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EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 12 November 2013

Please see the attached report marked “to follow” on the agenda.

10 ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (Pages 3 - 8)

*Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
www.bromley.gov.uk/meetings*

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London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Briefing for Education PDS Committee

12th November 2013

EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY CHILDREN IN CARE

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1. Summary

- 1.1 The role of the Bromley Virtual School is to ensure that the London Borough of Bromley fulfils its corporate parenting responsibilities to provide children in care with good education opportunities (Helen Priest has the role of head-teacher within the virtual school). The Bromley Virtual School does this by providing a tailored package of support where needed and tracking children on an individual basis to ensure they are making good progress.
- 1.2 The virtual school tracks children from when they become looked after throughout their educational career and works closely with schools, alternative providers and carers to ensure that the educational needs of our looked after children are consistently and appropriately met to achieve good outcomes.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information in relation to key areas of attainment for Bromley's children in care during the 2012/13 academic year.

2. THE BRIEFING

- 2.1 The Virtual School offers both universal and targeted support to the children, their schools, their social workers and foster carers. Universal support is provided by way of ensuring that schools are aware of the needs of children in care and can respond positively.

- 2.2 Every looked after child has a Personal Education Plan which focusses upon areas of individual learning to ensure children and young people achieve the best that they possibly can. As a result, many children receive additional individual support in their schools, either provided to meet an identified need through Pupil Premium funding for personalised support, or through support offered by the Virtual School.
- 2.3 For the purpose of this report the YR2 group is made up of only eleven pupils, six of whom were accommodated after the beginning of the reporting period (three children from the cohort are now placed for adoption). The KS2 reporting group is made up of 10 pupils who have been looked after continuously for 1 year between April 2012 and March 2013. Because of the very small cohort sizes, we can see larger swings from year to year. Accordingly we show both numbers and percentages in the tables below.
- 2.4 By the end of Key Stage 4, cohorts will usually be made up of between forty and fifty students. This year's group is exceptionally small, with only 33 in total. Fourteen of these young people were accommodated after 1st April 2012 and so are not part of the reporting cohort. Despite becoming looked after so late in YR10 or in YR11, there are some remarkable outcomes for this group; the result of some exceptional foster carers and effective joint working between professionals. One child from this group went from 38% attendance before becoming looked after in the autumn of YR 11 to achieving three A's, four B's and one C at GCSE

2.5 Key Stage 1 SATs 2013 (age 7)

11 Bromley children in care ended KS1 in August 2013 but only 5 had been continually looked after during the reporting period. These 5 children form the **reporting cohort**.

- 3 (66%) achieved level 2 in Reading, Writing and Maths

The remaining two children both have Statements of Special Educational Needs and are working below the level of assessment.

Key stage 1 achieving level 2 or above

		2011	2012	2013
Reading	Bromley	66%	57%	60%
	National	59%	67%	Published Dec' 2013
Writing	Bromley	44%	57%	60%
	National	52%	57%	Published Dec' 2013
Maths	Bromley	66%	57%	60%
	National	63%	71%	Published Dec' 2013

Based upon the local data Bromley has seen a slight overall improvement in performance from 2012 although remains behind the national average for reading and maths. However, caution must be observed as the reporting cohort is so small and the national data that will provide a more accurate comparison is not yet available.

2.6 Key Stage 2 SATs 2013 (age11)

14 children in care ended KS2 in August 2013

Of these, **9** been continuously looked after for at least 12 months (to 31st March 2012) and these pupils form the **reporting cohort**.

Key Stage 2 achieving level 4 or above

		2011	2012	2013
English (N99)	Bromley	50% (5 of 10 pupils)	28% (2 of 7 pupils)	66% (6 of 9 pupils)
	National	59%	67%	N/A
Maths (N100)	Bromley	40% (4 of 10 pupils)	28% (2 of 7 pupils)	66% (6 of 9 pupils)
	National	52%	57%	N/A
New combined reading, writing and maths score	Bromley	Not applicable	Not applicable	66% (5 of 9 pupils)
	National			Published Dec' 2013

- 2.7 All but one of these children has made two or more levels of progress in English and Maths during KS 2 (8 out of 9 pupils). The child who has not made this progress is a severely disabled child, who is making progress below national curriculum levels.

2.8 Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2013 (age 16)

33 children in care ended YR11 in August 2013

Of these, **19** had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months (to 31st March 2013) and these pupils form the **reporting cohort**.

GCSE Results		2011	2012	2013 All LAC (33 pupils)	2013 reporting cohort (19 pupils)
5 A* - C including English and Maths	Bromley	8.6% (n=3)	11% (n=2)	18%	16% (n=3)
	National	30.3%	30.3%	Published Dec' 13	Published Dec' 13

GCSE Results		2011	2012	2013 All LAC (33 pupils)	2013 reporting cohort (19 pupils)
5 A* - C	Bromley	25.7%	22.2%	27%	21%
	National	33.4%	38.6%	Published Dec' 13	Published Dec' 13
5 A*-G	Bromley	48.6%	55%	27%	21%
1 A*-G	Bromley	74.3%	88%	33%	26%
Sat GCSE or equivalent	Bromley	77%	88%	36%	26%

16% of pupils (3) achieved **5 GCSEs at A*-C** including English and Maths.

78% pupils (15) in the reporting cohort have identified **SEN**:

3 (16%) have Statements of Special Educational Needs.

6 (32%) are at School Action Plus

2.9 Analysis

2.9.1 Overall, children in care education performance at key stages 1 and 2 was as expected given the very small reporting cohort. Performance at key stage 4 was slightly lower than our prediction because as well as the relatively small number of children and young people within the reporting cohort (this was a very small year group compared to normal years) we also identified a number of themes that emerged during the year; for example:

- A higher than average proportion of this year's cohort has been moderately or completely disengaged during year 11. This figure has been impacted by the higher than normal number of young people that became accommodated at aged 15 plus. Many of the late entrants to the cohort were already refusing to attend their education provision and some had no identified school at all when they became looked after. Some young people, including a number who had previously been high achieving, experienced placement breakdowns or other serious disruption which caused them difficulties in engaging at any level. For some of our young people it is hard for them to focus on education. Most schools work hard to keep young people on track but, ultimately, academic targets are missed despite high levels of support.
- The range and quality of alternative provision is limited. The alternatives on offer are sometimes not suitable for looked after young people in crisis or for those with complex and challenging behaviour. For example, we had a small number of young people that had been the perpetrators of sexual assault against other young people. Maintaining these young people in any educational resource whilst at the same time safeguarding other young people, can present a significant challenge.

- The impact of removal of GCSE Equivalence. This year, a number of young people who might, in previous years, have achieved a number of GCSEs by virtue of having gained other qualifications which had GCSE equivalence now have no GCSE successes at all. It is not clear if this will have any impact on their future education, training or employability.

2.10 Bromley Looked After Pupil Exclusions

2.10.1 Bromley has had no reported permanent exclusions of looked after children since 2008 and, the number of fixed term exclusions has decreased year on year over this period. This is the result of increased levels of support offered to both individual pupils and their schools by the Virtual School and of improved collaborative working between the Service and colleagues in the Behaviour Service, SEN and Education Welfare and our local schools.

2.10.2 Permanent Exclusions have largely been avoided by managed moves (planned transfer to other maintained or alternative provisions). The decision to affect a managed move rather than allow a 'natural progression' to permanent exclusion and subsequent placement in a pupil referral unit is usually driven by two factors: (a) the reluctance to allow the pupil to have a permanent exclusion on their record and (b) the nature of pupil referral unit provisions and the mix of students already attending. Looked after children have precedence in the school admissions code and tend to have the highest priority for admission.

2.10.3 The expectation of the Virtual School is that children will remain in mainstream schools and that schools are challenged and supported to keep pupils on roll. Bromley provides both the challenge and support very well, often keeping children in school and allowing them to complete courses and take national examinations. However, when a student is experiencing multiple fixed term exclusions, there is a judgement to be made about the value of continuing to make them attend a provision in which they are extremely unhappy and are not engaging (or are being purposely being disruptive) and then removing them to a new provision in which they can make a new start. Both options present challenges and both carry the risk of a poor outcome.

2.10.4 Fixed terms exclusions 2009 - 2013

	Number days total FX	Number of pupils	Bromley Schools	Other schools	Total Schools
2009/10	232	33	9	21	30
2010/11	134	24	9	13	22
2011/12	126	23	11	12	23
2012/13	91	13	5	6	11

NOTE: The exclusion data presented here is raw data for all look after children in these years and not the data used for government reporting. Fixed Term Exclusions (FX) of Looked After Children have been reduced year on Year since 2009. This trend is not reflected universally in the statistical neighbour group, where there was an increase in the numbers of pupils with FX in 2011.

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