



Report of: **Corporate Director of Children's Services**

Meeting of	Date	Ward(s)
Children Services Scrutiny Committee	30 October 2017	All

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SUBJECT: Children's Services Performance 2017/18: Quarter 1 Update

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This Quarter 1 performance report provides an update on progress against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across Children's Services.
- 1.2 A Data Dashboard, showing performance against the KPIs, is included in a separate attachment. This report should be read alongside the dashboard for a full, rounded understanding of performance in each area.
- 1.3 Only those KPIs where new data is available at the time of writing are discussed in this report, to avoid repetition from previous performance updates.
- 1.4 Corporate Indicators, including Equalities Indicators are highlighted.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To consider Children's Services performance in Quarter 1 2017/18;
- 2.2 To note the following changes to Children's Services KPIs:
 - Attainment 8 and Progress 8 have replaced the previous GCSE headline measure of the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths. Due to the significant changes in the English and Maths GCSEs in 2017, the 2017 results are not directly comparable with the results in previous years.
 - In line with national changes, the measure of young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) used by the Department for Education (DfE) has been amended to focus on 16 and 17 year olds only, and now includes both young people who are NEET and whose status is not known. Also, the annual figure is now based on the December to February average, whereas previously the annual

figure was based on the average proportion of NEETs between November and January.

- The Corporate Indicator on the number of children missing from care each month has been replaced by a measure looking at the number of children who go missing from care for more than 24 hours each month.

Children's Services Plan 2016/19 - Aim 1: Through strong universal services, children, young people and adults are enabled to achieve good education and employability outcomes

1.1 – Corporate Indicator – Percentage of families with under-5s registered at a Children's Centre – indicator under review

In 2016/17, 90% of families with children aged under 5 were registered with an Islington children's centre. Once families are registered, they receive regular general information about services available at their local children's centre and can receive targeted information about key entitlements, such as their eligibility for a funded two year old place. Although 90% is lower than the 95% reported in 2015/16, improvements made to the Islington Insights data warehouse used to calculate the proportion of children reached mean that we have better data on those families not registered with children's centres, which informs ongoing outreach work.

12,101 Islington children aged under 5 were reached by a children's centre in 2016/17, which is in line with the number in 2015/16. However, we now know details of 13,259 Islington children aged under 5, which is an increase on 2015/16 and more in line with the GLA Population estimates for 2017.

Reach for some of our target groups shows that 89% of families living in social housing and 95% of Black and Minority Ethnic families were reached by our children's centres in 2016/17.

While reach of 90% sounds very positive with nearly 10,000 families with children under five registered, the 10% not registered equate to 1050 families, a substantial number. Monitoring overall reach allows us to compare the effectiveness of children's centre services in reaching target groups. Over half of the total number of families with children under 5 not reached live in social housing (573).

With the transformation to Bright Start Islington services and the closer integration with health visiting, we are looking to reach about 97/98% in time. In the meantime, as part of the transformation, universal services such as stay and plays will be developed in areas and locations where currently take-up from families in social housing is relatively low.

Data solutions which will enable electronic initial self-registration and registration for specific services is scheduled for mid-way through 2018. It is hoped that a move from paper-based to electronic recording will contribute to improved reach, accuracy of data and better analysis which can be used to shape effective outreach strategies to key groups.

1.2 – Percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

69.9% of Islington pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile in 2017, an increase of more than 4 percentage points on the 2016 results and more than 6 percentage points higher than in 2015. 2017 results for other local authorities are not available at the time of writing, although the National Consortium of Exam Results has reported an early provisional national result of 70.7% of pupils in England achieving a Good Level of Development, which would put Islington with 1% of the national average for the first time.

The GLD is the proxy indicator used to measure the impact of the cumulative range of early childhood services on children's development and learning at age 5. For the first time, Islington's GLD is virtually in line with the national average. The GLD has risen by 26% over the past five years in Islington, and while nationally the rate has also improved, the rate in Islington has improved faster. Further analysis is needed to see if anything in particular has made such a difference this year although it is likely that a combination of factors have contributed. For example, integrated early childhood services have become more embedded over the past five years and the reach and quality of services is good (87.5% judged as good by Ofsted); the quality of early years settings and teaching and learning in primary school nursery and reception classes has also improved (see 4.7 and 4.8 below).

Early analysis of EYFSP scores shows that 67.3% of low income and FSM children who took up a funded place when their child was 2 achieved a good level of development compared with 60.2% of eligible children (FSM only) who did not take up a place. (Please note while this is not a directly comparable group, all funded 2 year olds are from families with incomes of less than £16,190 per year and/or have severe and complex educational needs and disabilities.)

Impact on children's outcomes will be carefully scrutinised over the next year, as the reduction in entitlements to funded early education particularly affects low income families following changes to national policy.

1.5 – Corporate Indicator - Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent

Provisional figures for the Autumn and Spring terms during the 2016/17 academic year suggest that 9.6% of Islington primary school pupils were persistently absent (i.e. were absent for 10% or more of the time) during these two terms. This is lower than the 9.9% persistent absent rate for Islington during the same terms of 2015/16. During the Autumn term, persistent absence levels were higher during 2016/17 than the previous year, both in Islington and across the country as a whole. However, lower persistent absence levels in the Spring term have led to a fall in the overall level of persistent absence across the two terms combined.

The proposed target for this academic year is to be at or lower than the Inner London average. Comparator data is not available at the time of writing, so no direct comparisons can be made until the Quarter 2 report.

Persistent Absence (PA) is moving in the right direction since resources previously held centrally were delegated to schools from 2015/16. But it still remains too high when compared to other LAs, particularly at primary. Interventions are targeted on schools with the highest levels of PA. An emphasis is placed on the consistent use of systems and procedures (e.g. first day calling) and a range of in-school factors (e.g. encouraging extra-curricular participation). An Attendance Network for School Attendance Leads in our primary and secondary schools now meets termly, and is well attended. It has contributed to a more consistent approach across our schools through sharing of good practice.

Recognising that some of the factors associated with chronic absence are beyond the school's direct control, we are also supporting improved links between schools and the Early Help Service, and with colleagues in health, to target children with PAs and their families.

1.6 - Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2

65% of Islington's pupils reached the expected standard for all three core subjects in the local provisional Key Stage 2 results for 2017. This is 8 percentage points above the final 2016 results for Islington, and 4 percentage points above the interim national average for 2017.

Islington's performance against this measure is in the top quartile, nationally, based on the provisional results (ranked equal 26th out of the 150 authorities with results available).

Islington schools have responded well to the demands of the KS2 assessments. Many schools focussed on reading as this was a key issue following 2016 outcomes. The % of pupils attaining greater depth is a good indication of how schools are challenging the ablest pupils so that they can demonstrate a mastery of the national curriculum. A focus for the coming year will be to provide additional support to schools in relation to tracking the attainment of reading, writing and maths so that the % of pupils increases above national.

1.7a - Corporate Equalities Indicator - Narrowing the gap in attainment between Black Caribbean pupils and the Islington average at KS2 (gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths)

Provisional results for 2017 indicate that the proportion of Black Caribbean pupils achieving the expected standard across Reading, Writing and Maths increased from 42% in 2016 to 49.5% in 2017. However, as the results for all Islington pupils improved from 57% achieving the expected standard in 2016 to 65% in 2017, the gap between Black Caribbean pupils and the Islington average widened slightly, from 15 percentage points in 2016 to 16 percentage points in 2017, when rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Key Stage 2 results broken down by ethnicity are not published below national level, and the national results for 2017 will not be published until December 2017.

Support to schools to address this issue will be linked to better tracking and analysis of those pupils who are at risk of not achieving the expected standard by the end of KS2.

1.7b - Corporate Equalities Indicator - Narrowing the gap in attainment between White British pupils eligible for Free School Meals and the LBI average at KS2 (gap in percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths)

Provisional results for 2017 indicate that the proportion of White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals who achieving the expected standard across Reading, Writing and Maths improved slightly, from 45% in 2016 to 46% in 2017. However, as the results for all Islington pupils improved from 57% achieving the expected standard in 2016 to 65% in 2017, the gap between White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals and the Islington average widened from 12 percentage points in 2016 to 19 percentage points in 2017, when rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Key Stage 2 results broken down by both ethnicity and Free School meal eligibility are not routinely published, so no comparisons with other local authorities can be made.

Support to schools to address this issue will be linked to better tracking and analysis of those pupils who are at risk of not achieving the expected standard by the end of KS2.

1.8 - Number of children in Alternative Provision

There were 118 Islington pupils in Alternative Provision at the end of June 2017, which is marginally higher than the 117 at the end of March 2017. This figure includes 89 Year 11 pupils, who were no longer in Alternative Provision in the 2017/18 academic year.

There are currently (September 2017) 40 pupils in Alternative Provision. This is made up of 35 year 11s and 5 year 10s.

Arrangements for Alternative Provision in Islington have changed from September 2017. Year 11 pupils continue to be monitored by the AP team in partnership with schools. This provision is now managed by New River College PRU. Islington schools now have responsibility for managing their own arrangements for Year 10 pupils in Alternative Provision – including the monitoring of attendance and progress. This can be through a paid procurement and quality assurance service managed by New River College PRU. Most Islington schools have purchased this service. Going forwards the Alternative Provision team will only be managing cases where schools purchase this as a service. The message from the Local Authority remains that the best place for the vast majority of pupils is in a school. We continue to work with Secondary Schools and with early help services to ensure that Alternative Provision is a final resort for a small number of pupils. This academic year the current numbers of Year 10 pupils are down substantially. The current Year 11 has also fallen in relation to previous years.

1.9 – Corporate Indicator: Average Attainment 8 Score

At the time of writing, the provisional Attainment 8 figure for Islington mainstream schools for 2017 is 46.5. Provisional national figures will be available later in October, with revised figures published in January.

Note – Indicator 1.10 – Average Progress 8 Score is a relative measure and will not be available until national performance is published, this will be ready for the Q2 report.

1.11 – Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate

At the time of writing, the provisional figure for the proportion of pupils in Islington mainstream schools achieving the English Baccalaureate in 2017 is 24.9%. Provisional national figures will be available later in October, with revised figures published in January.

In line with national changes, this measure has been amended to reflect the rise in expectation of results from a C grade pass to a 5, which is equivalent to a high C in both English and Mathematics. As a result, figures are not comparable to previous years.

Turbulence continues in GCSE assessments, with significant changes in curriculum and in assessment and accountability measures. In spite of this, Islington secondary pupils have continued to performed very well in relation to the Progress 8 measure and have performed strongly in other measures. Challenges for schools will continue over the next few years with outcomes at GCSE gradually moving from the familiar A*-G to a scale that measures from 9-1 with associated new grade boundaries. The next few years will also see new and untried GCSE specifications coming on-line.

1.14 - Percentage of 16 & 17 year old Residents NEET or Not Known

The proportion of Islington's 16-18 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) has reduced in recent years, from 5.2% in 2014/15, to 2.2% in 2015/16 and 1.7% in 2016/17.

The DfE have revised this measure to look at 16 and 17 year olds only, and to include those young people whose status is not known to the local authority. The DfE have also changed the measure to look at the average between December and February each year, whereas before the average was taken for the months of November to January.

Using this new definition, 3.4% of Islington's resident 16 and 17 year olds were NEET or Not Known in 2016/17, which is better than the London (5.3%) and England averages (6.3%). This places Islington's performance within the top quartile of local authorities in the country. Only 1.1% of Islington 16 and 17 year olds were NEET, which was lower than the London (1.8%) and England (2.8%) averages. Islington also had a lower proportion of 16 and 17 year olds whose activity was not known (2.4%) compared to the London (3.5%) and England (3.2%) averages.

The improvement in performance in both the 'in learning' measures reflects continued work with schools to identify early those learners who are assessed as being at risk of not progressing to post 16 learning and ensuring that the appropriate support is provided to them. A specialist progress adviser has been in place since September 2015 whose role is to work with young people who wish to pursue a vocational pathway post 16. This role working with schools has contributed to the numbers of young people remaining in learning, as has sustained follow up of school leavers and work carried out by progress advisers in the GCSE results period.

The continued reduction in the numbers of young people 16 to 18 who are NEET or whose activity in learning is not known to the local authority is pleasing, given the high figures that had been sustained in Islington over a number of previous years. The performance in this area is delivered through a caseload-based approach, careful data management and skilled engagement with individual young people in order to support them back into learning, in often complex and challenging circumstances.

Children's Services Plan 2016/19 - Aim 2: The resilience of children, young people and families is strengthened by accessing effective early intervention approaches

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

This is based on the number of children in funded places compared to the size of the list of eligible parents received from the DWP. There were 710 2 year olds in funded places, a slight fall of 18 compared to the previous term. However, the size of the cohort of eligible children also grew slightly. This resulted in an overall fall in the proportion of eligible 2 year olds in funded places, from 70% in the Spring term to 67% in the Summer term.

The reviewed communication strategy with strong social media presence will reach wider groups of potentially eligible families. This will be underpinned by the development of the family engagement worker role and improved integrated working with health colleagues as part of Bright Start Islington. The new role of parent involvement development officer will help to grow awareness of the entitlement through a parent champion model. The slight decline in take up may be due to a number of children with additional needs, who were previously counted, but who do not meet the national SEND eligibility criteria. Further data analysis will allow for trends to be identified.

We will continue to monitor the update and the sufficiency data to plan appropriate expansion works in areas with high demand.

Children's Services Plan 2016/19 - Aim 3: Children and young people are kept safe through effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements which respond to risk, early identification and reduce escalation of concerns

3.1 - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months

The proportion of re-referrals reduced slightly from the provisional year end figure of 21.8% for 2016/17 to 21.1% at the end of Q1 2017/18. Overall, the proportion of re-referrals for Islington remains consistent with the 2015/16 national average.

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

In 2015/16, Islington had the 28th highest proportion of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time in the country. However, the provisional year-end figure of 12.1% for 2016/17 has almost halved compared to 2015/16. The 2016/17 year-end figure for Islington is lower than the London and England averages for 2015/16, and is equivalent to top quartile performance based on the 2015/16 figures across the country.

During the first three months of 2017/18, 13.3% (12 out of 90) children who became the subject of Child Protection Plans did so for the second or subsequent time. Although this is slightly above the provisional year-end figure for 2016/17, this is based on relatively low numbers across a few months. A clearer picture of performance on this measure will emerge throughout the year.

In terms of the year 16-17:

There have been repeat plans for 31 children from 24 sibling groups in the year 2016/17. This accounts for 12% of all child protection plans made in this period which is Islington's target. This is a reduction from last year's percentage of 22%.

The 5.3% cases that have been repeated within a 2-year period (10 children from 7 families) have been examined to identify themes and lessons learnt.

This year has been an improvement in terms of numbers of repeat plans and in the main those that have been repeated have been appropriately escalated.

This reduction is a result of the intensive work being performed to ensure children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan are not removed from the plan until their needs are met.

3.3 - Percentage of children who were seen in accordance with a Children in Need Plan

At the end of Q1 2017/18, 63% of Child in Need were seen in accordance with their plans, compared to 73% as at the end of 2016/17. However, the number of visits within timescales at the end of Q1 was similar to the number at the end of 2017/18. As the total number of cases had increased by more than a hundred between these two snapshots, this resulted in a decrease in the percentage reported for this measure. Management oversight and audit of

the practice in relation to visits to children suggests that children are being visited frequently but that there has been a drop in recording for this quarter.

This is a local measure. A change in the cohort covered by this measure during Q2 of 2016/17 means only trend data and no comparator data is available for this indicator. The measure is included for information only.

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

3.5 - Number of children missing from home

The number of children missing from care for more than 24 hours has decreased in the last few months, from 22 in March to 14 during June 2017.

The number of children who went missing from home has increased slightly in the last few months, from 27 in March to 31 during June 2017.

The data evidences that boys are more likely to go missing from care or missing from home than girls and that children aged 16 and 17 years old most frequently go missing. The numbers of children who have been missing in the last quarter has remained relatively similar. However, there is significant decrease in the amount of times those children went missing in comparison to the previous quarter. There has been a marked decrease in individual children missing from home on a subsequent occasion; this has been due to improved safety planning within the Social Work teams alongside partner agency contribution. The fewer number of times a child goes missing the less potential risk there is to that child.

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

Provisional data for Q1 2017/18 shows that 73% / 24 out of 33 young people triaged were diverted away from the criminal justice system.

There has been a slight decrease in performance when the data for this quarter is compared to that of Q1 in 2016/17, but this performance is still impressive. Indeed, this level of performance is evidence that the Triage service, which is offered by the Targeted Youth team, is continuing to be successful in diverting young people away from the criminal justice system. A lot of effort and focus is taking place at the current time to enhance the offer available to young people even further. For example, work is underway to ensure that the young people who are seen at Police Stations, following arrest, are screened by the diversionary nurse for additional needs and this will include utilising the speech and language offer. The overall aim is to ensure that health needs are identified and addressed, thus reducing the vulnerabilities of the presenting young person. Other recent developments, in relation to the Triage offer is the strengthening the quality and relevance of other interventions which the presenting young person receives – such as sexual health and substance misuse support and weapons awareness sessions – so that the young person's resilience to keep them safe and out of offending is increased. The Restorative Disposal, for use with complex young women who offend, is still available although it has not been used as much as anticipated. This disposal has subsequently been re-promoted to the YOS and the Police.

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

Provisional data suggests there were 17 first time entrants into the Youth Justice System during Q1 2017/18, a significant reduction from 2016/17, when there were 31 first time entrants during the first quarter of the year. This means our Q1 performance was better than the profiled target of 18 for the first quarter.

This is an extremely positive result and outcome and is indicative of the strong, multi-agency and young-person centred Triage service as detailed in the commentary for 3.6. Further work has taken place, in the past few months, with the Police and by Targeted Youth Support being part of a duty service via the front door in Children's Social Care, to maximise the use of Out of Court disposals for those young people who are eligible for this, as opposed to them being sent directly to court. This has allowed the statutory system to concentrate more on those young people whose offending, risk and safeguarding concerns requires this specialist approach.

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

Provisional data suggests out of the 53 young people in the cohort for 2017/18, only 13 had reoffended as at the end of Q1 2017/18 (25%). This is lower than the 28% of the cohort for 2016/17 who had reoffended at the same point in the previous year.

The reductions for this indicator are positive, but there is still further multi-agency work to do in order to deal with the complex needs of this small, but significant group of young people. The 'live tracker' tool, which assists in the identification of the groups of young people who are more likely to offend, has indicated that this cohort of young people are those who are likely to have been NEET for some time and disengaged from education; to come from BME communities; to have been open to Children's Social Care at the present time and/or in the past and who have experienced multiple episodes of trauma. This has helped to strengthen the quality of the interventions which are on offer to this cohort and to focus more robustly on the protective factors which keep the young people on the right path. There are some issues, however, such as addressing the high rates of breach of Criminal Behaviour Orders and tackling the NEET issue for our young offenders, which continue to be priority areas for the partnership going forward.

3.9 - Corporate Indicator - Number of custodial sentences for young offenders

Provisional data for the end of Q1 2017/18 suggests that five Islington young people received custodial sentences during the quarter, which is a reduction from the ten custodial sentences during Q1 in 2016/17.

This is an important achievement given the sustained high custody rates that Islington has experienced for young people over the past few years. The recruitment of two specialist Intensive Supervision and Surveillance workers, who provide up to 25 hours of additional and rigorous management to high risk young people in the community as an alternative to custody, has contributed to this reduction. In addition, the strengthening of quality assurance processes within the Youth Offending Service, which has led to the courts and sentencers having greater confidence in the assessments and reports that staff write for young people. This has assisted in the imposition of more community penalties as opposed to custodial sentences. The fact that the YOS has more appropriate and targeted resources available to staff to work with young people with more complex needs and the determination and dedication of the staff to keep young people out of custody have all also led to this achievement. Further work is planned to reduce these figures further including a magistrates' open day and enhanced quality assurance.

Children's Services Plan 2016/19 - Aim 4: Children, young people and families thrive through good local area health, care and education provision

4.4 – Emotional well-being of Islington looked after children (average score in Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire)

The average score on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for Islington's children who had been looked after continuously for at least a year was 13.2 in 2016/17, which is an increase on the average of 12.5. Higher scores on the SDQ correspond with an increased risk of mental health disorders, although scores of under 14 are still considered normal.

However, there was a significant increase in the response rate between the two years, from 67% of eligible looked after children in 2015/16 to 87% in 2016/17.

The average SDQ score for Islington in 2016/17 remains below the latest reported national average of 14.0 for 2015/16.

We have recently set up a monthly emotional Wellbeing meeting (EWM) to monitor and plan intervention for children in care with high scoring SDQs. It was developed as part of a broader strategic pathway aimed at improving our understanding of, and the delivery of services to, CLA with mental health needs. The EWM consists of the CLA Service Manager, CAMHS Clinical Psychologist, CAMHS Lead Family and Systemic Psychotherapist and Virtual School Head. The objective is to provide a helpful space for workers to think about cases to address CLA with high scoring overall stress scores and ensure additional support is accessed where appropriate.

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

At the end of Q1 2017/18, 2.6% of Islington's looked after children had had 3 or more placements during the year. This is a reduction on the 3.3% during the same period in 2016/17.

Comparator data for 2015/16 has now been published for this measure. Islington figures improved in 2015/16 and moved into the second from bottom quartile, after being in the bottom quartile the previous year. It should be noted that published data on this measure is only reported to the nearest whole percentage, so most local authorities are closely bunched together.

There are various reasons why some children have not been in the same placement for 2 years. There have been positive moves for children from their placements particularly children returning home, children moving from therapeutic residential care to foster care or supported accommodation, placed for adoption or who have moved to permanent families. There has been a trajectory for improvement for children placed for adoption with some children being placed swiftly. Some young people placed in supported accommodation have been moved to improve their safety.

4.6 - 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

At the end of Q1 2017/18, 69.9% of Islington's looked after children who had been looked after long term were in stable placements. This is an increase on the 66.2% for the end of 2016/17.

As above, the comparator data for 2015/16 has now been published for this measure. Islington's performance on this measure was ranked in the bottom quartile for 2015/16.

The majority of changes in long term placements involve children over the age of 14, and in short term moves young people over the age of 17. The themes are late entry to care, difficulty in meeting behavioural needs and the shortage of placements available for these children and young people. Some of these young people have benefitted from placements out of the area, where specialist help is available for them and they can make a new start away from negative influences.

A policy is already in place whereby all second moves and above are scrutinised at senior management level. There are also processes in place to scrutinise the placements of children in long term fostering arrangements. Permanency Planning Meetings are held by the adoption Service for children up to and including 13 year olds. Our Adoption and Permanency panel approves fostering matches for children under the age of 10 and our Long Term Fostering panel scrutinises and decide whether to approve all prospective long term foster placements for children over the age of 10. A Care Planning Panel has been established which is chaired by the director of Children's Services or Head of Service CLA to ensure greater oversight of these cases and in particular children in residential care. An analysis is being completed on children who have had 3 or more moves and on those who have been in the same placement for 2 years (and LAC for 2.5) between March 2017-September 2017.

4.7 - Percentage of good and outstanding early years settings

The proportion of early years settings judged to be good or better in their most recent inspection has increased throughout 2016/17. The latest published data (as at the end of March 2017) shows 89.8% of Islington's early years settings are good or better, which is similar to the London average and slightly below the England average. The Islington figure has continued to increase over time, however, and the proportion of Islington settings on the Early Years Register judged to be good or outstanding increased by almost 7 percentage points during 2016/17.

While the direction of travel continues to improve although the figures appear disappointing in comparison with national averages. The March 2017 dataset includes only one nursery setting in the borough with a less than good inspection outcome. Of the 22 individual childminders with a less than good outcome, only five are currently looking after children and all of them are working with the local childminding co-ordinator. 14 more were not looking after children at the time of the inspection and did not meet requirements; and three further childminders are included in the statistics but have not been looking after children for some time.

Nine of the 11 out of school childcare providers on the Early Years Register were good or better. There were two provisions with 'requires improvement' – the monitoring officer is providing support to the other two settings which require improvement.

4.8 - Percentage of good and outstanding Islington schools (primary, secondary and special)

The proportion of schools judged good or better rose slightly in the last quarter of 2016/17, from 87.5% at the end of December 2016 to 90.8% at the end of March 2017. This is higher than the national average, although it is just below the London average.

Published data shows that across the country, fewer schools are receiving good or outstanding inspection outcomes in recent inspections.

Subsequent to these figures and recent published reports the current figure of good or better schools across Islington is:

- 96% good or better primary (Maintained)
- 80% good or better secondary (non-academy)
- 100% good or better special school
- 100% good or better primary/secondary (Academy/Free School)

Currently this would indicate that Ofsted outcomes for Islington schools are in line with London figures and are above national figures.

The local authority is anticipating a further inspection of a primary school currently judged as requiring improvement. All indicators suggest that this school will be judged “Good” and therefore the primary figure will rise to further.

Children's Services Plan 2016/19 - Aim 5: A high quality strategic and business support infrastructure stimulates the development and delivery of efficient and effective services

5.1 - Number of active childminders

There has been little change in the overall number of childminders over time, with the number at the end of 2016/17 standing at 188, an increase of one over the previous year. At the end of Q1 2017/18, there was a slight increase to 189 childminders registered. However, this snapshot does not include one childminder whose registration was temporarily suspended in relation to late payments of fees. This childminder's registration has now been reinstated.

The length of time needed for DBS checks has improved but during the period of DBS delays some prospective childminders found employment elsewhere and have postponed registration or are no longer planning to register. Although the childcare business grant is now available, we have not yet seen an impact and there continues to be a low number of applications received (currently 6 proposed childminders) for initial childminder training.

5.2 – Percentage of children and young people with statements who were issued with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

By the end of 2016, 34.0% of pupils with a statement of Special Education Needs maintained by Islington had had their statement converted to an Education, Health and Care Plan. This is above the London (25.6%) and England (32.7%) averages.

Despite Islington being above the national average, Islington was narrowly in the second from bottom quartile. However, the numbers involved show that if just two more statements had been converted at the time of this snapshot, Islington would have been placed in the second from top quartile.

Of approximately 1000 statements, there are now less than 100 to convert. All of the reviews to support these conversions are scheduled / underway so that we are confident of completing all conversions by the April 2018 deadline set by Government.

5.3 – Percentage of new Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans issued within 20 weeks

Excluding exception cases, 49.5% of new EHC Plans for Islington pupils were issued within 20 weeks in 2016. This was around the same level as in 2015. If we include these exceptions, 40.0% of new EHC Plans for Islington pupils were issued within 20 weeks in 2016, a fall compared to 48.4% in 2015. However, there was a large increase in the number of new EHC Plans issued in 2016 compared to 2015, as the new SEN system is implemented, so the 2015 figures are based on relatively low numbers of plans.

The proportion of new EHC Plans (excluding exceptions) issued within 20 weeks fell slightly across the country between 2015 and 2016. However, in Inner London, there was a particularly significant drop in the proportion completed on time, from 70.2% in 2015 to only 48.0% in 2016. There was a similar fall in the proportion completed on time across Inner London including these exception cases. This will likely relate to the increased number of plans being made and capacity to respond to demand.

A significant local increase in the number of assessments requested / plans issued has been mirrored nationally, and has impacted on capacity to complete within 20 weeks. We have reviewed local processes and reorganised duties within the SEN Team to enable more timely completion, and the Head of Service is receiving weekly reports so that any slippage can be quickly identified and addressed where possible. Some circumstances (e.g. parents missing appointments) are difficult to control however.

5.4 - Number of new mainstream foster carers recruited in Islington

Two new mainstream foster families were approved in the first quarter of 2017/18. This is an improvement on the same quarter in 2016/17, when there was one mainstream foster family approved.

5 new mainstream foster families were recommended for approval by the Fostering panel up till the end of September 2017. There is another foster family for panel on 7th October. Two families are transferring in from independent agencies, together this change will save the council £1000 per week and we will offer better support to the children and foster carers, even with this saving. We continue to work with housing to enable more space for more foster children in current foster homes. We work with the North London Fostering consortium to reduce advertising duplication across the 6 boroughs and continue to plan the microsite to give better information to the public about fostering so we can increase the effectiveness of our digital advertising, reducing overall media costs longer term.

Appendices: Appendix A – Data Dashboard

Background papers: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



Carmel Littleton
Corporate Director of Children's Services

Date: 17/10/2017

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