

SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)

Title of review: Making Children Visible

Scrutiny Committee: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Director leading the review: Jon Abbey, Corporate Director, Children's Services

Lead officers: TBC

Overall aim of the review:

To assess the way the council works to improve the visibility of vulnerable children and ensure that there are equitable processes and inclusive practices that enable the voice of these children and young people to influence the support and services for them to thrive.

Objectives of the review:

1. To further understand and consider the current and future challenges for children and young people who may be at risk of invisibility to the children's system and how the council is responding to these
2. To explore how support to attend school, learn and prepare for the world of work can be strengthened for the following children and young people at risk:
 - a. Children with a social worker
 - b. Care-experienced young people
 - c. Vulnerable adolescents
3. To assess how the voice of children and young people can be strengthened across the children's system to further influence the planning and delivery of support and services, in equitable and inclusive ways

How does this review contribute to the Council's priorities?

This scrutiny review will contribute to the Council's strategic priority to nurture our vulnerable children and young people in Islington so everyone has the very best start. Making children visible enables young people have the access to the opportunities they need to feel safe, belong and thrive for a fulfilled life.

This scrutiny review will enable the committee to explore issues related to making vulnerable children visible, the work currently being undertaken, and explore areas for further improvements to the children's improvements.

Scope of the review and evidence to be received:

The review will focus on:

- The disproportionality and disparities for children who may be at risk of invisibility to the children's system
- The challenges, opportunities, and developments to improve the visibility of children and the voice of the child/young person identified by the young people and families themselves, and professionals working in Islington
- The current support and pathways for identified groups of children and young people at risk of invisibility to the wider children's system e.g. elective home education, within the virtual school, post-16 education, employment and training
- Different models of child/youth voice and influence approaches and an exploration of how this can be more effective, inclusive and achieve change.

Subject to agreement, the Committee will use the following to receive and gather the evidence:

1. Documents and data information to include:
 - Summary of policy papers, think tank reports, and academic studies that pertain to the subject matter
 - How other boroughs and organisations have embedded child/family voice, engagement, and influence approaches
 - Attendance, destinations, and pathways to EET
 - Summary findings from the Pathway Plans of Children Looked After who were NEET

2. Insight visits and/or meetings with:
 - Young people who are home schooled and their parents/carers
 - Care-experienced young people supported by the virtual school with a particular focus on those placed more than 20 miles outside Islington
 - Care-experienced young people and their pathway to education, employment and training
 - Young people known to the Targeted Youth Support and the Youth Justice Service
 - Staff at Lift, Platform and New River College who provide EET advice and support to young people
 - Staff from Detached Youth Work and Arsenal in the Community
 - All relevant senior council officers
 - Other organisations and boroughs who embed child/family voice and influence approaches e.g. Participation People, Greenwich Council

Additional information:

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.