

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

### **Review of Equalities in Educational Outcomes 2019/20**

#### **Draft Recommendations**

##### **Values, Aspirations and Relationships**

1. Islington Council should continue to support schools in developing their relationships with parents/carers to ensure school staff understand the communities they serve. School leaders may wish to explore the make-up of their communities in staff induction materials and staff and governor training sessions.
2. Islington schools should revisit the aspirational values embedded in their work. Schools should be encouraged to reflect on whether their values and aspirations are meaningful for all of their communities, particularly those from underachieving groups.
3. Islington schools should consider the identification of suitable role models and mentors to work with children and young people. It is important that role models and mentors are relatable to the borough's different communities.

##### **Supporting children and young people's wellbeing through the curriculum**

4. The Committee considers that the wellbeing of children and young people should be supported through the school curriculum. From September 2020 the new statutory health education curriculum will provide an opportunity for schools to reflect on how well they address pupil wellbeing through personal, social and health education (PSHE), including strategies for dealing with stress, sleeping and eating well. They should also aim to provide age-appropriate life skills lessons to support their personal development journey to adulthood. If possible and within school budgets, schools could consider appointing dedicated and specialist staff to support children and young people who would benefit most from such approaches.
5. Islington Council should encourage schools to offer a broad, inclusive curriculum for all pupils up to Year 11, including the arts and digital and other technologies, to ensure that everyone can enjoy their learning and optimise their skills in order to progress to a successful adult life. A broad curriculum would reflect the new Ofsted Framework for inspection and also support Islington Council initiatives such as 11 by 11 and the 100 hours of the World of Work.

6. As teachers are increasingly aware, and research studies confirm, setting pupils can contribute to feelings of segregation and lower aspirations for young people. We encourage Islington schools to further explore flexibility in groupings and consider minimising or removing setting where appropriate. Issues for consideration should include opportunities for movement between sets and/or how teachers are allocated to sets and year groups, to ensure the most effective use of teaching experience and expertise. Islington Council should help to raise awareness of the impact of setting through the Community of Schools and governor briefings.

### **Developing school processes to offer the best support to children and young people**

7. Islington Council should support schools in developing clear strategies for raising the achievements of any underachieving group within their school, taking into account approaches identified as best practice within the Islington Community of Schools. Islington Council should also support governing bodies in their oversight of underachievement and equality issues. The Committee welcomes the work already underway to achieve this.
8. Islington Council should continue to encourage schools to make best use of iTIPs and adopt other supportive approaches to understand the behaviour of children and young people. As far as possible, all school staff are encouraged to be trained on how to recognise and respond to symptoms of trauma in children, young people and their parents/carers.
9. Islington Council should encourage schools to adopt behaviour policies that are underpinned by fairness, kindness, consistency and positivity. Behaviour policies should provide clear and succinct guidance to pupils, parents/carers and staff on what is and is not acceptable.
10. Islington schools should review their staff appointments to ensure that, wherever possible and in all kinds of posts, these reflect local communities. Schools and the local authority should also review appointments to governing bodies to ensure that they reflect the borough's communities.
11. Best practice in supporting young people and their parents/carers across transitions should be shared throughout Islington's Community of Schools. This should focus on all transitions from early years to post-16. This could include enabling staff to visit other education settings prior to transition, developing pupil resilience prior to transition and providing support for lower achieving and vulnerable pupils throughout and beyond the process.

## **Developing Council services**

12. Islington Council should continue to raise awareness of equalities issues among all staff through historical and local contextual information regarding specific communities and to provide unconscious bias and other relevant training to encourage fairness.
13. Islington Council should review how it supports schools to use data related to Black, dual/mixed heritage groups of children and young people. This may include using the data to plan a series of assemblies and school topics/educational experiences that reflect differences in self-definition and personal identity among this group; e.g. post-Windrush 'Black Londoner' or 'Black British' as opposed to the diaspora-related 'Black Caribbean'.
14. To improve outcomes to children and their families, Islington Council's social care and early help services should further develop their interactions and work with schools. This could include engaging with schools to jointly review systems and processes to ensure they are as effective as possible for all parties. Islington Council should also consider if it can help to enhance the relationships between schools and key partner organisations, such as the Police and voluntary sector.