

Report of: Interim Director of Children's Services

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

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SUBJECT: Children's Services Quarter 1 2021/22 Performance Report**1. Synopsis**

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

2. Recommendations

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

3. Background

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

- 3.2 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee is responsible for monitoring and challenging performance for the following key outcome area: Children and Young People. The Committee also reviews performance related to children and young people under the Safety outcome area, e.g. key measures for the Youth Offending Service.
- 3.3 The Corporate Indicator set were reviewed at the end of 2020/21 and a revised set of measures have been put in place for 2021/22. The changes took into account measures that were not reportable under some of the lockdown restrictions in 2020/21, but that will be reportable for at least part of 2021/22 (e.g. school attendance), as well as performance during the previous year. The set of measures used for quarterly Children's Services Scrutiny performance reporting has been updated to reflect these changes.
- 3.4 The following measures have been added as Corporate Indicators for 2021/22:
- Percentage of 2 year old places taken up by low income families, children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or who are looked after (previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny)
 - Number of Children and Young People accessing Early Help
 - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months, plus sub-measures for two groups that have consistently had higher rates than the Islington average in recent years:
 - Black-Caribbean ethnic group
 - White-British ethnic group
 - Number of Looked After Children (previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny)
 - Percentage of mainstream school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance), with sub-measures for primary and secondary school phases (sub-measures previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny)
 - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions from mainstream schools, with sub-measures for primary and secondary school phases (sub-measures previously had been reported to CS Scrutiny), and a sub-measure for Black-Caribbean secondary school children, who have historically had the highest rate of exclusions

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

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

The following additional measures have been added:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.5 - Number of domestic abuse offences

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PI No.	Indicator	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Target	Q1 2021/22	On target?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
3.2	Corporate Indicator - Number of children being supported through our Bright Islington family support offer – rate of assessments per 10,000	1,035	985	n/a	1090	n/a	1,016	Higher
3.2	Percentage of 2 year old places taken up by low income families, children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or who are looked after	63%	70%	TBC (at or above Inner London)	67% (Summer 2020/21 Academic Year)	TBC	Not available	n/a
3.6	Corporate Indicator: Percentage of mainstream school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Not available due to Covid	TBC Published March 2022	At or below Inner London (14.1% in Autumn 20/21)	15.2% (Autumn 20/21 AY)	No	12.6%	No
3.6a	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of primary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Not available due to Covid	TBC Published March 2022	At or below Inner London (12.7% in Autumn 20/21)	11.5% (Autumn 20/21 AY)	Yes	11.3%	Yes
3.6b	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of secondary school children who are persistently absent (below 90% attendance)	Not available due to Covid	TBC Published March 2022	At or below Inner London (15.9% in Autumn 20/21)	20.7% (Autumn 20/21 AY)	No	14.6%	No
3.7	Corporate Indicator - Percentage rate of fixed period exclusions - mainstream schools	5.71%	Published 2022	2.99% (2019/20 AY)	5.71% (2019/20 AY)	No	8.00% (2018/19 AY)	Yes

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

	Black-Caribbean ethnic group							
3.19b	Corporate Sub-measure - Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within the previous 12 months – White-British ethnic group	18.8%	19.8%	Less than 19.8%	20.2%	No	32.6%	Yes
3.20	Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan	199	194	200 or fewer	182	Yes	190	Yes
3.21	Percentage of children who become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	18.3%	10.5%	16.5%	34.3%	No	13.2%	No
3.22	Percentage of children's social care assessments completed within time	91.0%	87.0%	89.0%	87.8%	No	92.6%	No
3.23	Placement stability - short term - Proportion of looked after children with 3 or more placements over the course of the year	9.8%	15.0%	11.0%	1.7%	N/A	3.3%	Yes
3.24	Placement stability - long term - Percentage of children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years who have been looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years or placed for adoption	73.1%	69.1%	70%	65.6%	No	64.7%	Yes
3.25	Number of Looked After Children	366	342	357	349	Yes	366	Lower
3.27	Number of children missing from care for 24+ hours	15 (Mar 20)	13 (Mar 21)	n/a	13 (June 2021)	n/a	15 (June 20)	Yes
3.28a	Percentage of primary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals	30.3% (Jan 20)	37.9% (Jan 21)	n/a	37.9% (Jan 21)	n/a	30.3% (Jan 20)	Higher
3.28b	Percentage of secondary school pupils eligible for	34.3% (Jan 20)	37.5% (Jan 21)	n/a	37.5% (Jan 21)	n/a	34.3% (Jan 20)	Higher

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

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

7.2

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.5

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.8 - Number of Electively Home Educated pupils

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.11 This indicator relates to children who have had a social care assessment and intervention which has resulted in their case being closed and who have then been referred again within 12 months of the case closure. Our previous auditing of these cases suggests that the majority of these children relate to children living with domestic abuse where either the level of risk had apparently diminished or where the family no longer wanted social work intervention and the needs were not so great as to warrant statutory child protection processes being instigated. Audits of the cases when they are referred is indicative of new incidents of domestic abuse or an escalation of the original concerns.

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

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

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

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

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

and

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please see commentary for paragraphs 7.8 - 7.10

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.25 - Number of Looked After Children

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

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

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

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

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

The Exploitation and Missing Team continue to provide training across the council and through the Islington Safeguarding Children Board which explores the link between children that go missing and risk of exploitation. In 2021 the training has been developed in conjunction with the police to reflect the changes to the police's reporting system for 13 – 17-year-olds in semi-independent or residential placements in London who are missing. There is continuous scrutiny at senior management oversight of children who do go missing with briefings provided every Friday to senior leaders.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.22 Target is **met**.

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

Total YTD unique page views: 3,888

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. Implications

Financial implications:

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

Legal Implications:

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

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

8.3 There is no environmental impact arising from monitoring performance.

Resident Impact Assessment:

8.4 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010).

8.5 The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

9. Conclusion

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

Signed by:

Interim Director of Children's

Date: [add date]

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