3.6	✓	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of mainstream school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	15.2% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	12.6% (Autumn term 2019/20 AY)	Not available due to Covid	↑	13.0% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	12.7% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	Bottom
3.6a	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	11.5% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	11.3% (Autumn term 2019/20 AY)	Not available due to Covid	↓	11.5% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	9.9% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	2nd from bottom
3.6b	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	20.7% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	14.6% (Autumn term 2019/20 AY)	Not available due to Covid	↑	15.1% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	16.3% (Autumn term 2020/21 AY)	Bottom
3.7	✓	Corporate Indicator: Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - mainstream schools	5.71% (2019/20 AY)	8.00% (2018/19 AY)	8.00% (2018/19 AY)	↓	2.56% (2018/19 AY)	3.70% (2019/20 AY)	Bottom
3.7a	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - primary	1.34% (2019/20 AY)	1.67% (2018/19 AY)	1.67% (2018/19 AY)	↓	0.56% (2019/20 AY)	1.00% (2019/20 AY)	Bottom
3.7b	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - secondary	13.26% (2019/20 AY)	19.19% (2018/19 AY)	19.19% (2018/19 AY)	↓	5.28% (2019/20 AY)	7.43% (2019/20 AY)	Bottom

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
3.7c	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - Black-Caribbean secondary school pupils	25.49% (2019/20 AY)	39.63% (2018/19 AY)	39.63% (2018/19 AY)	↓	12.00% (2019/20 AY)	11.79% (2019/20 AY)	Bottom
3.8	x	Number of Electively Home Educated pupils	273 (End of Q1 2021/22 FY)	187 (End of Q1 2020/21 FY)	247 (End of 2020/21 FY)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.18	x	Children's social care contacts in the past month	1255 (June 2021)	798 (June 2021)	1126 (March 2021)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.18a	x	% of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from the Black-Caribbean ethnic group compared to overall population	+3.2% (Q1 2021/22)	+2.1% (Q1 2020/21)	+2.8% (2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.18b	x	% of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from any Black ethnic group compared to overall population	+5.6% (Q1 2021/22)	+5.2% (Q1 2020/21)	+7.2% (2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.18c	x	% of Children's Social Care contacts for YP from a Mixed ethnic group compared to overall population	+4.8% (Q1 2021/22)	+7.3% (Q1 2020/21)	+8.7% (2020/21)	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.19	✓	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months	21.1% (Q1 2021/22)	21.2% (Q1 2021/22)	17.5% (2020/21 FY)	↔	17.8% (2019/20 FY)	22.6% (2019/20 FY)	2nd from bottom
3.19a	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months - Black-Caribbean ethnic group	22.4% (Q1 2021/22)	20.8% (Q1 2020/21)	22.1% (2020/21 FY)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.19b	✓	Corporate Sub-measure: Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months - White British ethnic group	20.2% (Q1 2021/22)	32.6% (Q1 2020/21)	19.8% (2020/21 FY)	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.20	x	Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan	182 (Q1 2021/22)	190 (Q1 2020/21)	194 (2020/21)	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.21	x	Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	34.3% (Q1 2021/22)	13.2% (Q1 2020/21)	10.5% (2020/21 FY)	↑	17.9% (2019/20 FY)	21.9% (2019/20 FY)	2nd from bottom
3.22	x	Percentage of children's social care assessments completed within time	87.8% (Q1 2021/22)	92.6% (Q1 2020/21)	87.0% (2020/21 FY)	↓	84.7% (2019/20 FY)	83.9% (2019/20 FY)	2nd from top
3.23	x	Placement stability - short term - Proportion of looked after children with 3 or more placements over the course of the year	1.7% (Q1 2021/22 FY)	3.3% (Q1 2020/21 FY)	15.0% (2020/21 FY)	↓	10.4% (2019/20 FY)	10.6% (2019/20 FY)	2nd from top
3.24	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	65.7% (Q1 2021/22 FY)	64.7% (Q1 2020/21 FY)	69.1% (2020/21 FY)	↑	69.8% (2018/19 FY)	68.2% (2019/20 FY)	Top
3.25	✓	Number of Looked After Children	349 (June 2021)	366 (June 2020)	342 (March 2021)	↓	Not comparable	Not comparable	n/a
3.27	x	Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours	13 (June 2021)	15 (June 2020)	13 (March 2021)	↓	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.28a	x	Percentage of primary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals	37.9% (Jan 2021)	30.3% (Jan 2020)	30.3% (Jan 2020)	↑	22.2% (Jan 2021)	21.6% (Jan 2021)	Bottom
3.28b	x	Percentage of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals	37.5% (Jan 2021)	34.3% (Jan 2020)	34.3% (Jan 2020)	↑	22.4% (Jan 2021)	18.9% (Jan 2021)	Bottom
3.29	x	Number of schools engaged in the 11 by 11 Cultural Enrichment Programme	24 (End Q1 2021/22)	22 (End Q1 2020/21)	66 (End Q4 2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.30	x	Number of unique page views - Creative & Music pages	3,888 (End Q1 2021/22)	1,314 (End Q1 2020/21)	20,192 (End Q4 2020/21)	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a

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

CS PI No.	Corporate Indicator?	Indicator	Current Figure (Period covered)	Previous Figure (Period covered)	Figure at end of previous year	Direction of travel	London	England	National quartile
6.3a	x	Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks, excluding exceptions	54.5% (2020)	81.8% (2019)	81.8% (2019)	↓	61.8% (2020)	58.0% (2020)	2nd from bottom
6.3b	x	Percentage of new EHC plans issued within 20 weeks, including exceptions	36.9% (2020)	75.8% (2019)	75.8% (2019)	↓	57.3% (2020)	55.6% (2020)	Bottom

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Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Work Plan 2021/22

DRAFT

20 September 2021

1. Scrutiny Review – witness evidence
2. Quarter 1 Performance Report
3. Child Protection Annual Report

19 October 2021

1. Scrutiny Review – witness evidence
2. SACRE Annual Report

23 November 2021

1. Scrutiny Review – witness evidence
2. Quarter 2 Performance Report

11 January 2022

1. Scrutiny Review – witness evidence and concluding discussion
2. Executive Member questions

1 March 2022

1. Scrutiny Review – draft recommendations
2. Islington Safeguarding Children Board – Annual Report (to be noted)
3. School Results 2021 (including qualitative data from schools and the 3Rs strategy)

28 March 2022

1. Scrutiny Review – draft report
2. Quarter 3 Performance Report
3. Youth Offending Service

June 2022 (date to be confirmed)

1. Membership, Terms of Reference, Dates of Meetings
2. Quarter 4 Performance Report
3. Annual report back on the Transition from COVID-19 scrutiny review
4. School Place Planning