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DATE: 17 January 2022

To: Members of the
CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Councillor Nicky Dykes (Chairman)
Councillor Judi Ellis (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Hannah Gray, Christine Harris, Simon Jeal, Robert Mcilveen,
Neil Reddin FCCA, Ryan Thomson and Stephen Wells

Church Representatives with Voting Rights
Reverend Roger Bristow

Parent Governor Members with Voting Rights
Vacancy, Vacancy and Vacant, Vacant

Non-Voting Co-opted Members
Penny Osborne, Early Years Representative

A meeting of the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee will be held
Committee Rooms, Bromley Civic Centre on **TUESDAY 25 JANUARY 2022 AT 7.00 PM**

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH. Members of the public can attend the meeting: you can ask questions submitted in advance (see item x on the agenda) or just observe the meeting. There will be limited space for members of the public to attend the meeting – if you wish to attend please contact us, before the day of the meeting if possible, using our web-form:

<https://www.bromley.gov.uk/CouncilMeetingNoticeOfAttendanceForm>

Please be prepared to follow the identified social distancing guidance at the meeting, including wearing a face covering.

TASNIM SHAWKAT
Director of Corporate Services & Governance

Paper copies of this agenda will not be provided at the meeting. Copies can be printed off at <http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>. Any member of the public requiring a paper copy of the agenda may request one in advance of the meeting by contacting the Clerk to the Committee, giving 24 hours notice before the meeting.

Items marked for information only will not be debated unless a member of the Committee requests a discussion be held, in which case please inform the Clerk 24 hours in advance indicating the aspects of the information item you wish to discuss

A G E N D A

PART 1 (PUBLIC) AGENDA

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contact details are shown on each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting.

STANDARD ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, questions that are not specific to reports on the agenda must have been received in writing 10 working days before the date of the meeting.

Questions specifically on reports on the agenda should be received within two working days of the normal publication date of the agenda. Please ensure that questions specifically on reports on the agenda are received by the Democratic Services Team by **5pm on 19 January 2022.**

a QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CHILDREN EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

b QUESTIONS FOR THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

4 MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, CHILDREN & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2021 (Pages 5 - 18)

5 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 19 - 22)

HOLDING THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO ACCOUNT

6 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

7 PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY DATASET (Pages 23 - 32)

8 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF DECISIONS FOR THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

a DOMESTIC ABUSE: EXTENSION AND VARIATION OF CONTRACT (Pages 33 - 42)

b PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021 (Pages 43 - 54)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

- 9 **BROMLEY COMMUNITY WELLBEING** (Pages 55 - 70)
- 10 **ANNUAL ADOPTION REPORT 2020-2021** (Pages 71 - 102)
- 11 **BROMLEY VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 'A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH TO TEACHING VULNERABLE CHILDREN INCLUDING THOSE IN OUR CARE'** (Pages 103 - 122)
- 12 **CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES INFORMATION ITEMS**

The items comprise:

- ETE Update
- Part 1 Contracts Register and Contracts Database
- Part 2 (Exempt from Publication) Contracts Register and Contracts Database

Members and Co-opted Members have been provided with advance copies of the briefing via e-mail. The briefing is also available on the Council's Website at the following link: <http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=559&Year=0>

PART 2 (CLOSED) AGENDA

- 13 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

The Chairman to move that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

	Items of Business	Schedule 12A Description
14	EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2021 (Pages 123 - 124)	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
15	PART 2 PERFORMANCE REPORTING CHILDREN SCRUTINY DATA SET (Pages 125 - 134)	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

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CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 9 November 2021

Present:

Councillor Nicky Dykes (Chairman)
Councillor Judi Ellis (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Graham Arthur, Hannah Gray, Christine Harris,
Simon Jeal, Robert Mcilveen, Ryan Thomson and
Stephen Wells

Also Present:

Councillor Kate Lymer, Children, Education and Families Portfolio
Councillor Kieran Terry, Executive Assistant for Children, Education &
Families

Councillors Vanessa Allen, David Cartwright QFSM, Ian Dunn and
Kevin Kennedy-Brooks

31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor Neil Reddin and Councillor Graham Arthur attended as substitute.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no additional declarations of interest.

33 MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, CHILDREN & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2021, were agreed and signed as a correct record.

34 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

The following question to the Portfolio Holder was received:

From Ms Alsia Igoe

Could you kindly tell me the total amount of money in the Welfare Fund for the year 2020-2021, how much of it was spent in that year and how much remained, if any, at the end of that financial year and where any remaining and unused funds were allocated? Thank you.

Reply:

The Welfare Fund earmarked reserve administered by the Housing, Planning and Regeneration Service, had a balance as at 1st April 2020 of £639k. During 2020/21, £147k was drawn down from the reserve, leaving a balance of £492k as at 31st March 2021. This balance is retained in the earmarked reserve for use in 2021/22 and future years.

Supplementary Question:

It's excellent to see the Council promoting the government's funding for the Housing Support Fund on social media yesterday, 8 November. However, I am concerned that vulnerable residents who are able to self-refer may not read the Policy Document, nor understand exactly what information to provide on or submit with the application form, therefore delaying or cancelling the application to a Fund distributed on a first come, first served basis. The press release encourages them to click on the application form, but makes no mention of the Policy Document, which I have read and throws up the following:

The Policy document states the actual start date of the Fund was 6 October. Why was the Fund not promoted in the last month?

It states those with school age children should contact the child's school for assistance with food vouchers across the holidays. Why are Bromley not offering holiday food vouchers from within this new Fund to those eligible for free school meals over the Christmas holidays?

On boiler repairs, etc, the Policy document states "a minimum of 2 quotes from different providers should be provided". Why does the application form not state this? It is only states "supporting evidence". People may submit only one quote in error.

The Policy Document states "we will publicise the scheme and provide information to relevant agencies, stakeholders and other council services". Which exact date was this information provided to them, by what means and was it from 6 October?

Why is there no mention of the right to appeal in the Council's list of information on the Housing Support Fund webpage?

Reply:

Noting that it was a long question with a number of aspects, the Portfolio Holder asked Ms Igoe to email the question in full to enable a full response to be provided. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that the Welfare Fund was administered by the Housing, Planning and Regeneration Service and that the Portfolio Holder would be happy to take them to the correct department.

The Chairman highlighted that the Department for Children, Education and Families worked closely with vulnerable families across the Borough and had been signposting families to the support available and supporting them through the process.

The Director of Education confirmed that supermarket vouchers would be made available to eligible families through schools as they had been during other school holiday periods.

Following the meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing provided the following response:

The Household Support Fund was launched on 8th November to provide financial support to residents facing financial hardship. 6th October represented the date the Government notified the Council, along with other local authorities, that this funding would be received. Final guidance to permit the Council to distribute funds was only received on Friday 5th November, so the scheme was launched on the earliest reasonable date and was amongst the first in London to go live.

The initial launch page for the scheme that appeared in the 'latest news' section of the Council website homepage directed residents to an information page about the scheme and not directly to the application. All evidence required is explained in the form and not all information needs to be or should be provided in the initial application form. For example, two quotes for boiler works are required, but residents are only asked to provide this once they are found to be eligible, to prevent residents who are unable to access the fund going to this trouble unnecessarily. The right to appeal is clearly stated on the fund policy page. Naturally the application information and webpages are regularly reviewed, particularly based on resident feedback to ensure it is as clear and accessible as it can be.

These grant monies have also been used to fund school meals during school holidays. Applications to access this funding should be made directly to applicant children's schools, as stated on the webpage and as schools are aware.

A number of partner organisations alongside representatives from Council services were also contacted on 8th November so individual teams can advise clients and residents on how to apply for the grants.

35 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD21123

The report set out the proposed programme for scrutiny of reports relating to the Children, Education and Families Portfolio for the 2021/22 municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**36 CALL-IN: HARRIS KENT HOUSE FREE SCHOOL INCLUDING
ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TRANSACTION
Report CSD21121**

On 22nd September 2022, the Executive approved the recommendations made in a report on the Harris Kent House Free School.

The decision was called in by Councillors Simon Jeal, Angela Wilkins, Josh King, Kathy Bance, Ian Dunn and Vanessa Allen. This Committee was requested to consider what action should be taken in response to the call-in of this decision; the options were to refer the decision back to the Executive for re-consideration, or to take no further action on the call-in, in which case the decision would stand and could be implemented without any further delay.

Following a request from the Chairman, the Head of Strategic Place Planning outlined the process for the approval and delivery of the free school.

The Harris Federation had made an application for the school through the Department for Education's sponsor led free school route. The school was approved in 2017 as part of Wave 12 of the programme and was originally intended to meet need in Bromley and Lewisham. The proposals were now focused on addressing Bromley's requirements. Once a free school application has been approved there was no DfE process to consult on the chosen sponsor.

The Head of Strategic Place Planning explained that once a school had been accepted into the Department of Education's programme the Council's input into the process was limited to 3 key areas; consultation on the need for school places; discussion about the provision of possible sites and the determination of any planning application. The DfE were responsible for the development of detailed proposals and for taking schemes through the planning process. The process followed for Kent House was the same as the other 6 sponsor led free schools already delivered in Bromley. In line with the DfE's process local residents would have two opportunities for consultation: on any planning application brought forward by the Department for Education in relation to the scheme; and on the trust's consultation to determine whether the DfE should enter into a funding agreement for the school.

The Chairman set out the various Committee processes through which the Harris Kent House site had been considered. This included discussion at a number of meetings of the Local Development Framework Advisory Panel and the School Places Working Group, a sub-committee of the CEF PDS, in 2019, 2020 and 2021. The Chairman noted that no Members of the Labour Group had attended the meetings of the School Place Planning Working Group in 2020 and 2021, despite invitations being extended.

The Committee noted that the proposals had received detailed attention and scrutiny. This stage of the process was not concerned with the detailed design of the proposals as it would be for the DfE to now undertake a full feasibility and submit a planning application in due course. The Council would

not enter into any property transaction until after these matters had been completed.

In response to a question from Cllr Jeal concerning the opportunity to consider other sites, the Head of Strategic Place Planning set out that the Kentwood site's allocation for a secondary school had been determined through the Council's Local Plan adoption process that had included both public consultation and a public inquiry. Any proposal for an alternative site would need to make a very strong special circumstances argument for education use as the Kentwood site had been allocated for use as a secondary school with the adopted Local Plan.

Councillor Jeal, one of the signatories to the call-in, explained that one of the reasons behind the decision for call-in was that the report had not been publicly available at the last Children, Education and Families PDS meeting in September. There was agreement that there was a need for a secondary school in the area however, locally there were concerns around the detailed plans and Ward Member engagement with residents had highlighted concerns that needed to be addressed in order to avoid an inappropriate development. One of the key concerns of residents was that the proposed development was too big. The planning process afforded a truncated list of grounds for approval whereas the Council's current position as freeholder afforded additional powers to those available through the planning process. The reality was that as freeholder the Council currently had greater flexibility to negotiate with the Harris Federation and consult with residents than would be available through planning processes. The Member cited previous issues with development at Stewart Fleming school and argued that waiting for a planning application to be submitted by the DfE would be too late and that these issues should instead be reviewed as part of the feasibility study.

The Vice-Chairman expressed concern that the lines between the planning process for a school and the need for school places were being blurred. The Head of Strategic Place Planning confirmed that the Local Plan established the framework for consideration of a development and until the DfE submitted fully developed proposals it was very difficult for the Council to respond. The Committee noted that planning proposals for schools were often controversial and there were a number of competing issues that needed to be balanced. Where the Council became aware of local concerns, these were raised with the DfE.

The Leader of the Labour Group and signatory to the Call-in raised the following three issues. Firstly, in terms of transparency, there had been significant concerns around the absence of Part 1 (public) papers at the meeting of the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee on 14 September 2021. It was stressed that Officers provided a recommendation as to whether an item should be discussed in Part 1 or Part 2 of the agenda, but it was for Members to decide and vote. Secondly, in relation to the Local Plan, objections had been raised about the size of the Kent House site and its suitability for a secondary school at meetings of the Local Development Framework Advisory Panel. Finally, in relation to planning issues, Cllr Wilkins

highlighted that she had attended the September meeting of the Executive where another similar issue concerning a land transaction for a school had been considered. At that meeting a request had been made that the two schools were treated the same. Cllr Wilkins sought clarification that the negotiations on the lease for Kent House would be entered into subject to any planning application.

Members of the Committee questioned exactly what part of the decision taken by the Executive was being called-in. It was noted that the report to the Executive had asked Members to note the progress made and endorse a move to heads of terms.

A Member noted that during the Local Plan processes, Members had clearly been advised by Officers that the Local Plan process was the only opportunity to influence designation of education sites and the Local Plan consultation had been very thorough. There was now a need for Members to consider the current position and wait for the next opportunity to influence further through Local Plan processes.

In bringing the debate to a conclusion, the Chairman confirmed that she had not heard anything which had made her consider that the decision taken by the Executive in September was unsound. Consequently, the Chairman proposed that no further action be taken on the Call-in. The motion was seconded by the Vice-Chairman, put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED: That no further action be taken in respect of the Call-in.

37 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families, Cllr Kate Lymer, attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Committee. Prior to the meeting the Portfolio Holder had provided Members of the Committee with a written update outlining activity across the Portfolio since the last meeting. In particular the Portfolio Holder highlighted the following issues:-

- The Local Authority had received a very positive letter from Ofsted following a recent focus visit. In the letter Ofsted had confirmed that Members, Officers and Partners were doing all they could to help young people reach their full potential.
- The Portfolio Holder had recently addressed a Chair of Governors meetings.
- An invitation had been extended to school to visit the Civic Centre and hold their School Council meetings in the Council Chamber. As part of these visits the young people would meet the Mayor or Deputy Mayor and be provided with a tour of the Old Palace culminating in a visit to the Mayor's Parlor. It was noted that when schools visited local were Members were informed and invited to attend.
- The Portfolio Holder reported that since the last PDS meeting in September, she had attended a number of meetings including the

SEND and YOS Governance Boards. The Portfolio Holder had also recently made a presentation at internal Officer Training.

- In October the Portfolio Holder had chaired her second meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board and had also been involved in promoting National Kinship Week.
- In addition, the Portfolio Holder had attended the official opening of the “Beyond Autism” Facility in Bromley North.
- A visit had also been made to the SEND Matters pop up shop in the Glades and Members noted that further pop-up shops would be arranged for Primary and Secondary schools.
- Within the last week the Portfolio Holder held meetings with the new Director for Children, Education and Families and the incoming Director for Corporate Services and Governance.
- Finally, the Portfolio Holder welcomed Richard Baldwin, Director for Children, Education and Families and extended her best wishes to Janet Bailey (Director of Children’s Services) who would be leaving the Council. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that the leadership and dedication demonstrated by Janet Bailey had been truly inspiring and she was genuinely one of the best in the business.

Cllr Lymer then responded to questions making the following comments:-

- A document on the Care Leavers Covenant would be forwarded to Members of the Committee when it was available. Members noted that whilst the Covenant was very much about continuing to provide the support already in place, what it did do was provide the Council’s Care Leavers with national access. The wider audience and ideas coming from the Covenant would enhance the young people and widen their horizons.
- The Ofsted review into Sexual Harassment and Abuse had been regularly discussed at meetings of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership. Since the publication of the Ofsted report a letter, from Ministers had been sent to all Safeguarding Children Partnerships. Discussions were taking place with schools and these had also been attended by a senior police officer. Bromley schools were taking a very proactive approach to discussions and the response with the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership leading the coordination of the Boroughwide response. Officers were looking to develop a set of resources to support schools with their consideration of and response to this matter.
- The Council was in the process of procuring consultants to undertake a strategic review of the SEN estate in Bromley. It was anticipated that current Marjorie McClure would form part of the first phase of property reviews commencing in Spring Term 2022.

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder for the update.

38 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF DECISIONS FOR THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The Committee considered the following Part 1 reports where the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision:

A BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22 Report CEF21055

The report provided the budget monitoring position for 2021/22 based on activity up to the end of September 2021.

Members considered issues around the overspend in SEN Transport, noting that following a consultant review, proposals would be developed which would form part of the medium-term financial strategy and were likely to take effect, in varying degrees, from 2023. Some savings and mitigations had already been identified and further actions would be presented to Members as part of the budget setting process. The Director of Education confirmed that the review of SEN Transport formed part of the Council's four year Transformation Programme. Initial benchmarking had established that Bromley was not an outlier in terms of SEN transportation costs, indeed Bromley's costs were lower than some neighbouring boroughs.

In relation to the overspend in SEN Transportation, Members noted that the projection was that the overspend would reach £1.8m by the year end and the Department would be seeking to mitigate as far as possible. Members noted that there were a number of underlying issues and not all of these could be resolved through the consultants report. The Committee requested a further update at the next meeting in January 2022.

Turning to the issue of the cost of placements arising from the decisions of tribunals, a Member expressed concern around the wording used in the report, suggesting that it would be more appropriate to highlight the costs to the Council of placements whilst acknowledging that the placements were appropriate and met the needs of children. It was noted that tribunal processes should be avoided where possible as they carried with them a number of negative effects, not only on parents, but also on the headteacher who were required to compile lengthy reports. It was suggested that a review of the Tribunal Process should be added to the Committee's work programme.

In response, the Director of Education reassured the Committee that from the start of the process children and families were put first and staff were alert to the human aspect of the process. The Department was seeing significant pressures, not just in terms of the number of cases but also in increased complexity of need. The increased complexity of need meant that there were challenges with the sufficiency of places which resulted in a requirement to place children out-of-borough placements. Whilst it was recognised that the independent provision resulted in appropriate placements, they were at the

more expensive end of the scale. Officers did focus on the beginning of the process and engage in mediation prior to tribunal, however increasingly litigious claims were being submitted driven by private law forms.

RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1. Note that the latest projected overspend of £1,806,000 is forecast on the controllable budget, based on information as at September 2021;**
- 2. Agree the use of the £500k Education Risk Reserve and forward to the Executive for their approval as set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report.**

39 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 24 November 2021:

A DORSET ROAD SITE DISPOSAL Report CEF21048

The Executive was asked to approve and agree to the property transaction for the disposal of the Dorset Road Infant School following the amalgamation of the school with Castlecombe Primary School.

The Committee noted the addendum to the report that had been tabled and published on the website with the meeting papers.

Cllr David Cartwright address the Committee as Ward Member and reported that members of the Mottingham Resident's Association were watching progress on this issue closely. He noted that there were serious structural defects with the school building and that the school was not a listed building. The Resident's Association had indicated that its preference was for a housing development.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Place Planning confirmed that the process for disposal was elongated as the site is protected by a number of pieces of legislation protecting public land. Section 77 applications to the Secretary of State for Education for the disposal of school land often take a year. The Regional Schools Commissioner had already taken a decision around enabling the schools to amalgamate into the new Elmstead Wood Primary School, which included that the proceeds from the sale of the Dorset Road site would go towards the costs of ensuring that new amalgamated school could physically admit all the pupils from both Castlecombe Primary School and Dorset Road Infant School. The Secretary of State would determine how funds would be used. The exact costs of the works would not be known until tenders had been received and there could potentially be a funding gap. The Trust was responsible for the delivery of the Elmstead Wood School proposal and discussions around any funding gap would need

to include the DfE. The Council's contribution was capped at the level of the capital receipt.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to:

- 1. Notes that the amalgamation of the Dorset Infant School and Castlecombe Primary School academies, operated by The Spring Partnership Trust, has been approved by the Department for Education. The new amalgamated school will be called Elmstead Wood Primary School and will be based at the Castlecombe Primary School site.**
- 2. Authorise the Director of Education to apply and obtain formal consent from the Secretary of State for Education to dispose of the Dorset Road Infant School site.**
- 3. Authorise the Council disposing of the Dorset Road Infant School once the 125-year academy lease has been terminated, and the land has reverted to the Council and subject to obtaining the requisite consent and approval of the Secretary of State for Education.**
- 4. Authorise the reinvestment of the capital receipt obtained from a disposal of the property at Dorset Road, estimated at £500,000, to improve the facilities at Castlecombe Primary School site in accordance with Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010.**
- 5. Authorise that the Council's contribution to support the amalgamation of the schools be capped at the value of the capital receipt achieved from the disposal of the Dorset Road Infants School site.**
- 6. Delegate authority for the Director of Education, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and Governance, Director of Finance and Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration, and the Portfolio Holder for Children Education and Families, to agree and settle the commercial terms of the disposal and to enter into all relevant legal agreements and any other ancillary legal documentation relating thereto and to deal with publicising, if appropriate, any Open Space Notices and considering representations received.**
- 7. Note that Secretary of State for Education's consent to dispose of Dorset Road Infants School does not change the Local Plan designation of the site for education use and that any planning application relating to the site will have to demonstrate how relevant Development Plan policies, notably Local Plan Policy 27 Education and Policy 20 Community Facilities, have been addressed.**

**40 BROMLEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT (2020/21)
Report CEF21042**

The annual report of the Bromley Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP) covered the period from April 2020 to March 2021. It was a statutory

requirement for safeguarding partnerships to publish this report under Working Together 2018. In line with statutory guidance and best practice, the report would be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care.

In response to a question, the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership Manager reported that a MASH Strategic Group had been established this year in order to review information on referrals.

In response to a question from the Chairman concerning attendance at Board meetings, the Partnership Manager confirmed that with the introduction of virtual meetings attendance had improved and the new meeting process appeared to be working very well.

The Chairman thanked the Bromley Safeguarding Children's Partnership for the informative update.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

41 0-25 PROGRESS REPORT **Report CEF21047**

The report provided an update of the scoping and progress of the 0-25 Project.

The Council's Transforming Bromley roadmap for 2019 to 2023 set out the Children's Services and Education workstream but was cross cutting with Adults, Housing, Health and Commissioning.

This included the following statements: *Statement 5* - Review transition plans and service pathways *and Statement 6* - Explore opportunities for developing an integrated 0 – 25 service offer for children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

An initial scoping report was completed in early 2021 for the transformation board which outlined initial findings some of which were summarised within this report which provided a summary of initial key findings and presented progress and next steps.

In opening the discussion, the Chairman thanked Officers for their work on the transition event which had recently been held. The Committee noted that the intention was to hold such events twice a year. The recent transition event had been a joint venture in partnership with the SEN and Adults Teams. The intention was to further develop the local support available to young people. It was hoped that more young people would help in running the next event and be present at the next event as there was a desire to continue to promote the ambitions of young people. The aim was to continue to develop the transition events around the four areas of the Preparing for Adulthood Pathway.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Head of the 0-25 Project confirmed that success would be measured through supporting young people to achieve positive outcomes in terms of employment, fulfilling lives and the local support that was available. The aim was to implement planning from an earlier age.

A Member highlighted that in order to support a child at times it was necessary to challenge the parental context being provided and work with parents to raise their own expectation of the achievements of their child. Members recognised the importance of informing families of the offer that was available.

The Committee noted that the various strands of the project would report to the 0-25 Governance Board and the Board would receive regular feedback. Co-design work would begin to be initiated following initial consultation with young people, families and professionals and this was happening through October/November 2021. Officers wanted to ensure that local people and parents were involved in shaping the final offer.

The importance of developing a link with local businesses was recognised.

In drawing the discussion to a close, the Chairman suggested that future reports on the 0-25 Project be considered at a joint meeting of the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee and the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- 1. Progress on the 0-25 project be noted and the direction of the project endorsed; and**
- 2. Future reports on the 0-25 Project be considered at a joint meeting of the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee and the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee.**
- 3.**

42 CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES INFORMATION ITEMS

The items comprised:

- Independent Reviewing Officer 6-Monthly Update
- Local Authority Designated Officer 6-Monthly Update
- Youth Offending Service Update
- CEF Contracts Register
- Risk Register

The Chairman reported that the Independent Reviewing Officer 6-Monthly Update had been considered by the Living in Care Council and the Youth Offending Service Update had been considered by the Bromley Youth Council. The presentations would be appended to the minutes at **Appendix A**.

43 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it was likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

**The following summaries
refer to matters involving exempt information**

44 PART 2 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

Members noted the information provided.

45 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 (EXEMPT) PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORTS

The Committee considered the following Part 2 reports where the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision:

A CONTRACT AWARD UNDER EXEMPTION FAMILY DRUG AND ALCOHOL COURT SERVICE (FDAC)

The Committee noted the report and endorsed the recommendations

46 PART 2 CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES INFORMATION ITEMS

The items comprised:

- Part 2 (Not for Publication) CEF Contracts Register

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Noting this was Janet Bailey's last meeting, the Chairman led the Committee in thanking Janet for her hard work, dedication and support.

In response, the Director of Children's Services noted the "huge journey" undertaken by Bromley Children's Services, and stressed that all the Members and Officers involved should be proud of what had been achieved.

The Meeting ended at 8.54 pm

Chairman

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Report No.
CSD22012

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **Children, Education and Families PDS Committee**

Date: **Tuesday 25 January 2022**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **MATTERS OUTSTANDING & WORK PROGRAMME**

Contact Officer: Philippa Gibbs, Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 0208 313 4508 E-mail: Philippa.Gibbs@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Tasnim Shawkat, Director of Corporate Services and Governance

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report deals with the Committee's business management including:

- Monitoring progress against actions arising from previous meetings;
- Developing the 2021/22 Forward Work Programme; and

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the PDS Committee reviews and comments on:

1. Progress on matters outstanding from previous meetings; and
2. The 2021/22 work programme, indicating any changes or particular issues that it wishes to scrutinise for the year ahead.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: None
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £359k
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Budget
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 6.67 FTE
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: This report does not involve an Executive decision.
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): This report is intended primarily for the benefit of Committee Members.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable People and Children/Policy/Financial/Legal/Personnel/Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Minutes of previous meetings

3. COMMENTARY

Matters Outstanding from Previous Meetings

- 3.1. There are currently no matters outstanding from previous meetings.

Work Programme

- 3.2 Each PDS Committee determines its own work programme, balancing the roles of (i) pre-decision scrutiny and holding the Executive to account, (ii) policy development and review and (iii) external scrutiny. E&R PDS Committee has the additional role of providing a lead on scrutiny issues and co-ordinating PDS work.
- 3.3 PDS Committees need to prioritise their key issues. The work programme also needs to allow room for items that arise through the year, including Member requests, call-ins and referrals from other Committees. Committees need to ensure that their workloads are realistic and balanced, allowing sufficient time for important issues to be properly scrutinised. Members also need to consider the most appropriate means to pursue each issue – the current overview and scrutiny arrangements offer a variety of approaches, whether through a report to a meeting, a time-limited working group review, a presentation, a select committee style meeting focused on a single key issue, or another method.
- 3.4 The Committee may wish to consider establishing Task and Finish Groups for specific focused policy development work.
- 3.5 **Appendix 1** sets out the Education, Children and Families PDS Committee Work Programme for 2021/22. The Committee is invited to comment on the proposed schedule and suggest any changes it considers appropriate.
- 3.6 Other reports will be added to the 2021/22 Work Programme as items arise.

Children, Education & Families Work Programme 2021/22

SACRE		23rd February 2022
Children, Education & Families PDS Committee		15th March 2022
Item		Status
Annual Scrutiny Report 2021/22	Annual Report	PDS Item
Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan Update		Holding PH to Account
Education Outcomes	Information Report	PDS Item
Risk Register	Information Report	Information Item
Capital Programme 2021/22 Q.3		PH Decision
Budget Monitoring 2021/22 Q.3		PH Decision
Basic Need/Capital Programme		Executive Report
IRO Annual Report	Annual Report	PH Decision
LADO Annual Report	Annual Report	PH Decision
Panel Discussion with the Children's Services SLT	Annual Item	PDS Item
Youth Offending Service Update	Annual Report	PH Decision
Early Intervention and Family Support Service Update	Annual Report	PH Decision
Contracts Activity Report (Part 1 and Part 2)		PDS Item

*Items in italics are tentative

To be Scheduled

Bromley Y Contract Performance Review (June 2022)

Family Group Conferencing Contract Performance Review (September 2022)

Report
No.
CEF22001A

London Borough of Bromley

Decision Maker: Children, Education and Families Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 25 January 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: Performance Reporting – Children’s Scrutiny Dataset

Contact Officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation

Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director Children’s Services

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

1. To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children. The performance index provided in appendix one is as at the end of October 2021.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. The Committee note and comment on the October 2021 outturns of key performance indicators and associated management commentary.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: N/A
 5. Source of funding:
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional):N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 In January 2018, the Performance and Budget Sub-Committee received a draft of a new performance management framework document in respect of children's services. This document described the roles and responsibilities of elected members and officers in managing the performance of the council's services for children and families. The specific responsibilities of the Education, Children and Families Select Committee and its Budget and Performance Sub-Committee were identified as *'receiving reports on performance, asking challenging questions about areas of underperformance, and making recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.
- 3.2 The accompanying report recommended that Sub-Committee should, on behalf of the Select Committee, receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services. This would be over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual School Standards reports – already received by the Sub-Committee. The suite would be selected from the much wider set of data collected and reported both internally and externally in respect of children's services and would act as a regular 'health check' on key areas of service delivery to enable scrutiny and enquiry from elected members.
- 3.3 The Sub-Committee agreed a proposed suite of indicators in March 2018 and agreed to receive four performance reports a year. Where appropriate, Directors have attributed either a target or a range of acceptable performance/outturns alongside trend and benchmarking data, these allow Members to be alerted to issues where they need further exploration only. It was agreed that the quarterly reports would provide management commentary against those indicators that were performing below expectation. Directors would also report on any other indicators not in the index, by exception, should they have particular concerns or if they wished to report particularly good performance.
- 3.4 Directors have provided number and percentage outturns in order to allow the Scrutiny Committee to gain a sense of scale and relativity. It was agreed that the suite of indicators would be reviewed annually and changed only on a periodic basis. It is worth noting that the committee will also be in receipt of the regular Finance, Contracts Register and Risk Register updates, these will provide some reassurance under the broader performance management framework.

3.5 **MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY ON EXCEPTION – Index indicators performing below expectation.**

Some data in this Part 1 public committee report has been suppressed in order to minimise the risk of sensitive personal information being identified and to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation. The publication of data should not result in the identification of a person when it is reviewed with other publicly available data or when combined with information provided through FOI requests. Performance for this reason is presented in this Part 2 report.

As at the end of October 2021, the following Children's Scrutiny Dataset key performance indicators were performing below expectation. The data in this report shows the continuing work to assist and support the introduction of the new Liquid-logic information system. We continue to work diligently to work through some of the new ways of recording and to make this as straightforward as possible for staff.

Indicator 13: % of reviews completed within timescale for Children with Child Protection Plans (AMBER)

This indicator has also been adversely impacted the implementation of the new social care management system; staff require further training to understand the correct place to add key dates. 91% of children subject of a child project plan were reviewed in timescale.

We have identified a refresh training need around scheduling Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPCs). We have identified all relevant children and have rectified most of the scheduling issues; a small number were not able to be corrected in a timely way. Having reviewed every child, we know that that children noted as 'overdue' in the performance report have now in fact been reviewed.

At the point of drafting this report, the timeliness of Child protection reviews were back up to 95% and improving further.

We are working to update the social care management system workflows to allow the system/performance information to reflect the accurate record. We are clear on what needs to happen to take this forward we are working urgently alongside colleagues in other service to resolve the record.

Indicator 19: % of Children Looked After cases which were reviewed within required timescales (AMBER)

Similar to the management commentary on child protection reviews, this indication of looked after children reviews has also be affected by the implementation of the new social care management system, Liquid Logic. Formally performance can only report that 64% of children looked after were recorded as having been reviewed within time scale. Having all reviewed all 'late' reviews manually, we believe service performance is in fact closer to 95%, which is in line with normal practice stands.

Both the Quality Assurance Service and Children Looked After Service have reviewed the children's case files to ensure that this performance is indeed 95%. We have found that in some cases review records were updated in the new system but were stored in either a word document uploaded or in case notes on the file. For the performance to be accurately reported dates need to be entered in to key fields of the database also.

To resolve this, an action plan in in place, with the Assistant Director reviewing performance reports weekly. Further training and support has been provided so that future errors are not made. Officers are updating the database retrospectively to ensure that record reflect practice.

Indicator 20.2: Number of In-house foster carers recruited (Amber)

See Part Two report.

Indicator 21: Number of Children Looked After who were adopted (Amber)

See Part Two report.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 Examination of performance by elected members holding scrutiny roles is part of a broader performance management framework which supports improvement of services delivered to children, including those vulnerable to poorer outcomes.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The monitoring of key performance measures is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children's services in Bromley.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising from this report.

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific procurement implications arising from this report.

Non-Applicable Sections:	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Children's Scrutiny Dataset, agreement of regular performance monitoring (March 2018) http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=593&MId=6166&Ver=4 Children's Performance Management Framework (updated January 2020)

Appendix One: Children's Scrutiny Dataset, October 2021

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Children, Education and Families Scrutiny - Performance Index 2021/22

Benchmarking and trend																									
No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Priority	Target or Range of acceptable performance 2021/22	Bromley 2020/21	Bromley 2019/20	Bromley 2018/19	England	London	RAG rating	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Year to Date	Notes	
Early Help																									
1.1	Number of families supported by the Bromley Children's Project (Early help) (Family referrals)		n/a	This is not a target measure	972	977	949	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	80	81	77	81	72	61	62							514	
1.2	Numbers of Children supported by the Bromley Children's Project (Early help) (under 18ys)	This is not a target measure. Numbers of CAFs undertaken and/or Children supported by the Children's Project is an indicator of early identification of problems/issues for a child.	n/a	This is not a target measure	1758	1694	1554	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	140	141	145	140	124	112	110							912	
2	Number of Common Assessment Frameworks undertaken (CAFs)		n/a	This is not a target measure	487	588	709	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	54	50	51	55	16	43	41							310	
3	% outcome of School Ofsted inspections good or outstanding (overall effectiveness)	Schools are subject to regulation and inspection from Ofsted. Our ambition is that LB Bromley schools are at least good or better. This measure, to be considered alongside e.g. Key Stage results, progress measures, attendance and exclusion data.	High	95-90%	97%	97%	96%	89%	93%	GREEN			97%			97%									
4	Number of Primary permanent exclusions (Bromley schools) (Number YTD Academic year)	Permanent exclusion can severely disrupt a pupil's education and social networks. It can be extremely challenging to find alternative school/alternative education for pupils excluded in the secondary phase because of the nature of the factors leading to the exclusion. However, the LA has mechanisms in place to both minimise time out of education and to identify alternative	Low	0	Data published July 2022	0 (rate: 0.00)	1 (rate: 0.00)	Rate: 0.02	Rate: 0.00	GREEN	0	0	0	0		0	0								
5	Number of Secondary permanent exclusions (Bromley schools) (Number YTD Academic year)	The LA monitors persistent absence in primary, secondary and special school sectors. Persistent absence harms pupils' outcomes but also triggers powers and duties the LA has to ensure pupils' attendance.	Low	22-36 (rate of 0.10-0.16)	Data published July 2022	21 (rate: 0.09)	48 (rate: 0.21)	Rate: 0.13	Rate: 0.09	GREEN	18	19	20	22		See PART 2	See PART 2								
6	% of Secondary persistent absenteeism (10% absence) (Academic year)		Low	11-11.9%	Publication Cancelled	Publication Cancelled	12%	13.7%	12.0%	Annual measure															
Safeguarding and Child Protection																									
7	Number of 'Referrals' to Children's Social Care	Measure of demand for CSC services and an identification of the effectiveness of early help, as well as if thresholds are understood by partners.	n/a	This is not a target measure	3,827	3,829	3,422	646,120	100,620	This is not a target measure	360	317	345	340	219	264	362							2207	
8	% of statutory Assessments authorised within 45 days (Year to Date)	Assessments are undertaken in order to identify whether or not statutory thresholds for children's social care have been met and statutory services are required. There is a 45 day statutory timescale for completion - this is a measure of efficiency and effective management oversight. It is also a reflective of manageable caseloads.	High	95 - 83%	85%	86%	81%	83%	82%	GREEN	85% (323/382)	90% (648/720)	92% (995/1078)	93% (1218/1309)	94% (1468/1563)	94% (1666/1763)	95% (1923/2024)								
9	Child Protection Plans rate per 10,000	This is a prevalence measure which is examined by managers and regulators alongside other rates including CIN and CLA. These provide a proxy for the 'balance' in the child care system. It can also reflect events/issues nationally e.g. media coverage of child abuse enquiries. Rates should be broadly in line with benchmarks, particularly statistical neighbours. Low rates could suggest thresholds that are too high and a failure to recognise child neglect or abuse.	n/a	This is not a target measure	37	39	33	43	39	This is not a target measure	41	41	44	45	48	51	50								
10	Number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan	This is not a performance measure but indicates prevalence of need for intensive social care intervention. Also volume of intensive casework and social worker capacity required to fulfil statutory duties. Links to Child Protection Plans for children subject to a CP plan for the second or subsequent time in respect of decisiveness and impact of child protection interventions.	n/a	This is not a target measure	283	290	244	51,080	7,760	This is not a target measure	310	321	329	340	364	381	379								
11	% of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan with an allocated Social Worker	It is a statutory requirement that all Child Protection Plan casework is allocated to qualified social workers. This is a proxy for high quality interventions undertaken by qualified practitioners who are subject to national professional standards	High	100%	100%	100%	100%	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%								
12	% of quorate attendance at child protection conferences (ICPC and Reviews)	Child protection plans almost invariably require input from a range of professional disciplines and agencies. This is a proxy for appropriate engagement of key agencies e.g. NHS, Police in Child protection planning and delivery.	High	100 - 92%	100% (initial) 99.6% (review)	99% (initial) 100% (review)	98% (initial) 96% (review)	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN			100% (initial) 100% (review)			Not available at this time							x% (initial) x% (review)		
13	% of reviews completed within timescale for Children with Child Protection Plans	There is a national framework of expectations around interventions with children requiring safeguarding. This measure is a proxy for appropriate management/IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) oversight of complex casework and decisive social work planning.	High	100 - 95%	100%	97%	99%	92%	96%	AMBER	100%	98%	99%	100%	93%	84%	91%								
14	% of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time	If a second child protection plan is required for similar reasons, this could indicate potential lack of impact of earlier Child protection interventions. It can often demonstrate multiple risks/challenges faced by children and families. It prompts enquiry into whether or not other statutory interventions should be/should have been considered. Was the child removed from the plan too early? Was practice too optimistic?	Low	20 - 15%	14%	15%	16%	19%	15%	GREEN	14.5% (8/55)	19.5% (18/92)	17.7% (23/130)	Not available at this time	Not available at this time	Not available at this time	Not available at this time								
15	Average number of weeks taken to complete Care proceedings against a national target of 26 weeks (CAFCASS definition)	It is imperative to avoid 'drift' in making permanency plans for CLA. Time taken to undertake care proceedings is a proxy for decisive casework and can be looked at alongside timeliness of achieving adoptions. The measure can be affected by issues beyond professional control e.g. court delays.	Low	26 weeks	49	42	36	41	32	Data not yet published			38			Data not yet published									

No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Priority	Target or Range of acceptable performance 2020/21	Benchmarking and trend																	Year to Date	Notes
					Bromley 2020/21	Bromley 2019/20	Bromley 2018/19	England	London	RAG rating	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22		
Children Looked After and Care Leavers																							
16	Children Looked After rate per 10,000	As above this is a prevalence measure to be looked at alongside others including CIN/CP rates and should also be, broadly, in line with London and statistical neighbours. Low rates could suggest thresholds that are too high.	n/a	This is not a target measure	46	43	47	62	52	This is not a target measure	44	44	43	44	43	41	42						
17	Number of Children Looked After	As above this is compared with appropriate benchmarks and the measure also indicates professional social work capacity and placements/budgets required to fulfil statutory responsibilities.	n/a	This is not a target measure	341	328	348	72,670	9,910	This is not a target measure	336	331	329	331	327	315	318						
18	% of Children Looked After with an allocated Social Worker	It is a statutory requirement that all CLA casework is allocated to qualified social workers. This is a proxy for high quality interventions undertaken by qualified practitioners who are subject to national professional standards.(NB: Care Leaver often request a YPS who are not qualified social workers)	High	100%	100%	100%	100%	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%						
19	% of Children Looked After cases which were reviewed within required timescales	There are statutory requirements for reviewing the care plans for CLA within set timescales. This measure is a proxy for appropriate management/IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) oversight of complex casework and decisive social work planning.	High	100- 95%	93%	91%	97%	Not available	Not available	AMBER			97% (314/323)	Not available at this time	Not available at this time	Not available at this time	64% (201/313)						
20.1	Number of in-house foster carers recruited (households) (YTD)	We have set ambitious targets for increasing the number and range of in-house foster carers. Although placements with foster carers are, almost invariably, the first option to be considered for CLA, a shortage of 'in house' carers i.e. recruited and approved by	High	This is not a target measure	10	7	15	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2					
20.2	Number of in-house foster carers recruited (YTD)		High	20	14	9	27	Local Measure	Local Measure	AMBER	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2					9
21	Number of Children Looked After who were adopted	The key aim for looked after children who cannot return to their families of origin is to find alternative permanent families. Numbers of adoptions arrangements are, therefore, closely monitored by managers. Central government, from time to time and including the present government, issues policies aimed at increasing the number of children adopted.	High	16	10	8	18	Local Measure	Local Measure	AMBER	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2						4
22	Number of Children Looked After for whom a Special Guardianship Orders was granted		High	This is not a target measure	33	27	22	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2						5
23	Stability of placements of Children Looked After - number of placements (3 placements or more in the year)	There are two key measures for placement stability – Placement stability is a foundation stone for improving outcomes for CLA as it enables consistent relationships between young people and their carers; consistent school placements; a settled context in which young people can develop social networks etc. While some placement moves are 'positive' – e.g. move to a permanent home; move to withdraw a young person from a risky environment, others occur due to e.g. breakdown of relationships/behaviour issues etc. and should be minimised.	Low	12-0%	7%	10%	10%	10%	10%	GREEN			0.9% (3/326)	3%	3%	3%	4%						
24	Stability of placements of Children Looked After - length of placement	There are two key measures for placement stability –The length of placement indicator refers to children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more. Placement stability is a foundation stone for improving outcomes for CLA as it enables consistent relationships between young people and their carers; consistent school placements; a settled context in which young people can develop social networks etc. While some placement moves are 'positive' – e.g. move to a permanent home; move to withdraw a young person from a risky environment, others occur due to e.g. breakdown of relationships/behaviour issues etc. and should be minimised.	High	70% (In line with national or above)	66%	60%	57%	69%	68%	GREEN			64.3% (63/98)	Not available at this time	Not available at this time	Not available at this time	Not available at this time						New Liquid Logic performance report in development
25	% of Care leavers who are EET (aged 19, 20, 21) (DFE definition)	This indicator provides a guide to the effectiveness of Corporate Parenting in improving life chances for children in care.	High	52-47%	42%	41%	45%	50%	52%	GREEN			52%			65%							
26	% of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (aged 19, 20, 21)	This indicator provides a guide to the effectiveness of Corporate Parenting in ensure Care Leavers have an appropriate and safe place to live.	High	84-76%	86%	77%	81%	84%	82%	GREEN			82%			96%							
Children's Social Care Caseload Promise: Average caseloads																							
27	Average Caseloads	Following the 2016 Ofsted inspection Bromley committed to maintaining safe caseload levels. This is a measure of manageability of Social worker workloads.	n/a	12 - 15	19	18	16	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	15	16	16	15	14	14	14						
Children and Young People with complex needs																							
28	% of CYP (16 - 17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Non-participation in education, employment or training beyond age 16 is a major predictor of long-term unemployment and low income. This indicator should be reviewed alongside the 'Not Known' outcome.	Low	1.7%-1.9%	1.5% (104/7042)	1.5% (102/6826)	1.8% (120/6783)	2.8%	1.9%	GREEN			1.6% (114/7030)			Not available at this time							
29	% of CYP (16 - 17 year olds) education, employment or training status 'not known'	The EET status of young people can be difficult to ascertain e.g. once pupils leave school. The aim is to have a low number of young people whose EET status is 'not known'. This indicator should be reviewed along side the NEET outcome.	Low	0.7%-1.1%	0.2% (17/7042)	0.3% (20/6826)	0.6% (43/6783)	2.8%	2.7%	GREEN			0.7% (48/7030)			Not available at this time							1.1% is the threshold for Q1 national benchmark performance
30	Number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17	Offending can be linked to factors such as truancy, low attainment, substance misuse, employability etc. and the challenge to the council, schools and partner agencies in a local area is to prevent young people from entering the youth justice system.	Low	This is not a target measure	30	38	57	15182	3090	This is not a target measure	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2	See PART 2						21
31	Proportion of offenders that are proven to re-offending in the youth justice system	This indicator measures the re-offending of specific cohorts of young people following an initial pre-court or court disposal.	Low	42% - 35%	22%	26%	28%	42% 2015/16	48% 2015/16	GREEN	18%	18%	18%	18%	18%	18%	26%						
32	Percentage of Young Offenders in Education Employment and Training	This indicator recognises the importance of engaging young offenders in education, employment or training to enhance their life chances and future opportunities.	High	TBC	100%	92%	95%	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	80%	73%	92%	100%	89%	81%	100%						
33	Number of children/Young People discussed at MEGA	This indicator provides a guide as to the awareness of CSE and gang risk.	n/a	This is not a target measure	27	35	28	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	29	30	29	26	27	25	32						

The following indicators are measured on a calendar year:			Benchmarking and trend																					
No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Priority	Target or Range of acceptable performance 2020	Bromley 2021	Bromley 2020	Bromley 2019	England 2019	London 2019	RAG rating	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Year to Date	Notes
34.1	% of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20 week timescale <u>[excluding exception cases]</u>	In line with Children and Families Act 2014 Reform requirements, EHC plans replaced SEN Statements. They result from a multi-dimensional assessment of education, health and care needs. They specify outcomes to be achieved for a child and identify provision to meet those outcomes. There is a 20 week statutory timescale for completion, although there is a balance to be found between quality and timeliness.	High	75 - 65%	Available March 22	62%	54%	60%	65%	GREEN			74% (45/61)			65% (53/81)			58% (44/76)				65% (142/218)	
34.2	% of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20 week timescale <u>[including exception cases]</u>		High	This is not a target measure	Available March 22	43%	49%	59%	60%	This is not a target measure			38% (45/117)			38% (53/138)			38% (44/116)				38% (142/371)	

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Report No.
CEF22012

London Borough of Bromley

Part 1 - Public

Decision Maker: PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

Date: Tuesday 25 January 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: DOMESTIC ABUSE: EXTENSION AND VARIATION OF CONTRACT

Contact Officer: Rachel Dunley, Head of Service for Early Intervention and Family Support
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Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director of Children, Education and Families

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The Council holds a contract with Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid for the delivery of a range of support services to women and girls at risk of, or who have suffered, domestic abuse ('DA'). The contract is wholly grant funded and continuation of the service is dependent upon confirmation of recurrent grant funding.
- 1.2 A one year contract commenced on 1st April 2020, with an option to extend for a further two years. The contract length was set so that it aligned with grant funding arrangements. The estimated annual value was £179K and an estimated whole life value of £546K.
- 1.3 Grant funding for 2020/2022 was confirmed for one year only and so Approval to Extend the contract for one year up to 31 March 2021 was granted on 23 December 2020 (CEF 200015). In addition, the contract was varied to reflect the cessation of the perpetrator element (£30,000). This reduced the annual contract value by £30k.
- 1.4 A Portfolio Holder Gateway Report was presented on 31 March 2021 to further vary the DA contract with BCWA due to commence on 1 April 2021 to incorporate the majority of the DRIVE Perpetrator Programme MOPAC funding allocation at the value of £47,553 to cover the cost of an additional IDVA for 14 months (split across 2020/21 £7,392, and 2021/22 £40,161).
- 1.5 A report (CEF 21015) was submitted in June 2021 seeking permission to proceed to procurement for the provision of domestic abuse services for a total of 5 years on a 1 + 3 + 1 basis at an estimated cost of £150K per annum subject to confirmation of the supporting grant award. This did not include the funding for an additional DRIVE IDVA as this was not proposed to continue past 31 March 2022.
- 1.6 Permission was granted to proceed to procurement and a tender exercise ran from October to November 2021. Research shows that due to insufficient funding to support the contract the tender failed.
- 1.7 On 8 December 2021 MOPAC confirmed that they would continue to support the delivery of the DRIVE Perpetrator Programme until 30 September 2022 and grant funding to continue the DRIVE IDVA will be

received. BCWA have confirmed that cost of the DRIVE IDVA for the period 01 April – 30 September 2022 is £20,897. This is within the grant allocation.

1.8 We are seeking to: -

- (a) use the final option to extend this contract for a further one year commencing on the 1st April 2022, and
- (b) vary the original estimated contract value for 2022/23 from £154,262 to £200,000 cover the increased costs of delivering victim support services as proposed by Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid to deliver this service following the unsuccessful Tender exercise: and
- (c) vary the contract value to cover the additional MOPAC funded DRIVE IDVA post six months until 30 September 2022, at a cost of £20,897.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Portfolio Holder is recommended to extend the existing domestic abuse ('DA') contract with Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid for one year utilising the final option to extend the current contract for 1 year, commencing April 1 2022.
- 2.2 The Portfolio Holder is further recommended to vary the proposed annual cost of the DA contract for services to support victims of abuse for 2022/23 to reflect the substantial increase in the costs of Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid to deliver this contract safely to women within the Borough. The new estimated annual value will be £200,000. This is an increase on the estimated value of the contract, originally £154,262 for 2022/23.
- 2.3 The Portfolio Holder is further recommended to vary the proposed value of the DA contract to incorporate the additional six months MOPAC funding for the continuation of the DRIVE IDVA post at the cost of £20,897 until 30 September 2022.
- 2.4 The Portfolio Holder is recommended to approve the variation to the contract estimated annual and whole life values as follows: -
 - (i) WAS: as per previous Gateway Report to the Portfolio Holder dated 31 March 2021; Updated to reflect the inclusion of the DRIVE grant for 2020/21 and 2021/22 and totalled £186,392 for 2020/21, £191,769 for 2021/22 and £154,262 for 2022/23 with a whole life value of £532,423.
 - (ii) NOW: as per this Gateway Member Report; Updated to reflect the recommendations in 2.1 – 2.3 above and updated to reflect the increase in the value of the victim services contract for 2022/23 and the recent confirmation of the extension to the DRIVE grant for 2022/23 this now totals £186,392 for 2020/21, £191,769 for 2021/22 and £220,897 (this is £200,000 for victims' support services plus the £20,897 for the DRIVE IDVA) for 2022/23 with a whole life value of £599,058.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:
Domestic Abuse is an horrific crime which impacts on vulnerable adults and their children. Responding to domestic abuse is a complex and multi-faceted issue that touches many people's lives in many different ways. Domestic violence is like no other crime insofar as the perpetrator has intimate and constant access to the victim. Domestic violence and abuse are experienced by adults and children from all backgrounds, and many domestic incidents remain unreported and often result in devastating consequences for long term mental and physical health.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: £186,392 for 2020/21, £191,769 for 2021/22 and £220,897 for 2022/23 with a whole life value of £599,058.
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A
 3. Budget head/performance centre: 132569
 4. Total current budget for this head: £221K
 5. Source of funding: MOPAC (Mayors Office for Police & Crime) LCPF (London Council Police Fund) and core funding
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A as this service is outsourced.
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement::
 2. Call-in:
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications:
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Responding to domestic abuse is a complex and multi-faceted issue that touches many people's lives in many different ways. Domestic abuse is like no other crime insofar as the perpetrator has intimate and constant access to the victim. Domestic abuse is experienced by adults and children from all backgrounds, and many domestic incidents remain unreported and often result in devastating consequences for long term mental and physical health.
- 3.2 Domestic abuse is considered a gendered crime. We focus on the needs of women and girls due to the disproportionate impact of domestic abuse crimes on women and girls. Almost 1 in 3 women aged 16-59 will experience domestic abuse in her lifetime. (ONS 2019) According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales 2019, an estimated 1.6 million women (7.5%) and 3.8% of men experienced domestic abuse in the last year (year ending March 2019). Women are more likely to experience higher rates of repeated victimisation and are more likely to be seriously hurt or killed than male victims of domestic abuse (ONS 2019) They are also more likely to be subjected to coercive and controlling behaviours and experience higher levels of fear. In the year ending March 2019, the majority of defendants in domestic abuse-related prosecutions were men (92%) and the majority of victims were female (75%).
- 3.3 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to monitor the level of domestic abuse in their communities and establish partnerships, in order to reduce the problem as well as work together with other agencies to highlight the issue and coordinate a response. In 2021 the Domestic Abuse Act gained Royal Assent and became law. This Act placed additional statutory duties on the Local Authority e.g., to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>
- 3.4 Domestic abuse costs society an estimated £15.7bn per year. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on a wide range of services including housing, criminal justice and social service provision. Nationally, violent crime figures show that despite a long downward trend in violent crime, domestic abuse remains a widespread problem which affects more than 8.5% of women and 4.5% of men every year, two women are killed every week in England and Wales by a current or former partner. The Home Office's 'The Economic and Social Costs of Domestic Abuse' Research Report dated January 2019 suggests (p.6) that the total cost of domestic abuse in England and Wales for 2016/17 including economic and social costs, reached a staggering £66bn with a unit cost of £34,015. The report further suggests that whilst the £66bn cost appears large, it is most likely an under-estimate.
- 3.5 DA services were commissioned and approved by the Children Education and Families Portfolio Holder on 09 October 2019 to deliver an Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocate (IDSVA) service, Community Domestic Abuse Projects, and a Perpetrator Programme. These services are currently delivered through a single contract on a 1 + 2 year basis, where year one was 2020/21, year two was 2021/22 and this paper seeks to use the final available extension in year three for 2022/23; the service was advised on 2 December 2021 that MOPAC funding is continuing.
- 3.6 Members will recall that the DRIVE programme was funded to 31 March 2022 under a separate grant agreement with MOPAC and on 8 December 2021, confirmation was received from MOPAC that this funding would continue until 30 September 2022. The funding provides for an IDVA to work alongside the DRIVE programme.
- 3.7 These services are funded by the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) as part of the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF). The LCPF also fund projects across Community Safety.
- 3.8 The London Assembly state that "recorded domestic abuse offences across London have significantly risen in recent years and during COVID this significantly increased with the highest ever presentation of victims in Bromley seeking support; e.g., data shows our IDVA Support Service received 466 referrals in 2019/20, but this increased to 943 in 2020/21. During 2021/22 we have seen similar pattern with 431 referrals in the first 6 months to 30 September 2021.

- 3.9 There is a strong financial case for the need to continue to invest in specialist support services as well as targeted training and resources for frontline staff, in order to reduce the extent and impact of domestic abuse. Reducing funding to specialist services should not be seen as necessary or unavoidable cost saving. The evidence of independent reports shows this would be a false economy, not just in terms of the quality of the service and support that is offered to our local communities, but also in financial cost to the London Borough of Bromley.
- 3.10 This will ultimately reduce the pressure on, and costs to, statutory public services. If support services are reduced and domestic abuse continues to increase the demand for services such as housing, adult and children's social care increase in direct proportion.
- 3.11 Domestic abuse sits within an increasing body of legislation, policy and guidance that is applicable to victims, perpetrators and children. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities and the police to work together with other agencies to tackle crime at a local level through the provision of a Community Safety Strategy that should include domestic abuse.
- 3.12 Since an open tender in 2019 the Domestic Abuse commissioned services have been carried out by Bromley and Croydon's Women's Aid. The contract commenced on 1st April 2020 and the following services are currently provided under the contract:
- **CSU and Community IDVA** – One IDSVA is based with the Community Safety Unit (CSU) offering a specialist support service to police staff and the high risk domestic/sexual abuse cases they work with.
 - **Young Person IDVA** – This IDVA will support 16-17 year old victims of domestic abuse. The Young Person's IDVA works with the Leaving Care Team and with schools and youth clubs. In addition the post co-locates with the Children Early Intervention Team.
 - **Specialist Adult Support IDVA** – This IDSVA provides specialist support to vulnerable and elderly victims of domestic violence; nearly half of elderly victims of domestic abuse also have a disability. The IDSVA links in and is a single point of contact for the Adult Early Intervention Team, substance misuse and mental health teams to support service users with complex additional needs.
 - **Community Domestic Abuse Projects** – This includes The One Stop Shop and victim/survivor support groups. The One Stop Shop is a free and confidential service for victims and survivors of domestic abuse offering services under one roof. Victim/survivor support groups are approximately a 12 week course with the overarching aim to help women who have experienced domestic violence make sense of and understand what has happened to them and to recognise potential future abusers.

4. SUMMARY OF THE BUSINESS CASE

- i. This contract is funded by MOPAC's LCPF grant. The current MOPAC funding model has been inconsistent; previously it ran to a four year award cycle split into two blocks of two years. Recently this changed to a 1 year settlement and in December 2021 changed again to a three year settlement. The local authority is required to bid for this funding in the run up to 'year 1', outlining the full proposal for the three years. Consequently, the future funding model is uncertain. The authority is exploring options for the service should MOPAC funding reduce or cease in the future.
- ii. The current commissioned provider of the DA victims' support services is Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid (BCWA) who have a contract until 31st March 2022 with a final option to extend for 1 year, subject to funding which has now been confirmed.
- iii. The Local Authority had intended to proceed to procurement in order to refresh and use the learning from COVID in terms new and different ways to offer more effective delivery models however, following the approval to procure in June 2021, the Tender Exercise ran from 4 October through to 8 November 2021. 24 organisations viewed the tender however no tenders were received. 2 organisation provided feedback and research shows the tender failed due to insufficient funding to deliver the contract.

- iv. The standard 6 month window prior to the contract end date required by Bromley for all extensions to contract has been missed due to the failed Tender exercise and late confirmation from MOPAC of the grant award.
- v. Advice was sought from colleagues in Procurement, the AD and Director for Children's Social Care and the Chief Executive. A decision was taken to explore with the current provider the option to utilise the remaining 1 year extension available. Discussions took place with the current provider, who provided feedback on their decision not to tender for the new contract, and a subsequent meeting on 15 December 2021 resulted in agreement, subject to Member approval, to utilise the option to extend the existing contract for a final year with an increase contract value of £200,000 for 2022/23. Following the meeting with our commissioned provider, we are now in a position to seek authorisation for the variation and extension to this contract.
- vi. In the interim, MOPAC separately confirmed the continuation of the DRIVE funding for 6 months to 30 September 2022. This also requires a variation to the contract in order to continue the funding for the additional IDVA to work alongside the DRIVE programme.
- vii. Performance of the contract is generally good, and the Key Performance Indicators have been tightened up as part of the specification with more outcome focus.
- viii. A paper will follow in due course to set out plans in relation to the commissioning plans for 31 March 2023.

4.1 SERVICE PROFILE/DATA ANALYSIS

- 4.1.1 The value of this contract is covered under the grant award from MOPAC's LCPF funding, plus core Council funding

4.2 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 4.2.1 Doing nothing: This is not an option as the DA services will stop on 31st March 2022 which will mean we will no longer be providing a support and preventative service around domestic abuse, nor will we have a robust intervention to challenge and change perpetrators' behaviours. In addition, we will not meet our statutory duties.
- 4.2.2 Extend the contract for a final one year with no variation: This is not an option as the provider has advised that this would not allow for a safe model of practice and they are not prepared to deliver against the contract until the value of the contract is increased to £200,000 for victims' support services.
- 4.2.3 Extend the contract for one final year with two variations to the existing contract (1) increasing the value of the contract in relation to victims' support services for the period 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 to match the proposal made by the current provider of this service in order to deliver a safe service as a cost of £200,000 (2) varying the value of the contract in relation to the DRIVE IDVA in line with the grant funding to continue the existing service for a further 6 months to 30 September 2022 at a cost of £20,897. This option would allow commissioners in due course to set out commissioning options for 2023 onwards.

4.3 PREFERRED OPTION

- 4.3.1 The preferred option is as described in 4.2.3 above.
- 4.3.2 The cost per annum of this proposal would see the existing contract valued at totalled £186,392 for 2020/21, £191,769 for 2021/22 and £154,262 for 2022/23 with a whole life value of £532,423 increased to £186,392 for 2020/21, £191,769 for 2021/22 and £220,897 (this is £200,000 for victims' support services plus the £20,897 for the DRIVE IDVA) for 2022/23 with a whole life value of £599,058.

- 4.3.3 MOPAC funding for 2022/23 has been secured and covers the majority of the proposed contract value and the Local Authority is supplementing the grant funding to ensure the contract value for 2022/23 of £220,897.

4.4 MARKET CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.4.1 Generally across most elements of this contract and its sub-projects, service users report good levels of feeling safer and high levels of satisfaction with the services commissioned. There are however a higher number of referrals for the Keys to Freedom support group than can currently be accommodated.
- 4.4.2 As the data shows, unfortunately domestic violence and abuse is a growing issue both in Bromley and nationally. The number of potential providers of services to support victims and challenge perpetrators of DVA has grown in recent years expanding the market. The Met police BCU have identified the London Borough of Bromley having a number of high-risk perpetrators in comparison to other authorities and supported the MOPAC bid to the Home Office to include Bromley in its expansion of the successful DRIVE perpetrator programme from one to all three of the boroughs in the Southern BCU, which commenced in April 2021 and is funded until 30 September 2022.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 The Director of Children's Services along with the Head of Early Intervention, Assistant Director Governance and Contracts, colleagues in Housing, and Public Protection have been consulted with as part of drafting this report.
- 5.2 Feedback from the users of the current service has also been taken into account in helping shape the service moving forward.

6. PROCUREMENT AND PROJECT TIMESCALES AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 **Estimated Contract Value** – £186,392 for 2020/21, £191,769 for 2021/22 and £220,897 for 2022/23 with a whole life value of £599,058.
- 6.2 **Other Associated Costs** – N/A
- 6.3 **Proposed Contract Period** – 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

7. SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 7.1 The Domestic Abuse commissioned services to support victims have a positive and vital impact on those vulnerable adults and children who require support and engagement.
- 7.2 A service which supports these vulnerable people is required in the long term along with a tool to measure the outcomes and the positive impact the service has had.

8. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The London Borough of Bromley's Intergenerational domestic abuse strategy for 2021 – 2024 entitled "Making Domestic Abuse Everyone's Business" published in January 2021.
https://bromleysafeguardingadults.org/assets/1/dvastrategy_final_september_2021.pdf

- 8.2 The London Borough of Bromley's Corporate strategy, "Making Bromley Even Better (2021-2031)" https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/10020/policies_and_plans/993/building_a_better_bromley Bromley has five ambitions for the next stage of our journey of which domestic abuse is a crossing-cutting issue. These are:
1. For children and young people to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 2. For adults and older people to enjoy fulfilled and successful lives in Bromley, ageing well, retaining independence, and making choices.
 3. For people to make their homes in Bromley and for business, enterprise and the third sector to prosper.
 4. For residents to live responsibly and prosper in a safe, clean, and green environment great for today and a sustainable future.
 5. To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
- 8.3 Transforming Bromley Our Four-Year Roadmap (2019 – 2023): To be flexible and responsive to the local needs of our residents and their wider communities, embracing new ways of working with partners, staff, and our communities. Part of the Transforming Bromley Our Four Year Roadmap is managing demand, through enhancing our understanding of our demand pressures by mapping need and aligning our service to ensure the most effective use of targeted resources. Through the Transforming Programme, Bromley will seek opportunities to be innovative in our relationships with commissioned providers, delivering more for our residents. One of our themes is prioritising the health, safety, and wellbeing of our residents 'the right help at the right time to keep them safe and to meet their needs... at the earliest point of need'.
- 8.4 The Children and Young Peoples Plan (2021-24): Delivering good and outstanding services that improve outcomes for our children, young people and families who are disadvantaged. Our priorities are:
1. Targeted early intervention and good universal services
 2. Safeguarding children and adolescents
 3. Being the best corporate parent
 4. Challenging disproportionality
 5. Engaging with children, young people, and families
 6. Children and young people to grow up, thrive, and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.

9. IT AND GDPR CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 As this is an extension to the contract length, and the variation does not include an increase in the processing activities, there are no additional GDPR considerations to be made. The Council has already set out its lawful basis for undertaking this activity and the contract reflects the controller-processor relationship. There are ongoing needs to ensure that there is adequate due diligence and contract management that includes monitoring of data protection compliance.

10. PROCUREMENT RULES

- 10.1 This report seeks to make use of the final extension option of one year within the Council's domestic abuse contract with Women's Aid. With variations taken into account, the value of the extension is £221K.

- 10.2 This was originally tendered as a light touch service, and therefore this contract was awarded as a below-threshold contract.
- 10.3 The Council's requirements for authorising an extension are covered in CPR 23.7 and 13.1. For an extension of this value, the Approval of the Portfolio Holder following Agreement by the Chief Officer, the Assistant Director Governance & Contracts, the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Finance must be obtained.
- 10.4 Further, this report seeks to vary the contract in two ways:
- By £46k to cover the increased costs of delivering victim support services by Women's Aid, and
 - By £21k to cover the additional MOPAC funded DRIVE IDVA post for 6 months.
- 10.5 The Council's requirements for authorising a variation are covered in CPR 23.7 and 13.1. For a variation of this value, the Approval of the Chief Officer following Agreement by the Assistant Director Governance & Contracts, the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Finance must be obtained.
- 10.6 Following Approval, the extension and variations must be applied via a suitable Change Control Notice, or similar, as specified in the contract.
- 10.7 In accordance with CPR 2.1.2, Officers must take all necessary professional advice. The actions identified in this report are provided for within the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, and the proposed actions can be completed in compliance with their content.

11. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The report proposes an extension and a variation to two Domestic Abuse contracts. The value of these in 2022/23 is £221k
- 11.2 The contracts are in the main financed by MOPAC grant with some additional funding from core council funding
- 11.3 The MOPAC grant has been confirmed for 2022/23

12. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are HR implications from this report.

13. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 The Council has the power to receive and spend any Government Grant as outlined in this report. The Council has various legal/statutory duties and powers for empowering vulnerable women and girls and families encountering domestic abuse, which is reflected in 'The London Borough of Bromley's Intergenerational domestic abuse strategy for 2021 – 2024' as per Clause 8.1 of the Report. This is also echoed generally under 'The London Borough of Bromley's Corporate strategy', 'Making Bromley Even Better (2021-2031)', 'Transforming Bromley Our Four-Year Roadmap (2019 – 2023)' and also 'The Children and Young Peoples Plan (2021-24)' as mentioned specifically at clauses 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4 of the Report respectively. In furtherance of these powers, the Council has the legal power to enter into a Contract with Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid regarding the delivery of a range of services to women and girls who are at risk of/have suffered domestic abuse and the Council may provide and commission through a contract the services outlined in this report.

- 13.2 This Report seeks approval for the proposal of an extension and a variation to two Domestic Abuse Contracts. The Council already holds a Contract with Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid in respect of providing various support services to women and girls who are vulnerable or who have suffered from domestic abuse. The proposal is to extend the contract for one final year with two variations to the existing contract in order to deliver a safe service at a cost of £200,000 (as stated in clause 4.2.3 as the preferred option). Apart from the Report proposing to vary the Contract value of £154,262 to £200k (covering the increased costs of delivering victim support services) in 2022/23, a variation of £20,897k is sought (covering the additional MOPAC funded DRIVE IDVA post for 6 months) until 30.09.22. The proposed Contract period commences from 01.04.22 till 31.03.23. One year commenced on 01.04.20 with the option to extend for a further two years. The annual value of the Contract in 2020/21 was £186,392, £191,769 in 2021/22 and £220,897 in 2022/23. The contract's overall whole life cost over the whole life (i.e total cumulative spend) is £599,058.
- 13.3 Under the Public Procurement Regulations 2015, the Council can also consider the use of the Light Touch Regime for specific health and social care related services such as those described as above. This Contract was originally tendered as a light touch service anyway and hence can be awarded as a below-threshold contract accordingly.
- 13.4 Under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR), the Councils requirement for authorisation of an extension/variation/modification to a Contract, is in accordance to CPR 23.7 and 13.1 and where applicable the Public Procurement Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). The recommended approach to make this modification would in any event fall and comply with Regulation 72 (1) which allows Contracts to be modified without a new procurement procedure where the requirement for modification has been brought about by circumstances which a Council could not have foreseen and that the modification does not alter the overall nature of the Contract and that any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original Contract.
- 13.5 For any extensions to the Contract, Guidance gives authority to approve the extension with the approval of the Portfolio Holder following Agreement by the Chief Officer, the Assistant Director Governance & Contracts, the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Finance. The Approval of the Chief Officer following Agreement by the Assistant Director Governance and Contracts, the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Finance must also be obtained regarding any variations/modifications to the Contract. In accordance with CPR 2.1.2, Officers must take all necessary professional advice
- 13.6 Following Approval, the extensions/modifications/variations of the Contracts must be applied via the appropriate Change of Control Notice, or similar method signed by both parties, as specified in the contracts.
- 13.7 The Contracts can be awarded in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Procurement Regulations 2015. Officers should ensure they comply with all Grant conditions

Non-Applicable Sections:	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]

Report No.
CEF22004

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE**

Date: **Tuesday 25 January 2022**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**

Contact Officer: Wenifred Marshall, Head of Permanency and Children with Disabilities
E-mail: wenifred.marshall@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Children, Education and Families

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This annual report provides a self-evaluation of London Borough of Bromley's (LBB) practice against The Children Private Fostering Arrangements for Fostering Regulations 2005. The report also gives details of the circumstances of children identified as Privately Fostered.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 That PDS Committee

- (i) Consider the content and comment upon the annual report of the Private Fostering Agency;
- (ii) Recommend that the annual report be endorsed by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and families .

2.2 The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families is asked to endorse the annual report.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: There were 17 notifications in the year 2020-2021. There had been a further eight arrangements which LBB had received notifications about in the previous year. The total number of private fostering arrangements during the year 2020-2021 were 25
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: 833120
 4. Total current budget for this head: £4,947,160 Private fostering is within the fostering budget
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Support Grant
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 3
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):25
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

The attached annual Private Fostering Report meets the Council's statutory duty to report under the Children Private Fostering Arrangements for Fostering Regulations 2005.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults And Children, Policy Implications, Financial Implications, Personnel Implications, Legal Implications, Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	None

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Private Fostering Awareness

Do you know a child being looked after by someone who is not a close relative?

It could be a private fostering arrangement.

Learn more at

www.bromley.gov.uk/privatefostering

Download our
free App



Bromley Private Fostering Annual Report 2020-2021



"By working together with partner agencies, we will ensure that every child in Bromley has the right help at the right time to keep them safe and to meet their needs, so that they achieve, thrive and reach their full potential."

Transforming Bromley to Deliver Better Outcomes for Children and Families (2020)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This annual report provides a self-evaluation of London Borough of Bromley's (LBB) practice against The Children Private Fostering Arrangements for Fostering Regulations 2005. The report also gives details of the circumstances of children identified as Privately Fostered.
- 1.2** There were 17 notifications in the year 2020-2021. There had been a further eight arrangements which LBB had received notifications about in the previous year. The total number of private fostering arrangements during the year 2020-2021 were 25.

2. BROMLEY'S PRIVATE FOSTERING STANDARDS

Standard 1 – Statement on Private Fostering

The Local Authority has a written statement or plan, which sets out its duties and functions in relation to Private Fostering and the ways in which they will be carried out.

- 2.1** Bromley's Children's Services Statement of Purpose on Private Fostering sets out the following:
- Definition of a Privately Fostered Child
 - The Local Authority's Duties and Functions under the Children Act 1989 and Regulations
 - The Children Act 2004 and the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005
 - Promotion of Public and Professional Awareness
 - Assessment of Suitability of Private Fostering Arrangements
 - Advice and Information for Carers, Parents and Children
 - The Role of other Agencies in Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Privately Fostered Children
 - Staff Training.

Standard 2 – Notification

The Local Authority:

- promotes awareness of the notification requirements and ensures that those professionals who may come into contact with privately fostered children understand their role in notification;
- responds effectively to notification; and
- deals with situations where an arrangement comes to their attention, which has not been notified.

- 2.2** A program of awareness raising was completed within the stakeholder community in 2020-2021. This included linking with education, health, children's centres,

housing, voluntary and faith organisations. Training around identification and response to private fostering arrangements has been delivered as part of multi-agency safeguarding board training and designated safeguarding lead training.

- 2.3** The referral pathway in Bromley is clear; the MASH team immediately transfer such cases to the Permanency Service, Fostering team for an initial assessment within 7 days to ensure the child is being appropriately cared for. Partner agencies have been given the clear message that they should notify our MASH of a private fostering arrangement when they become aware of it and that they should make it clear that the reason they are referring is private fostering.
- 2.4** Information and leaflets on Private Fostering for parents, carers and professionals are available on the *Bromley council's website*, the *Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership website* and, in the Bromley, *Private Fostering App*.

Standard 3 – Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare

The Local Authority determines effectively the suitability of all aspects of the Private Fostering arrangement in accordance with the regulations.

- 2.5** Through undertaking the Private Fostering assessment, the social worker establishes the suitability of the placement/proposed placement of carers. This includes the assessment of:
- The intended duration of the private fostering arrangement and that this is understood and agreed between the parent and private foster carer.
 - The ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child about the proposed/actual private fostering arrangement.
 - That the child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development is appropriate and satisfactory (once the private fostering arrangement has begun).
 - That the child's needs arising from faith, race, culture and language are being met.
 - That the financial arrangements for the care and maintenance of the child have been agreed between the parents and private foster carer.
 - The capacity of the proposed/actual foster carer to look after the child, and the suitability of members of their household and premises (including whether the private foster carer or anyone in the household is disqualified from privately fostering children).
 - That consideration has been given, and necessary steps taken to make arrangements for the care of the child's health; and that, once the private fostering arrangement has begun, these arrangements are in place and, in particular, that the child is registered with a G.P.
 - That consideration has been given, and necessary steps taken to make arrangements for the child's education; and that, once the private fostering arrangement has begun, these arrangements are in place.
 - The standard of care provided for each privately fostered child.
 - Whether the contact arrangements have been agreed and understood and will

be/are satisfactory for the child.

- How decisions about the child's day to day care will be/are taken.

- 2.6** There is a workflow which social workers can access to provide them with clear direction in relation to completing the assessment. The social worker undertakes a DBS check of the private foster carer and anyone else over 18 years old living in the household where the child will reside.
- 2.7** All private fostering assessments are signed off at team management level and Private fostering arrangements tracked through performance digests at Group manager and Head of Service level.

Standard 4-6 – Advice and Support

The Local Authority provides such advice and support to private foster carers and prospective private foster carers as appears to the authority to be needed.

Children who are privately fostered are able to access information and support when required so that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Privately fostered children are enabled to participate in decisions about their lives.

The Local Authority provides advice and support to the parents of children who are privately fostered with in their area as appears to the authority to be needed.

2.8 Information and Support for Privately Fostered Children:

The council have developed information available specifically for privately fostered children, which explains about the private fostering situation, the role and responsibilities of the carer, the child's rights and the involvement and support offered by the Local Authority. This guidance is written in an easily accessible format and is available online and hardcopies.

- 2.9** The social worker provides the privately fostered child, appropriate to their age, with their contact details on their first visit with the child and encourages the child to contact them as they wish. The social worker also speaks to the child about private fostering to gain their views on the private fostering arrangement and their wishes and feelings regularly.

2.10 Advice and Support for Private Foster Carers:

On the first meeting the social worker provides the private foster carer with written guidance and advice that has been specifically developed for them. This includes information on what private fostering is, why and how the Local Authority is involved and the support that is available to them through the Local Authority.

- 2.11** The social worker also provides the Private Foster carer with their and team's contact details and out of hours emergency contacts as well as information relating to their entitlement to child and other financial benefits and any other necessary advice and support which will assist them in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.

2.12 Private Foster carers are eligible to access parenting courses and other resources made available through the council's Early help service.

2.13 Advice and Support for Parents:

As part of the Private Fostering assessment, the social worker will consider all support and placement options for the child, parent/s, carer/s, including the need for the arrangement itself to take place and whether support can be provided to enable the child to live with his/her parent/s instead.

2.14 The social worker has a duty to contact the parents within 7 days of receiving the notification and will provide them with written guidance, specifically developed for parents, which explains the criteria for Private Fostering, the involvement and duty of Council's services and the support available for them to access. Should the Private Fostering arrangement be assessed as not appropriate for the child, the parents will be informed and guided as needed to make other arrangements.

2.15 The social worker provides the parents with their contact details and will remain in regular contact throughout the arrangement.

Standard 7 – Monitoring Compliance with Duties and Functions in relation to Private Fostering

The Local Authority has in place and implements effectively a system for monitoring the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering. It improves practice where this is indicated as necessary by the monitoring system.

2.16 The council maintain confidential records of all privately fostered children, their carers and their parents on the electronic record of the child's file. Any visits, actions, decisions and information regarding the child, carers and parents are inputted onto the electronic system by the relevant involved professional.

2.17 The management group in the Permanency service monitor the number of Privately Fostered children within the Local Authority to ensure that children are being visited regularly and within statutory timescale and that children are safeguarded and their wellbeing is promoted and monitored.

2.18 Our Private fostering team is now part of the Private Fostering Practice Network run by CoramBAAF for private fostering practitioners nationally. We are also part of a virtual practitioner forum where ad-hoc information and informal support is exchanged on Private fostering practice issues. This is again a national forum.

3. OVERVIEW OF PRIVATELY FOSTERED CHILDREN IN BROMLEY

3.1 Private Fostering cases, assessments and visits are monitored. All private fostering cases are supervised and tracked at management level to ensure that these children are safeguarded and parents and carers receive adequate information and guidance.

3.2 The data below illustrates the private fostering activity for the year 2020-2021.

1	Number of active/open PF arrangements at 31 March 2020	8
2	Number of new notifications received During 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021	17* <i>*15 of these notifications were made retrospectively, 3 of them being for PF arrangements that had already started in the previous financial year</i>
3	Source of new notifications	
	<i>International school</i>	10
	<i>Social Care departments (Bromley, Lambeth, Cornwall, Nottinghamshire)</i>	5
	<i>Primary school</i>	1
	<i>Community / Parents</i>	1
5.	Number of children in PF arrangements during 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021	25 (17 new and 8 from previous year)
6.	Number of PF arrangements closed during 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021	21
7.	Outcome / Reason for closure	
	<i>Section 20 / Transfer to other teams in Bromley</i>	3
	<i>Child returned to parents or close relative in the UK</i>	5
	<i>Child returned to parents or close relative overseas</i>	3
	<i>Child turned 16</i>	2
	<i>Child returned to Boarding school after lockdown</i>	6
	<i>Criteria not met as child living with close relative</i>	1
	<i>Care transferred to another Local Authority</i>	1
8.	Number of active/open PF arrangements at 31st March 2021	4

3.3 The ages of children at point of point of notification ranged between 6-15 years.

3.4 The table below illustrates the ethnicity of the children in private fostering

arrangements during 2020-2021

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR'S PRIVATE FOSTERING ACTIVITY

- 4.1** Continued quality assurance of privately fostered children by the management group to ensure regular visiting to these children and thorough assessments and that children in private fostering arrangements in Bromley are safeguarded and their wellbeing promoted.
- 4.2** The service will continue to include Private Fostering as a compulsory element to safeguarding training offer and ensure any updates in legislation and procedures are incorporated, as a compulsory element to the training, ensuring new staff are provided with this training and current staff receive refresher training.
- 4.3** The management team will continue to review our private fostering processes to ensure good practice in the field is embedded in our service to privately fostered children and their carers.
- 4.4** The service will continue with ongoing awareness campaigning in the community and within the multi-agency groups.
- 4.5** Bromley Private Fostering will continue to contribute to the learning and improving practice within the practitioner's groups locally and nationally.

Date of report: 03/11/2021

Report completed by:

Ana Parr-Group Manager Permanency service

Wenifred Marshal Head of Service

Report No.
CEF22007

London Borough of Bromley

Agenda
Item No.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Date: 25 January 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT TO MEMBERS - BROMLEY Y MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICE

Contact Officer: Daniel Manns, Integrated Strategic Commissioner
Tel: 020 8313 4618 E-mail: daniel.manns@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin

Ward: Boroughwide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees may review contracting arrangements on an annual basis, where the contract is valued over £500k. The Bromley Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Service contract commenced on 1 April 2021 and has an annual value which exceeds this threshold (50/50 with SEL CCG).
- 1.2 This report specifically provides an insight into the delivery of the contract in accordance with the service specification and does not consider the wider CYP mental health and wellbeing arrangements that are delivered outside of this contract.
- 1.3 Bromley Y have developed an accompanying presentation in order to provide an awareness of operational service delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee (CEF PDS):

1. Notes the content of this contract monitoring report on the performance of Bromley Y in delivering the Mental Health and Wellbeing Service contract.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy. Existing Policy Context/Statements
 2. BBB Priority: Supporting Independence .
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost as detailed in Part 2 of the contract award report for this service, split equally between the SELCCG Bromley and the London Borough of Bromley
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring cost .
 3. Budget head/performance centre: 834130 People Department, Children's Social Care and Education
 4. Total current budget for this head: £as detailed in Part 2 of the contract award report for this service
 5. Source of funding: Integrated Commissioning (Core Funding and co-funding agreement with NHS SEL CCG (Bromley))
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: n/a
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Mental Health and Wellbeing Support offer to approx. 2900 CYP, parents and carers per annum with additional support to Education, NHS and voluntary and community sector providers in the borough.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 This service was jointly recommissioned by a tender with SELCCG Bromley led by the London Borough of Bromley during 2020. This was prompted by the end of the previous contract. The new contract with Bromley Y commenced on 1 April 2021.
- 3.2 Recent months have been extremely challenging for the service with referrals in the first quarter of 2021/22 up approximately 75% on the 2020/21 average and 35% above the 2019/20 average. However the close partnership arrangements with LBB and SEL CCG have alleviated some of the challenges, for example via the involvement of the mental health network leads and the work on the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2020-25) as discussed at the Health and Wellbeing board on 25th November 2021.
- 3.3 The service has faced significant challenges from their relationship with CAMHs, in particular this has centred on disagreements about which onward referrals should be accepted by them and there are concerns at the number of high risk cases being held by Bromley Y at tier 2.5 level. Staff in Bromley Y are also concerned at the long waiting times for a service from CAMHs which can be up to 9 months.

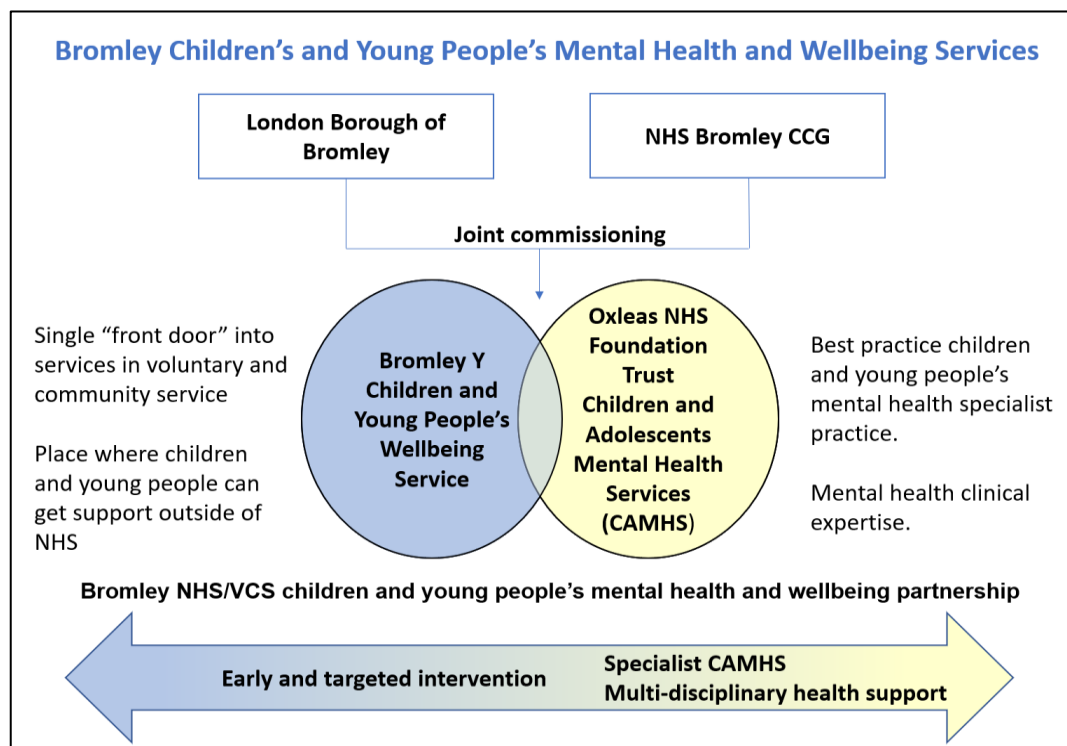
3.4 SERVICE PERFORMANCE

- 3.5 Bromley Y is currently moving to the Rio Patient Record System (the same system used by Oxleas) which will be its core IT system going forward. This transformation is welcomed by commissioners as it should make information sharing with NHS colleagues much easier, as the vast majority of NHS departments use this system. The current transfer means that there is no performance data from Bromley Y at this time, although this is expected to be rectified in January 2022.
- 3.6 That said, Bromley Y are known to be managing a caseload which is over 30% above normal levels. The service is fully staffed and there has been positive feedback from service users and stakeholders on how it has adapted to the pandemic/post-pandemic delivery.

4 SERVICE PROFILE / DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 BROMLEY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY CONTEXT

- 4.2 Bromley Council and NHS Bromley CCG commission a range of services to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in the borough. Whilst there are a range of different services in the area, the core mental health and wellbeing offer centres on the provision of the Wellbeing Service for Children and Young People (Bromley Y) and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services – CAMHS (Oxleas NHS FT).



- 4.3 The dual service model was originally established in 2014/15 with some initial challenges in delivering a coherent offer across the NHS/voluntary sector. Since then there has been strong partnership working between the two services with improved joint working. Bromley Y were successful in securing a new five-year Council/CCG contract in April 2021.
- 4.4 At the heart of the NHS/voluntary sector partnership is the **Single Point of Access (SPA)**, which is managed by Bromley y. The SPA ensures that, wherever possible, there is a focus on delivering early help and intervention for children and young people outside of NHS services. Only around 12% of children and young people who come to the SPA end up in specialist services but are instead supported outside of the NHS.

5 PLANS FOR ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS IN PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 Commissioners have agreed to facilitate a half-day workshop between Oxleas CAMHS/Bromley Y in January 2022 to support next steps in the development of a mature partnership between the two organisations. There is an interest in redesigning pathways between the two organisations to improve services for CYP, as well as to put in place a partnership agreement, joint branding etc.
- 5.2 There may be an opportunity to set-up a pilot "in reach" service between CAMHS/Bromley Y into children's social care utilising NHS mental health underspend funding. This is a long-standing aim that the Council/CCG have been working on, and it is recognised that this remains a gap in terms of excellent joint working between services. The outcome of this work should be known by January 2022.
- 5.3 Bromley Y/Oxleas CAMHS are supporting the Council/CCG to deliver a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Network with Bromley Schools, which is being led by Jared Nehra (Director of Education). The launch of the network took place on 3rd November 2021 and was very positive with excellent attendance/engagement by education settings.

6. PLANS FOR ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS IN VALUE FOR MONEY

6.1 WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS SERVICE

- 6.2 In 2018/19, Bromley was successful in becoming a national “trailblazer” for the establishment of Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) in local schools. This new service was part of the delivery of the Government’s *Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health* programme. In Bromley the national approach was delivered by setting up Bromley Y’s Schools Wellbeing Service (SWS), with around half of the schools in the borough covered during the service’s initial years of operation.
- 6.3 An additional team will be added to the SWS from January 2022 in order to provide greater reach into schools across the borough, with an emphasis on those areas with highest needs.

7. USER / STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

- 7.1 The service has demonstrated excellent outcomes in general, with positive feedback from education settings, parents and children and young people. In particular, the SWS had to adapt its delivery model during the covid-19 pandemic with a particular focus on supporting school management around pupils of concern. There have also been opportunities for the SWS to better support education settings to access the right help for pupils, reducing inappropriate referrals to A&E and CAMHS.

8. SUSTAINABILITY / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 8.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. This contract has been informed by a focussed equalities impact assessment, which found that the revised service will have a far wider reach and richer more responsive service offer than the previous service contract, and should therefore ensure that equal access to mental health and wellbeing support is available to all CYP in Bromley requiring support with additional service focus on delivery to vulnerable cohorts, including CYP from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic groups, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Questioning CYP, and Neurodiverse and disabled CYP.

9. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 [Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision: a green paper \(Dec 2017\)](#) which sets out the ambition that children and young people who need help for their mental health are able to get it when they need it.

The [Government’s 2018 Response](#) to this was clear in its call for amongst other things the strengthening of preventative and resilience supporting services in education and other community settings.

The [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) contains a wide ranging raft of legislative requirements across a wide spectrum of CYP agendas including Children Looked After support provisions, establishment of new Safeguarding partnerships and Child Death Review systems and additional support for children with complex and continuing health and care needs, including neurodiverse groups and mental health.

- 9.2 Alongside this there has been a range of significant policy developments in the NHS which have a major impact on the context of delivery for MHEW services

[The NHS Long Term Plan](#) This sets out the systemic changes in delivery and service configuration for all NHS services and the specific priorities and service postures required for mental health in community and school settings for all CYP from 0 to 25.

[Journey to A New Health and Care System](#) sets out Sir David Sloman’s challenges and tests involved in establishing the “New Business as Usual” in the post Covid 19 world and sets out the issues associated with the transformation of the commissioner/Provider landscape, establishment of Integrated

Care Systems, and repatriation of Specialised Commissioning service lines from NHS England regional control to local systems.

9.3 Local Policies that have informed the specification for this service and will inform the long-term Contract management of this service include:

- [LBB Transforming Bromley Roadmap for 2019-2023](#)
- [LBB Children and Young Peoples Plan 2021 – 2024](#)
- [Bromley Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-25](#)
- [Bromley Community Mental Health Transformation and Delivery Plan 2021/22](#)
- [Our Healthier South East London Recovery Plan \(October 2020\)](#)

10. COMMISSIONING & PROCUREMENT CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 The current contract commenced on 1 April 2021. It was tendered for an initial period of five years with two extension periods of up to two years each. If all extensions are utilised, the current service will terminate on 31st March 2030.

11. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

11,1 The current value of the Mental Health and Wellbeing/CAMHS contract controlled by the Council is detailed in part 2 of the contract award report for this service. The Council led on the procurement of this joint LBB/CCG CAMHS contract. This increased the contract value managed by LBB. Further details are available in part 2 of the contract award report for this service.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Customer Profile, Market Considerations, Personnel Considerations
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	N/A

Bromley Y

providing the

**Single Point of Access for Children and Young People to
Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Services**

During 2020-2021 Bromley Y has focused on key areas

- Setting up the new service, including changes of staff roles and responsibilities
- Our offer to young people particularly as a result of the pandemic and an increase in numbers
- Listening to the voice of the young person
- Supporting change in terms of the service delivered
- Focus on equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that all groups can easily use our services, particularly through active outreach into those communities finding access difficult
- Supporting parents and carers
- Supporting education and schools particularly on the impact of the pandemic

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Service (MHEWS)

- Continued to provide a service to young people throughout the transition
- Restructured the service in line with the THRIVE model
- Recruited to new staff posts both from existing staff and external candidates
- Adopted new systems, forms and processes for the new service
- Adapted the new service capacity to the needs from the pandemic
- Focus on equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that hard to reach groups have access to the services particularly through active outreach into these communities
- To integrate other **Bromley Y** services funded by SELCCG Bromley, donations and traded services into the new model



Impact of the Pandemic

- We would expect around **2,600** referrals to the service in a full year, with 10% of these being referred onto specialist services
- Based on current referral numbers we can expect **3,833** referrals in 2021/2022, a **47%** increase, with 8% of these being referred onto specialist services
- Young people are also presenting with higher needs, requiring more risk screening and safety calls.



Listening to the voice of the young person

- Evaluating the impact of the new service by tracking of 30 users to monitor their pathways
- 12 week follow up of all users to gather feedback and to identify if further support is required
- Using clinical outcome measures
- Engaging with individuals who are dissatisfied with the service
- Attracting young people to the Board of Trustees

*My name is Dami Ogunnaike, I'm the newly appointed youth ambassador at **Bromley Y**. I will be acting as the middle person between the young people of Bromley and **Bromley Y**.*

For the short time that I've been here, I have had the opportunity to meet each team and have been able to plan some exciting activities for the upcoming months.

We are seeking feedback from past users asking them a few questions about their experience of our service. This will provide us with valuable information to ensure that our services meet the needs of young people.

*I will be spreading the word about **Bromley Y** by reaching out to young people from different groups and communities to help make mental health services accessible to everyone.*

Supporting change in terms of the service delivered

- Clear pathways for the young person with transparent expectations of time frames
- Increasing the choice of interventions virtually or face to face, both for individuals and groups
- Development of a partnership with Orpington Rovers Football Club to increase the take up of sport as a contributory factor to wellbeing
- Expansion of the Mentoring Service into schools by merging with Positive Pete
- Use of new evidence-based technologies such as Lumi Nova (online therapeutic game) and The Signpost- a text chat service for young people aged 11-18
- Introduction of new client record system- RIO



Supporting parents and carers

- Increase in parent support groups
- Increase in parent wellbeing groups
- Development of webinars on specific topics of wellbeing for their child and themselves
- Development of clear information for parents through the website and other media platforms
- Direct referral to **Bromley Y** through the website

Supporting education and schools

- Based on the first quarter data we will hold 480 workshops on a variety of issues with a prospective 12,472 participants in the first year.
- Pupil of concern meetings provided support with staff wellbeing. 54 were held with 87 school staff in the first quarter equating to 216 with 348 staff in a full year
- The third School Wellbeing Team – funded by SELCCG Bromley will enable in reach and targeted work with schools who have a high number of pupils presenting to A&E
- To continue to offer to schools and other organisations additional support direct from Bromley Y through our Traded Services
- Webinars developed for young people, parents and staff



The challenge

- To continue to respond to the impact of the pandemic on young people
- To continue the focus on equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that vulnerable groups have timely access services, particularly through active outreach into these communities
- To establish the third School Wellbeing Team, funded by SELCCG Bromley focusing on key secondary schools
- To work with commissioners and colleagues in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to support individuals waiting for more specialist services
- To continue to provide an innovative range of services to young people, meeting their needs and listening to their voice within the funding allocated (whilst holding reserves for three months' running costs)

Any Questions ?

Gill Allen, Director
Bromley Y

25 January 2022

Report No.
CEF22003

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 25 January 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: ANNUAL ADOPTION REPORT 2020-2021

Contact Officer: Elena Muller, Service Manager, Adoption RAA
E-mail: Elena.Muller@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Children's Social Care

Ward: Bromley Town;

1. Reason for report

Report re: the activity of Bromley Adoption Service from 1st of April 2020 to 31st of March 2021

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Report submitted for the Committee's consideration.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost No Cost Not Applicable: Further Details
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost Non-Recurring Cost Not Applicable: Further Details
 3. Budget head/performance centre: 833110
 4. Total current budget for this head: £1,395,006
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Support Grant
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 5
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 154 per week
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
 2. Call-in: Applicable Not Applicable: Further Details
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 339
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

Bromley is a registered Adoption Agency. Adoption agencies are subject to the Adoption Agencies Regulations (AAR) 2005 (updated 2011) and the Adoption Agencies (Panel and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012; Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 and are subject to the National Minimum Standards (2014) which accompany the Regulations. Standard 25.6 of the National Minimum Standards requires the Adoption Agency to produce a report to be received by the agency Executive.

The activities of the adoption service reflect the ongoing agenda of Central Government which is to ensure that children looked after achieve permanence in a timely manner and that adoptive families receive the support they need.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Key Themes:

1. Summary of Impact:

- Bromley's Adoption Service continues to be part of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) '*Ambitious for Adoption CORAM Capital*'. This RAA model was approved by the Department for Education on the 1st November 2018 and became live in July 2019. This RAA is made up of the following local authorities: Harrow, Redbridge, Hillingdon, Slough, Waltham Forest, Bromley, City, Chelsea and Westminster and CORAM
- There were 10 Bromley looked after children placed with prospective adopters during the year 2020/2021.
- 10 children were made subject to Adoption orders in 2020/2021
- The Adoption Scorecard shows that timescales have been improved for adoptions completed in 2020/21 and despite several government lockdowns due to the global pandemic, the children who needed adoptive families did not need to wait unnecessarily and matches and introductions took place within the government guidance.
- There were **43** requests for assessments for post-adoption support received from adoptive families in 2020/2021.
- **72** applications for therapeutic support through Adoption Support fund were made in 2020/2021.
- There were **15** adult adoptee who received adoption support in 2020/2021.

The annual report is attached as Appendix 1.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy implications Financial implications Personnel implications
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	Legal implications Procurement implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	



Annual Report on Adoption Activity

Coram Ambitious for Adoption

2020-2021

Mission Statements:

Bromley Council's Adoption Service believes that every child has the right to a permanent, secure and loving family which embraces their individual needs and differences, including their culture and identity where this is possible.

Coram's mission is to develop, deliver and promote best practice in the support of vulnerable children and young people. Our vision is that every child has the best possible chance to lead a fulfilling life.

CONTENTS:

1. Introduction

2. Early Permanence

3. Children with an Adoption Plan

4. Children Placed for Adoption in 2019/2020

5. Children Made Subject to Adoption Orders

6. Adoption scorecards

7. Panel

8. Recruitment and Approval of Adopters

9. Adoption and Post Adoption Support Services

10. Disruptions, Complaints & Allegations and Compliments

11. Future developments and priorities

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the activity of Bromley Adoption Service from 1st April 2020 to end of March 2021. The main purpose of this document is to report on the work undertaken by Bromley Adoption Service, update on the new developments and set out the ambitions and plans for the future.

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 puts the responsibility on all local authorities to establish and maintain an adoption service in their area, to meet the needs in relation to adoption, of children who have or may be adopted, of adults who have been adopted, and persons who have or may adopt a child. Since June 2019, Bromley Council have delegated most of those functions to Coram Ambitious for Adoption, a Regional Adoption Agency. Bromley retains overall responsibility for their own Children in Care but delegating most adoption functions to Coram Ambitious for Adoption.

The regionalisation reforms as set out in Regionalising Adoption paper (2015) intended to reduce the large number of agencies providing adoption services by creating 25-30 regional agencies. The expectation was that larger organisations should be able to pool resources and share best practice resulting in: targeted and efficient recruitment of adopters; speedier matching with a larger more diverse pool of adopters; and an improved range of adoption support services.

The purpose of this partnership is to help to simplify and speed up the adoption process in Bromley. Coram Ambitious for Adoption is a partnership between Coram, the UK's oldest children's charity, and several local authorities in London, bringing together their expertise to match children more quickly with their new adoptive families.

Coram Ambitious for Adoption is the first port of call for adoption enquiries on behalf of Bromley Council and provides access to adoption support for all of its adoptive families. Coram is judged Outstanding by Ofsted and has more than 40 years' experience in finding vulnerable children permanent loving families.

In addition to Bromley Council, Coram Ambitious for Adoption also provides adoption services for Hillingdon, Waltham Forest, Harrow, Redbridge, Bi-Borough The City of London and Slough.

The services provided through the Regional Adoption Agency include the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters and the management of adoption panels, which take place in the 'hub' at Coram main office in Brunswick Square, and the family finding for children, and adoption and post adoption support are provided by Coram staff in the 'spokes' situated in each of the local authorities.

Adoption concerns only a small proportion of Bromley children who are unable to safely return to their families, but they are some of the most vulnerable children in society. Adoption usually offers the benefits of family life throughout childhood and beyond into adulthood. It provides the opportunity for secure relationships to develop and the chance of developmental recovery for adopted children; the majority of whom have been maltreated and/or suffered significant trauma (Selwyn. et al., 20158).

There were **10** looked after children placed for adoption in the year 2020/2021, and **10** adoption orders made.

Coram Ambitious for Adoption is responsible for recruitment, assessment, approval and support of adopter's pre and post-order, family finding for looked after children with an adoption plan and post-adoption support services. The team provides a duty service for adopters and offers consultancy on adoption matters to social workers from the Referral & Assessment, Safeguarding, Children in Care and Court Teams. The team also provides post placement and post adoption support and a range of services for adopted adults and descendants. The function of assessment of intercountry adoption applicants is subcontracted to the Intercountry Adoption Centre.

2. Early Permanence

Early permanence provides an evidence-based approach to securing permanence that ensures that children who cannot live with their families are placed with prospective long-term carers at the earliest opportunity. Early permanence enables a child in care to be placed with foster carers who are ready and willing to adopt them later, if the Court decides they cannot live with their birth family. It is intended to reduce the time that a child spends in care and minimise the disruption of repeated moves to different families. This aims to enable children to experience a loving and secure home in which they feel safe and settled as quickly as possible. Early permanence placements can limit delay and secure good outcomes for children whether they are rehabilitated home, or they are adopted.

Early permanence for children has continued to be the focus and a viable option for young children in Bromley who are likely to need adoption families.

Coram family finder tracks all cases that might need EP carers and works closely with the social work team to identify the most suitable placement for the baby.

Cases needing an early permanence placement are discussed and scrutinised at different stages of the Bromley Children Service's involvement. A weekly Legal Gateway Panel provides management oversight and scrutiny of all cases where a Legal Planning Meeting has been requested by Children Social Care and to ensure effective early case planning, timely interventions, and pre-proceedings assessments. This panel is chaired by the Head of Safeguarding Service.

Another layer of scrutiny is added by the Permanence Panel. This Panel meets weekly and focuses on children and young people entering care in Bromley, analyses care plans and ensure that all aspects of care arrangements, permanency and contingency plans are in place. All children and young people coming into care are presented to the permanence panel between 6-8 weeks after accommodation. The panel is chaired by the Head of Permanence.

Coram family finder also uses the weekly performance data to monitor the progress of all the potential early permanence cases and any new referrals are discussed with the Early permanence team responsible for recruiting, assessing and approving early permanence carers in Coram Adoption and Permanent Families Service based in Central London.

Coram family finder is also part of the London Wide Early Permanence Steering group, a forum which meets bi-monthly to share expertise, ideas, good practice and family find for children who need early permanence carers.

Bromley was the first London borough to be awarded the '*Working towards Quality Mark*' in Early Permanence and fostering for adoption has become an established early permanence practice in Bromley. The family finder attends all the early permanency meetings and had a crucial role in the decision made regarding the care plan. Last year, one child was placed in an early permanence placement from hospital, when she was 1 day old and one child was adopted having being placed with early permanent carers the previous financial year.

3. Children with an Adoption Plan

There were 19 children with an Agency decision for adoption in 2020/21, of which 10 were male and 9 were female. Of this cohort, there was five sibling groups of 2 children and 1 sibling group of 3 children.

The ages of this cohort of children when an adoption decision was made were as follows:

Age	Number
Under 12 months	2
1	6
2	3
3	2
4	3
5	2
6	1
7	1
Total:	20

The number of ADM adoption decisions granted had increased in the last financial year from 13 in the year 2019-2020 which was the same number as in the year 2018-19 and in 2017/18.

There was a significant change in the number of sibling groups requiring a placement together in 2020/21, comparing to previous year 2019/20 and a notable decrease in the number of children under the age of one from 8 the previous financial year to just 2 in the last year. Bromley undertakes a comprehensive Together or Apart assessment in circumstances where separation of siblings may be required to determine the best permanence option.

Of the cohort of 19 children who had adoption plans agreed in the year 2020/21,

- 2 were matched, placed and subsequently adopted within the same year 2020/21
- 1 child was matched at Adoption Panel and placed with prospective adopters
- 14 children were in different stages of the Care proceedings and either had a Placement Order and active family finding activity was taking place or awaiting Court's decision about their long-term plans. Out of these children, a sibling group of 2 were linked with prospective adopters and due to be presented to Panel in the following financial year.
- 7 of these children had Placement Orders granted.
- 3 children had the adoption decision reverted (2 went to live with birth family member so the care plan changed to rehabilitation under Supervision Order and 1 had the care plan changed to SGO).
- 1 child whose adoption plan was agreed in the year 2016/17 had the adoption decision reverted (Placement Order revoked)

4. Children Placed for Adoption in 2020/2021

Despite the global pandemic, the family finding activity for children who needed permanent families continued and children continued to be introduced to new parents and successfully placed with them after a period of introduction.

The family finding activity is carried out in the RAA by an experienced social worker with dedicated role in family finding for children with adoption plans from early stages of the child's care planning. The Family finder has an advisory role in matters such as Early Permanence planning for unborn or young babies and attends Final Care Plan Meetings where the permanency options are discussed for each child. The family finder brings her expertise and knowledge of the available resources within the Regional Adoption Agency as well as nationwide, advising about timescales and

The Family Finding Lead undertakes the family finding in house (Coram RAA) and nationally for all cases where adoption is the plan, or likely to be the plan/ early family finding, working closely with practitioners from other teams, services and partner agencies.

There were **10** Bromley looked after children placed with prospective adopters during the year, compared to 12 in 2019/20 and 9 the year before that.

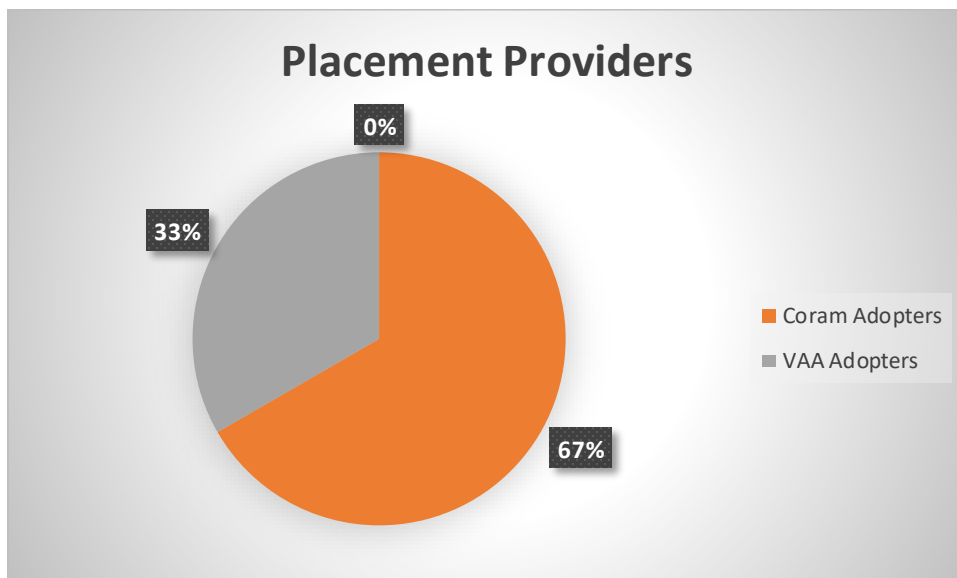
In this cohort there were 1 sibling group of 2 and 8 individual children.

In terms of gender, there were 5 male and 5 female children, with the eldest being 5-year-old and the youngest 7 months at the time of adoption placement.

In terms of ethnicity 9 children were of White British heritage and one child was White Other (Turkish and Romanian).

Of the cohort of **10** children placed for adoption, 1 had been initially been placed with her carers as an early permanence placement as a newborn baby from hospital.

In terms of placement provider, of the cohort of 10 children, 6 were placed with Coram adopters and 4 were placed with adopters from voluntary adoption agencies under inter-agency arrangements.



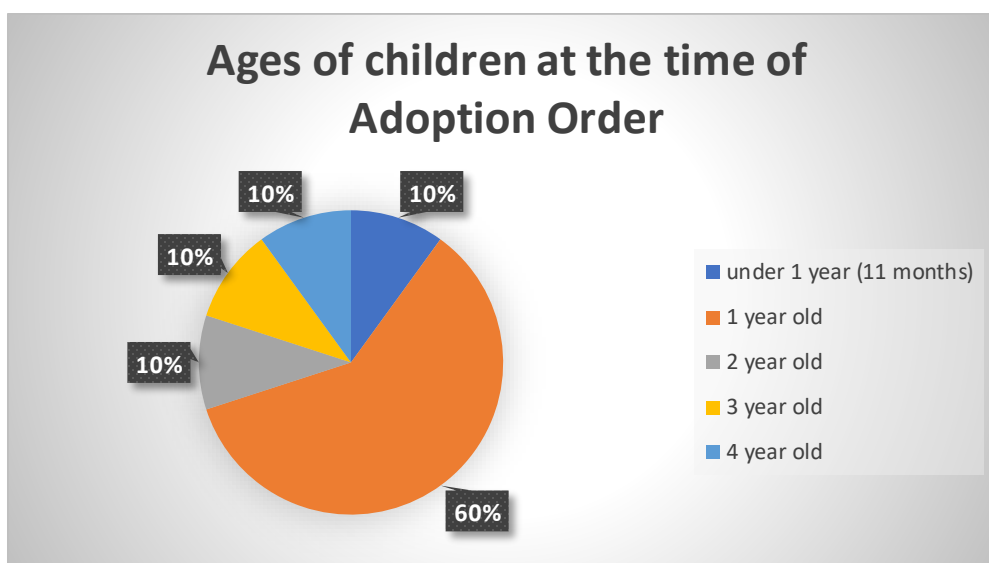
4.1. Family finding status on 31st March 2021 for the children with Placement Orders and ADM decisions waiting for adoption placement was:

- 1 sibling group of two had been linked with Coram adopters and were due to be matched in the next financial year. Their Placement Order was granted in February 2021.
- 1 sibling group of 2 had also been provisionally linked with a Coram couple who were in the last stage of their assessment process. Their Placement Order was granted in February 2021.
- Active family finding was taking place for a 2-year-old boy of Mixed heritage whose Placement Order was made in December 2020. The child has complex needs and further assessments are needed to establish the complexity of his needs.
- All the other children with an ADM decision were tracked through monthly family finding meetings and awaiting the conclusion of Care Proceedings.

5. Children Made Subject to Adoption Orders

10 children were made subject to Adoption Orders in 2020/2021.

- 1 child was under 1 year old (11 months)
- 6 children were 1 year old
- 1 child was aged 2 years old
- 1 child was aged 3 years old
- 1 child was aged 4 years old



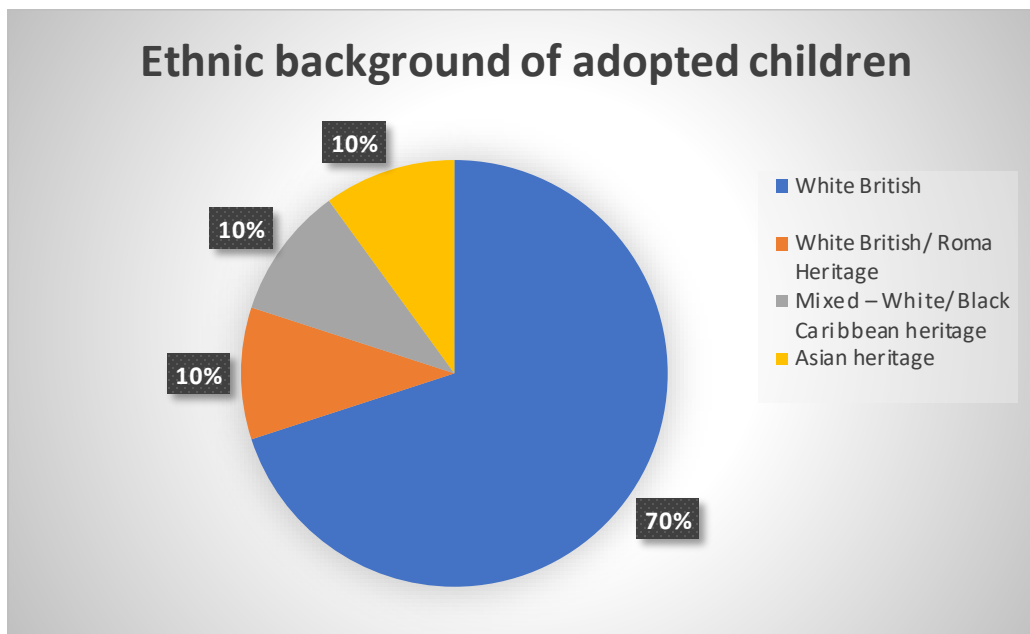
Out of the 10 children, the eldest child was aged 48 months (4 years old) at the time the Adoption order was granted, and the youngest child was aged 11 months.

Of the 10 children cohort:

- All children were placed in separate adoptive placements
- 9 children were placed in new adoptive families
- 1 child was placed in a family who adopted previously
- 6 of the children were male and 4 were female
- 7 children had been placed for adoption within the year 2019/20

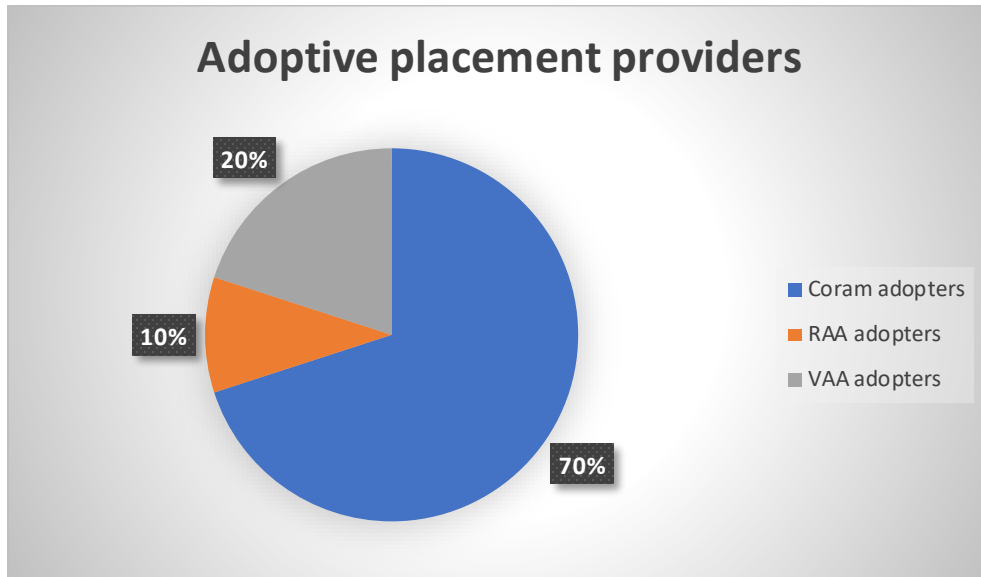
In terms of children's ethnic background, out of the 10 children:

- 7 were of White British heritage
- 1 of White British/Roma heritage
- 1 of Mixed – White/ Black Caribbean heritage
- 1 of Asian heritage



In terms of placement providers, of the 10 children adopted in the year 2020/21,

- 7 of the children were adopted by Coram adopters
- 1 was adopted by adopter from other RAA
- 2 were adopted by adopters from voluntary adoption agencies



6. Adoption scorecards

Adoption Scorecards have been published by the Department for Education on an annual basis since 2012. They measure local authorities' performance against two key indicators. The A1 indicator measures the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family for children who have been adopted. A low number of days represents a good performance. The A2 indicator measures the average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family. A low number of days represents a good performance.

The timeliness has been improved for adoptions completed in 2020/21 and despite several government lockdowns due to the global pandemic, the children who needed adoptive families did not need to wait unnecessarily and matches and introductions took place within the government guidance.

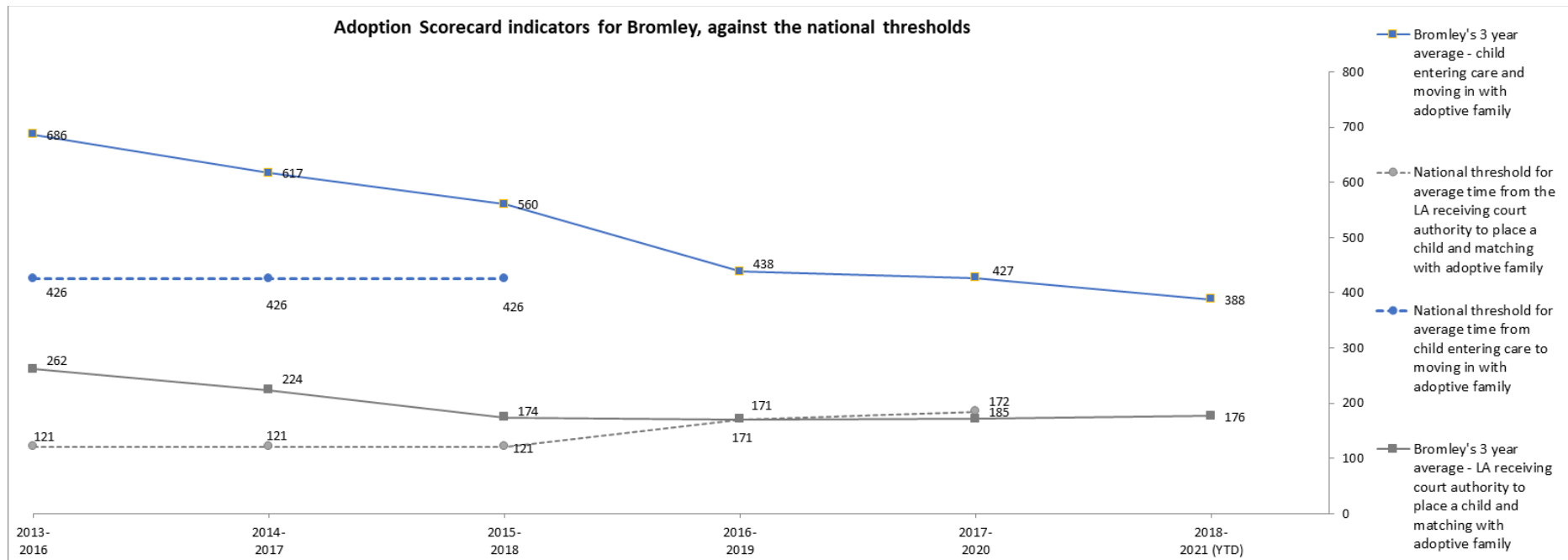
The average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with an adoptive family in 2018/21 (3 years average) was 388. This is 38 day shorter than the National target of 426 days. The average number of days between a child entering care and moving with an adoptive family in 2020/21 (single year) is 287 which means that Bromley children wait an average 139 days less to be with their new family in comparison to other UK children.

The average number of days between Bromley receiving court authority to place a child for adoption and matching the child with an adoptive family is

152 days in 2020/2021. This is 31 days longer than the National target of 121 days. The 3-year average for 2018/21 is also above this at 176 days.

The scorecards were higher this year in comparison to other years due to a combination of factors such as the delays caused by the global pandemic, adoptive placement needed for a siblings' group, and older children from black and ethnic minority background.

The three year average is also influenced by and historic case, an adoption placement that broke down in 2018 (child needed to wait 9 months until he was ready to move with another family).



7. Adoption Panel

In November 2019 the approval function of the Panel was transferred to Coram Ambitious for Adoption Regional Adoption Agency, including matching recommendations.

During 2020 -2021, 27 panels were conducted at Coram Ambitious for Adoption.

43 adopters were presented for approval and 31 matches were brought to Panel, 9 of which were for Bromley children.

7.1. Overview of the service

The Adoption and Permanency Panel for the region is constituted in accordance with legislation, regulations and guidance. The panel members, chair and vice chairs, are drawn from an approved central list of panellists. The work of the panel is supported by a Panel Adviser and Panel Administrator.

Members of the Adoption and Permanency Panel include individuals with personal experience of adoption, adopters and adopted adults and other independent members with experience of fostering and looked after children. Panels are balanced as far as possible in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and experience.

There are 3 Panel Chairs appointed that rotate to ensure timely panels in response to the needs of the service. In addition, there are 3 Panel Vice Chairs appointed to the Panel. The central list of panel members comprises of 27 members (6 from the original Coram panel and 21 new panel members).

7.2. The purpose of the Panel

The panel considers all applications from prospective adopters and foster carers (for early permanence) and makes recommendations of approval. The recommendation is made to the Agency Decision Marker for Ambitious for Adoption

The panel considers all applications for the approval of a match between a child/ren and suitable adopters. This recommendation goes to Bromley Agency Decision Maker.

The panel also considers placements for adoption where the birth parent(s) request their child be adopted. The recommendation of the match goes to Bromley ADM.

The Panel considers 'brief reports' on adoption and fostering applications during stage 2 of the assessment on whether the assessment to approve adopters should continue if the agency is considering terminating the assessment.

The Panel may consider reports on proposed or actual placements for the purpose of information and advice.

The Panel considers reports on the progress of placements from time to time and gives advice.

The Panel considers reports on disrupted placements and reports of any cases referred to the IRM and advises on lessons to be learned.

The Panel performs a quality assurance function, commenting on the standard of reports received and the quality of assessments. This may relate to a particular complex case, or the required six monthly or annual report

An annual quality report is received from the panel and submitted to senior managers and Trustees, the findings of which are incorporated in progress reporting for the regional agency.

Panel training is offered regularly to ensure child centred and informed delivery incorporating case law and panel outcomes.

The Panel can also give advice about the numbers and ages of children in relation to prospective adopters; about post adoption contact; delegated parental responsibility and adoption support plans.

The Panel makes recommendations based on written reports prepared in advance by the relevant social worker, and the social worker and/or team manager attend at Panel to discuss and clarify any matters relevant to the application. When considering the approval of prospective adopters or a match between prospective adopters and a child, prospective adoptive and adopters have the option of attending the panel in person. Applicants who decide not to attend in person are not disadvantaged in any way and no judgement is made from their decision not to do so although every effort will be made to assist their attendance.

The recommendations and advice of the Panel are referred, along with the final minutes of the meeting, to the relevant Agency Decision Maker, for a decision to be

made and conveyed to all parties within the time scales laid down in the Adoption & Children Act 2002.

8. Recruitment and Approval of Adopters

In relation to preparation training delivered to prospective adopters, Coram RAA had delivered during the year:

- 14 information events,
- 43 preparation courses at Stage 1,
- 46 preparation courses at Stage 2.

8.1 Recruitment/promotion activities

Coram Ambitious for Adoption warmly welcomes all adopters single, married or in partnerships and from all communities who are willing and able to adopt children from all backgrounds, which may include sibling groups, children with disabilities or complex needs and children with contact arrangements. The recruitment strategy is informed by the needs of the children across the RAA with a plan for adoption and the regular monitoring of data regarding those enquiring and progression as adopters. Currently, 38% of children with a plan for adoption across the RAA partnership are from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background

A sector-wide National Adopter Recruitment Strategy provides the overarching framework for the recruitment, assessment and support of adopters and is utilized to drive forward the sufficiency of adopters for the Coram Ambitious for Adoption Regional Adoption Agency.

A major campaign in October 2020 included the targeted recruitment within the black African and black Caribbean communities in London. Coram Ambitious for Adoption RAA are continuously running activities aimed at promoting adoption and attracting prospective adopters. A dedicated team continually run Google Ads, press and social media activity promoting the RAA. In addition, they run small digital campaigns around key adoption calendar events, like for example LGBT Fostering & Adoption Week including integrated marketing activity across a digital and offline channel, campaigns such as National Adoption Week.

Coram are actively involved in the delivery of the national campaign programme to raise awareness about adoption amongst the general public and specifically amongst

black, Asian and minority ethnic and faith communities, taking an inclusive approach and challenging the myths which can prevent people from thinking they can adopt. Coram fully utilize all social media channels as well as other marketing approaches, including radio and street advertising to promote these messages within our own agency.

Information Meetings have taken place online during the last financial year on a bi-monthly basis. These events are very well attended and give adopters the opportunity to ask questions to social workers from the Recruitment and Assessment team. Feedback forms are gathered at the end of the event where prospective adopters can request to be contacted about progressing further into the adoption process.

8.2. Assessment

The assessments are undertaken by the Adoption Recruitment and Assessments Teams based at the Coram office.

The teams are guided by the statutory timescales for the adoption approval process and adopters are asked to ensure that they can meet these at the start of the assessment. This is a child focused process, and adopters need to understand our commitment is to the welfare of children needing permanence through adoption.

At the heart of the Government's adoption reform programme is a shorter two-stage approval process for prospective adopters. The aim of this process is to allow potential adopters first to learn more about adoption, and then to move quickly through the approval process. Whilst remaining rigorous, the approval process is time-bound and ensures that prospective adopters have a greater role in the process. There is also a fast-track process for some previous adopters and approved foster carers. After completion of the initial pre-stage, prospective applicants who are likely to meet the needs of children needing an adoptive placement are invited to submit a 'Registration of Interest' and they begin Stage One of the adoption process. This stage is adopter led and should be completed in two months. During this period, it is a time for prospective adopters to complete DBS and medicals while statutory checks and references are taken. If all checks are satisfactory, applicants are advised that they are, or are not, able to move to Stage Two. Stage Two has required timescales of four months, applicants are engaged in the preparation training and assessment during this stage. Prospective adopters are invited to attend preparation training during this stage. The programme includes information on early life trauma, loss, attachment,

abuse, adoptive parenting 'parenting plus', post adoption contact, post adoption support and social media, etc. Due to the pandemic and restrictions imposed by the government re: face to face meetings, the sessions were delivered online via Zoom.

Once an adopter's approval by the ADM is confirmed the allocated social worker will work with the adopter to identify a child who will benefit from the skills and experience of the prospective adopters. This will include working with colleagues in Ambitious for Adoption, and also referring children to other agencies and to Link Maker.

8.3. Early Permanence carers Assessments

Coram Ambitious for Adoption offers additional preparation to early permanence carers about the nature of these placements and what would be expected of the carers, as well as opportunities to meet experienced early permanence carers to hear about their experience at first hand. It is important that carers have the opportunity to discuss the issues and to understand the legal framework and the expectations of foster carers.

Coram uses the CoramBAAF Prospective Adopter's Report (PAR) which enables them to assess the carers suitability to offer an early permanence placement at the same time as they are being assessed as prospective adopters. Some people may have decided that they wish to be approved as early permanence carers before the assessment begins. However, it may also be possible to decide this during the assessment, once they have had opportunities to learn about the implications of acting as a foster carer during the time when the case is being decided by the court.

8.4. Intercountry Adoption

The Adoption Team is responsible for providing a service to people living within the borough that wish to consider inter-country adoption. Through membership of the Inter-country Adoption Centre (IAC) additional information on inter-country adoption; preparation groups for first- and second-time adopters and training is provided.

The service is also responsible for providing support to applicants waiting for a match, which last year included children being matched and adopted from Bangladesh and India.

9. Adoption and Post Adoption Support Services

DATA:

Activity	2020-2021
Requests for assessments for post-adoption support did you receive from families	43
How many assessments resulted in the provision of support	38
How many assessments were still being carried out at 31 March 2020?	0
Number of families in receipt of pre-adoption support (not one off advice) for support that was provided	4
Total ASF (pre and post order)	72 applications
Number of families in receipt of adult adoptee adoption support (not one off advice) for support that was provided	15

9.1. Overview of the service

Statutory adoption support is a key service to the regional agency and these services operate from local authority settings and managed by Coram RAA.

Adoption support services are prescribed by Adoption Support Regulations Services 2005 and listed as:

- Financial support
- Services to enable groups of adoptive children, adoptive parents and natural parents or former guardians of an adoptive child to discuss matters relating to adoption;
- Assistance, including mediation services, in relation to arrangements for contact between an adoptive child and a natural parent, natural sibling, former guardian or a related person of the adoptive child;
- Services in relation to the therapeutic needs of an adoptive child;
- Assistance for the purpose of ensuring the continuance of the relationship between an adoptive child and his adoptive parent, including—
- Training for adoptive parents for the purpose of meeting any special needs of the child; and
- Assistance where disruption of an adoptive placement, or of an adoption arrangement following the making of an adoption order, has occurred or is in danger of occurring, including—
- Making arrangements for the provision of mediation services; and
- Organising and running meetings to discuss disruptions in such placements or arrangements.

If there is a high level of crisis, safeguarding concerns or high risk of adoption breakdown/disruption it may require a different type of intervention and a referral will be sent to MASH to access safeguarding and family support services and work together with these professionals to ensure the family have the right kind of support.

Children's presenting with emotional difficulties who are posing risk to themselves or others are referred to CAMHS and Bromley Adoption Service has a great working relationship with the LAAC Team.

The post order team also works closely with the virtual school in providing advice and support to schools, parents and individual children with regards to education matters.

There has been a long-standing tradition for Bromley Post Adoption Service to organise a yearly adoption picnic for adopters and their adopted children. This event has been a success year after year, and usually very well attended. Unfortunately, due to the global pandemic, we were not able to organise a picnic in 2020.

9.2. Adoption Support Process

9.2.1. Pre-Adoption Order

Child's allocated social worker completes the Adoption Support Plan as part of the Adoption Placement Report (APR) and the support plan is discussed with and signed by adopters and any ongoing financial support will be agreed at this stage. Decision re: financial support lays with Head of Service for Bromley Permanence Service.

Signed contact arrangements: indirect (letterbox) and direct contact will be agreed and signed by birth family and adopters pre-Adoption Order.

The life story book and later life letter will be completed by child's social worker and given to the adopters before the case can be transferred to post adoption, 10 days after the Celebration Hearing.

9.2.2. Post Adoption Order

Once the adoption order has been granted, the case will be transferred to Post Adoption Team and one of the following pathways will be followed:

- There is no need for immediate support - Case to close and adoptive parents to be informed how they can refer themselves for support.
- Case to remain open for letterbox exchange only. Adopters will be advised how they can refer themselves for support

- Case to remain open with an allocated social worker due to ongoing support plan. ongoing support plans will be reviewed at 3 or 6 monthly intervals until case closes.

We receive referrals directly from adoptive parents and professionals via phone call or email.

All cases which are open to post adoption support require an assessment of need and adoption support plan completed by the Post Adoption Team social workers, this will be then be reviewed once a year or any time the plan needs to significantly change.

Adopters are invited to regular coffee mornings and post adoption workshops organised by senior practitioners across the RAA. They take place every other month and are currently held online. The topics are relevant to the needs of the adopted children and their families and well attended.

9.3. Adoption Support Fund (ASF) Applications

The introduction and availability of the Adoption Support Fund in England has stimulated the provision of support services in an unprecedented way. Much of the focus of Bromley Post Adoption Service has been on ensuring a speedy application to the Fund to enable therapeutic services to be commissioned with minimal delay. This is usually based on a comprehensive assessment of need to ensure that services are responsibly and effectively commissioned in a joined-up and child-and-family centred way.

The therapeutic interventions offered via the Adoption Support Fund are mainly in-depth attachment /trauma models and they are often long-term interventions. The adoption support social worker works closely with other teams in Bromley Social Care, Thrive, independent therapists and CAMHS Teams to provide the relevant support to the adoptive families.

It is the responsibility of the Post Adoption Team to assess the need of the family, identify relevant services and make the application to the fund.

72 applications were made to Adoption Support Fund in 2020/21 which brought the total spend on approved services in 2020-21 to £474,722.74. The secured funding enabled us to purchase various resources for our adoptive families. This included

Family therapy, specialist assessments, sensory integration programme, therapeutic parenting courses, family mediation provisions, play therapy, creative therapy .

9.4. Work with Birth Families

It is the responsibility of local authority adoption agencies to ensure that birth families affected by adoption have access to independent advice, information and support when the plan for the child becomes adoption. This is now provided in Bromley through THRIVE, the therapeutic support team. This service has a designated worker who is a therapeutically trained social worker who offers to birth parents affected by adoption to help assist them with loss and separation. Experienced senior practitioners in the post adoption service offer advice with letter writing.

9.5. Other adoption support services offered

9.5.1. Education Support

Educational support to adopters is provided by Bromley's Head Teacher of Virtual School for Children Looked After. The Virtual Head supports adoption via consultations with adoption service to support adopters in accessing the right educational provision for Children Looked After.

Additionally, the Adoption Support Fund has been used to provide play therapy resources in schools and this has reduced the need to access Pupil Premium Plus fund being used.

9.5.2. Post Adoption Contact

The letterbox arrangements are managed as part of the post adoption support duty system.

- Number of children who have letterbox arrangements: **206**
- Number of exchanges: **304**
- Number of family members receiving letters: **554**

The letterbox coordinator provides the initial point of contact for information, advice and support to all those involved in indirect contact between adopted child and their birth families. If intensive support is required a senior practitioner in the Post Adoption Service will be allocated for further work.

There are 13 adopted children with direct contact arrangements in place with birth family's members. Due to the global pandemic, couple of contacts did not take place last year as they were cancelled either by the birth parent or the adopters. The contact was mostly with siblings, but there is an increase in the number of direct contact arrangements involving both birth parents and grandparents. Each child will have one, two or more direct contacts annually with one or more parties. Not all contacts could go ahead due to the pandemic, with either birth parents or adopters reluctant to have face to face contact during this time.

Contact arrangements require a great deal of time and sensitivity from the service. The post adoption social worker prepares adoptive family members and birth family members to ensure the best possible outcomes from these contacts. The contacts are emotional and require sensitivity and empathy on the part of the adoption social worker. Direct contacts are an important piece of work for the child as it assists identity formation, reinforces important attachments made to significant people and promotes the cultural identity. Direct contacts continue until the child is 18 or until either party requests a review to either increase or changing contacts arrangements to better meet the needs of the child.

9.5.3. Adoption Allowances

This function of the Adoption Service was not transferred to the Regional Adoption agency so a Bromley Finance has been undertaking all Adoption allowance reviews, overseen by the Head of Service for Permanence Service

A number of 48 adoption allowances were reviewed in 2020/21. This was primarily to pay regular adoption allowance payments in relation to adopted children. There were in addition to one-off payments made towards the costs of introductions and settling in allowance.

This payment is reviewed annually and is means tested.

10. Disruptions, Complaints & Allegations and Compliments

There were no placement or adoption disruptions during 2020/21, which is similar to the previous financial year.

There were two complaints in 2020/21

There were no allegations in 2020/21.

11. Future developments and priorities

As part of our drive for improving further on service delivery the action plan for the year ahead is to continue to:

- Aim for an 'outstanding' adoption service, by continuing to engage in the development of the Coram Ambitious for Adoption RAA, developing closer working relationships with the other Local Authorities which are part of the RAA in order to form a collective identity.
- Continue to work in partnership with the Regional Adoption Agencies to look at best practice and service delivery, share ideas and expertise. Our family finder is part of the Pan London Early Permanence steering group which meets regularly and looks at improving practice.
- To continue to further reduce the timescales for children with an adoption plan and to improve our Adoption scorecard by ensuring most of the children are matched with adopters within 4 months of the adoption order being made. We recognise the challenges of securing permanent families during a global pandemic, especially for sibling groups, older children and children with additional needs and we will continue to track and start family finding at the earliest opportunity.
- Continue to improve on the quality of CPRs and support plans for children with an adoption plan. Family finder is working closely with relevant teams at the pre-order stages, by attending Final Care Plan meetings and arranging regular family finding meetings for children with ADM decisions. Further relevant training to be organised, upskilling the workforce in writing good Child Permanence Reports which are a vital tool in identifying suitable families for children in need of an adoptive placement.

- Continue to develop the post-adoption assessment tools, in order to support the process of making decisions on the right intervention for the adoptive families. Workstreams are taking place across the RAA on a monthly basis looking at unifying adoption processes and procedures. The post adoption workstream was set up in January 2021.
- Continue to apply to the Adoption Support Fund in a timely manner; this financial year, the Post Adoption Team secured approximately 3 times more funds than the previous year. We have been able to add more names to the list of therapeutic independent providers which is shared with the other post adoption services across the RAA.
- Ensure that post adoption support services are offered on the basis of clear, transparent and individualised support plans, which are reviewed regularly, with financial support provided based on the child's individual needs; Bromley adopters are invited to attend bi-monthly coffee mornings and bi-monthly support workshops on relevant topics which are organised across the RAA.

Elena Muller

Adoption Service Manger

Vicky West

Assistant Director Specialist Services

03.09.2021

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Report No.
CEF22002

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker:	Children, Education and Families PDS Committee		
Date:	Tuesday 25th January 2022		
Decision Type:	Non-Urgent	Non-Executive	Non-Key
Title:	Bromley Virtual School Annual Report 2020/21 ‘A trauma-informed approach to teaching vulnerable children including those in our care’		
Contact Officer:	Sally Kelly, Headteacher of the Bromley Virtual School Tel: 07966 774 298 E-mail: Sally.Kelly@bromley.gov.uk		
Chief Officer:	Richard Baldwin, Director of Children, Education and Families		
Ward:	All		

1. Reason for report

- 1.1. To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of the Virtual School for children in care and children previously in care currently adopted or cared for under a Special Guardianship Order.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1. The Committee note and comment on progress made towards the actions identified in the Corporate Parenting Strategy as laid out in the outcomes and evaluation section of this report.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

- 2.2. Summary of Impact: The academic year 2020/21 was a successful year in unusual times. We may not be able to measure our successes in the same way as usual, but our young people had success at Key stage 4 and 5, managed some transitions very well and are continuing to make us all proud in the way that they are continuing their learning through all these events.
- 2.3. COVID19 was again a major event of the academic year, with many of our young people learning from home for a period, and all having their education disrupted to some extent. The Virtual School staff focussed their efforts on ensuring PEPs continued to challenge and support all to ensure that children were able to continue learning, supporting any child who needed to be at home for some of that learning time and focussing on catch up support.
- 2.4. Reporting of GCSE grades will be without comparators as statistical reporting from the DFE did not take place. We have of course collected our own data which shows that our young people have performed well in their GCSE and at level 3. The vast majority have achieved or exceeded their predicted grades and cohort statistics compare well with previous years. Progress measures have also been hard to collect from schools as their own internal assessment cycles have been disrupted. However, our holistic progress measures taken from discussions at PEPs show good number of young people making progress
- 2.5. We continue to play a significant role in planning and delivering the Corporate Parenting Strategy through membership of the Corporate Parenting Board, the achievement and participation sub-group, as well as attending the health sub-group. The actions identified in the Corporate Parenting Strategy are at the core of our service improvement plan and all the actions and success criteria are addressed in the outcomes and evaluation sections of this report.
- 2.7. Progress continues to be made has been made with the quality and effectiveness of PEPs. It demonstrates increased professional curiosity about the school lives of children and ambition for their future. These plans provide a starting point for the provision of intervention and challenge by the Virtual School.
- 2.8. The Virtual School is developing the work brought about by the demands of increased statutory duty imposed by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and now the 2021 guidance on promoting the education of children with a social worker.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: £ N/A
 5. Source of funding: N/A
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All Bromley children in care.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

3.1. The Purpose of the Virtual School

3.1.1 The role of the Virtual School is to promote the best educational outcomes and raise attainment of all children looked after (CLA) by Bromley, and those that have been placed in our schools by other authorities. The children we look after are being educated across many different schools and local authorities. The Virtual School therefore has a powerful role in tracking their progress as if they were in a single school: combining expert school leadership with being the best of parents. Our key question every day is “Would it be good enough for your child?”

3.1.2 Bromley Virtual School works on the following four core, crucial, statutory areas of responsibility:

- To make sure that there is a system to track and monitor the attainment and progress of all children we look after.
- To ensure that all CLA have a robust and effective PEP and monitor the use of the Pupil Premium grant where a child is eligible.
- To champion the educational needs of CLA and care leavers across the authority and those placed out-of-authority.
- To champion the educational needs of those children who were previously CLA and are now adopted, or in a Special Guardianship arrangement, or a subject of a Child Arrangement order.

From September 2021 we will have additional duties to “Promote the Education of all children with a social worker”

3.1.3 This report outlines the activity and impact of Bromley Virtual School during the academic year 2020/21 and provides full details of the educational outcomes of Bromley CLA. It reflects on the impact of our activities and identifies areas of future development to achieve improved outcomes for our children.

3.1.4 Data contained in this report is for children who were in the care of the LB Bromley for the academic year 2020/21 and is now wholly based on internal data for all children as the Statistical First Release has not provided us with any outcome data for the last two years.

3.1.5 Due to the impact of COVID19 much of the data usually available will not be available or comparable with previous academic years. We have measured impact in other ways wherever possible and given an overview as to how the impact of COVID19 on our children’s education has been mitigated.

3.1.6 We were fully staffed at the end of 2020/21 although we are planning two new posts to cover the new duties along with the 2017 duties, currently being covered by an agency worker.

3.1.7 COVID19 Response:

During the year the team has continued to respond flexibly as the government guidance and situation changed regularly. During lockdown we increased attendance monitoring and contact with foster carers. Advisors continued to attend PEPs, mostly online, but as things started to open, we reverted to face to face where agreeable. Going forward we will continue with a blend. Remote meetings mean we can attend more meetings due to reduced travel time and have a

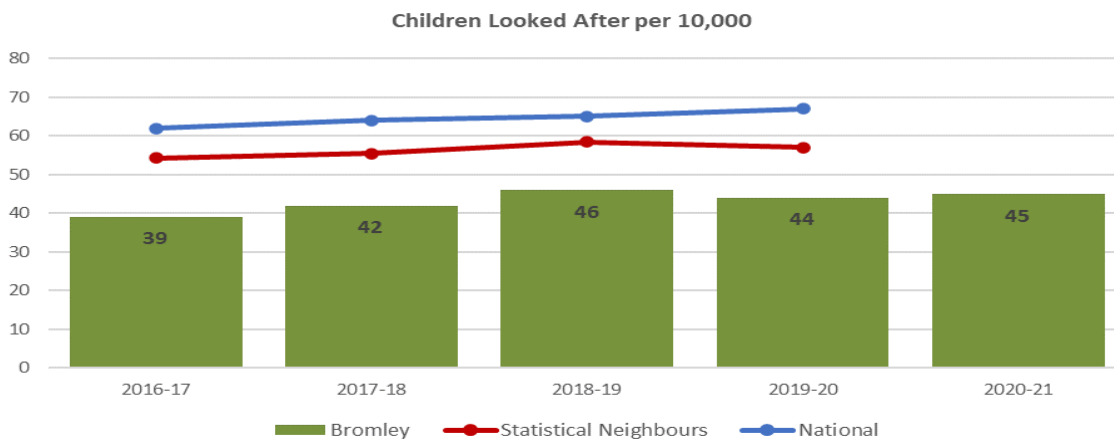
better attendance of the network. However, it is crucial that we visit each child in their setting and get the opportunity to see their lived experience and hear their voice. At PEP meetings staff were able to address any “catching up” or other needs that emerged because of the period of the pandemic.

3.2. Our Children

3.2.1 Children Looked After: numbers on 31st March 2021.

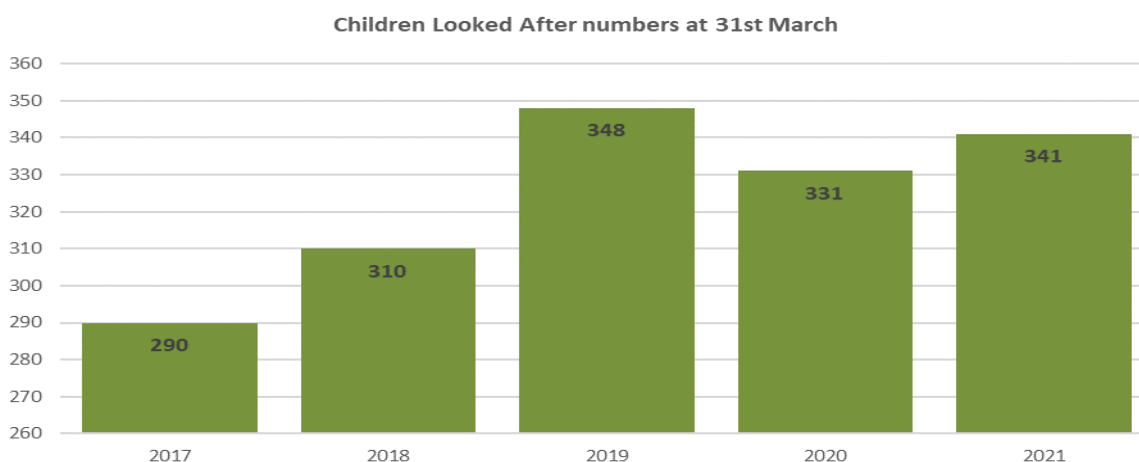
There has been an increase in the number of CLA in Bromley from last year (2019/20). The numbers per 10,000 in Bromley remain much lower than those in statistical neighbours and significantly lower than the National picture.

3.2.2 CLA rates per 10,000, including statistical neighbours and national statistics:



3.2.3 Around 350 CLA and care leavers aged under 18 were in the Virtual School at any point in the academic year 2020/21. The features of the cohort are representative of all Bromley children in terms of gender and ethnicity and, as might be expected, secondary aged children are slightly over-represented.

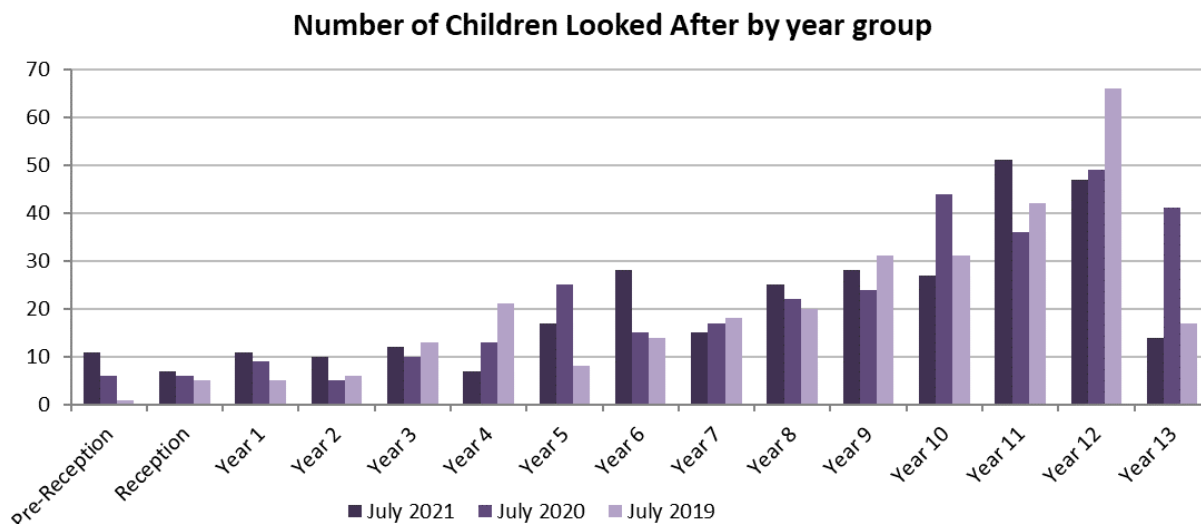
3.2.4 Numbers of CLA with historical context:



3.2.5 Of the cohort in care at the end of the academic year, 37% of statutory age children were in schools outside the borough. Some of these were schools close to Bromley, in neighbouring authorities, and some further away. Around 30% of Bromley CLA in schools outside Bromley were in special schools or alternative provision, including those having tuition at home. This contrasts with those who remained in school in Bromley, of whom around 16% were in special or alternative school provision.

3.2.6 Older children continue to feature disproportionately in the Virtual School: with year 11 ending the year with 51 children. Years 8, 9 and 10 all have 25+ children. The size of the year group cohorts tends to grow reasonably steadily year on year but, occasionally, there are bulge year groups lower down the age range, as can be seen in the graph below at 3.2.7. – the year 6 cohort in 2020/21 was particularly large with 28 children. The proportion of children with an EHC plan in these groups is much higher than in the rest of the population.

3.2.7 Bromley Virtual School Year Group Cohorts as at end July:



3.2.8 We had particularly high numbers of year 11 children in 2020/21, many of them coming into care during this crucial last year of school. Year 11 is not a good time to change schools so the challenge is to find placements where the child can continue at their current placements. We have improved joined up with social workers on this but there is still some work to do. However, because of good work on home and school placements, 95% of young people were in a school that is rated at least good by OFSTED. The Virtual School should be consulted by social workers when a child needs to move school because of a placement change as the advice of the Virtual Headteacher should be “given due weight” in placement decisions (Statutory Guidance 2018). In most cases this will happen but going forward we need to find ways to ensure this is more consistent. The Virtual School staff work hard to minimize possible gaps in education. Education Advisers work closely with admissions, SEN staff, schools, and other Virtual School teams to secure appropriate school places as quickly as possible.

3.3. Educational Outcomes

3.3.1 Progress measures for all children:

Progress measures are collected twice per term for each pupil. There is a data drop once per term at the end of the term, collected by Welfare Call. Progress data is also collected once per term when the PEP is reviewed. The latest data we have is from the Summer term in 2021. Due to the lockdown, school’s assessment cycles have been affected, meaning that there are some gaps in assessment. By the Autumn term we should have progress data that we are more confident in.

3.3.2 The table below shows numbers of CLA making expected progress or better in school. This includes all CLA at the Summer data drop, irrespective of how long they have been looked after.

	Summer Term 20/21 Progress	Cohort size on 23rd July 2021	CLA with Progress data provided English and Maths	Making Expected Progress - English	Making expected progress - Maths	Making Expected Progress - English	Making expected progress - Maths	CLA making Expected Level of overall progress based on Cohort on 23rd July 2021	CLA making Expected Level of overall progress based on Cohort on 23rd July 2021
		Numbers	Numbers	Numbers	Numbers	%	%	Numbers	%
Po Statutory School Age CLA	KS1	18	13	9	9	69%	69%	12	67%
	KS2	59	45	31	34	69%	76%	47	80%
	KS3	63	39	28	26	72%	67%	38	60%
	KS4	74	33	23	23	70%	70%	44	59%
	In borough	134	76	52	52	68%	68%	86	64%
	Out borough	85	57	42	43	74%	75%	61	72%
	EHCP	83	50	32	34	64%	68%	54	65%
	SEN (not EHCP)	11	9	7	6	78%	67%	5	45%
	No SEN	126	74	55	55	74%	74%	88	70%
	All Pupils	220	133	94	95	71%	71%	147	67%
Po	Post 16	55	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	22	40%

3.3.3 COVID has undoubtedly had an impact on progress. Firstly, schools have struggled to accurately assess pupils, and, secondly, most pupils have lost some learning time over the year despite many managing the online learning very well. This has meant that in English and Maths 71% of pupils made expected progress in the summer term compared with 82% last year. We are carefully monitoring pupils and putting in interventions such as one to one tuition where appropriate. Schools also have a range of “catch up” interventions and we are ensuring our young people can access these where needed.

3.3.4 Key Stage 1 Summer 2021 (7-year-olds)

Key Stage 1 SATS were cancelled due to Covid. However, 67% of children in Key Stage 1 were making expected progress during the summer term. It is not surprising that then Key stage 1 data has one of the lower percentage of children making progress. In general, these children are new in care and have not yet had the time to catch up from the missed opportunities and education that their previous experience has invariably led to.

3.3.5 Key Stage 2 Summer 2021 (11-year-olds)

Key Stage 2 SATS were cancelled due to Covid. However, 80% of Key Stage 2 pupils were making at least expected progress during the summer term. All year 6 pupils had a quality transition planning process, and all started in a secondary school place in September.

3.4. Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2021

3.4.1 51 children in care ended year 11 in August 2021. Of these, **28** had been continuously looked after on roll in year 11 for at least 12 months (to 31st March 2021) and these pupils form the **reporting cohort**.

3.4.2 The lockdown meant that GCSE exams were cancelled. Grades were instead assessed by teachers based on the evidence they had collected through mock exams and other assessments that had been done throughout the year. Teachers then gave their best prediction of how the

young person would have performed in the exam. Our children were assessed fairly, and all achieved the grades they, and we, were expecting.

3.4.3 31% of the reporting cohort achieved 5 GCSEs at grade 4 and above including English and Maths. 36% achieved 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above. 62% of pupils achieved at least one GCSE. 14 pupils gained Maths and English level 4+.

3.4.4 The table below shows GCSE outcomes in 2021 with historical context.

N.B. it should be noted that national reporting is based on the number of CLA on roll in year 11.

	2021 Reporting cohort of 39 pupils	2020 Reporting cohort of 28 pupils	2019 Reporting cohort of 31 pupils	2018 Reporting Cohort of 20 pupils	2017 Reporting Cohort of 19 pupils
5 at grade 4 and above incl. English and Maths	31% (12 pupils)	21% (6 pupils)	29% (9 pupils)	15% (3 pupils)	26% (5 pupils)
5 at grade 4 and above	36% (14 pupils)	25% (7 pupils)	29% (9 pupils)	20% (4 pupils)	26% (5 pupils)
5 GCSEs	46% (18 pupils)	46% 13 pupils	45% 18 pupils	65% (13 pupils)	47% (9 pupils)
1 GCSE	64% (25 pupils)	71% (20 pupils)	58% (18 pupils)	80% (16 pupils)	84% (16 pupils)
% cohort with SEND	56% (22 pupils)	61% (17 pupils)			
% cohort with EHCP	38% (15 pupils)	43% (12 pupils)			
% cohort in borough	39% (28 pupils)	50% (14 pupils)			
% cohort in care 1-2 years	23% (9 pupils)	18% (5 pupils)			
% cohort 2-5 years in care	36% (14 pupils)	36% (10 pupils)			
% cohort 5 years +	41% (16 pupils)	46% (13 pupils)			
% in mainstream provision	72% (28 pupils)	61% (17 pupils)			
% special provision	15% (6 pupils)	7% (2 pupils)			
% alternative provision	13% (5 pupils)	18% (6 pupils)			

3.4.5 GCSE exams were once again cancelled and young people were awarded their grades through a process of teacher assessment. This was a very stringent process. The results for our young people were pleasing this year and most of our young people who were entered for GCSE and BTEC exams achieved the grades that they were predicted.

3.4.6 15 young people in the reporting cohort have an EHC plan. This equates to 38% against a national figure of 37% (all children). A further 7 were receiving additional support in school without recourse to an EHC plan, making a total of 56% with identified special or additional

needs. Children with special educational needs are more likely to be placed in schools outside Bromley even if they live in the borough and those children who do well would do so whether inside or outside the borough. Those children are also more likely to be in longer-term, stable, foster placements.

3.4.7 Within this cohort, young people accessed their education in a variety of settings:

- Mainstream: 72% compared with 61% last year
- Special Schools: 15% compares with 7% last year
- Alternative Provision: 13% compared with 18% in 2019-20.
- No young people had no recorded school compared with 3 last year

3.5. Post-16 Young People

3.5.1 Our vision is that all young people over 16 who are looked after, or care leavers will be engaged in education, employment, or training (EET) commensurate with their ability and aspirations and be making significant progress towards recognised career ambitions.

3.5.2 The academic year 2020/21 has seen a continued focus on transition at 16+ years old and improving the quality of post-16 PEPs. We are embedding the use of PEPs beyond 18 for those still completing Key stage 5 education where young people wish to continue receiving support. The Virtual School is part of the EET Strategy Group, sitting on the EET panel.

3.5.3 Once again we used our successful partners “Fresh Start in Education” during the spring and summer terms and provided intensive independent careers advice and guidance support to year 11 students making choices about post-16 progression. 92% of CLA started year 12 with a secure place in a sixth form or college in September 2021. This is a 20% increase in the last 4 years. Of the 16 (most likely to be NEET) who engaged with “Fresh Start” over the summer, 14 are still in their college place as of November 2021.

3.5.4 We work closely with the CLA and care leavers service to ensure that any young person who is NEET has every opportunity and support to re-engage in education and training. The Virtual School contribute to the EET strategy and post 16 advisors attend the EET panel. Being part of the panel has improved the working together practice and this has resulted in improved EET figures at post 16 and beyond.

3.5.5 In the Ofsted Report of January 2019, inspectors said; “The proportion of care leavers who are in education, employment, or training (EET) is improving and compares positively with statistical neighbours and the national average. This is a result of concerted efforts by a specialist worker and others in the Leaving Care Service to provide tailored and creative support with a focus on helping care leavers into suitable opportunities. Staff are ambitious for care leavers, and those care leavers who are not in EET are considered at the fortnightly EET panel.”

3.5.6 In total in 2020/21 we had a total of 24 enrolled in higher education L4+ courses, compared with 22 last year. We have 8 care leavers who have started an undergraduate course in 2021. We are exceptionally proud of them for continuing with their studies.

3.5.7 KS5 Outcomes Table

The table at 3.5.9. shows what a complex range of learning abilities and stages are associated with our older cohorts. A much higher number of young people have SEND and 39% have an EHCP.

3.5.8 The table does not represent the final tally of level 1, 2, or level 3 qualifications that will be achieved by these young people. A few of the young people who appear not to have achieved any qualifications are part way through apprenticeships and many who have achieved ESOL, or level 1 qualifications have now gone on to further courses and have trajectories that could eventually take them to level 3 qualifications or beyond.

3.5.9 The table shows qualifications gained at the end of 2020/21 by our reporting cohort of year 13 students.

	2021 Reporting cohort of 28 pupils	2020 Reporting cohort of 28 pupils
% attaining L1	39% (11 pupils)	14% (4 pupils)
% attaining L2	36% (10 pupils)	25% (7 pupils)
% attaining Level 3	25% (7 pupils)	7% (2 pupils)
% SEND	43% (12 pupil)	28% (10 pupils)
% EHCP	39% (11 pupils)	21% (6 pupils)
% EET	61% (17 pupils)	68% (19 pupils)
% in care 1-2 y	14% (4 pupil)	39% (11 pupils)
% in care 2-5 y	43% (12 pupils)	36% (10 pupils)
% in care 5 y +	43% (12 pupils)	7% (2 pupils)
UASC	4% (1 pupil)	43% (12 pupils)

3.5.10 Case study: NEET to EET

Child A had been disengaged from education in Key Stage 4. He had been encouraged to make applications to post 16 courses. We found he had missed his interview with his chosen college. Our post 16 advisor contacted the college and persuaded them to offer another interview. Following support, he was successful at interview and started college at the end of September. Regular contact with the college and his carers at his placement and the young person was kept up to ensure he was settling well and that there was a good plan to support him in college. Because of the close monitoring we were alerted when his attendance started to drop off. The college policy is to withdraw a student's place if attendance drops too low without good reason, and he was in danger of this. However, our advisor advocated for him ensuring they knew how challenging his circumstances were and further support was put in place to support him. Our young person not only passed his course but has decided to stay at the college to study another course. He still struggles with his attendance from time to time, but he now has a strong network of professionals both in the college and in the local authority who are clear about his needs and work together to overcome any obstacles as they arise.

3.6. Regular Attendance at School

- 3.6.1 Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life. Good attendance is a protective factor for CLA, and academic achievement is the key to a successful and productive adult life and breaking the cycle of neglect and life in care.
- 3.6.2 The Virtual School utilises a service provided by “Welfare Call” to monitor attendance at school and alternative provisions daily by an individual phone call to check every child is at school. The carer is contacted if there is an unauthorised absence, and the allocated Social Worker is notified. Attendance reports are reviewed at weekly Virtual School team meetings, identifying children at risk, and appropriate strategies discussed with the network. Due to COVID19 and lockdown we are not able to benchmark attendance or compare in the same way to previous years.
- 3.6.3 The table below shows attendance from September 2020 to 22nd June 2021. CLA were classified under the Vulnerable children cohort during the periods of Covid lockdown. When absent from school (even if working from home) they were marked as absent, this therefore did not reflect well on their attendance. Welfare Call have supplied the analysis for CLA below if they are shown as absent during the lockdown in Spring 2021 and if they were not shown as absent during the Spring lockdown (when working from home), this was a one-off manual task for Welfare Call and unfortunately were not able to redo for the full academic year 20/21 at the end of July.

<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Sept – 22nd June 2020-2021 (including spring lockdown as absence)</i>	<i>Sept – 22nd June 2021 - academic year 2020-2021 (not counting children working from home in Spring lockdown as absent)</i>
Number of CYP 5-16 as at 22/06/21 excluding new to care	215	215
All CYP - (5-16)	82.7%	93.3%
Primary	89.3%	97.6%
Secondary	78.8%	90.7%
KS1	89.1%	96.7%
KS2	89.5%	97.9%
KS3	85.9%	96.2%
KS4	73.2%	86.1%
School in borough	83.3%	93.4%
School out of borough	84.1%	93.2%
SEND without an EHCP	83.0%	96.9%
EHCP	87.5%	94.3%
Unauthorised Absence	1.6%	1.8%
Persistent absence	54.9%	25.1%

- 3.6.4 Overall attendance for younger children remains excellent, with primary age children average attendance at 97.6%. Persistent absence was 25.1% for all CLA in 2018/19 which is more

comparable with the academic year 2020/21 which again remains at 25.1%. As in previous years the majority of CLA falls within the Secondary age pupils (94%), in addition a few pupils identified as Persistent absentees are also subject to an EHC plan (26%)

- 3.6.5 Once again there is a correlation between those who are late into care and have experienced multiple placement and school changes. For some of those children there was too long a delay in securing a suitable new school. This related to the placement planning issues referred to. Where children are out of school tuition will be organised on site. Persistent absence is usually a result of refusal to engage with education. This is often relating to young people coming into care as teenagers where they are already disengaged from education.
- 3.6.6 Alternative provision is now put in place more rapidly than has previously been the case when a child is moved in an emergency. This is often in the shape of one-to-one tuition. The Virtual School has managed to substantially increase the number of tuition providers on its dynamic purchasing system. Work started last year on a new policy and process on improving the timeliness and quality of tuition. This work has been co-ordinated by our graduate trainee.
- 3.6.7 Schools closed between 4th January and 6th March 2021. However, many schools had sent their children home before the Christmas holiday because of staff shortages or sheer numbers of covid cases. The DfE required schools to provide in school provision for vulnerable children. They required all looked-after children to be in school and said they should be marked as "C" if we decided that a child should learn at home rather than go into school. It's important to be clear that the curriculum received by vulnerable children going into school in almost all cases was the same as the curriculum provided to those at home: most schools provided a supervised space for children to access online lessons.
- 3.6.8 As in the previous lockdown we reviewed each child's case and made sure that if they needed to be in school that was facilitated. There were a few cases where this was difficult if there were other clinically vulnerable children or adults at home. However, most children where it was felt the child would benefit to be in school did go into school. Although still learning online they were able access the support of teaching staff if they need that support.
- 3.6.9 A significant cohort of young people did not want to take up the offer of learning in school. Most of these young people felt that they were able to access the online learning as well as their non-looked-after peers. They did not want the stigma of being seen to be a "vulnerable child". For some young people who had a long journey on public transport the negatives of the journey and risk did not outweigh any small benefits of being in school completing the work. These young people were monitored by the virtual school and the plan to support each child captured in their PEP.
- 3.6.10 Lower attendance to previous years is therefore explained by extra periods of illness or isolation due to those affected by COVID, as well as the large number of children marked "absent" despite all professionals including the school agreeing the best place for the child to learn would be from home.

3.7. Exclusions

3.7.1 There have been NO permanent exclusions of looked-after children in 2020-21.

3.7.2 Fixed term exclusions (suspensions)

	2018-19 total	2019-20* total	2020-21 total
No of children with FTE	17	18	23
No of days FTE	123	70	92.5

3.7.3 In the academic year 2020/21 there were 23 young people who were subject to a fixed term exclusion from school, equating to 92.5 days lost from school and 41 separate episodes. In 2019/20 18 young people had a fixed term exclusion and this represented a total of 70 lost days from school which is not comparable with the academic year 2020/21 when there were fewer in school days due to Covid. In 2018/19 there were 25 young people who had a fixed term exclusion from school. This totalled 123 lost days of school and 54 episodes. This data suggests there are fewer re-occurring episodes of fixed exclusions from school. When a fixed term exclusion occurs, prevention strategies are put in place to ensure the young person is supported and behaviour can improve.

The pandemic has without a doubt had an impact on our children's ability to regulate in school. We saw a cluster of exclusions in the weeks following the return to school after each lockdown. With each notification we are working with schools and the network to support the young people to ensure that there is no re-occurrence of the behaviour than led to the exclusion. New process and practice and the slightly increased capacity has meant that when an exclusion takes place action can be swiftly taken to getting a new plan in place with the network to prevent re-occurrence.

3.8. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

3.8.1 The local authority has a statutory duty to maintain PEPs for every school age CLA up to the end of the school year in which they turn 18 (i.e., the end of year 13). The PEP must be reviewed at least termly, or at any time of significant changes to placement and/or education provision. Social Workers are jointly responsible along with school Designated Teachers for writing, reviewing, and taking actions written into the PEPs.

3.8.2 The table below shows number of PEPs against eligible CLA through the academic year.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Autumn Term	Cohort	205	188	197
	Completed	94%	89%	89%
	Authorised	80%	77%	85%
Spring Term	Cohort	216	207	188
	Completed	78%	85%	91%
	Authorised	31%	93%	97%
Summer Term	Cohort	210	223	219
	Completed	96%	90%	92%
	Authorised	90%	88%	98%

Autumn 2018/19 data from Virtual School dataset and cohort is of all statutory school aged children spring 2018/19 onwards CLA PEP report from CareFirst and those statutory school aged children looked after for 28+ days.

3.8.3 The table below shows multiple PEPs against number of eligible CLA through the academic year.

2020/21	2 Personal Education Plans (PEPs)	3 Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
Personal Education Plans (PEPs)	92% (194 of 211)	77% (162 of 211)

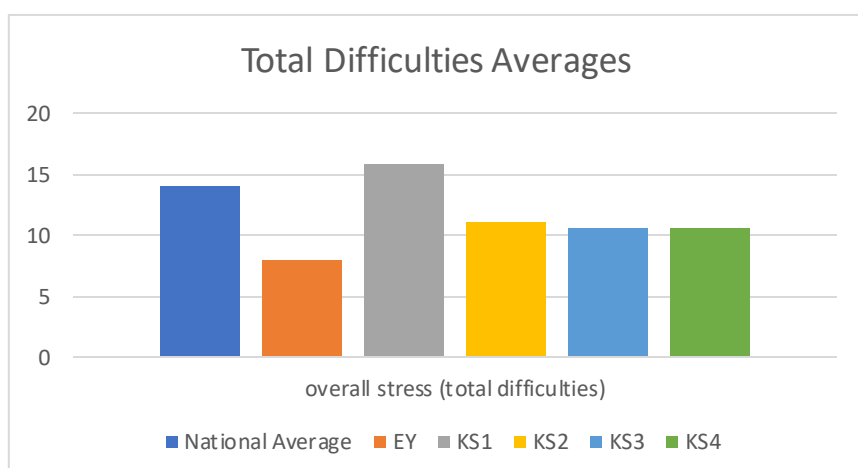
Cohort is of statutory school aged children continuously looked after for 12+ months as of 1st March 2021 and those still looked after at the end of July 2021.

3.8.4 PEP compliance has been improving over the last couple of years and records show that, although there are still a small number of PEP meetings that do not get recorded each term, almost all CLA in year groups R-13 had 2 or more PEPs completed on the system and authorised during the academic year. 77% of young people had their PEPs reviewed 3 times.

3.8.5 There has been a sustained improvement in the quality of PEPs over the year. The work of the Quality Assurance officer combined with advisors authorising all PEPs for their cohort and with regular fortnightly audits by the Headteacher has meant that we have seen improvement in the quality of targets and the use of pupil premium as well as the child and young person's voice.

3.8.6 For the first time we have included Strength and Difficulty questionnaires (SDQ) in the PEP. This is in addition to the SDQ generally completed by the foster carer. This took place in the spring term PEP and going forward this will be an annual expectation. We were successful in ensuring that 75% of the cohort had an SDQ completed by a member of staff and embedded in their PEP. Guidance was issued to designated teachers in schools and we offered targeted support to staff who were struggling. Where issues emerged from the SDQ, a discussion could take place at the PEP meeting to consider next steps, e.g., further assessment or interventions which meant that the pupil premium could be targeted where it was needed. In 2021/22 we need to ensure more of these discussions are captured in the PEP write up.

3.8.7 The chart below shows the overall findings. The overall stress score for the cohort was 11.3, lower than the national average of 14.1 and very similar to the score generated by the foster carer SDQ's at 11.02. The age group with the highest scores were Key stage 1, although this is partly explained by the much smaller cohort with several children new in care who display higher levels of distress. It was these very children where this screening tool proved very useful for discussion in the school to consider appropriate next steps at the PEP meeting.



3.8.6 Training sessions on PEPs were offered and delivered to Social Workers; both new staff and those who needed a refresh. Bespoke team training was also delivered.

3.8.10 Case study to show good multiagency work:

Prior to becoming CLA, Child B, who was supported by an EHCP, was struggling at their local secondary school. The school and SEND had agreed that the school was no longer able to meet their needs. Prior to Virtual School becoming involved over 10 schools/educational provisions had been consulted, over several months. All schools stated that they were unable to meet the presenting needs of the young person.

Once in care, the Virtual School were able to identify the issue. We consulted colleagues and the EHCP was updated to reflect the child's current needs.

The VS was able to bring all the professionals together including CAMHS and our EP to make the adjustments needed. We then re contacted a school that we have excellent relationships with, a school that had initially refused the child. We were able to discuss all concerns and behaviours and what the child was like in school. We were able to reassure the school that their school was a good fit for this young person. Following this, the school were able to invite the young person in for a 2-day taster and they started soon after. Child B has had a very successful start to this school, and we are hoping they will go from strength to strength.

3.8.11 Planning for Children with Special Educational Needs

The Deputy of the Virtual School is our SEND lead. Close joined up work with the SEND team has developed this year, meeting regularly to look at complex cases and ensure timeliness of plans and reducing time out of school for children who need a new provision.

3.8.12 An audit took place of children with EHCP. 31 out of 102 children's cases were looked at, with 11 social workers. Interviews took place with the social workers and their EHCPs were scrutinised. Out of 31 files, 20 were of very good quality. 11 needed some adjustments, some were missing pieces of information, for example health input. Some were draft plans and need the final plan confirmed.

The social workers felt that plans reflected the current needs of their young people were confident attending annual reviews, although they appreciated the Virtual School attending and that they felt that was helpful. There was less certainty about the procedure for transitions between Key Stages and the Year 9 preparing for adulthood review. These were not always carried out within the correct timescales.

3.8.13 As a result of the EHCP audit several actions are underway:

- The Virtual School will attend as many annual reviews as possible with social workers this year
- The VS will ensure that all social workers have an up to date and final copy of the EHCP
- SEND Lead for the Virtual School is now a member of the multiagency group within the borough that is currently quality assuring EHCP
- Transition planning is to be written into the annual calendar for the SEND joined up meetings

3.9. Pupil Premium Plus Funding for CLA Financial Year 20120/21

3.9.1 The Purpose of Pupil Premium Plus

Children who have been in local authority care for 1 day or more attracted £2,345 of Pupil Premium funding in the financial year 2020/2021. This funding does not go directly to the schools but is managed by the Virtual School in the local authority that looks after the child. The Conditions of Grant require the Virtual School Headteacher to distribute funding. Funding should support children to meet their targets in the PEP.

3.9.2 In 2020-21 we amended the process by which the pupil premium was distributed to schools to improve impact and reduce administration. This is linked to our “pupil progress days” where we check the progress data each term of all children on our roll. If children are making progress and there is a good quality PEP on the system, we automatically allocate £400 for that term. If the child is not making progress or the PEP is not on the system further scrutiny is needed, the PEP chased or amended, or more clarity on what interventions will be put in place to help the child meet their targets. A few initial payments of the full allocation of £2,345 or more were made where the Virtual School team was aware that schools were already funding expensive resources for children. If a child needs a higher level of funding due to individual circumstances, then this is discussed through the PEP and allocated at the end of each term.

3.9.3 All allocations are therefore now termly, making evaluation of impact on the child more responsive. It also means that school changes are dealt with and new schools automatically get the money for the term the child starts to attend.

3.9.5 Centrally Held Funding

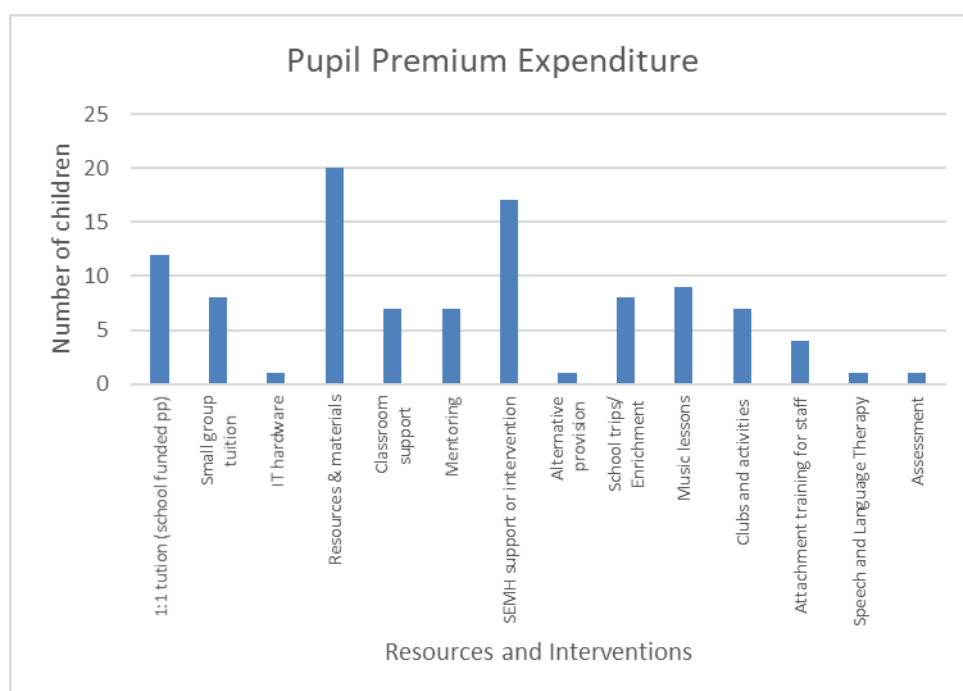
The principle of withholding an element of each child’s funding enables us to provide necessary interventions for the right child at the right time, ensure that we have good quality targets for each child and that the pupil premium is being used to help the child meet these targets. It also enables us to put in interventions that are managed by the Virtual School when school is unable to provide what is needed.

3.9.6 In the financial year 2020/21, withheld funding was used for the following:

- Two 0.2 FTE Education Psychologists who has provided access to rapid assessments for CLA, with priority being given to those placed at a distance from Bromley.
- A 0.4 FTE PEP quality officer who reviews all PEPs to ensure that personal education planning is robust, offering support and training to Social Workers and Designated Teachers.
- Classroom support for individual learners.
- 1:1 tuition or e-learning resources for targeted year groups.
- Integration support for our CLA changing schools. This will usually be the guarantee of a full year’s allocation even if the previous school has had funding, as well as further resources if required.
- Short-term funding of alternative provision for our CLA not able to access a conventional education setting, for example during a fixed term exclusion.
- Year 11 Transition Project with “Fresh Start”.
- Laptops, tablets, and software for our CLA.
- Whole school training on attachment awareness and emotion coaching for schools that wish to participate.
- Training for Designated Teachers, Headteachers, and Governors through the accredited online training packages as well as the Designated Teacher Forum and other training events.

- Additional educational, cultural, or social activities for CLA, including educational visits, music programmes, etc. to promote aspiration in CLA cohorts and their foster carers.

3.9.8 The chart below shows use of Pupil Premium Plus funding delegated to schools.



3.9.10 Pupil Premium Case Study Example: supporting young people with centrally held funds.

Child C was a Year 11 student in an out of borough SEN secondary school. There were growing concerns about increasing impulsive and aggressive behaviours towards staff. Following a serious incident at school an emergency EHCP review meeting was held. It was agreed that the school were unable to meet his needs. The Virtual School worked closely with the out of borough SEN authority and our EP (paid for by centrally held funds) to plan provision and we undertook school suitability assessments with two identified schools. This was incredibly difficult due to the child needing a school placement just for the last 4 months of statutory age schooling. However, a school was located, planning meetings were held, and pupil premium was agreed to support intensive tuition alongside the curriculum. The young person was able to leave school with grade five in Maths, and grade four in English and move on to their first-choice course Post 16.

3.10. Children Previously Looked After and all children with a social worker

3.10.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 placed significant new statutory duties on the role of the Virtual School Headteacher, extending it to include promoting the interests of children who have been adopted or who are in long term care permanent arrangements (under an adoption, Special Guardianship, or a Child Arrangements Order). These responsibilities came into force in September 2018.

3.10.3 We have used the new duties grant to put in a post which has 2 days a week dedicated to it. Responding to schools and adoptive or Special Guardian parents is disproportionately time consuming, working with anxious parents and schools that have often been compassionate and supportive, but which have ultimately reached the end of their resources. In addition, enquiries

from admissions and SEND regarding these children are also adding to the resources needed. With the new duties this role has now been linked with the CIN and CP children meaning we have a new deputy role from September that will oversee primary age children, and “all children with a social worker”

3.10.4 In June 2021 new guidance was issued expecting virtual Schools to take on a new role from September 2021 “promoting the education of all children with a social worker”. We have been given grant funding to carry out this work. With that in mind we have been preparing for this work and have created two new roles: A Deputy for “Vulnerable Children” and a new advisor role. Each of these roles will work with early years and primary age children (most likely to be adopted or move to an SGO) as well as previously looked after children and vulnerable children. A baseline analysis of CIN / CP data is planned, an action plan will be created, and work will start as soon as we have appointed staff.

3.11.1. Evaluating the success of 2020/21

3.11.2 Challenge 1: Improve persistent absence for statutory age children

Persistent absence has not reduced - we were hoping to reduce by half the PA but because of the effect of COVID on attendance that has not been possible. However, our oversight on children’s attendance has improved – COVID absence was constantly monitored by a single member of staff and monthly attendance planning meetings take place with the whole team. Welfare Call have supported us to ensure we have the reporting that we need to keep a tight rein on all attendance matters and we have the structures in place to tackle issues quickly. Fixed term exclusions also affect attendance and we have had a drive on reducing exclusions. This has not yet paid off in terms of number of exclusions, but we have kept down the number of days that children have been out of school for by challenging schools to look at alternatives such as internal exclusion.

Placement planning has improved – we have established presence on both permanence and placement panel which means there is a clear message to social care staff around planning for education whilst planning for placement change. There are still issues when children come in to care in an emergency. This is often due to communication through the changeover of social worker that takes place as children move through the services. Training needs to take place with staff working at the front door to ensure that education issues are considered as much as is reasonably possible.

3.11.3 Challenge 2: Improving outcomes for children with SEND

Joined up meetings with SEND take place monthly to forward plan and proactively plan for placement changes, school changes, and for COVID19 related issues. This has enabled assessments and finalising of plans to happen more quickly. However there has been a delay in getting the single point of contact staff member in SEND so the impact of these meetings will improve further next year when we now have single points of contact for each SEND team and attendance from HOS CLA as well as moving to tracked action minutes for each case and a planned annual agenda to enable pro-active planning.

We have started to plan for the join up of EHCP reviews and PEPs, contributing to the guidance / training given out to schools by SEND.

An audit of EHCPs took place over the year which involved meeting with all social workers to look at quality of plans, process, and practice and to ensure we have dates for the following review in place.

The deputy with responsibility for SEND has been part of the SEND multiagency audit.

Our EP service has been well developed to include regular monthly consultation sessions for the whole VS staff as well as EP's completing assessment and advisory work. This has also contributed to plans being updated or issued more quickly and with improved quality.

3.11.4 Challenge 3: Improving outcomes through supporting the transition into care, to new placements, and out of care to adulthood

The new in care policy has been developed and agreed with all staff in the team. Once we are aware of a child coming into care, we move quickly to establish their educational strengths and needs and get a quality PEP in place. We need to continue to raise awareness with social care colleagues to ensure they are working with us from the very first moment the child enters care to ensure that young people's education is well supported.

School changes at normal transition points have improved hugely and all year 6 children had an identified school place and started on the first day in year 7. In year transitions are greatly improved and this work has led to 95% of our children being in good or better schools. Any children who are not in a good or better school have a careful review of their placement to ensure that it is the right setting for them.

Post 16 PEPs for those over 18 but still completing their post 16 courses are well embedded now and monitored by the Post 16 education advisor.

The post CLA advisor has developed the role well and has set up good multiagency links to support parents and young people who are adopted or on an SGO and are struggling with their education.

3.11.5 Challenge 4: Improve quality of PEPs, particularly better target setting, use of SDQ's and more accountability for Pupil Premium

The SDQ was successfully introduced in 2020-21. 75% of our children who are of statutory age had this completed by their teachers and embedded in their PEP. For many children this became a focus of discussion and a link to future actions and use of the Pupil premium plus. Next steps are to increase the compliance on this and develop the use of the scores, ensuring all are discussed in the meeting.

In addition to the quality assurance provided by our quality assurance officers, education advisors also assure each PEP when they are authorising PEPs. The Virtual head also audits around 6-8 PEPs a fortnight when children are presented at permanence panel. This has meant that the quality of PEPs has improved significantly, especially in the use of pupil premium. Pupil voice has also improved.

Training was delivered to cohorts of social workers and all AYSE's now have training on PEPS and education as part of their induction programme. Designated teachers training was delivered to 18 of those new to role and as a refresher to current staff.

One to one tuition is a significant part of the use of pupil premium and a common action coming from PEPs. The graduate intern has been tasked with the project of improving the timeliness and quality and has built in a process for checking tuition is in place and that tutors are meeting children's needs.

Recruiting to the new secondary post in March increased capacity. Children in key stage 3 and 4 can have the most challenging needs and are at the most critical stage of their education. Caseloads were too high before. The new postholder is really experienced and hit the ground running. The two advisors are now able to have a better oversight of these young people, attending more PEPs, having more capacity to support with behaviour and learning issues and school placement moves. Importantly in the post covid world staff can pick up on COVID issues through authorisation and support with these.

The countdown to the CareFirst shutdown was managed very well and despite this shutting down 3 weeks before the end of term we managed to achieve 92% compliance. However, since moving to liquid logic, social workers have struggled to open PEPs as it is linked to a workflow system

with many approval points in it. We are seeking to detach the PEP from this workflow system, but autumn term compliance rates will be affected.

3.2 Challenges for 2021-22

3.21 Attainment and progress

- Improving overall progress %
- Maximise numbers going to HE
- Improve post 16 EET figures
- Increase % of those in Key stage 4 accessing one to one tuition

3.22 Improve attendance and behaviour of all young people.

- To reduce PA by half of stat age children.
- To reduce exclusions
- To improve EET figures for post 16.
- To increase the number of schools who have received whole staff attachment and trauma training

3.23 Improving transitions into care, to new placements, to new schools and out of care to adulthood.

- Over 90% of children in good or outstanding school provisions.
- Reduce the number of school changes
- Develop training for social workers of all vulnerable children
- Secondary school places all approved before deadline
- All year 12's have destination and start a post 16 placement in September

3.24 Improve quality of PEPs: particularly better target setting, use of SDQ's and more accountability for pupil premium.

- SDQ return at least 80% in first term
- Develop rag rating for quality of aspects of the PEP

3.25 Leadership and learning

- Improved outcomes for CIN/CP children
- Improved outcomes for SEND children
- Improved wellbeing for staff and young people

4 IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

See Section 2.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy Implications, Financial Implications, Personnel Implications, Legal Implications, Procurement Implications
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