

# Nurturing our Children and Young People

## Executive Member Annual Report

Cllr Michelline Ngongo

Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

September 2022

# Nurturing our children and young people to give them the best possible start in life

Reflecting Back: 2021/22

# Overview

- Thanks to the late Carmel Littleton for her commitment and leadership, bringing Children's Services to where it is today
- The separation of Children's and Adults Services; recruitment to new children's senior leadership
- A tremendous welcome to new leadership from Jon Abbey
- Local council elections and new Council Executive team
- In and out of pandemic – the impact for children and young people
- New central government policies published
  - Children's Social Care and National Care Reviews
  - Green Paper on Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
  - White Paper on Education

# Achievements and challenges in 2021/22

## Lifelong learning and enrichment

- It has been key to work in partnership with schools to identify and facilitate their work to support children in a post-Covid environment.
- Heightened focus on outcomes for vulnerable groups leading to a reduced attainment gap for Black Caribbean boys
- A refreshed and revised strategic approach to education including how we support a more inclusive culture in all of our schools, to reduce exclusion and improve attendance, developing our additional resource provision on our mainstream school sites so that more children with special educational needs can remain in school and in their communities.
- Six clear priorities have been identified including take up of the two year old offer, reducing exclusions, improving attendance, outcomes for vulnerable groups, increasing the number of young people progressing in education and training, increasing attainment at KS2 and KS4. Each priority has a plan with clear targets that will be recurrently reviewed at our developing Education Board (shadow).

# Achievements and challenges in 2021/22

## Early Help and Working Together for A Safer Islington

- Gradual recovery in take up of early years and after school childcare but has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels (change in working patterns, impact on employment etc)
- Good recovery in certain areas, particularly in the take up of funded 2 year old places: Summer term performance in 2021/22 was 67%, 6% points above last year's equivalent term
- Bright Start: return to face to face activity and take up: 62% 0-4s registered by Q4 with significant increases in registrations for under 1s
- HAF: Successful Easter/summer/winter programme run despite the impact of Covid surges in all seasons; Summer 2021 take up was 37% against a 30% target
- Bright Start & Bright Futures Early Help family support: 61% increase in the number of children and young people worked with compared to 20/21 with a surge in referrals in summer 21, following lockdown
- Of the 10 domains measured, families made most progress following EH intervention with "Your Well-being" and "Meeting Emotional Needs" and least with "Progress to Work and "Social Networks"

# Achievements and challenges in 2021/22

## Early Help and Working Together for A Safer Islington

- Youth Justice Service
  - Reduced the reoffending rate of young people in our Youth Justice service with lower rates than most of London and our statistical neighbours
  - Significant improvement in our EET figures for YJS YP with a 10% increase in 2021-22 (72%) compared to 2020-2021 (62%)
- New Young Islington universal youth work offer in place - supporting quality youth work relationships and experiences, reaching more vulnerable young people and those at 'transition' age
- Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)
  - Launched 2021-2022 VAWG Strategy in November 2021
  - Increase in domestic abuse (DA) criminal offences (2,756 compared to 2,537 in 2020-2021).
  - 85% increase in number of referrals to VAWG services (2,342 compared to 1,264 in 2020-21)
  - 2,008 survivors and families supported by specialist VAWG services
  - Islington DA Daily Safeguarding Meeting received nearly 2x number of high-risk referrals (695) compared to UK average (398) our repeat referral rate (25%) is lower than UK average (33%).
- Challenges: Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on VAWG and increasing criminal justice outcomes for survivors of rape and sexual assaults and domestic abuse

# Achievements and challenges in 2021/22

## Care, Choice and Control | Maximising independence

- Children's Social Care Transformation Programme
  - Launched Adolescent Intervention Team for children at high risk of exploitation and on the edge of care; 75% success rate over the year meaning 75% of children have been prevented from coming into care by having intensive wrap around support within their family home and community
  - Children's Social Care Transformation Programme - In house fostering recruitment and new models of care, housing. More Foster Carers recruited last year than year before. 15 Current Foster Carers assessed as being able to carer for more children if they had the space too and are currently awaiting housing with one carer already moved and one carer having had adaptations to their property.
- Very positive Local Area SEND Inspection in Nov 2021: recognised strengths in strategic leadership and joint working, with well-established teams and meaningful and effective partnerships with parents
- SEND Strategy 2022-27 is informed by a detailed review and case for change in response to increased demand. Key outcome indicators are set out under four Ambitions in the Strategy in the form of 'what success will look like'
- Lifelong corporate parenting - Task and Finish Group Launched chaired by the Chief Exec and attended by all senior leaders across the council to improve the life chances of care leavers in accommodation, employment, education and training, health etc.
- Challenges: placement sufficiency both locally and nationally, numbers of UASC coming into care from local hotels and social work recruitment crisis

# Building a More Equal Islington for: Children and Young People - Future focus

Executive Member 2022/26 priorities



# Nurturing our children and young people to give them the best possible start in life

## Children's Services Vision

- Every child and young person feels safe and thrives, leading to a fulfilling life

## Our Mission

- To care for our children and young people is to invest in their futures. It is our calling to build their and their family's resilience, secure the best education and skills, in places where they are safe, for their best start in life.
- Together, as guardians of a system, we will influence, flex, combine and connect to the situations of each individual child and young person because they deserve the right support at the right time.
- Excellence and equity drive us to have the services and systems in place and be ahead of the curve.
- Guided by the aspirations of children, young people, and their families, we will work with passion and ambition to co-create a place, particularly for those with complex needs or have challenging circumstances, where they feel they belong and included.

- New government policy and legislation across health, education and social care
- A focus on equalities and equities that affect childhoods and life chances
- Care leavers – more we can do as a council that reduces isolation, opens up avenues for them and progressing focus on care experience as a protected characteristic
- Strengthening participation and involvement of children and parents
- Ambitious for our safeguarding system
- Strengthening relationships with external stakeholders to improve children's outcomes through individual actions e.g. headteachers.
- Future funding and income across services and support for children and young people

## 2022-26 Future focus

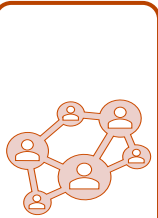


### **Lifelong learning, skills and enrichment**

Children, young people and their families are empowered with the learning and skills for life, work and the future of work supported by a high quality and high performing, inclusive education and skills system.

- Education Plan and sustainable school system
- School Catering
- School Place Planning
- Devices for Islington Year 7s
- Free School Meals
- SEND Strategy

# 2022-26 Future focus

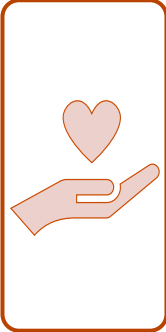


## **Resilient children and families**

The resilience of children, young people and families is strengthened through system-wide approaches with local partners to intervene early and prevent problems from escalating.

- Supporting Families, Family Hubs and Reducing Parental Conflict
- Adventure Play capital redevelopment
- Mental health services in schools and youth hubs
- Reducing exclusions and persistent absence
- Young Islington Universal Youth Offer
- Revised Children Trust Board
- Child-friendly Islington

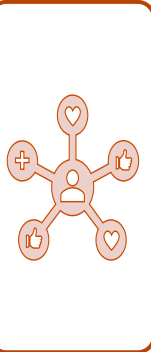
## 2022-26 Future focus



### Care, support and safeguarding

Children, adolescents and young people are kept safe through effective safeguarding, preventative and violence reduction arrangements which respond to familial and extra-familial harm, early identification and reduce escalation of concerns

- Children's Social Care Transformation Programme and resources review
- YOS Inspection
- Young people at risk of involvement in crime



### Progressing well to adulthood, independent and fulfilled lives

Young adults, particularly those whom we are corporate parents for, those with disabilities, women and girls transition well to and/or live healthy, independent and fulfilled lives with strong networks.

- Lifelong Corporate Parenting
- Proposed Youth Employment Service: input from Children's Services

