

Report of: Corporate Director of People Services

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	21 st January 2020	All

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SUBJECT: Children's Services Quarter 2 2019/20 Performance Report

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This Quarter 2 performance report provides an update on progress against the relevant Corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the relevant services within the People Directorate.
- 1.2 A Data Dashboard, showing performance against the KPIs, is included in a separate attachment. This report should be read alongside the dashboard for a full, rounded understanding of performance in each area.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To consider Children's Services performance in Quarter 2 2019/20.

3. Background

- 3.1 The main body of this report is set out under the outcomes within the Corporate Plan for 2018-22. Only those KPIs where new data is available at the time of writing are discussed in this report, to avoid repetition from previous performance updates.
- 3.2 Note that some of the numbers identifying particular indicators have been changed from previous reports, as a result of slight changes made to the basket of KPIs.

Outcome: Creating a safe and cohesive borough for all

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

75% of young people triaged in the first half of 2019/20 were diverted away from the criminal justice system. This is slightly down on performance during the same part of the year in 2018/19. However, it should be recognised that this measure is currently based on relatively small numbers of young people being triaged – only 8 young people were triaged in Q2 of this year.

Targeted Youth Support continues to ensure that children, young people and their families who need support are able to access this as soon as they need this in line with the principle of 'earliest help'. This package of support to the young person, helps them address the difficulties that they are enduring, with the objective of ameliorating their circumstances and diverting them from the criminal justice system. The utilising of the Trauma Informed and Motivational Practice models has assisted with the quality of the relationship between the allocated youth worker and the young person and increases the likelihood of the intervention being successful. Inroads also continue to be made in relation to the use of the multi-agency system, where specialist support can be provided from other professionals to help the young person who is subject to the triage. This may include the provision of support from Youth Counselling or CAMHS, Police, sexual health and/or other health orientated staff and education support staff such as the I-Work coach. Young people who are subject to Triage interventions are now also able to benefit from whole-family working arrangements due to the availability of an IFIT worker within the team. This means that staff can receive consultations, which helps the worker to assess and plan from a systemic and family orientated perspective, as well as having the ability to make referrals for a more systemic approach where required.

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

There were 25 first time entrants in the first two quarters of 2019/20, which is exactly the same number of first time entrants as there was during the same period in 2018/19. However, as the overall target is to have fewer first time entrants than last year, and the year-end total for 2018/19 was 58, we are on course to meet this aim.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) report on the rate of first time entrants for each local authority, to allow comparisons to be made between different areas. Islington's latest reported rate was 355 per 100,000 10 to 17 year olds, for April 2018 to March 2019. This is the lowest reported rate for Islington since the introduction of this measure over a decade ago (beating the record low reported the previous quarter), although the Islington rate remains above the London and England rates.

Islington continues to see important and impressive reductions in relation to the number of first time entrants in the youth justice system. Figures within the past year have continuously represented Islington's best levels of performance in relation to this indicator. This has been achieved despite Serious Youth Violence and knife crime being at its highest level, in London, for a decade. Due to these improvements, it is apparent that Islington is supporting more vulnerable young people at an early stage in their journey, for instance those young people who may be subject to a triage intervention. This, in turn, prevents the escalation of more concerning and serious behaviours in numerous young people, thus preventing their entrance into the Criminal Justice System. The Youth Counselling Service is used for young people who require emotional support and there are commissioned organisations available such as Safer London and Chance UK, who provide mentoring. Young people also have access to health staff such as the Sexual Health worker, the Liaison and Diversion Nurse and IYPDAS, (the substance misuse team), amongst other services.

The delivery of targeted, planned and co-ordinated interventions to local areas, which have increased levels of need continues to be prioritised and the detached teams continue offer support to young people in specific areas of concern and in 'hotspots'. The service also continues to support schools, particularly those who require more support with more complex cohorts of young people. The service is in discussions about reviewing the list that provides a link or contact worker to our top 10 schools of concern.

The transitions project is showing some encouraging results, especially in terms of the qualitative feedback from parents and children. The feedback elicited from children and families in relation to the project has been positive.

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

Provisional data shows that out of the 43 young people in the cohort for Q2 2018/19, 19 had re-offended during the following year (44%). This is a slightly lower percentage than the level reported at the end of 2018/19.

The definition for this measure has been changed this year. Each quarter's performance will be 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).

The YJB report on two different measures of re-offending, also based on a rolling cohort of young offenders in one quarter, and their levels of re-offending over the following 12 months. However, the YJB allow a significant time lag in their reporting, to allow for potential delays in the recording of outcomes, nationally, and their figures are a year behind our own local recording. The latest data for the YJB re-offending 'binary' measure is for the July – September 2017 cohort of offenders, and 60.7% of these young people re-offended in the following year (17 out of 28). This is similar to the rate reported six months ago, although the figure for the previous quarter was a lot lower. The volatile figures for each quarter highlight how erratic the proportion of re-offenders can be, as this measure is now based on relatively low numbers of offenders in each quarter. A few years ago, this measure would have been looking at the offending of around 60-70 young people in Islington each quarter, but with the overall reductions in youth offending in Islington, the measure now relates to a cohort about half this size. The Islington re-offending rate for this quarter was above the London and England rates. In relation to the YJB 'frequency' measures on reoffending, Islington's 17 re-offenders committed 71 offences between them, meaning the average was 4.18 re-offences per re-offender. This is just above the national average (4.03) and above the London average (3.54).

Although improvements have been seen in terms of reducing the reoffending rate of young people who are prolific and persistent offenders, there is still room for further improvement. The local measure used by Islington, which measures a more recent period, shows that inroads have been made in relation to this indicator which is positive. However, the official figures for the YJB 'binary' and 'frequency' rates are higher than the London and national average. Our local analysis shows that this cohort are predominately young people with highly complex needs and vulnerabilities and this makes it more difficult to reduce their risk factors and to improve their circumstances. However, we continue to use the 'child first, offender second' ethos in working with these young people and we continue to focus on strengthening the specialist and multi-agency packages of support that can improve the lives of these young people. The embedding of Trauma Informed and Motivational Practice models have strengthened the quality of the assessment, planning and interventions to all of our young people.

Note – the comparison shown above is a snapshot at the end of the last 12 months. The figures are listed as provisional, as the number of re-offences can be subject to change, as the outcomes of offences are confirmed.

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

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

There have only been five custodial sentences involving Islington young people in the first two quarters of 2019/20. This is only a third of the number there were during the equivalent period in 2018/19, and significantly below the profiled target of 13 at the Quarter 2 point for this Corporate Indicator.

The YJB report on custodial sentences based on rates per 1,000 10-17 year olds during a rolling 12-month period, to allow comparisons to be made between different local authorities. The latest data, for July 2018 to June 2019, reports Islington's rate as 0.6 custodial sentences per 1,000 population, which is the lowest ever rate that has been reported for Islington. Despite this decrease, Islington's rate remains higher than the London (0.40) and England (0.27) custody rates, although the gaps between Islington and each of these rates has narrowed significantly.

There has been a lot of focus on this area in recent times because of the large numbers of Islington young people that were being sentenced to custodial sentences, which were the highest levels in London (and prior to that in the country) at one point. The YOS has placed a lot of effort into ensuring that Pre-Sentence Reports are trauma informed and strengths based, which has been well-received and the courts are now much more confident in Islington's alternatives to custody and ability to manage high risk young people in the community.

It is well known that BAME young people are over-represented in the youth justice system and in the secure estate and recent Islington data has shown this to be true even though the seriousness of the offending is not the equivalent of those perpetrated by White young people. Subsequently, we continue to prioritise this area from a strategic and operational perspective. Our disproportionality project, in conjunction with Haringey, with funding from the Youth Justice Board, is progressing well and will be evaluated by Professors within City University in Q4.

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

There were 21 different children missing from care for more than 24 hours during September 2019. This is higher than the number during March 2019 (11), and also higher than the number during September 2018 (13). However, this higher level has only been seen in one month, as the figures for July and August were 14 and 9 missing children respectively, so this is at present an outlier month, rather than a sustained trend. Our latest provisional data indicates a reduction in October and November.

Islington's demographics profile for children missing from care remains consistent, with more boys than girls, and those children aged 16 and 17 years old going missing from care more frequently than younger ages. Our profile of children missing from care, who are also at risk of exploitation (i.e. CCE, SYV and CSE etc.) also remains consistent – with a higher number of children missing from care and at risk of exploitation identified, than those that go missing from home.

Children that are identified as missing from care and also at risk of exploitation continue to be overseen by the Specialist Social Workers in the Exploitation and Missing Team. 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. There is continuous scrutiny and senior management oversight of children who do go missing with briefings provided every Friday to senior leaders and council members.

The Return Safe Team moved under the management of the Exploitation and Missing Team in 2018. They are currently recruiting for 2 permanent Exploitation and Missing Engagement Worker posts. Their responsibilities will include completing RHIs with children who go missing, and providing on-going, additional key work to a cohort of young people who go missing and where there are exploitation concerns, in order to minimise instances of repeat missing episodes and to address exploitation concerns.

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

Corporate Indicators and associated targets relating to Employment, Skills and Culture are generally reported to the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. However, any of these measures that relate particularly to children and young people will also be reported to Children's Services Scrutiny.

2.2 – Percentage of 16 & 17 Year old Residents NEET or Not Known

Although this measure is only reported annually in quarter 4 of each year, the following provides an update on the progress made since the 2018/19 data was reported.

Islington Council has a statutory duty to track and report on all 16-17 year olds and to have an up to date destination for this cohort, ensuring they are engaged in education, employment and training (EET).

For those young people are unable to access EET due to social, emotional and health issues and other significant barriers, support is provided through the council's Progress Team. A re-engagement offer provides 1-1 support and a stepping stone approach for the most vulnerable young people in Islington.

Since the last reporting period, the Progress Team has taken measures to strengthen performance in improving EET outcomes for young people.

- 96.6% of Islington school leavers had a September Guarantee offer of EET. This figure is comparable to the previous year.
- The Annual Activity survey has started, with schools reporting on the destinations of their Year 11 leavers. The Progress Team are already supporting young people who have been referred by schools, colleges and partners.
- During the months of September to November there is a period of 'churn' as enrolment data from schools and colleges is returned, and a range of follow up activities is targeted at young for whom a destination is not known. To date mailshots have gone out to all Islington residents in Year 12 & 13, while evening follow up activities and partnership work with other youth services is underway to reduce unknown destinations.
- Activity is underway in preparation for the annual reporting period for 16-17 year old NEET performance; figures for October show that Islington is making good progress, in line with other Central London boroughs. During this period, is the potential for an increase in NEETs with instances of young people leaving during the first term of school and college. We are working hard to establish a partnership approach with school sixth forms and colleges which is focused on early identification of young people at risk and rapidly putting support in place to ensure a young person able to continue.

2.3 – Corporate Indicator: Number of children completing the summer reading challenge

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

In 2019 a total of 1991 children registered to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge. This was an increase on 2018 when 1735 children registered to take part in the challenge.

904 children completed the challenge in 2019 which was below the target of 950, but above the 2018 total of 900.

Results in 2019 were effected by a 4-week closure of Central Library in August and numbers completing at Central Library were down. However, although we didn't reach our overall target, we saw the following:

- An increase in completers at 6 Libraries.
- Increase in joiners at 4 Libraries.
- Increase in number of books read at 8 libraries

We are continuing to promote reading to schools and families and our Winter Reading Challenge will run between 1 Dec and 28 February.

2.4 – Corporate Indicator: Number of schools engaged in the 11 by 11 Cultural Enrichment Programme

11 by 11 is a commitment to providing all children and young people in Islington with 11 outstanding cultural experiences by Year 11 in school. It is a programme which aims to ensure equality of access to enrichment activities, particularly targeting those who are disadvantaged. This new corporate plan priority and recommendation of the Fair Futures Commission is an evidence-based response to enhancing life skills through engagement with cultural activity.

A school is defined as engaged in 11 by 11 if, in the last 2 quarters, it has a) applied for an 11 by 11 activity, b) has a Cultural Lead teacher who has attended a Cultural Lead Network meeting or had a 1:1 with CET, or c) a teacher at their school has attended a Culture Bank CPD opportunity

Across Q1 and Q2:

- 59 schools (88%) engaged with 11 by 11 in one of the above ways
- 49 schools (73%) have applied for 11 by 11 activities
- 53 schools have nominated a Cultural Lead teacher or Cultural Governor or both
- 8 schools (11%) have not engaged in any way with 11 by 11:
 - 2 secondaries
 - 1 alternative provision
 - 1 special school
 - 4 primaries

During Q2 19-20 (July-September):

- 29 schools applied for Autumn activities. 11 of these schools did not apply for activities in the previous window; i.e. this is the first time that they have engaged with the activity menu. This is less than in the previous quarter (37 schools), but in Q1 there were 2 windows of activity, whereas in Q2 there has only been one.
- The breakdown of schools that engaged in this window was: 25 primary (including 1 SEN), and 4 secondary (including 2 SEN).
- Every school that came forward for activities was offered at least half of the activities that they applied for.
- Activities for over 120 classes have been offered for the Autumn term.
- The Cultural Enrichment Team has identified 22 target schools for 11 by 11 engagement, using as evidence of low cultural engagement the following sources: the November 2018 Cultural Enrichment schools survey, individual meetings with secondary schools and liaison with Schools Improvement Service. Of the above 22 target schools
 - 2 are secondary
 - 12 are primary
 - 3 are alternative provision/PRU
 - 5 are special

50% of our identified target schools applied for activities in Autumn 2019.

Cultural Partners Engagement

- 53 cultural partners contributed offers to the Autumn 11 by 11 Activity Menu; an increase of 7 partners since the previous window.

- 14 of the partners for this window are new for the Autumn term
- 8 partners from the previous window did not submit an offer for this term.
- We have the most partners for theatre (15), music (9) and heritage (8).
- We have the least opportunities for film & digital (2), dance (3) and outdoor (3).

Cultural Lead Teachers and CPD

- As of end September 2019, 53 schools have now nominated a Cultural Lead.
- Planning for CPD sessions through Culture bank was actively happening during Q2, which then took place in early Q3. At time of writing, 3 CPD sessions have taken place through Culture Bank and in total, 59 teachers from 29 schools have engaged with these.

Secondary Engagement in 11 by 11

Engagement by secondary schools with 11 by 11 has been proportionally less than that of primary. We have met with the SI secondary consultant and agreed to focus on activities suitable for the English teachers network, particularly focusing on Y7 & Y8. A range of new activities have been added to the secondary menu and we will report back on engagement in the next quarter.

11 by 11 and Vulnerable Groups

We are piloting ways of working with the most vulnerable children and young people through partnerships with other LBI services and partners. With the Virtual School, we are planning a taster event for Looked After Children and their Carers on 21st February 2020. We are also planning an event with Young Carers for August 2020 working with Family Action and Isledon Arts. We have met with and are developing ways of working with Pupil Services. Following a series of meetings, the PRU are now highly engaged with 11 by 11.

2.5 – Corporate Indicator: 100 hours of the world of work - Number of schools engaged with the programme

The council has committed to ensuring that all young people in Islington benefit from 100 hours' experience of the World of Work by age 16. This builds upon the work that has been in action since the recommendations of the Employment Commission in 2014 to develop a high quality careers offer in schools that is industry led, in order to create change for the next generation.

Quarter 2 marks a quieter period for schools' delivery due to summer holidays. Nonetheless, key developments for the quarter include:

- 14 schools engaged with the programme, including 11 secondary and 3 primary.
- 444 pupils benefitted from delivery of world of work activities.
- A pilot Careers Carousel for all Year 6 pupils at Hargrave Park Primary School, organised in partnership with BIG Alliance. Excellent feedback received from all parties confirmed this activity as an effective model for primary schools.
- 37 businesses currently signed up to offer activities through the 100 hours World of Work online menu. New employers include cyber security firm Risk Ledger, Institute of Physics and the Southbank Centre.

A targeted approach to world of work activities for priority groups of young people is being developed, including a bespoke programme for children looked after. In September a career insight session was hosted at Expedia for this cohort. Further activities have been delivered for young people with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities at Samuel Rhodes School, with employers including Laing O'Rourke and Arsenal. Work experience placements were also brokered for young people at New River College pupil referral unit at local employers including Outlandish, Soapbox and Museum of London.

A 100 hours World of Work Breakfast Event scheduled to take place in November 2019 at the Institute of Physics has been rescheduled for 21 January 2020, due to the period of purdah preceding the General Election. The aim of the event is to recruit schools not already involved, recruit more employers from priority sectors, to celebrate the good work already happening to highlight the benefits of the programme to all parties involved.

Collaboration with the Richard Reeves Foundation has enabled six secondary schools to access grant funding, to build capacity to deliver careers education and experiences of work. iWork is delivering additional consultancy for schools funded by the foundation to develop programmes of employer led activities that support the 100 hours World of Work alongside a plan for achieving the Quality in Careers Standard. 5 out of 6 schools have received a stage 1 certificate for the quality award and are on track to achieve the QICS award in the three-year funding period.

Outcome: Making Islington the best place for all young people to grow up

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

This measure is based on the number of children in funded early education places compared to the number of eligible parents received from the DWP. Provisional data for the Autumn term suggests there were 649 2 year olds in funded places in the Autumn Term 2019/20, a slight increase on the 626 in funded places for the Summer term 2018/19. The number of eligible parents decreased to 951, so the overall proportion of places taken up has risen to 68%, the highest it has been since Summer 2017.

The increase in take up is positive but as has been previously discussed, regional and national research has identified a range of reasons for the relatively low take up of the 2 year old offer across the country and particularly in London. A number of actions taken recently appear to be having an impact, eg. increased marketing including holding regular briefings for partners on the childcare offer both locally and nationally; rebranding publicity with a more differentiated message for target groups. The Bright Start area teams are making 2 year old take-up a key priority for outreach and engagement. This month sees the first “golden tickets” going out to families who have not responded to the postcard mail-out. The “golden ticket” allows families to skip the online eligibility check which has been found to be a barrier to some families who do not take up the offer, although not for all. With peer to peer recommendation acknowledged as being one of the most effective methods of spreading the message about the benefits of the 2 year old offer, another cohort of parent champions are being trained this autumn.

The range of initiatives being undertaken are being detailed in an action plan which will be monitored regularly through the Early Years and Childcare Service to establish what works and what further action needs to be taken.

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

Published data for 2018/19 shows that 71.0% of Islington pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), a marginally lower proportion compared to last year (71.1%). Comparator data for 2018/19 shows a marginal increase for both the London and England averages, which now stand at 74.1% and 71.8% respectively. As there was such minimal changes in the figures compared to last year, Islington remains in the third quartile, nationally.

The GLD is the proxy indicator used to measure children’s development and learning at age 5. To note, this is the first year of children who were affected by the 30 hours entitlement, so fewer children would have benefited from full time nursery education.

While the rate of improvement has flat lined in Islington, the rate of increase in both London and England has also slowed considerably. There are a number of anomalies in this year’s local results: boys’ results improved whilst girls’ did not although gender gaps remain for all areas of learning and are significant for some groups e.g. Black Caribbean; scores for children eligible for FSM improved while overall scores did not; scores in Maths and Literacy had a small decline whereas they have been rising steadily for a number of years; there was a small drop in the percentage of children reaching the expected level of development in two of the three prime areas of learning, personal, social and emotional development (particularly “managing feelings and behaviour) and physical development. While further analysis is being undertaken to see if there are trends, Islington had an increase in the numbers of children achieving the “exceeding” level in all areas of learning: 25% of children in Islington achieved exceeding in both areas of Communication and Language compared with 15.3% nationally.

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

The gap between the results for Free School Meal (FSM) eligible children and their peers has narrowed in 2018/19 due to improvement in results for FSM-eligible pupils.

In Islington results show that 64% of FSM-eligible pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in 2018/19, an increase from 61% the previous year. 74% of non-eligible pupils achieved a GLD in 2018/19, a slight reduction on the previous year. This means the attainment gap has narrowed from 14 percentage points in 2017/18 to 10 percentage points in 2018/19. National results for 2018/19 show only 55% of FSM pupils across England achieved a GLD (down from 57% last year), whilst 73% of other pupils achieved a GLD (down from 74% last year), so Islington is above the national averages for both groups. The attainment gap in Islington is narrower than the gap nationally (18 percentage points), and it is also narrower than the gap across London (12 percentage points). Islington is in the top quartile of local authorities in the country for both the proportion of FSM-eligible pupils achieving a GLD (equal 20th out of 150 local authorities) and the gap between these pupils and their peers in achieving a GLD (equal 16th out of 150).

The increasing percentage of children eligible for FSM reaching the GLD and the widening gap between the achievement of Islington FSM children compared with both London and nationally is extremely positive, as early years attainment is a predictor of later educational and well-being outcomes and points to the growing impact of universal and targeted Bright Start early childhood services and high quality early years provision in the borough.

Notwithstanding, there are over 25% of children eligible for FSM in the bottom quintile compared with only 15% of NFM children, and certain groups (e.g. White UK FSM) are yet more over-represented, so further actions are being identified to address the inequality gap.

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

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

The DfE have now published comparator data on absence for the combined Autumn & Spring terms during 2018/19. This confirms that the persistent absence rate in Islington primary schools was 9.4%, which was lower than the rate during the Autumn & spring terms of the previous year (11.4%). The Islington persistent absence rate remains above the London (8.3%) and England (8.4%) averages, although the gap between Islington and each comparator has narrowed. The persistent absence rate for Islington in the Autumn & Spring terms was also lower than the primary persistent absence rate for the borough across 2017/18 as a whole. Despite this reduction, Islington remains in the bottom quartile, nationally, on this measure.

The persistent absence rate for Islington secondary schools in the Autumn & Spring terms during 2018/19 was 14.0%, which is higher than the rate for the same terms during the previous year, and marginally higher than the overall rate for Islington for 2017/18 as a whole. Islington remains above the London (11.1%) and England (12.7%) averages, but is in the bottom quartile nationally.

Work has been undertaken with partner agencies to agree a joint working 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.

School attendance audits have been carried out with those schools with the highest persistent absence levels. This has been followed up with a targeted focus group of twelve schools, who have met on five occasions to develop their respective action plans and responses. All but one of these schools has seen a positive improvement, and the programme will be repeated this term with a new group of schools.

Improving and sustaining attendance remains a key priority. An Attendance Strategy 2018-2020 is in place with 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.

There have been briefings for all headteachers and governors. Performance in relation to attendance will be a key evaluation point in the Autumn 2019 categorisation of schools delivered through the Work in Support of Schools framework.

3.13 – Number of children in Alternative Provision

The number of pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) at the end of Q2 2019/20 was 44 pupils compared to 59 last year. This equates to a 25% decrease in comparable 2018 figures and include all pupils attending Alternative Provision whether commissioned through New River College (NRC) or directly by schools.

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

3.14 – Corporate Indicator - Average Attainment 8 Score

The provisional average Attainment 8 figure for Islington schools for 2018/19 is 45.7, a decrease on the 2017/18 average at the time of the provisional results (46.2). Islington's provisional average is below the comparator averages.

Attainment 8 measures achievement across 8 qualifications.

3.15 – Corporate Indicator - Average Progress 8 Score

The provisional Progress 8 figure for Islington schools for 2018/19 is 0.02, which is below the average for the same point during the previous year (0.14). Islington is below the Inner London average (0.24), but above the national average (-0.03).

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

This drop is mainly linked to a decline in outcomes at three schools. We are working robustly to support and challenge maintained school leaders using processes outlined in the Work in Support of Schools (WiSS) document to focus them on bringing about sustained improvements in progress and outcomes for their pupils. We are also meeting with leaders of Multi Academy Trusts to discuss their approaches to bringing about improvements in academies over which they have control. In spite of this, many Islington secondary pupils have continued to performed very well in relation to Attainment 8 and Progress 8 and have performed strongly in other measures.

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

and

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

The average Progress 8 score for Islington's Black-Caribbean pupils in the provisional 2018/19 results was -0.35, a fall from -0.28 in the 2017/18 results. However, as the overall Islington average Progress 8 score has fallen by a larger amount, this means the gap between Islington's Black-Caribbean pupils and the borough average has narrowed from 0.43 points in 2017/18 to 0.38 points in 2018/19. Comparator data will only be available at national level, and only when the revised results are published.

The average Progress 8 score for Islington's White-British pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals in the provisional 2018/19 results was -1.13, a fall from -0.64 in the 2017/18 provisional results. The overall Islington average also fell, but not by as much as the average score for this group of pupils. The gap between the two averages therefore widened, from 0.79 points in the 2017/18 provisional results to 1.16 in the 2018/19 provisional results. Comparator data will only be available at national level and is not yet available.

Whilst the narrowing of the progress gap for Black Caribbean pupils is promising, its context within the fall in overall progress makes the achievement of these pupils a continuing priority. The widening gap for White British Disadvantaged students can be largely accounted for by underachievement in three schools which have a high proportion of these pupils. Since September, all meetings between the Heads of Primary and Secondary School Improvement and headteachers have had the need to improve the achievement for these target groups as a key point for action. It has also been a key focus of the meetings held in the autumn term with headteachers to identify areas for specific support to individual schools. Council officers have also met with leaders from the Academy Trusts in meetings of mutual interest and again have raised the need for improvement in the achievement of the target groups as an explicit agenda item. These meetings of mutual interest are a particularly important strategic step in tackling the issue at borough level. Below is an outline of some of the work which has been happening since the last report.

This year the scrutiny committee's focus is on the achievement of these two groups of pupils. This has provided an effective and sustained framework through which to interrogate current approaches and explore issues to bring about improvement. After an initial session on setting the scene, the committee have had an opportunity to question a panel of headteachers, hear about current borough approaches, gain insight into a national research project into the impact of grouping practices on disadvantaged pupils, and visit various Islington settings to talk to pupils, parents and staff. This process will culminate in a series of recommendations which will inform future actions for both council officers and school staff. The headteacher termly briefings have been used to feedback on this work and continue the focus on this critical issue.

Since the last report, the Equalities Reference Group have continued to meet on a half termly basis. The focus on the second priority (engaging parents, pupils and communities) has led to an Islington Best Practice Charter which will be launched at the Deputy Heads conference at the end of January. The aim is to encourage as many schools as possible to sign up to the charter and thereby to adopt and adapt the best practice which is present in schools which buck the trend in relation to these two groups.

The Equalities Reference Group has also been working on the third priority (engaging pupils in school and society) which has led to a transition project due to be piloted in 3 primary and 3 secondary schools from January. The aim is to support 4-5 pupils from the target groups in each school to develop their sense of safety and belonging, express their ideas and opinions and embrace leadership opportunities.

Both of the above initiatives will feature at the Deputy Heads Conference at the end of January, together with further input from the cultural competency trainer who had such an impact last year. The focus of the conference is again equalities. As such, it will also provide an opportunity to launch a suite of inclusive assemblies which have been written specifically for Islington schools. These feature notable people from local history and include representatives from both the target groups.

Although the 'train the trainer' cultural competency course has not been possible to secure, Islington council is in the process of securing unconscious bias training to be rolled out to all council employees. A basic unconscious bias training course, delivered by a council officer, has also been made available to any Islington school which wishes to have it.

Academic research into the lived experience of White British disadvantaged pupils has continued to progress. The data collection period is almost at an end. Results will be shared with participating schools during the Spring term and senior leaders will engage in dialogue to decide on recommendations for their setting. A borough report will be published in the summer term.

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

This indicator relates to children who have had a social care assessment and intervention which has resulted in their case being closed and who have then been referred again within 12 months of the case closure. Our auditing of these cases suggests that the majority of these children relate to children living with domestic abuse 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 has remained fairly constant at about 20%, which has been similar to the national average. However, the proportion of re-referrals within the last 12 months has reduced from 16.8% at the end of 2017/18 to 16.4% at the end of 2018/19, and is also at 16.4% as at the end of Q2 2019/20. Comparator data for 2018/19 has now been published and shows that the Islington rate is just above the Inner London rate (16.0%) but well below the England rate (21.4%). Islington is in the second quartile, nationally, although Islington was only one place outside the top quartile.

The reduction in the re-referral rate is an indication that the Motivational Practice model is now having a sustainable and longer term impact on the wellbeing of children and their families, as improvements in this indicator have been sustained for two years.

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

The figure for repeat child protection plans for the end of Q2 is currently 17.8%: of the 90 new CP plans made, 16 were repeat plans (relating to 11 family groups). This is above Islington's target, although below the 21% reported for the end of Q2 in 2018/19. At the same point last year, 119 new child protection plans were made, 25 of which were repeat plans. The current figure is also below the latest available London and England comparator averages.

There has been a 24% decrease in new CP plans being made at the end of Q2 compared to the same quarter the previous year. There has also been a 36% decrease in the number of repeat child protection plans from the previous year. The fact that at the end of Q2, repeat plans account for 17.8% of all new CP plans needs to be seen in this context. One hypothesis could be that we have CP plans for a smaller population of children but from families with more complex and chronic needs. Nevertheless, we can see from the 16 repeat plans that have been made so far is that half of current plans were repeated within a two-year period and domestic abuse remains a significant factor in such plans. We have in place a system where an alert is raised of any potential repeat plan and therefore highlights the need for advance overview of the child's file and also prior to any potential repeat Initial Child Protection Conference being booked we request that a CP consultation is booked in.

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

Provisional data shows that 15 out of Islington's 318 looked after children had had 3 or more placements during the year 2019/20 so far, which is 4.7% of the total. This is slightly lower than the same quarter in 2018/19, when 5.0% of Islington's looked after children had 3 or more placements during the year (16 out of 320), although the numbers involved are relatively low at this point in the year.

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

Provisional data shows that at the end of the second quarter of 2019/20, 72.1% of Islington's looked after children who had been looked after long term were in stable placements. The proportion in stable placements has risen in each month of this quarter, and the Q1 figure was 64.0%. This is above the proportion at the same point in 2018/19 (62.2%), and also above the figure for the of 2018/19 (59.5%).

A certain number of placement moves are expected and positive, as some children move from short to long term and permanent placements. However, we still have a significant cohort of older young people entering care and other young people who came into care aged between 9 and 12 who by the age of 14 are experiencing multiple placement moves.

The recent reorganisation in CLA aims to embed our practice model further. In particular, it will enable more intensive work with foster carers and children to promote placement stability. Alongside a revised permanency protocol, increased monitoring by senior managers has begun to make a positive difference to our performance. Long term placement stability has improved in-year and is better than London and national annual 2018/19 outturns.

3.24 – Number of looked after children

At the end of Q2 2019/20 there were 318 children looked after by Islington. This is above the 313 at the end of 2018/19, but slightly lower than the 320 at the same point last year. In general, these figures represent a reduction in the medium term, as the numbers of looked after children have tended to be around 340 to 350 in recent years.

The reduction in the numbers of children looked after is very positive and an indication of the impact of our Motivational Practice model.

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

6.1 - Percentage of good and outstanding early years settings

The latest published data is based on a snapshot of inspection outcomes as at the end of the 2018/19 academic year (August 2019) and shows the proportion of Islington's settings on the Early Years Register judged good or better has increased again to 95.1%, up from 93.7% at the same point during the previous year. This is above the London average, but below the England average. Islington remains in the third quartile, nationally, although this is better than previous performance - historically Islington had tended to be in the bottom quartile for this measure. To show how tightly grouped together the figures are for each local authority, if just 4 more of Islington's 184 settings improved their inspection judgement, Islington would be in the top quartile of local authorities, nationally.

At the end of August 2019, there was one Islington early years settings judged to be inadequate. This setting (Moreland Primary School 0-2 year old provision) was re-inspected in September 2019 and its inspection judgement improved to 'Good'.

Islington's rate of outstanding provision is well above both England and London averages at 29.3% compared with 19.8% and 18.0% respectively. Provision classed as non-domestic (i.e. not childminders or group childcare in people's homes) is particularly good with 45.9% judged as outstanding compared with 22.4% across London and 23.5% in England. 95.9% of Islington's private, voluntary and independent nurseries were judged to be good or outstanding.

6.2 - Percentage of good and outstanding Islington schools

The proportion of Islington schools judged good or better remained at 91.0% at the end of September 2019, the same proportion as at the end of the last quarter, and the same as at the end of 2018/19. There were no new inspections published for Islington schools in Q2 2019/20. Islington remains above the England average (86.0%) in terms of inspection outcomes, but is slightly below the London average (92.7%). Islington is in the second highest quartile, nationally, but is only one place outside the top quartile.

Three secondary and three primary schools are currently requiring improvement or inadequate, half of these being academies. These schools are receiving robust support and challenge to secure rapid improvement leading to a good or better judgement at the next inspection.

Alongside the Categorisation meetings for local authority schools which are undertaken with school leaders in the first half of the Autumn term, meetings of Mutual Interest have been arranged with Academy Trusts or 'stand-alone' Academy Boards.

The breakdowns by school phase (good or better) are:

- 100% of nursery schools (3/3)
- 93.3% of primary schools (42/45)
 - 97.5% of local authority maintained primary schools (39/40)
 - 60% of academies and free schools (3/5)
- 70% of secondary schools (7/10)
 - 66.6% of local authority maintained secondary schools (4/6)
 - 75% of academies and free schools (3/4)
- 100% of special schools (5/5)
- 100% of Pupil Referral Units (4/4)

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications:

Not applicable.

4.2 Legal Implications:

Not applicable.

4.3 Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

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

A Resident Impact Assessment has not been completed because, although there are some equalities data-monitoring measures within this report, this is part of a regular set of reporting and no major changes to service provision have been recommended. A Resident Impact Assessment would be completed if there was a recommendation or decision to make a substantial change to an existing service, or to launch a new service, in light of the findings of this report. The information contained within this report may, however, form part of the evidence base for future Resident Impact Assessments as required.

5. Reason for recommendations

- 5.1 In accordance with its remit, the Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss the progress set out in the report.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Data Dashboard for Q2 2019/20

Background papers: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Andrew Fraser
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Date 19/12/2019

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