

## SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)

**Review title** Special Education Needs and Disabilities – Transitions

**Scrutiny Committee** Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

**Lead Director** Cate Duffy, *Director – People*

### **Lead officers**

Candy Holder, *Head of Pupil Services, Learning and Schools* and  
Sue Imbriano, *Assistant Director, School Improvement and Pupil Progression*

### **Overall aim**

To assess the ways in which the council supports young people with SEND and their families at various points of transition: early years to primary school, primary to secondary school, secondary school to the world of work or further education as well, as the transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Services, and paying particular attention to the experiences of SEND children (i) with **emerging needs** at key transition points and (ii) who move between schools **outside of expected transition points**.

### **Key Objectives**

1. To investigate whether schools and families are properly consulted by the local authority when the local authority is considering their request for a particular school.
2. To ascertain whether some mainstream settings are taking significantly more/less children from disadvantaged groups than others and, if this is happening, what impact that has on all stakeholders and what measures the local authority could take to ensure fairness.
3. To look at whether where a child attends primary school affects outcomes (for example, in terms of securing earlier diagnosis/support/intervention).
4. To evaluate how joined up the local authority is where a child's borough of residence is not the same as the borough where the child goes to school or accesses services.
5. To consider the factors that influence parental choice in selecting out-of-borough provision.

6. To consider whether young people with SEND are disproportionately NEET, missing in education or permanently excluded and, if they are, what can be done.
7. To consider which council services/interventions work well; to identify best practice and to investigate services/interventions which are less successful.
8. To look at outcomes for young people with SEND who are experiencing additional disadvantage (e.g. by virtue of (i) being a child at risk, (ii) economic disadvantage, (iii) criminal justice system involvement, being missing from care etc).
9. To consider the impact of Covid on children with SEND and whether there is a specific recovery strategy for children with SEND, the success of which could be evaluated.

### **Scope of the review**

The review will focus on:

1. Provision and how this is funded
2. Profile and complexity of needs
3. Projected demand
4. Inclusion in schools

### **Types of evidence**

1. It is proposed that witness evidence is taken from:
  - a. Headteachers and SENCOs in mainstream primary and secondary schools
  - b. Senior leaders in pupil referral units
  - c. Officers responsible for drawing up Education and Health Care Plans (including educational psychologists)
  - d. Service Directors responsible for setting Islington's SEND strategy
  - e. Parents/carers of children with SEND
  - f. SEND Link governors
  - g. Representatives from transition support services / projects
  - h. Officers with lead responsibility for transition
  - i. Officers from comparator boroughs
2. It is proposed that member of the committee visit New River College, The Bridge and a mainstream school.
3. The Committee will:
  - a. Contact policy institutes such as the Education Policy Institute.
  - b. Consider data on how children with SEND were spread across schools in the borough, different categories of schools and the complexity of need of the children.

- c. Request that one of two members attend a transition review meeting for a child or young person (subject to GDPR regulations and parental consent).
- d. Request that officers map out the journey of two or three children from early years to their current stage.

**Additional information**

A. The SEND Code of Practice, Paragraphs 9.78-9.79 states that:

The child’s parent or the young person has the right to request a particular school, college or other institution...

If a child’s parent or a young person makes a request for a particular nursery, school or post-16 institution in these groups the local authority must comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless:

- i) it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or
- ii) the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

B. In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.

**Witness Evidence Plan**

<b>Committee Meeting – 20 July 2021</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Introductory Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny Initiation Document</li> </ul>	<p>For the Committee to agree the aim, objectives and scope of the review.</p> <p>Introductory presentation to include details on the Framework, the powers of the Local Authority and how the Local Authority works with different categories of school</p>

<b>Written Evidence to be circulated</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Background Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written Evidence</li> </ul>	Written evidence will be circulated to members. This will include background information that may be of interest to members.

<b>Committee Meeting – 20 September 2021</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – To Be Confirmed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Evidence</li> </ul>	

<b>Committee Meeting – 19 October 2021</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – To Be Confirmed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Evidence</li> </ul>	

<b>Committee Meeting – 23 November 2021</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – To Be Confirmed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Evidence</li> </ul>	

<b>Committee Meeting – 11 January 2022</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Any outstanding matters</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other information as requested by the Committee</li> </ul>	To consider any outstanding information requested by the Committee during the course of the review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concluding Discussion</li> </ul>	For the committee to discuss their thoughts and conclusions on the evidence received, prior to developing recommendations.

<b>Committee Meeting – 1 March 2022</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Recommendations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Recommendations</li> </ul>	To agree a set of draft recommendations that will form the basis of the committee's report.

<b>Committee Meeting – 28 March 2022</b>	
<b>Who / What</b>	<b>Area of focus – Recommendations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Report</li> </ul>	To agree the final report, summarising all of the evidence received, and explaining the reasons for the recommendations. The report will then be submitted to the Executive.