

Resources Department
Town Hall, Upper Street
London, N1 2UD

Report of: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Meeting of: Executive

Date: 1 September 2022

Ward(s): All

Subject: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transitions – Review of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report requests that the Executive receive the report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee following the completion of its review of SEND Transitions. A response to the recommendations set out in the report will be considered at a future meeting of the Executive.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee be received.
- 2.2. That the Executive Member's response be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

3. Background

3.1 The review was held between July 2021 and June 2022. The overall aim of the review was 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.

3.2 The Committee also agreed to the following objectives:

- 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.
- 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.
- To look at whether where a child attends primary school affects outcomes (for example, in terms of securing earlier diagnosis/support/intervention).
- 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.
- To consider the factors that influence parental choice in selecting out-of-borough provision.
- To consider whether young people with SEND are disproportionately NEET, missing in education or permanently excluded and, if they are, what can be done.
- To consider which council services/interventions work well; to identify best practice and to investigate services/interventions which are less successful.
- 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, or (iv) being missing from care etc).

- 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.

3.3 In undertaking the review, the Committee met with young people with SEND, parents of children with SEND, headteachers, SENCOs, school governors, council officers, support groups, educational psychologists and others to gain a balanced view. The committee surveyed both parents of children with SEND and headteachers, SENCOs, Governors and other professionals. The Committee also visited a mainstream school, special school and a pupil referral unit. In addition, the Committee considered local and national data and a variety of documentary evidence.

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Implications

4.1.1 The proposals in the report need to be costed before a response is made by the Executive.

4.2. Legal Implications

4.2.1 Relevant legal implications will be considered as part of the response to the review.

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

4.3.1 There are no environmental implications or contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030 at this stage. Any environmental implications and contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030 will be identified as part of the Executive Member response.

4.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

4.4.1. 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.

- 4.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report. Any equality impacts will be identified as part of the Executive Member response.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 Thirty-four recommendations have been made in response to the evidence received. The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses that gave evidence in relation to the review. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

Appendices:

- Report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – SEND Transitions

Background papers:

- None

Report Author: Zoe Lewis, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 020 7527 3486
Email: democracy@islington.gov.uk