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DATE: 5 September 2023

To: Members of the  
**CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Kira Gabbert (Chairman)

Councillor Jonathan Andrews (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Graeme Casey, Sophie Dunbar, Robert Evans, Hannah Gray,  
Colin Hitchins, Alexa Michael, Ryan Thomson and Rebecca Wiffen

Church Representatives with Voting Rights  
Reverend Roger Bristow and Vacant

Parent Governor Members with Voting Rights  
Shamilah Martin, Vacant and Vacant

Non-Voting Co-opted Members

Rosie White, Non-School Representative (Early Years)

Alice Kirby, Bromley Youth Council (Part 1 Only)

Tommy Velvick, Bromley Youth Council (Part 1 Only)

A meeting of the Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny  
Committee will be held in the Council Chamber at Bromley Civic Centre on  
**WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00 PM**

TASNIM SHAWKAT

Director of Corporate Services & Governance

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be printed off at <http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>. Any member of the public  
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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, members of the public may submit one question each on matters relating to the work of the Committee. Questions must have been received in writing 10 working days before the date of the meeting - by **5.00pm on Wednesday 30 August 2023.**

Questions seeking clarification of the details of a report on the agenda may be accepted within two working days of the normal publication date of the agenda – by **5.00pm on Thursday 7 September 2023.**

#### **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 CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2023 (Pages 5 - 22)**

### **5 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 23 - 28)**

## **HOLDING THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO ACCOUNT**

### **6 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE**

#### **a CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO PLAN - 2023/24 Q1 UPDATE (Pages 29 - 72)**

### **7 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF DECISIONS FOR THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

#### **a BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 (Pages 73 - 90)**

#### **b CONSTITUTION OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM (Pages 91 - 146)**

**c CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2023/24 Q1 (TO FOLLOW)**

**8 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS**

**a 0-25 PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 147 - 156)**

Members of the Adult Care and Health Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee are invited to attend the meeting for consideration of this item.

**b SPENDING BY PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL MAINTAINED SCHOOLS IN 2022/23 (Pages 157 - 164)**

**c CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 165 - 188)**

**d PERFORMANCE REPORTING – CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT (Pages 189 - 198)**

**e CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES RISK REGISTER – UPDATE: QUARTER 1 – 2023/2024 (Pages 199 - 206)**

**f DEEP DIVE: EDUCATION HEALTH CARE (EHC) (Pages 207 - 220)**

**9 CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES INFORMATION ITEMS**

The briefing comprises:

- Unauthorised Absence from Schools

This briefing is circulated for information only, but issues can be debated at the meeting at the request of any member of the Committee. Such requests should be made to the Democratic Services Officer at least 24 hours before the meeting and should set out which aspects of the information briefing need to be discussed.

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?Cld=559&Year=0>

Printed copies of the briefing are available on request by contacting the Democratic Services Officer.

**PART 2 (CLOSED) AGENDA**

**10 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.**

- |           |   |   |
|-----------|---|---|
| <b>11</b> | <b>EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN,<br/>EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE<br/>MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2023</b><br>(Pages 221 - 222) | Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) |
| <b>12</b> | <b>POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS PART 2 (EXEMPT)</b>   |   |
| <b>a</b>  | <b>PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT</b><br>(Pages 223 - 250)   | Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.  |
| <b>b</b>  | <b>ANNUAL ADOPTION REPORT</b><br>(Pages 251 - 280)  | Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.  |
| <b>c</b>  | <b>PERFORMANCE REPORTING –<br/>CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY DATASET PART<br/>2 (EXEMPT) REPORT</b><br>(Pages 281 - 288)                          | 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 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 20 June 2023

### Present:

Councillor Kira Gabbert (Chairman)  
Councillor Jonathan Andrews (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Jeremy Adams, Mark Brock, Graeme Casey,  
Sophie Dunbar, Robert Evans, Colin Hitchins,  
Alexa Michael and Rebecca Wiffen

Reverend Roger Bristow, Shamilah Martin, Rosie White  
and Tommy Velvick (Part 1 only)

### Also Present:

Councillor Kate Lymer, Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Item 9a: Provision of Transport Services for all Client Groups only

Councillors Felicity Bainbridge and Diane Smith

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hannah Gray and Ryan Thomson and Councillors Mark Brock and Jeremy Adams attended as their respective substitutes. Apologies for absence were also received from Alice Kirby.

### 2 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER Report CSD23079

The report asked that Co-opted Member appointments to the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year be confirmed.

### RESOLVED: That:

- **The following Co-opted Membership appointments be made to the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee for 2023/24 with voting rights:**
  - **Reverend Roger Bristow, as Church (Church of England) Representative**

- **Ms Shamilah Martin, as Parent Governor (Special Schools) Representative**
- **The following non-voting Co-opted Membership appointments be made to the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee for 2023/24:**
  - **Alice Kirby, as Bromley Youth Council Representative (Part 1 only)**
  - **Tommy Velvick, as Bromley Youth Council Representative (Part 1 only)**
  - **Rosie White, as Early Years Representative**

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Sophie Dunbar declared that she had a close family member in receipt of transport services and a Special Educational Needs-funded placement out of the Borough.

### **4 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

Two questions for oral reply and five questions for written reply were received at the meeting. A copy of those questions, together with the Portfolio Holder's responses can be viewed as Appendix A to these minutes.

### **5 MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2023**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **6 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD23081**

The report set out progress against outstanding actions from previous meetings and the forward work programme of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- **Progress on matters arising from previous meetings and the forward work programme be noted;**
- **It be formally noted that the following reports will move to annual reporting:**
  - **Corporate Parenting;**
  - **Youth Justice;**

- **Private Fostering;**
  - **Independent Reviewing Officers;**
  - **Local Authority Designated Officer; and,**
  - **Virtual School.**
- **The School Place Planning Working Group be reconstituted for the 2023/24 municipal year and its membership be agreed as:**
    - **Councillor Jonathan Andrews (Chairman)**
    - **Councillor Hannah Gray (Vice-Chairman)**
    - **Councillor Graeme Casey**
    - **Councillor Colin Hitchins**
    - **Councillor Rebecca Wiffen**

## **7 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families provided an update to the Committee on her activities.

As Lead Member for Children, Education and Families, the Portfolio Holder continued to represent the Local Authority in a range of settings both locally and regionally, including the Bromley Adult Learning Board. Work was ongoing to prepare for several inspections including a Children's Services Inspection (ILACS) for which regular preparation mornings were being held. Other activities included attending the Bromley Schools' Day and Bromley Youth Council Manifesto event. The Portfolio Holder had also attended the Local Authority's *Tackling Loneliness Workshop* and recommended all Members take this excellent virtual training session which could be booked via Eventbrite.

Upcoming events included the annual Fun Day for Looked After Children to be held at the Bromley Campus of London South East Colleges on 30 July 2023 and all Members were encouraged to attend as Corporate Parents.

**RESOLVED: That the update be noted.**

### **A CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO PLAN - 2022/23 Q4 UPDATE AND 2023/24 REFRESHED PLAN Report CEF23025**

The report presented the Children, Educations Portfolio Plan 2022/23 Quarter 4 Update and the draft Portfolio Plan for the 2023/24 financial year.

In considering Priority 3: Life Changes, Resilience and Wellbeing, a Member identified a specific action to monitor NEET performance for care leavers but queried why there was nothing similar for the general school population. The Assistant Director: Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation advised that there was no specific action as Bromley was one of the highest

*20 June 2023*

performing local authorities in England in this area, but that individual support was provided to any young person aged 16+ identified as not being in education, employment or training. Another Member noted an action on supporting children to catch-up after the COVID-19 pandemic and the Director of Education explained that the Local Authority continued to monitor attendance and attainment of Bromley students in the post-COVID period and that the remit of the Bromley Virtual School had been expanded to monitor the progress of all children with a social worker as well as those who were Looked After. Attendance continued to be a key issue across the whole education sector and a lot of work was being undertaken to improve performance in this area.

With regard to Priority 4: Supporting and Challenging Effective Multi-Agency Working, a Member asked that a direct reference be made within the Portfolio Plan to the role of Bromley's special schools in delivering outstanding education and this was supported by the Committee. In response to a question from another Member, the Director of Education advised that statistics suggested that there was no hesitancy amongst Bromley parents in seeking statutory assessment for their children where there were concerns around additional support needs.

**RESOLVED: That progress on actions associated with the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan be noted.**

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

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

### **A EARLY INTERVENTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT ANNUAL UPDATE Report CEF23022**

The report provided an annual update on the work of Early Intervention and Support Services.

Early Intervention and Family Support Services encompassed both statutory and non-statutory services and acted as the Local Authority's lead for Bromley's Support Families work. A wide range of services were delivered including Children and Family Centres, Bromley Children Project Family Support and Parenting Practitioner Team, the Parenting offer and the Common Assessment Framework Team. Responsibility for Domestic Violence and Abuse work no longer fell within this service after being transferred to the Public Protection and Enforcement Portfolio during the 2022/23 municipal year.

In discussion, Members welcomed many aspects of Early Intervention and Family Support Services including the work of the Independent Volunteer Service and the Social Communications Family Support Coordinator. A Member queried whether Early Intervention and Family Support e-Flip Books 2023 were available in audio or alternative language format. The Head of Service: Early Intervention and Family Support Services advised that whilst there was a wide offering on the Service's YouTube site, this did not include the Early Intervention and Family Support e-Flip Books 2023 as these had their own web address and were also directly accessible via QR codes. The Service's two websites, [www.bromleyparentinghub.info](http://www.bromleyparentinghub.info) and [www.bromleyiass.org.uk](http://www.bromleyiass.org.uk), already had multi-language functionality and work was underway to further improve accessibility of the Service's content, including with audio files. Another Member congratulated the service on its nomination and shortlisting as a finalist of the prestigious national Children and Young People Now Award for Early Intervention.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the annual update.**

## **B EDUCATION PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2023/24 Report CEF23026**

The report set out the Education Planned Maintenance Programme for 2023/24.

The Local Authority received an annual School Conditions Allocation from the Department of Education to undertake capital maintenance works at Local Authority Maintained Schools. The allocation for 2023/24 was made on the basis of five remaining Local Authority Maintained Schools, of which Riverside SEND School operated out of four satellite sites and would be distributed with reference to each school's development plan as well as condition surveys and the Department for Education's Condition Data Collection reports. The Local Authority was also supporting decarbonisation of the maintained school estate for which £39k had been set aside in the Education Planned Maintenance Programme 2023/24 with an additional capital expenditure contribution of £60k secured in principle from Section 106 funds to support solar panels at schools subject to meeting carbon reduction criteria.

In response to a question from a Co-opted Member, the Head of Strategic Place Planning advised that that Local Authority had previously secured a grant from the Salix for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3 scheme to replace the heating system at Southborough Primary School and that further bids would be made to this scheme where applicable to deliver necessary heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency projects across Bromley schools.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:**

- **Note the School Condition Allocation of £388,472 from the Department for Education to support the capital maintenance of community and foundation-maintained schools within Bromley during 2023/24;**
- **Delegate authority to the Director of Education to authorise the allocation of the £388,472 School Condition Allocation received for 2023/24;**
- **Note an additional £60,000 capital expenditure funding from Section 106 allocations to support decarbonisation;**
- **Authorise the proposed expenditure of capital funding up to the sum of £865k based on the five remaining Community and Foundation schools as set out in Report CEF23026;**
- **Agree that maintenance works will normally be procured through open procurement. The Local Authority may also on occasion delegate funds to schools or commission its Corporate Property Team to deliver capital works; and,**
- **Note that the Local Authority's Lot 4 consultant has been commissioned to support the Local Authority where required in the planning and project management of education planned maintenance works.**

**C PROCEEDING TO PROCUREMENT (GATEWAY 0/1): FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE**  
**Report CEF23024**

The report provided details of the existing Family Group Conference service that supported children and young people to remain within their family networks and reduce the number entering the care system. The existing contract for the provision of this service would end on 31 March 2024 and approval was requested to proceed to tender for a new Family Group Conference service for a five-year contract commencing on 1 April 2024, with the option to extend for a further two years.

In response to a question from a Member, the Integrated Strategic Commissioner advised that whilst the Family Group Conference service was not statutory, pressure on statutory services was reduced by supporting families to work on their strengths and identifying family and friends with whom a child or young person could be placed. Providers tendering to deliver this service would be scored on a number of factors including a 20% weighting for social value which was based on the providers commitment to measures including a local supply chain and recruitment, apprenticeship opportunities and prioritising Children Looked After in work placements. The Director of Children, Education and Families observed that the Local Authority

had lower numbers of children in care than the London average and its statistical neighbours and that services such as the Family Group Conference service contributed to this success.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to grant approval in agreement with the Director of Children, Education and Families, Director of Corporate Services and Governance, Assistant Director of Governance and Contracts and the Director of Finance to proceed to tender for a new Family Group Conference service for a five-year contract commencing 1 April 2024, with the option to extend for a further two years, at an estimate annual value of £129.6k (estimated whole life value of £907k).**

#### **D SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING REPORT 2023-27 Report CEF23031**

The report presented the Bromley School Places Plan 2023-27 that set out the Local Authority's plans to meet the forecast need for primary, secondary and specialist school places and sought agreement to the recommendations of the School Place Planning Working Group which met on 26 April 2023.

A Member asked about attending schools beyond borough boundaries and the Head of Strategic Place Planning advised that Bromley was a net importer of children and that for the secondary phase of education, 17% of Bromley children and young people attended a school out of the Borough whilst 21% of Bromley school places were allocated to out-of-borough pupils. This was in part due to the location of schools and pupil preference, but also reflected the high quality of Bromley schools, many of which were rated as 'Outstanding'. The Harris Federation had recently withdrawn its application to open the Harris Kent House Free School due to lack of outside play space and this raised concerns around meeting demand for secondary places in the North West of the Borough. The Chairman queried whether it was planned to increase the number of special school places available at Riverside School's Phoenix Centre campus and the Director of Education advised that the Local Authority continued to work with Riverside School around delivering additional places where feasible. Work was ongoing to establish a new special free school, Redwood Academy, to be delivered by the Department for Education, and that this would enable more Bromley pupils to attend an in-Borough provision. Site surveys for the planned special free school were due to commence shortly.

In response to a question from a Co-opted Member, the Head of Strategic Place Planning explained that the School Place Planning Report 2023/27 focused on education provision to Year 11, but that Bromley and other local authorities had raised issues about capacity at post-16 with the Department for Education which had responsibility for funding additional sixth form places.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:**

- **Note pupil roll projections and other trend data set out in Report CEF23031 and its appendices;**
- **Note the continued increase in the number of children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan above demographic trends;**
- **Agree that a planning margin of 5% above the Greater London Authority School Roll Projections continue to be implemented to provide for local variations in need and to meet parental preferences;**
- **Agree that the Greater London Authority School Roll Projections indicate a potential future reduction in the need for primary places and this position needs to be kept under review;**
- **Agree that whilst there are currently sufficient places available or planned to meet current and projected demand for school places, the Local Authority will work with schools to safeguard the existing supply of school places as required;**
- **Agree that the Local Authority will prioritise the needs of education within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;**
- **Agree there are specific pressures for placements for pupils with Education Health and Care Plans and that the Local Authority will work with local schools, trusts and the Department for Education to bring proposals forward to increase capacity and improve provision where necessary. The High Needs Funding and Estates Review will be a key route for identifying opportunities to bring forward additional capacity;**
- **Agree that discussions be undertaken with schools, multi academy trusts and the Department for Education as outlined in Report CEF23031 to ensure a sufficient supply of mainstream school places in the Borough, including through expansions and opening new schools;**
- **Note a recent notification received from the Department for Education's Regional Director that the Harris Federation has withdrawn its application to open the Harris Kent House free school;**
- **Note that whilst there has been delay in the delivery of the special free school, Redwood Academy, the Local Authority is working proactively with both the Department for Education and operator, Rivermead Inclusive Trust to open the school at the earliest opportunity;**



- **Agree that the Local Authority should actively seek to increase the capacity of in-Borough specialist provision;**
- **Agree where expansion is agreed, this will be implemented through the education capital programme (subject to the availability of funds; and,**
- **Agree that Officers continue dialogue with the Department for Education on amending the primary and secondary planning areas.**

**E PROVISIONAL OUTTURN REPORT 2022/23  
Report CEF23033**

The report presented the provisional outturn position for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio for the 2022/23 financial year.

The provisional outturn for the 'controllable' element of the Children, Education and Families' budget for the 2022/23 financial year showed an overspend of £8,761k in the Revenue Support Grant compared to the last reported figure of an overspend of £8,933k which was based on activity at the end of December 2022. The overspend was due to a number of factors including increasing demand for services, the rising cost of provision in some service areas and additional staffing costs. Senior officers were meeting on a regular basis to scrutinise and challenge the expenditure position and management action was being taken to address identified issues. In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Children, Education and Families Finance clarified that in addition to the overspend in the Revenue Support Grant, there was also an overspend in Dedicated Schools Grant of £5,563k which was a national issue caused by growing pressures within the High Needs Funding Block. The Local Authority had developed a robust Deficit Recovery Management Plan in consultation with the Department for Education to help contain and ultimately recover the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit and as an interim measure the Government had put a Financial Disregard in place which meant that such deficits did not have to be counted within the reserves of local authorities. The Member underlined the importance of setting realistic budgets for services within the Children, Education and Families Portfolio moving forward and the Head of Children, Education and Families Finance confirmed that in setting the Portfolio's budget for 2023/24, due consideration had been given to service demand.

Another Member asked about Special Educational Needs Transport and was advised that this service was operating within budget although demand remained high and there continued to be issues around the availability of drivers and transportation. In response to a question from a Member on grant funding, the Head of Children, Education and Families Finance explained that grants with explicit right of repayment had a specific purpose but that other grants with no explicit right of repayment could often be used more flexibly. A

grant of £1,187k from the Department for Education to support Ukrainian children with their education had been carried forward to the 2023/24 financial year and schools would be encouraged to make bids for this funding which formed part of the Local Authority's wider support offer to the Ukrainian community.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- **The latest projected overspend of £8,761,000 on controllable expenditure at the end of the 2022/23 financial year be noted;**
- **It be noted that the Council's Executive would be asked to agree the net carry forward outlined in Appendix 2 to CEF23033 at its meeting on 5 July 2023; and,**
- **The Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the provisional outturn position for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio for the 2022/23 financial year.**

**9 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS**

**A PROVISION OF TRANSPORT SERVICES FOR ALL CLIENT GROUPS - ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT  
Report CEF23023**

The report, considered jointly by the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee and Adult Care and Health PDS Committee, presented annual monitoring information for the provision of transport services for all client groups.

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health underlined the importance of ensuring that the transport services met the needs of all of its users, including timeliness of pick-up and drop-off. A further report on transport services would be considered jointly by the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee and Adult Care and Health PDS Committee in November 2023.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- **The content of this contract monitoring report on the performance of the contract for Transport Services be noted; and,**
- **Actions detailed at Paragraph 8.3 to Report CEF23023 on the future delivery of transport services be noted and that Officers take forward the process to review the commissioning options for this service as the contract end date of August 2025 approaches.**

**B ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK  
Report CEF23029**

The report presented 'Curiosity and Influence', a refreshed Engagement Framework, to replace the existing User Voice Framework. This report would also be considered by the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee at its meeting on 27 June 2023.

A Member suggested that a reference to Bromley residents being happier with our services on Page 6: The Benefits of Engagement be amended to state 'Our residents will make better use of our services', and this was supported by the Committee.

**RESOLVED: That the refreshed Engagement Framework, 'Curiosity and Influence' be endorsed, subject to the above amendment.**

**C PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY  
DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT  
Report CEF23028A**

The report presented a regular update on the performance of services for children across a suite of performance measures.

With regard to Indicator 26: Average Caseloads, the Chairman observed that average caseloads within the Safeguarding and Care Planning Teams had reduced to 18 but had still not met the caseload promise. The Director of Children, Education and Families confirmed that work was ongoing to reduce average caseloads to 12-15 cases. Twelve social workers had recently been recruited from Zimbabwe and South Africa and five further applicants would be interviewed during June 2023. In response to a question from a Member in relation to Indicator 12: Children that have become the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the Second or Subsequent Time, the Assistant Director: Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation advised that whilst it was important to monitor recurrence, this indicator also provided a level of assurance as it demonstrated that children at risk of significant harm were being identified and that necessary actions were being taken to keep them safe.

In considering Performance Indicator 32/33, the Vice-Chairman observed that the number of Education, Health and Care Plans issued varied from month to month with only a small proportion completed within the statutory 20-week timescale. The Director of Education explained that this was primarily due to delays in receiving professional advice across some specialist areas, and that improving performance in this area remained a top priority with additional provision being commissioned to build capacity in key specialist areas. The Vice-Chairman requested that a breakdown of the number of Education, Health and Care Plans issued on a monthly basis be included in future Part 2 (Exempt) performance reporting and this was agreed by the Committee.

**RESOLVED: That the March 2023 outturn of key performance indicators and associated management commentary be noted.**

**D CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES RISK REGISTER -  
UPDATE QUARTER 4  
Report CEF23027**

The report set out the Children, Education and Families Risk Register update for Quarter 4 of the 2022/23 financial year.

**RESOLVED: That the current Children, Education and Families Risk Register and the existing controls in place to mitigate the risks be noted.**

**E CONTRACT REGISTER PART 1 (PUBLIC)  
Report CEF23028A**

The Committee considered a report setting out the Contract Register for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio.

**RESOLVED: That Members' comments on the Contracts Register as at 31 March 2023 be noted.**

**F DEEP DIVE: MENTAL HEALTH  
Report CEF23030**

The Committee welcomed James Postgate: Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning, NHS South East London (Bromley), Gill Allen, Director and Yvonne Onyeka, Getting Health Team Manager, Bromley Y, and Lauren Crane, Assistant Director: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Dominic Leigh, CAMHS Manager, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust who gave a presentation on the core mental health and wellbeing offer for children and young people.

In considering the presentation, the Chairman raised concerns at the significant waiting times for treatment within CAMHS. The Assistant Director: CAMHS advised that waiting times were a national issue due to the increasing number of referrals which had increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with difficulty recruiting clinical staff. Long waiting times for a particular treatment did not necessarily mean that service users were not receiving other interventions and treatments, and all assessed service users were allocated a support worker. Huge advances had recently been made developing the acute end of the care pathway for those children and young people with the highest level of need. This included the introduction of 24/7 crisis care at the Princess Royal University Hospital in which young people were seen by CAMHS within 30 minutes of referral. Progress had also been made in securing local psychiatric beds for young people who needed them.

In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman, the Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning, NHS South East London (Bromley) confirmed that Bromley's mental health services worked both together and with other partners on a regional and national basis to learn from, share and implement best practice. The Director, Bromley Y gave the example of work undertaken

by the Bromley Y with other voluntary sector organisations in developing a robust social prescribing offer including mentoring and youth ambassadors. A Co-opted Member asked about the integrated single point of access for children and young people to access mental health and wellbeing support which had been identified as one of the key campaign areas of the Bromley Youth Council for 2023/24. This single point of access would be launched in October 2023 and would allow any professional, young person, parent or carer to make a referral for mental health and wellbeing services that would be screened and triaged to ensure children and young people were placed on the correct pathway and that those at the highest level of need were prioritised. Bromley Y also ran a range of webinars and workshops for young people on managing anxiety or tackling low mood which could be signed up to via the Bromley Y website.

The Committee thanked James Postgate, Gill Allen, Yvonne Onyeka, Lauren Crane and Dominic Leigh for their excellent presentation.

**RESOLVED: That the thematic session be noted.**

**10 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**

**11 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2023**

The Part 2 (Exempt) minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**12 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS PART 2 (EXEMPT)**

**A CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD AND REPORT - Q4 (PART 2)**

The Committee considered a report setting out Part 2 (Exempt) aspects of performance reporting against the Children's Scrutiny dataset.

*20 June 2023*

**B CONTRACTS REGISTER PART 2 (EXEMPT)**

The Committee considered a report setting out Part 2 (Exempt) aspects of the Contract Register for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio.

The Meeting ended at 10.00 pm

Chairman

**CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE  
20 JUNE 2023**

**QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY**

**1. From Councillor Graeme Casey to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

How will the Youth Support Programme look to ensure that the services at Anerley Town Hall for the new Streetwise location are equivalent to the previous services, providing young people with what they need?

**Reply:**

*The programme previously delivered is mainly replicated at the new Streetwise location. There should be no long-term reduction of services to young people. We are now working hard to try and ensure that we can move as much of our music hub to the new building, as we are aware that this is a popular aspect of the offer to young people.*

*We will also be asking our young people within the co-production work what they would like to see within the new venue.*

*The service will be working over the next few months in collaboration with young people to ensure that the new hub will be delivering what young people now want to see within the hub. This is a great opportunity to expand the services, we do not aim to reduce them. An example of this, is that we are currently in discussions with a local Boxing Club to join Streetwise.*

*Our aim is to increase provision within the hub and 'move with the times' in ensuring that the hub is what our young people would like to see, rather than what we have always delivered over many decades.*

**Supplementary Question:**

There was no supplementary question.

**2. From Councillor Graeme Casey to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

The first I was made aware of this plan was when the issue was first raised with me, can the Portfolio Holder commit to publishing or announcing plans like this to this chamber in future?

**Reply:**

*I will be mentioning it in my Portfolio Holder Update later this evening. This is the first CEF PDS since the decision was made.*

*It was an operational decision, made by officers with no input from me. When I was informed of the decision, I contacted both the Penge & Cator and Crystal Palace Councillors, whose wards are mostly affected. I didn't inform your good self as there are*

*currently zero young people living in Bromley Town ward attending the hub. Since I informed the relevant ward councillors, they have all had conversations and productive meetings with the Assistant Director overseeing the process and they are all content with the decision.*

**Supplementary Question:**

Can the Portfolio Holder commit to publishing or announcing plans like this to the committee in future?

**Reply:**

*A lot of operational decisions happen on a day-to-day basis within the Children, Education and Families Portfolio. I tend to inform the relevant ward councillors only when needed, however if there are any issues or topics you are particularly interested in, please email me a list and I will be happy to keep you updated.*



**CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE**  
**20 JUNE 2023**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**1. From Kyle Sewell to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

As we come up to the summer holidays, it is important that children from low-income families are provided with free healthy/nutritious meals during this period. Does the council share my opinion that this should be the case, and if so, what are their plans for this summer?

**Reply:**

*We take the widest possible interpretation of the Government guidance around Household Support Fund, including vulnerable families. Our HAF programme is open to all families and can be accessed by those who are not eligible through the payment of a small fee. The universal offer from our Family Centres is also available to all families and we will continue to prioritise support for those families that need it.*

**2. From Councillor Graeme Casey to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

Could the Portfolio Holder please let this committee know when the decision to move the Streetwise Youth Hub was made, how much consultation took place with local youth workers and why the decision was not scrutinised by this committee?

**Reply:**

*Because the concerns relating to the venue were in relation to the safety of the building and consequently the safety of young people using the venue, the decision needed to be made quickly. The venue had flooding to the basement and had an infestation of rats. Both of which posed a health and safety concern to young people and also to staff based in the building. We had a viable and local alternative. This decision allowed provision to continue, and without any significant break in provision.*

*The nature of the concerns are such that the decision had to be an operational one. The Assistant Director has been in correspondence with some Councillors who made an approach regarding these matters, to discuss the decision and the subsequent provision of Youth work in the area.*

**3. From Councillor Graeme Casey to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

Could the Portfolio Holder confirm what steps have been taken to promote the new venue, the date of the reopening and if the centre will be open and operational during the critical school summer holiday period?

**Reply:**

*We will be undertaking a new launch of the Streetwise Youth Hub to promote the new venue with our young people shortly, as we understand that change can be difficult, and*

*we need to hear from our young people to improve our services. This conversation has already commenced with some of our young people who are known to our outreach and Youth Justice Service, and they have given clear ideas on what they would like to see going forward.*

*Once the consultation has concluded with all young people who attend the Streetwise Youth Hub, Bromley Youth Council, Living in Care Council, and Youth think (Youth Justice Service) then we will launch our new programme in late summer.*

*The hub is open and operating the same hours as before. It will be open as usual during the summer holiday period.*

**4. From Councillor Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

What is the estimated cost of repairs to the Streetwise building and how does this compare to the rate of renting Anerley Town Hall?

**Reply:**

*The previous venue was not a property owned by the Local Authority, the rental contract required us to upkeep the maintenance of the property and was a full repairing lease. This was not cost effective due to the significant works needed to bring the building up to health and safety standards and Disability Discrimination Act compliancy.*

*The rental costs for both venues are similar, however the use of Anerley Town Hall allows any maintenance costs to come via the Council wide building refurbishment programme.*

**5. From Councillor Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**

How do the quality of facilities at Anerley Town Hall compare with that of Streetwise?

**Reply:**

*The quality of facilities within Anerley Town Hall are of a high standard. The town hall recently undertook a refurbishment and has ensured that the fabric of the building is of a good standard. The activities within the venues are not universally 'like for like', however most of the items from the previous venue will be moving to Anerley Town Hall. When Streetwise Youth Hub is in session most of the items are accessible. There will of course be times when this will not be possible, such as the gym, however since COVID-19 the gym has been closed and it is my understanding that this has not been fully reopened. The service is also currently exploring the possibility of transferring some aspects of the music studios too.*

Report No.  
CSD23117

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** CHILDREN EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND FORWARD WORK  
PROGRAMME

**Contact Officer:** Kerry Nicholls, Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 020 8461 7840 E-mail: Kerry.Nicholls@bromley.gov.uk

**Chief Officer:** Director of Corporate Services and Governance

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for decision/report and options

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

- Monitoring progress against actions arising from previous meetings; and
- Developing the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 That PDS Committee reviews and comments on:

1. Progress on matters arising from previous meetings; and
2. The Committee's Forward 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
- 

### Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate): Not Applicable
- 

### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
  2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Services
  4. Total current budget for this head: £366k
  5. Source of funding: Revenue Budget
- 

### Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 6
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
- 

### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable: Non-Executive reports are not subject to call-in
- 

### Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Impact on the Local Economy

1. Summary of Local Economy Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Impact on Health and Wellbeing

1. Summary of Health and Wellbeing Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (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

### 3. COMMENTARY

#### Matters Outstanding from Previous Meetings

- 3.1. **Appendix 1** provides a progress update on requests made by the Committee at previous meetings. This list is checked after each meeting so that any outstanding issues can be addressed at an early stage and timely progress made.

#### 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 2** sets out the Education, Children and Families PDS Committee Work Programme for 2023/24. 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 Forward Work Programme as items arise.

<b>Non-Applicable Headings:</b>	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children, Transformation/Policy Implications, Financial Implications, Personnel Implications, Legal Implications, Procurement Implications, Property Implications, Carbon Reduction/Social Value Implications, Impact on the Local Economy, Impact on Health and Wellbeing, Customer Impact, Ward Councillor Views
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Minutes of previous meetings

**MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

<b>Minute Number/Title/ Date</b>	<b>Action/PDS Request</b>	<b>Update</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date</b>
68e. Education Outcomes for Children in Bromley Schools 2022 (14 March 2023)	Key Stage 5 attainment data for the 2022/23 academic year to be provided to the Committee.	This information was provided to the Committee.	Director: Education	Completed.
7. Portfolio Holder Update (20 June 2023)	CEF Members to be provided with details of the Local Authority's <i>Tackling Loneliness</i> Workshop.	Details of the workshop were provided to the Committee.	Clerk.	Completed.
7a: CEF Portfolio Plan (20 June 2023)	Priority 4: Supporting and Challenging Effective Multi-Agency Working to be updated to make reference to the role of Bromley's special schools in delivering outstanding education.	The CEF Portfolio Plan was updated in line with the requested change.	Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation	Completed.
9b: Engagement Framework (20 June 2023)	Page 6: The Benefits of Engagement to be amended to state 'Our residents will make better use of our services'	The Engagement Framework was amended as requested.	Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation	Completed.
9c: Performance Reporting (20 June 2023)	A monthly breakdown of the number of Education, Health and Care Plans issued to be included in future performance reporting.	To be included in future performance reporting.	Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation	Completed.

**Children, Education & Families Work Programme 2023/24**

<b>Children, Education &amp; Families PDS Committee</b>		<b>22 November 2023</b>
<b>Item</b>		<b>Status</b>
Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan Update		Holding PH to Account
Budget Monitoring		PH Decision
Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 Q2		PH Decision
Award of Contract for Works at Oaklands Primary School		Exec Decision
Performance Management 2023/24 (Part 1 and Part 2)		PDS Item
Bromley Safeguarding Annual Report 2022/23	Annual Report	PDS Item
Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report	Annual Report	PDS Item
Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report	Annual Report	PDS Item
Youth Justice Service Annual Update	Annual Update	PDS Item
Annual CEF Compliments & Complaints Report	Annual Report	PDS Item
CEF/ACH Joint Item: Provision of Transport Services for all Client Groups Update Report	Annual Report	PDS Item
Risk Register		PDS Item
Deep Dive: Youth Services (including the findings of the Youth Services review)		PDS Item
Contracts Register and Database (Parts 1 and 2)		PDS Item
<b>Children, Education &amp; Families PDS Committee</b>		<b>1 February 2024</b>
<b>Item</b>		<b>Status</b>
Capital Programme Monitoring 2023/24 Q4		PH Decision
2023/24 Dedicated Schools Grant	Annual Report	PH Decision
Award of Contract for Capital Works at Red Hill Primary School		Exec Decision
Family Drug Alcohol Court		Exec Decision
Performance Management 2023/24 (Parts 1 and 2)		PDS Item
Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan Update		PDS Item
Virtual School Annual report 2022/23	Annual Report	PDS Item
Risk Register		PDS Item
CEF Draft Portfolio Budget 2024/25	Annual Report	PDS Item
<b>Children, Education &amp; Families PDS Committee</b>		<b>20 March 2024</b>
<b>Item</b>		<b>Status</b>
Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan Update		Holding PH to Account
Budget Monitoring		PH Decision
Basic Need Capital Programme Update		Exec Decision
Virtual School Annual Report	Annual Report	PDS Item
Performance Management 2023/24 (Parts 1 and 2)		PDS Item
Education Outcomes		PDS Item
Bromley Youth Council End of Year Report	Annual Report	PDS Item
Risk Register		PDS Item
Contracts Register and Database (Parts 1 and 2)		PDS Item

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Report No.  
CEF23037

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT AND SCUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO PLAN –  
2023/24 Q1 UPDATE

**Contact Officers:** Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate  
Transformation  
Tel: 020 8461 7554 Email: [naheed.chaudhry@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:naheed.chaudhry@bromley.gov.uk)

**Chief Officer:** Richard Baldwin, Director of Children's Services

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report presents the Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee with a Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan 2023-24 Quarter 1 update.
- 

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note progress on the actions associated with the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan (Appendix 1, note key highlights in this report):
- .

### Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Childre

1. Summary of Impact: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children.
- 

### Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: The monitoring of the Portfolio Holder Plan is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children's services in Bromley.
  2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:
    - (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.
    - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
- 

### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
  2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
- 

### Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
- 

### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive Decision.
- 

### Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): Not Applicable
- 

### Ward Councillor Views

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

### 3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan focuses on delivering the longer-term strategic priorities for children and families in Bromley and has been refreshed in line with the Council's Transformation Programme and the Corporate Strategy, Making Bromley Even Better.
- 3.2 The Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan focusses on five priority outcomes:
- Safeguarding
  - Affordable, Decent and Secure Homes
  - Life chances, resilience and wellbeing
  - Supporting and challenging effective multi-agency working
  - Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness
- 3.3 Within each priority are a number of statements which are underpinned by actions and measures of success within the work of Children's Services and other departments which impact on children and families.
- 3.4 Full progress against the Portfolio Holder Plan as at start of financial year 2023-24 (Quarter 1) is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Please see below a few key highlights for Quarter 1:
- a) Expansion of the successful Family Learning Outreach pilot supporting Ukrainian pupils and their parents in schools. Working in partnership with 3 maintained primary schools and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) on a pilot project focussed on metacognition and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. **(Carol Arnfield – Head of Service, Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education)**
  - b) An associated action plan has been drafted in-order-to monitor our performance in relation to the strategy. This action plan is updated every quarter. LBB are also signed up to the Commissioning Alliance as a commissioning platform who offer a Quality Assurance framework and support for all providers. **(Philip White – Children's Commissioner)**
  - c) The scheme for free prescriptions for care experienced young people aged 18-25 has been rolled out in June 2023 to all our young people in conjunction with Pharmacy Alliance and CLA health. Our Mental Health Practitioner who sits within our Leaving Care service has been funded for another year by ICB and will support with hospital discharge and complex multi-agency work. **(Cathy Lloyd-Williams – Head of Service, Care & Care Leavers)**
  - d) The THRIVE service has a dedicated worker who works in conjunction with CAHMS to provide therapeutic services to children looked after. Therapeutic sessions are also undertaken with the children and their carers. The work includes therapeutic life journey, which supports young people and the carers to consolidate the experiences of the child's emotional care journey. **(Wenifred Marshall – Head of Service, Permanency)**
  - e) We are working over the next few months on future recommendations on the ASD pathway model to address waiting time pressures. We are also looking at short term improvements to address current waiting time pressures. **(Tony Parker – Assistant Director for Children & Young People's Integrated Commissioning)**

- f) We have been working across Bromley Healthcare, ICB and Council on the proposed balanced model implementation. Initial proposals have been agreed and a detailed implementation plan is being worked on. This will be supported by Project Management support and an overarching governance board, plus task and finish engagement group. The implementation will be developed during the next quarter, with the current planned for start of February-April 2024. **(Tony Parker – Assistant Director for Children & Young People’s Integrated Commissioning)**
- g) Initial Preparing for Adulthood Group was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023. **(Mark Smith – Head of Service, 0-25 Service, Children and Young People with Disabilities)**
- h) A Carers Plan has been agreed between LLB, the ICB and Bromley Well and this will be presented to the Executive in September. The Plan includes a support offer to young carers and actions to improve the offer. A Carers Charter, to be led by Bromley Well, will ask a wider range of local agencies to sign up to a service offer to Carers. **(Sean Rafferty – Assistant Director of Integrated Commissioning & Vicky West – Assistant Director of Specialist Services)**
- i) London Borough of Bromley’s rate of first-time entrants has reduced annually by 1% and is 27% lower than the average for London. The rate is also 19% below the national average and 27% lower than London. First-time entrant rate is also 8% lower than stat neighbours and is the lowest rate compared with the 6 surrounding boroughs. **(Betty McDonald – Head of Service, Youth Justice Service)**
- j) London Borough of Bromley hosted a Tackling Loneliness Summit at the end of Loneliness Awareness Week in July 2023. Over 100 people attended this event with people representing various professions, organisations, community groups and more within Bromley and surrounding boroughs. **(Helayna Jenkins – Principal Loneliness Champion)**
- k) The commissioning team have completed the Short Breaks for Disabled Children Tender, resulting in the award of new contracts which will support school holiday activities that maximise the skills and potential of children and young people. The Direct Payment prepayment cards contract has been extended to support SEND and is currently being adapted to support care leavers to transition into adulthood. In April 2023 the new all age integrated community equipment contract commenced. Bromley is one of 21 London local authorities that committed to the consortium approach. **(Kelly Sylvester – Head of Service, Community Living Commissioning Programmes Team)**
- l) Virtual Reality continues to develop within each service area. From April 2022 to date, 41 practitioners were trained as VR practitioners across Children Social Care. In addition, VR is being used as a promotional tool to recruit Social Workers. **(Wenifred Marshall – Head of Service, Permanency)**
- m) Operational and strategic partnership work is ongoing and mature. Escalations are used appropriately within agencies to enable resolutions to emerging issues. Strategic Threat Assessments shared across partnership with contemporary intelligence. **(Jo Gambhir/Kerry Davies – Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Managers)**
- n) New framework developed during 2022/23. Framework endorsed by CEF PDS on 20 June and ACH PDS on 27 June 2023. Toolkit is being developed with full launch planned for Autumn 2023. **(Michael Watts – Engagement Strategy Manager)**

#### 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. TRANSFORMATION/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 CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 6.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, stipulates that the Children's PDS Committee should receive a regular updates ton the Portfolio Holder Plan in respect of children's services. Reports should enable Members to *'ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications and Ward Councillor Views
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Portfolio Holder Plan 2023/24

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# Children, Education and Families

Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024



# Welcome

## Message from the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Welcome to the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan for 2023 to 2024.

This Portfolio Plan will contribute to the delivery of our long-term vision as presented in our corporate strategy, **Making Bromley Even Better**; available from [www.bromely.gov.uk/corporatestrategy](http://www.bromely.gov.uk/corporatestrategy).

Our department leads on the delivery of the first of five ambitions, for.

***'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'.***

Our priorities included

- ✓ Targeted early intervention and good universal service
- ✓ Safeguarding children and adolescents
- ✓ Being the best corporate parents
- ✓ Challenging disproportionality
- ✓ Engaging with children, young people and families

Clearly many if not all of our activity involves working closely with or through partners agencies, we will continue to develop and maintain these key relationships to enable effective service delivery. By implementing this plan, I truly believe that we can enable our children and young people to achieve, thrive and reach their full potential.

Achieving this ambition in a changing regulatory, financial and physical environment remains a challenge and should not be underestimated. Members will monitor the delivery of this Portfolio Plan through our Children, Education and Families Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee, as part of the Children's Services Performance Framework.

We remain ambitious for our children and will continue to engage with them effectively, co-producing where possible. Our Bromley Relationship Social Work Model promotes 'doing with' rather than 'doing to' approach, we pride ourselves on the relationships we build with our families in order to support and assist positive change.

**Cllr Kate Lymer**

**Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families**



# About this Portfolio Plan

This Portfolio Plan will contribute to the delivery of our long-term vision as presented in our corporate strategy, **Making Bromley Even Better**; available from [www.bromley.gov.uk/corporatestrategy](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/corporatestrategy)

## Our vision

We want Bromley to be...

**a fantastic place to live and work, where everyone can lead healthy, safe and independent lives**

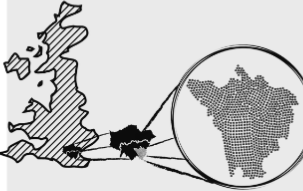
Our plan will be delivered jointly by the Council and partner agencies. We firmly believe that strong partnerships formed the foundation of our previous plan 'Building a Better Bromley'.

Together we have five new ambitions:

- 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.

**Making Bromley Even Better 2021 to 2031**  
 Our corporate plan on a page

### Get to know Bromley




We are located in **south east London**, we are the **largest London borough**.

We cover **59 square miles**.

We have more than **330,000 people** living here - in an estimated **141,000 households**.

We have a **vibrant rural and urban mix** - with **51%** of our space being **green belt land** and we have **eleven distinct town centres**.

We have relatively **low levels of deprivation** - we are the 4th least deprived of the 33 London boroughs.



### Our children thrive and flourish secure into adult

We support our residents with **good universal services** for everyone:

- 99% of early years settings are 'Good' or better
- 90% of schools are 'Good' or better
- 91% of GPs are 'good' or better

We have **high life expectancy** which exceeds national figures:

- 81 for males and 85 for females
- 7 year gap in some parts

### Our adults enjoy fulfilling and successful lives

We have a well **qualified and skilled working age** population:

- 50% have qualifications beyond A-Levels
- 3% have no qualifications

We have a high proportion of our **working age adults in employment**:

- 78% of adults are in employment
- 2% claiming out of work benefits
- average household income is just £43,000+

### Our families, businesses and communities thrive

We a mixture of **quality homes**:

- 12% increase in number of households
- mixed tenure - 72% home ownership and 14% social housing

We support our **businesses and town centres**:

- 15,000+ individual enterprises
- four Business Improvement Districts (BID)
- investment in public realm works

### Our borough is safe, clean and sustainable for the future

We care for and protect our **environment**:

- 50% of domestic waste is recycled
- becoming a direct 'net zero carbon' Council

We have lots of **green and historic spaces**:

- 45 conservation areas
- 1,000+ locally and 800 statutory listed buildings
- 7,000 hectares of green spaces
- 129 open spaces

We support our **residents with additional needs** well:

- 100,000+ visits to our Children and Families Centres
- 3,000 children have Education, Health and Care Plans
- 3,400 referrals to children's social care
- 9,000 requests for adult social care and support
- 2,000 adults receive care in their home
- 1,500 adults live in care homes

We have a strong and innovative **early help and intervention offer**:

- mix of holistic statutory, private and voluntary services
- single points of access

We support our **vulnerable residents** well through our:

- strengths-based approach
- relationship model
- Continuums of Need

We have a range of **quality homes** available:

- 1,500+ families are in temporary accommodation
- 1,000 affordable homes to be built

We encourage our children and adults to live **healthy and safe lives**:

- obesity levels and smoking rates are lower than national averages
- proportion of residents with mental health problems has increased

### Making it even better

**Our vision**

A fantastic place to live and work, where everyone can lead healthy, safe and independent lives

**Our ambitions**

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

For adults and older people to enjoy fulfilled and successful lives in Bromley, ageing well, retaining independence and making choices

For people to make their homes in Bromley and for business, enterprise and the third sector to prosper

For residents to live responsibly and prosper in a safe, clean and green environment great for today and a sustainable future

To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents

# Action plan

## Ambition 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**

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### Portfolio links

This priority has links with the following portfolio plans:

- Children, Education and Families

### Strategic links:

This priority has links with the following strategic plans:

- Children and Young People's Plan

What are we going to do?

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>1. Support the local childcare and early education market to maintain high standards and a good level of choice for parents, promoting inclusion and school readiness as well as monitoring those children who are educated at home.</b></p>	<p>a) Promote educational inclusion for all. Continue to provide high quality and timely information through a range of sources to support families.</p> <p>b) Work with local early years settings and childminders to increase the number of Early Years places provided for vulnerable children and those with SEN.</p>	<p>Early Years directory published annually and updated monthly; Bromley Education Matters updated monthly and accessible to schools and families. (<a href="https://bromleyeducationmatters.uk">https://bromleyeducationmatters.uk</a>)</p> <p>Capacity to enable 30 hours of funded childcare; Take-up of funded 2yr old places; % Childminders / Early Years Settings rated good or outstanding; Take up of Disability Access Fund.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years directory published annually and updated weekly.</li> <li>• Bromley Education Matters continues to be updated regularly and is accessible to schools, colleges and early years settings.</li> <li>• School Circular is issued fortnightly.</li> <li>• As of 31 March 2023, there were 411 (71%) of eligible children accessing 2-year-old funded places (National benchmark 72%).</li> <li>• 97.5% of early years settings in Bromley that have been inspected are rated as Good or Outstanding (National benchmark 96%).</li> <li>• As of 30 June 2023 DAF funding has been paid out for a total of 59 children in early years settings during the 2022/23 academic year.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p>1. <b>Support the local childcare and early education market to maintain high standards and a good level of choice for parents, promoting inclusion and school readiness as well as monitoring those children who are educated at home.</b></p>	<p>c) Promote school readiness through the provision of training, targeted at Bromley early years providers, that contribute to the promotion of school readiness in pre-school children.</p>	<p>Number of training courses that have taken place.</p> <p>Number of settings represented, and practitioners participated.</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>April 2024</p>	<p>Director Education</p>	<p><b>Training summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One course delivered on 'Creating a Rich Curriculum'</li> <li>• Two INSET days on 'Creating a Rich Curriculum' delivered within early years settings</li> <li>• One 'Leaders and Managers' Forum</li> </ul> <p><b>Participation by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 Settings</li> <li>• 66 Practitioners</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>2. Build on the success of Bromley's excellent schools, academies and further education offer. We consistently deliver a high 'first choice' school preference for our children and we will continue to ensure a sufficiency of school places in high quality provision, enabling high quality local choice for parents and young people.</b></p>	<p>a) Enable all children to access good educational outcomes through increasing places at Good and Outstanding schools</p>	<p>% of schools/ places in Good or Outstanding provision</p>	<p>Sept 2023</p>	<p>Director Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 96% of Bromley Schools are good or outstanding with 97% of pupils attending schools judged good or outstanding.</li> </ul>
	<p>b) Sufficient school places to sustain percentage of pupils offered one of their first three preferences</p>	<p>% of children in receipt of first and second choice school places.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68.7% of secondary school children in receipt of first choice and 94% in receipt of a preference.</li> <li>• 87.9% of primary school children in receipt of first choice and 98.8% in receipt of a preference.</li> </ul>
	<p>c) Sufficient local provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)</p>	<p>SEN Free School delivered</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEN estates review underway to identify opportunities for additional SEN places.</li> <li>• Special Free School project ongoing led by DfE, currently at feasibility stage.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>3. Work with our partners across the education sector to improve outcomes for all children and young people across the range of academic and narrowing attainment and progress gaps for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils</b></p>	<p>a) Ensure that there is a strong and coherent offer of support to Bromley Schools focussed on local priorities including closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged children</p>	<p>Clearly articulated offer for schools closely aligned to key priority of improved outcomes for disadvantaged children through Closing the Gap Workshops</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer in place and circulated to schools. Addressing the Attainment Gap events</li> <li>• Addressing the needs of pupils from Gypsy Roma and Traveller backgrounds at primary and secondary school events</li> <li>• Expansion of the successful Family Learning Outreach pilot supporting Ukrainian pupils and their parents in schools</li> <li>• Working in partnership with 3 maintained primary schools and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) on a pilot project focussed on metacognition and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>4. Embed our mental health and wellbeing model across the multi-agency children’s workforce to further improve the identification of additional needs in children, to improve assessment of need and risk, and to improve access to targeted and specialist services.</b></p>	<p>a) Place prevention and early intervention at the heart of the mental health and wellbeing offer for children and young people.</p> <p>b) Ensure staff supporting families are trained in mental health first aid and are provided with training and advice on CYP mental health and wellbeing support</p>	<p>Build on the success of the mental health support team (MHST) pilot in Bromley schools, with a long-term solution that helps ensure the resilience of Bromley schools to manage mental health challenges, in partnership with other mental health and wellbeing services.</p> <p>Ongoing training programme by Bromley Y and Oxleas CAMHS.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Senior Commissioning Manager – C&amp;YP’s Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bromley was awarded a third Mental Health Support Team (MHST) in 2023/24.</li> <li>• These teams will now cover 75% of schools with other schools receiving a tailored school responder offer.</li> <li>• Work is now taking place between the Director of Education, commissioners, and Bromley Y to review the total MHST offer, to look at lessons learned from pilot and the right model going forward.</li> <li>• Ongoing training programme monitored through normal CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing contracting processes.</li> </ul>



Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>4. Embed our mental health and wellbeing model across the multi-agency children’s workforce to further improve the identification of additional needs in children, to improve assessment of need and risk, and to improve access to targeted and specialist services.</b></p>	<p>c) Embed and develop our new THRIVE inhouse therapeutic provision. This team provides a psychological support service to our foster carers, special guardians, and adopters.</p>	<p>The number of referrals into THRIVE and feedback.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THRIVE have received 27 referrals from April 2023 to date.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>5. Encourage take up of our multi-agency early help services.</b></p>	<p>a) Enable parents to access information, advice, and support</p>	<p>Families report that they are able to find the information that they need at the right time.</p> <p>Provide training to partners to effectively signpost families to EIFS. Attendance at Multi Agency Partnership Events (MAPE) which promote early help.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EIFS social media platforms actively promote services for families with at least 3 posts per week.</li> <li>• Multi-Agency Partnership Events ‘MAPE’ sessions paused in Spring 2023 when the new front door model was introduced to prevent confusion during the roll out of Phase1 of the Children and Families Hub.</li> <li>• Sessions targeting specific cohorts of professionals; Health, Education and Early Years Education run termly.</li> <li>• A range of bespoke training is available to Children Social Care colleagues.</li> </ul>

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>5. Encourage take up of our multi-agency early help services.</b></p>	<p>b) Continue to provide high quality and timely information through a range of sources to support families. Information is available through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years directory</li> <li>• SENDMatters newsletters,</li> <li>• Early Intervention and Family Support (EIFS) Social Media platforms</li> <li>• EIFS Parenting Hub website</li> <li>• IASS website</li> </ul>	<p>Early support is joined up across health and education to reduce duplication.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of QR codes to make access to digital information easy. Introduction of 'flipbooks' for parents and staff and accessed via QR codes.</li> <li>• Bromley Education Matters continues to be updated monthly and is accessible to all education settings.</li> <li>• Schools Circular is produced fortnightly during term time and is accessible to schools, colleges and early years settings.</li> <li>• The Young Person area of the Local Offer is currently in development.</li> <li>• Bromley Information Advice and Support Service provides Specialist SEND support for families - website launched remains active.</li> <li>• EIFS launched the Parenting Hub website for parents and professionals and active.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>6. Continue to improve our children’s safeguarding practice in Bromley, embedding the statutory safeguarding partnership and strengthening our focus on non-familial (contextual) safeguarding risks, including children going missing, children missing education, child sexual and criminal exploitation, and gang affiliation.</b></p>	<p>a) Carry out an annual Strategic Threat Assessment including considering issues of disproportionality, community alienation and isolation.</p> <p>b) The Safeguarding Partnership challenges partners’ safeguarding practices</p> <p>c) Bromley Safeguarding Partnership commission a comprehensive training programme</p>	<p>Strategic Threat Assessments circulated to all partners</p> <p>Challenge Log referenced in BSCP annual report; Escalations recorded in case notes; Children’s Safeguarding Scrutiny Board and InterChairs Board merged in 2023</p> <p>Training evaluation included in BSCP annual report</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Independent Chair of Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (BSCP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five Strategic Threat Assessments published to date.</li> <li>• Challenge Log Updated</li> <li>• InterChairs Partnership Board taking place every 6 months.</li> <li>• Multi agency audit of serious youth violence/extra familial harm completed in 2023. Learning event held.</li> <li>• Training evaluation was published in annual report 2021-22.</li> <li>• New training programme procurement for 2022-25 complete.</li> <li>• Multi-agency BSCP Training Subgroup monitors quality and impact of training.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>6. Continue to improve our children’s safeguarding practice in Bromley, embedding the statutory safeguarding partnership and strengthening our focus on non-familial (contextual) safeguarding risks, including children going missing, children missing education, child sexual and criminal exploitation, and gang affiliation.</b></p>	<p>d) Children and Family Act 2014 Assessments carried out promptly Protect Vulnerable adolescents, especially those vulnerable to child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), modern-day slavery</p>	<p>i) Timeliness of assessments; Child seen during assessment.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Independent Chair of Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (BSCP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>94% of assessments were completed within timeframe with the majority of children seen.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p>7. Maintain a relentless focus on improving outcomes for Bromley’s looked after children and care leavers. In-order to meet the pledge, the Council has made to these young people, we will continue to develop our partnerships across the Council, NHS, DWP and housing providers to: increase the choice of high-quality placements; improve our education offer; help young people maintain good health and wellbeing; and increase housing and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>a) Ensure sufficiency of good quality placements for Children Looked After and accommodation for Care Leavers</p>	<p>Effective sufficiency strategy</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Children’s Education and Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLA Sufficiency Strategy 2022-2024 was signed off by members on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2022.</li> <li>• An associated action plan has been drafted in-order-to monitor our performance in relation to the strategy. This action plan is updated every quarter.</li> <li>• Bromley are also signed up to the Commissioning Alliance as a commissioning platform who offer a Quality Assurance framework and support for all providers.</li> </ul>
	<p>b) Improve education, employment and training outcomes</p>	<p>Successful Delivery of Care Leavers EET Strategy</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care, Safeguarding &amp; Care Planning Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of high education outcomes presented in Annual Virtual Head School report. Successful Delivery of Care Leavers EET Strategy</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p>7. Maintain a relentless focus on improving outcomes for Bromley's looked after children and care leavers. In order to meet the pledge, the Council has made to these young people, we will continue to develop our partnerships across the Council, NHS, DWP and housing providers to: increase the choice of high-quality placements; improve our education offer; help young people maintain good health and wellbeing; and increase housing and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>c) Ensuring easy access to Bromley health services where every child has a named specialist nurse, has their health plan regularly reviewed and has regular health-related checks and immunisations</p>	<p>Good performance in regard to annual health checks, immunisation and dental checks.</p> <p>Embed THRIVE (mental health) provision to ensure access it available for all children in need, and carers in need of support.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Children's Social Care, Safeguarding &amp; Care Planning Services</p> <p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scheme for free prescriptions for care experienced young people aged 18-25 has been rolled out in June 2023 to all our young people in conjunction with Pharmacy Alliance and CLA health.</li> <li>ICB have also agreed another year funding for our Mental Health (MH) Practitioner who sits within our Leaving Care service and is able to deliver responsive interventions and support to young people with MH need, they also support with hospital discharge and complex multi-agency work.</li> <li>The THRIVE Team provides therapeutic intervention and support to any child or young person (and carers) known to Bromley Children's Services who, for whatever reason do not live with their birth parents. This includes adopted children, children looked-after and children cared for by special guardians or connected persons.</li> <li>The service has a dedicated worker who works in conjunction with CAHMS to provide therapeutic services to children looked after.</li> </ul>

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p>7. Maintain a relentless focus on improving outcomes for Bromley’s looked after children and care leavers. In-order to meet the pledge, the Council has made to these young people, we will continue to develop our partnerships across the Council, NHS, DWP and housing providers to: increase the choice of high-quality placements; improve our education offer; help young people maintain good health and wellbeing; and increase housing and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>d) Further develop the local offer for care leavers</p>	<p>Care leavers will receive improved assessment, support, and services and each will have their own advisor; local offer reviewed regularly</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care, Safeguarding &amp; Care Planning Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapeutic sessions are also undertaken with the children and their carers’. The work includes therapeutic life journey, which supports young people and the carers to consolidate the experiences of the child’s emotional care journey.</li> <li>• Consultation, engagement and coproduction with Bromley Linc and Care Leavers Forum and senior leaders from Corporate Parenting Board.</li> <li>• The local offer has been revised in conjunction with CFCL in Jan 2023 and the updated documents has been published and shared.</li> </ul>



Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>8. Build on the progress we have made in improving services for children who have Special Educational Needs (SEND), continuing to build on working partnerships with parents, carers, agencies and SEND Governance Board</b></p>	<p><b>a)</b> Implement our SEND vision and priorities. Improved multi-disciplinary and cross agency support (health, education and social care) for young people</p>	<p>Targets for completion of Education Health Care Plan's (EHCPs) within 20 weeks are met</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EHCP timeliness is reported on a calendar year basis.</li> <li>• Performance for 2022 was 31%, significantly below target, primarily as a result of receiving late advice as part of the process.</li> <li>• The new Bromley Funded Inclusion Plans are being rolled out, which provides support for CYP, whose needs are best met with an enhanced level of support not within the statutory route.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>8. Build on the progress we have made in improving services for children who have Special Educational Needs (SEND), continuing to build on working partnerships with parents, carers, agencies and SEND Governance Board</b></p>	<p><b>b)</b> Increase the effectiveness of partnership working between education settings, health, social care and other partner agencies, providing support and advice to staff, children and young people and families to support those with SEN</p>	<p>Settings understand the 'local offer' and are confident about who they need to contact in order to provide appropriate and timely support to CYP and families</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director of Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued and focused work delivered by SEN Advisory Teams, providing support and challenge to schools, promoting the graduated approach.</li> <li>Continuing to provide traded and project work through Education Provision Service, early support, promoting inclusion at pre-statutory work.</li> <li>Local Offer kept under review and promoted with co-production of families and professionals.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>c)</b> Improve services for children and young people with social communication difficulties including Autism</p>	<p>Waiting times measured through All-Age Autism Board and Autism Family Support Contract feedback from families</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bromley Council and NHS South-East London Integrated Care Board (Bromley), in partnership with Bromley Healthcare and Oxleas, have been reviewing current ASD pathway linked to the South-East London ASD core offer.</li> <li>We are working over the next few months on future recommendations on the ASD pathway model to address waiting time pressures.</li> <li>We are also looking at short term improvements to address current waiting time pressures.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>9. Promote the proper inclusion of young people who have SEND in local universal services, through: developing and implementing joint commissioning strategies; prioritising localise needs, including increasing more local specialist placement choice; and establishing a service structure which supports mainstream schools, settings and partnership working</b></p>	<p>a) Mainstream schools and settings are able to provide for an increased level of complexity, enabling children &amp; young people (CYP) who have SEND to be supported effectively within mainstream settings</p>	<p>Increased number of children and young people accessing mainstream settings in their local community</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to provide traded and project work through EP Service, early support, promoting inclusion at pre-statutory work.</li> <li>Support and challenge to settings where the Local Authority is not assured that reasonable adjustments have been made in-order-to support CYP in mainstream schools.</li> <li>Investment in resource for mainstream schools to promote and enable higher levels of inclusion.</li> </ul>
	<p>b) Ensure sufficient schools places to meet rising demand for SEND places</p>	<p>Deliver new SEN Free School and Multi-Agency Centre for Excellence (MACE)</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DfE feasibility for SEN Free School underway. Site clearance work undertaken to enable surveys to be completed.</li> <li>We have been working across Bromley Healthcare, ICB and Council on the</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
	<p>c) Transform the Bromley CYP Integrated Therapies (Physiotherapy, Speech &amp; Language, and Occupational Therapy) commissioning and provision achieved through co-production</p>	<p>Commission and provide extra resource; Coproduce, redesign and strengthen a Graduated 3-tier (Universal, Targeted and Specialist) Approach; Develop a Commissioning Framework for Therapies</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Children &amp; Young People's Integrated Commissioning</p>	<p>proposed balanced model implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial proposals have been agreed and a detailed implementation plan is being worked on.</li> <li>This will be supported by Project Management support and an overarching governance board, plus task and finish engagement group.</li> <li>The implementation will be developed during the next quarter, with the current planned for start of February-April 2024.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>10. Develop our offer to young adults aged 18 to 25 who have SEND, including improving transitions into adulthood and, for those with continuing needs, adult services.</b></p>	<p>a) Helping young people prepare for adulthood from the earliest years</p>	<p>Young people and their families being fully involved in strategic planning and service design supporting commissioners in the development of services</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Head of Service, 0-25 Service, Children and Young People with Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A third worker has now been recruited within the Preparing for Adulthood Team, this will support the service supporting young people whose primary need is a physical disability.</li> <li>• A Performance Management Framework Report has been drafted to set standards for the service, consider how future needs are identified and setting key performance indicators to monitor the delivery of the service.</li> </ul>
	<p>b) Providing services that are focused on how they can support young people to progress through 'preparing for adulthood' outcomes</p>	<p>Young people and their families being at the centre of individual service planning, delivery and review.</p> <p>Evidencing positive and improving outcomes for young people.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>		
	<p>c) Achieving an effective, fully engaged, strategic partnership of agencies working collaboratively with an inclusive ethos</p>	<p>Providing a well-maintained Local Offer with up-to-date and clear information</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>		

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>11. Work collaboratively across the Council, schools, health and voluntary sector services to improve the identification of, and support to, children and young people who are young carers</b></p>	<p>a) Enable young carers to access information, online, advice, support, and access to services</p>	<p>Delivery of an effective young carers' strategy, support and action plan</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Integrated Commissioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Carers Plan has been agreed between LLB, the ICB and Bromley Well and this will be presented to the Executive in September.</li> <li>• The Plan includes a support offer to young carers and actions to improve the offer.</li> <li>• A Carers Charter, to be led by Bromley Well, will ask a wider range of local agencies to sign up to a service offer to Carers.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>12. Work to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people in Bromley, providing support earlier in schools and other settings, and improving access to, and waiting times for, more specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). We will focus resources on improving our response to: young people with eating disorders; perpetrators and victims of</b></p>	<p>a) Transform the Bromley CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing Single Point of Access (SPA) in order to deliver improved services, shorter waiting times and integrated delivery across CAMHS and Bromley Y</p>	<p>Supporting higher number of children and young people coming into services with multi-faceted and complex challenges and waiting times being reduced</p>	<p>April 2024</p>	<p>Senior Commissioning Manager – Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional investment in core Bromley CAMHS services will enable a speeding-up of assessments, with waiting times due to come down through the course of 2023/24.</li> <li>• Waiting times for CAMHS however remain very long and the risk around this area remains high.</li> </ul>
	<p>b) Reduce the number of referrals of children and young people into A&amp;E due to their mental ill health in Bromley, but instead provide an embedded partnership system of early intervention and support</p>	<p>Joint work across Oxleas CAMHS, Bromley Y, South East London Integrated Care Board, Bromley Council, schools and other partners to consider the outcomes of a refreshed analysis of Bromley A&amp;E/crisis cases for children and young people with mental health challenges.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current work taking place to bring forward a full analysis of this information for consideration by partners, after which time there will need to be a cross-organisational action plan of improvements.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>sexually harmful behaviour; and young people in youth offending services (YOS).</b></p>	<p>c) Establish an eating disorders early intervention pilot in Bromley, linked to the Single Point of Access (SPA) and Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) in schools</p>	<p>An innovative early intervention/prevention pilot between the NHS/voluntary sector to support children and young people who have disordered eating challenges to receive support, advice and clinical input where required</p>	<p>April 2024</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The business case for this service was agreed with mobilisation taking place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.</li> <li>• The pilot will be strongly linked with the Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) offer – with schools able to access this help going forward.</li> </ul>



**Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024**

<p><b>13. Deliver our Youth Justice strategy by working holistically and collaboratively to deliver our ‘child first’ principle – aiming to reduce the numbers of children and young people offending or at risk of offending, including developing the YOS work with younger offenders and our partnership approach to addressing harmful gang activity and violent crime. We will continue to engage offenders and victims in developing our restorative justice approaches.</b></p>	<p>a) Provide multi-agency support to those at risk of entering the youth justice system or who have been convicted</p>	<p>Reducing the numbers of children entering the youth justice system.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London Borough of Bromley’s rate of first-time entrants has reduced annually by 1% and is 27% lower than the average for London.</li> <li>• The rate is also 19% below the national average and 27% lower than London.</li> <li>• First-time entrant rate is also 8% lower than stat neighbours and is the lowest rate compared with the 6 surrounding boroughs.</li> </ul>
	<p>b) Address disproportionality</p>	<p>YOS disproportionality action plan delivered.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Justice service continues to work to deliver the priorities within our Youth Justice Strategy 2020/23 and our annual Youth Justice Plan 2023/24.</li> <li>• We deliver a wide range of interventions both 1 to 1 and in group settings, addressing serious use of violence, weapons awareness, gender specific groups and consequence sessions.</li> <li>• We work closely with emergency services who also deliver workshops to our children.</li> </ul>	

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>13. Deliver our Youth Justice strategy by working holistically and collaboratively to deliver our ‘child first’ principle – aiming to reduce the numbers of children and young people offending or at risk of offending, including developing the YOS work with younger offenders and our partnership approach to addressing harmful gang activity and violent crime. We will continue to engage offenders and victims in developing our restorative justice approaches.</b></p>	<p>c) Provide multi-agency support to CYP with SEND at risk of entering the youth justice system or who have been convicted</p>	<p>Multi-agency meetings held monthly to share intelligence, agree solutions to provide wrap-around support for the young person, to achieve the best outcome</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a new refreshed Youth Justice Plan 2023/24 that sets out our work for the next year including addressing our strategic priorities; how we intend to promote long term desistance; our commitment to understanding and effecting change in behaviour through the support and resources we have available.</li> <li>• Assurance reports presented quarterly to the Youth Justice Service (YJS) Executive Board.</li> <li>• YJS have commissioned Trauma training for all staff in YJS.</li> <li>• Restorative justice interventions are delivered with a high level of engagement with victims and their wishes included which has focused on information giving in indirect reparation.</li> </ul>
	<p>d) To ensure Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) support to Youth Offending Service (YOS) is provided through a tiered model (universal, targeted and specialist support) with clear agreed outcomes</p>	<p>Young people being referred for assessment and support.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people coming into the service have an initial SALT SCREENING, assessing need, areas of development and strengths – 3-6 sessions agreed.</li> <li>• The collaborative approach between YJS and SEN continues to meet to support improvements for children with ECHP and young people through ETE pathways.</li> </ul>	

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>14. Provide venues where young people can mix in a safe environment, learn, explore and develop skills and where, if required, early intervention can be identified, including vocational training and apprenticeships in line with local business needs.</b></p>	<p>a) Review Youth Services</p> <p>b) Provide careers advice and offer work experience and apprenticeships to young people together with support in education, training, and employment</p>	<p>Ensure appropriate youth services offer is operational</p> <p>Retain good NEET performance for post 16</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of the youth service is currently being scoped within the next 12 months.</li> <li>• We are looking at the post 16 support worker in the Voluntary Sector to have more of a role around intense NEET support – to start in September 2023.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor NEET performance for care leavers through the leaving care panel and joint work with Department of Working Pensions / Bromley Education Business Partnership and targeted youth support.</li> <li>• Ongoing group work offer for young people needing pre-employability skills and confidence raising.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>15. Information about how Bromley is supporting young people experiencing loneliness and/or getting involved in this topic.</b></p>	<p>Loneliness Champion to continue to build local partnership working and make stronger links with care leavers</p>	<p>Children and young people becoming less lonely and isolated; improving their mental health and linking older generations with younger generations together within local communities</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the Children and Family Assessments, loneliness and social isolation are identified and families are sign-posted to appropriate services.</li> <li>• The Principal Loneliness Champion has a resident spot on the Agenda at the Schools Mental Health and Wellbeing leads networking event which occurs each term during the academic year.</li> <li>• Schools receive an update on how they can get involved in helping to tackle loneliness in the local community, workshops, assemblies, and relevant research and initiatives within schools.</li> <li>• From the beginning of 2023, the Principal Loneliness Champion has been giving assemblies to Bromley Schools to help inform students of what loneliness is, when it may occur, and resources available to help start the conversation.</li> <li>• LBB hosted a Tackling Loneliness Summit at the end of Loneliness Awareness Week in July 2023. Over 100 people attended this event with people representing various professions, organisations, community groups and more within Bromley and surrounding boroughs.</li> </ul>
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## Ambition 5

**To manage our resources well, providing value for money, efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.**

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### Portfolio links

This priority has links with the following portfolio plans:

- Children, Education and Families

### Strategic links:

This priority has links with the following strategic plans:

- Performance Management Framework
- Quality Assurance Framework
- Bromley Relationship Social Work Model
- User Voice and Engagement Framework



Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>2. Being opportunistic and collaborative in making bids to Government and other funding sources to increase resources available to the Partnership. Lobby the Government and Government departments strongly for increased resources when we see a need or opportunity</b></p>	<p>a) Lobby the government for increased resources</p>	<p>Be opportunistic in making bids for funding sources and additional resources</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Children, Education and Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s services take every opportunity to lobby for a fairer funding for services.</li> <li>• SEN demand pressures are regularly raised at discussions with the Regional Director’s office.</li> <li>• We do surveys for London Councils in terms of our financial position which they use as London wide lobbying.</li> <li>• Peter Turner (Director of Finance) meets with government representatives to discuss funding for Bromley and London as part of his role in the Society of London Treasurers. This is ongoing and for all areas but has discussed the financial disregard, etc.</li> <li>• We are currently in discussion with DfE around the Deficit recovery plan.</li> </ul>

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>3. Recognising the importance of our workforce to the achievement of our ambitions and implementing workforce strategies which help to recruit and retain the highest quality staff for services in the borough</b></p>	<p>a) Recruit and retain the highest quality staff across the whole workforce</p>	<p>Workforce Stable</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Children, Education and Families / Director of HR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Recruitment and Retention Board Chaired by the Director of HR continues to ensure Bromley are best placed to mobilise a stable and well-trained workforce.</li> <li>• Bromley has relaunched its Wake Up 2 Care programme which had previously successfully recruited over 35 carers in the last round.</li> <li>• We are also supporting the care homes and domiciliary care agencies with overseas recruitment.</li> <li>• The Council continues to support and facilitate the Proud to Care initiative.</li> </ul>



MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>4. Maintaining our focus on commissioning and market shaping, developing integrated and joint commissioning where it makes sense to do so, and ensuring we commission intelligently with clear outcomes in mind. Ensuring our commissioned services deliver what is expected through robust and active contract management</b></p>	<p>a) Commission services intelligently and integrate services where appropriate</p>	<p>Effective contract management</p> <p>Timely procurement</p> <p>Good co-production where appropriate</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Integrated Commissioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracts continue to be monitored robustly to ensure that services are delivered to meet expectation.</li> <li>• The department continues to work through inflation related issues with providers.</li> <li>• The commissioning team have completed the Short Breaks for Disabled Children Tender, resulting in the award of new contracts which will support school holiday activities that maximise the skills and potential of children and young people.</li> <li>• The Direct Payment prepayment cards contract has been extended to support SEND and is currently being adapted to support care leavers to transition into adulthood.</li> <li>• In April 2023 the new all age integrated community equipment contract commenced.</li> <li>• Bromley is one of 21 London local authorities that committed to the consortium approach.</li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

MAKING BROMLEY EVEN BETTER	DETAIL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	TARGET DATE	LEAD	UPDATES
<p><b>5. Continuing to exploit the benefits of digitalisation in service delivery through a new Digital Strategy, integrating systems and processes where it is feasible and practical. The Council will learn from best practice with a view to utilising technologies which provide practical improvements to our services.</b></p>	<p>a) Exploit the benefits of digitalisation</p>	<p>Bed in use of Liquid Logic new social care management system</p> <p>Continually explore opportunities and implement, such as the use of Virtual Reality Headsets for Domestic Violence Training.</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p> <p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Children, Families and Education</p> <p>Assistant Director of Specialist Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Microsoft Power BI dashboards are being developed to enable greater management oversight.</li> <li>• Virtual Reality continues to develop within each service area as well both Health &amp; Education Partners. From April 2022 to date, 41 practitioners were trained as VR practitioners across Children Social Care.</li> <li>• In addition, VR is being used as a promotional tool to recruit Social Workers.</li> <li>• The recruitment seminar, in November 2022, the use of VR in practice featured as the lead story on Social Work Today in the November 2022 newsletter – <a href="#">‘Using virtual reality to understand the impact of trauma on children   Social Work Today’</a></li> </ul>

Children, Education and Families Portfolio plan for 2023 to 2024

<p><b>6. Developing information and knowledge sharing across Partnership agencies to enhance the intelligence available to all agencies in planning and evaluating our services</b></p>	<p>b) Maintain effective strategic and operational partnership</p>	<p>Including; Children’s Executive, Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership, Corporate Parenting Board</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Director Children, Families and Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational and strategic partnership work is ongoing and mature.</li> <li>Escalations are used appropriately within agencies to enable resolutions to emerging issues.</li> <li>Strategic Threat Assessments shared across partnership with contemporary intelligence.</li> </ul>
	<p>c) Maintain and Effective ‘Engagement Framework’</p>	<p>Deliver annual ‘you said we did’ reports as evidence</p>	<p>April 2024 (AP)</p>	<p>Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New framework developed during 2022/23. Framework endorsed by CEF PDS on 20 June and ACH PDS on 27 June 2023.</li> <li>Toolkit is being developed with full launch planned for Autumn 2023.</li> <li>6 monthly ‘You said, we did’ highlight reports are presented to the Children’s Executive Board and CEF PDS.</li> <li>An emerging digital “Childs Voice Hub” is enabling the Children Executive Partnership to share best practice, a toolkit and feedback findings amongst other professionals.</li> </ul>

# Our ambitions framework

## OUR VISION

A fantastic place to live and work, where everyone can lead healthy, safe and independent lives

## OUR AMBITIONS

- 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
- For adults and older people to enjoy fulfilled and successful lives in Bromley, ageing well, retaining independence and making choices
- For people to make their homes in Bromley and for business, enterprise and the third sector to prosper
- For residents to live responsibly and prosper in a safe, clean and green environment great for today and a sustainable future
- To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents

## WHAT WE WILL DO

- |  |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p><b>A good start to life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus our primary healthcare on promoting protective factors</li> <li>Promote and enhance multi-agency early help services</li> <li>Embed our wellbeing model</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Growing older positively</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve health outcomes for adults and older people with a focus on prevention</li> <li>Embed our 'strengths based approach' in adult social care</li> <li>Integrate our health and care services</li> </ul>   | <p><b>A home for everyone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet the housing needs of our residents</li> <li>Support those who are at risk of becoming homeless</li> <li>Provide longer-term housing options to reduce the use of temporary accommodation</li> </ul>   | <p><b>A safe and protected community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt 'systems thinking' to problem solve and reduce crime and disorder</li> <li>Protect communities from nuisance behaviour, rogue traders, poor food hygiene and the risk of fire</li> <li>Protect the local environment through effective and responsible enforcement</li> </ul> | <p><b>Living within our means</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work within our budgets and maintain sound financial processes and systems</li> <li>Lobby the government for increased resources when we see a need</li> <li>Effectively manage the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates</li> </ul>                                    |
| <p><b>Learning and living well</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain high educational standards and enable parents to have choice</li> <li>Promote educational inclusion for all</li> <li>Improve life outcomes for children in care and care leavers, those who have special educational needs, and young carers</li> </ul> | <p><b>Living independently</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve life outcomes for those have a learning disability or mental health, and those who are informal carers</li> <li>Help older people age well and independently</li> <li>Explore and implement innovation in seeking to improve outcomes for service users</li> </ul> | <p><b>A home for businesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage economic growth and regeneration across the borough</li> <li>Improve the public realm, especially in town centres and business investment districts</li> <li>Develop our town centres to provide focal points for communities</li> </ul> | <p><b>A clean and green environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collectively sustain a clean, green and tidy environment</li> <li>Increase levels of recycling and minimise levels of waste</li> <li>Promote more sustainable forms of transport and enhance the travel offer</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Transforming our services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and retain the highest quality staff across the whole workforce</li> <li>Exploit the benefits of digitalisation</li> <li>Make the best use of our resources, including the public estate and our people</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Healthy and safe lives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve support for those with poorer health outcomes</li> <li>Maintain our safeguarding practice</li> <li>Focus on reducing the number of young people in the youth justice system</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Living well</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and enhance multi-agency early help services</li> <li>Maintain and develop our education and skills offer</li> <li>Maintain our safeguarding practice</li> </ul>  | <p><b>A community for all</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain our collective investment in leisure facilities and cultural assets</li> <li>Maintain our high quality library service</li> <li>Support the enhancement of the third sector and increase volunteering</li> </ul>                            | <p><b>A carbon neutral environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tackle carbon levels in the borough by becoming a net zero carbon Council</li> <li>Encourage residents and businesses to reduce their carbon-emissions</li> <li>Improve air quality</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Collaborating and innovating together</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be opportunistic in making bids for funding sources and additional resources</li> <li>Commission services intelligently and integrate services where it makes sense to do so</li> <li>Explore and implement innovation in service delivery and design</li> </ul> |

Report No.  
CEF23040

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

**Date:** For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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

**Title:** BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24

**Contact Officer:** David Bradshaw, Head of Finance, Children, Education and Families  
Tel: 020 8313 4807    E-mail: David.Bradshaw@bromley.gov.uk

**Chief Officer:** Director, Children, Education and Families

**Ward:** (All Wards);

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1. Reason for report

1.1 This report provides the budget monitoring position for 2023/24 based on activity up to the end of June 2023.

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2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 The Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

- (i) Note that the latest projected overspend of £2,142,000 is forecast on the controllable budget, based on information as at June 2023;
- (ii) Note the full year effect cost pressures of £2,200,000 in 2024/25 as set out in section 4;
- (iii) Note the comments of the Department in section 9 of this report; and,
- (iv) Refer the report to the Portfolio Holder for approval.

2.2 The Portfolio Holder is asked to:

- (i) Note that the latest projected overspend of £2,142,000 is forecast on the controllable budget, based on information as at June 2023.
- (ii) Agree the release of amounts carried forward from 2022/23 as set out in section 5; and
- (iii) Recommend that Executive agree the release of funds from the Central Contingency as set out in section 6.

### Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. BBB Priority: Health and Integration
- 

### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
  2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
  3. Budget head/performance centre: CEF Portfolio
  4. Total current budget for this head: £70,473k
  5. Source of funding: CEF approved budget
- 

### Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1,250 Full time equivalent
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
- 

### Legal

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

### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The 2023/23 budget reflects the financial impact of the Council's strategies, service plans etc which impact on all of the Council's customers (including council tax payers) and users of the services
- 

### Ward Councillor Views

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

### 3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The 2023/24 projected outturn for the Children, Education and Families Portfolio is detailed in Appendix 1a, broken down over each division within the service. Appendix 1b gives explanatory notes on the movements in each service. The current position is an overspend of £2,142k. Some of the main variances are highlighted below.
- 3.2 Senior officers meet on a regular basis to scrutinise and challenge the expenditure position and formulate management action to address any issues.

#### **Education - £236k underspend**

- 3.3 Overall the position for Education is a predicted £236k underspend. The main areas of movement are in staffing where there are vacancies that are expected to be filled in the coming financial year.

#### **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - £4,209k in year overspend**

- 3.4 An element of the Education Budget is classed as Schools' Budget and is funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Grant conditions require that any over or under spend should be carried forward to the next financial year.
- 3.5 There is a current projected in year overspend in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) of £4,209k. This will be added to the £12,706k deficit that was carried forward from 2022/23. There was also an adjustment which resulted in an increase in the 2022/23 Early years DSG of £600k which effectively reduces the negative reserve position. This gives an estimated DSG deficit at the end of the year of £16,315k.
- 3.6 Although additional grant was given by DfE including additional Supplementary grant, demand continues to outstrip funding. Bromley was one of the last authorities in London to fall into a deficit position regarding its DSG. The overspends are in the main in the high needs block area and are related to the cost of placements in all types of education settings.
- 3.7 The unsustainability of the SEN system is a national issue and there are high expectations being set for the DfE's SEND Review. Nevertheless, officers are seeking to further reduce costs, within the tight constraints of the legal framework. Officers are working with DfE and are in discussion with them regarding recovery plans and actions that can be taken to reduce the deficit position.
- 3.8 EHCP's are still increasing but at a lower rate. This has been reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the position is close to what was expected.
- 3.9 The current number of EHCP's as at the end of June 2023 is 3,832, up 405 from 3,427 at the end of June 2022, an increase of around 11.8%
- 3.10 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the budget calculations and adequacy of reserves. The 151 Officer within that commentary is now required to consider the Councils DSG deficit position, despite the statutory override being in place.

The statutory override effectively means that any DSG deficits are not included in the Councils main revenue budgets. However, funding will ultimately need to be identified

In effect the Council has to still set aside resources to meet the DSG deficit and where no ongoing funding is identified such funding will need to come from the Councils reserves. On that basis the budget monitoring report identifies a deficit of £4,209k which has to ultimately be

funded from the Councils reserve.

Although DSG is effectively ring fenced the ongoing increase through funding by reserves (general and earmarked) creates a financially unsustainable position in the medium to longer term

The External Auditor as part of the annual accounts, are required to comment on the Councils Value for money arrangements and will be required to consider any DSG deficit and the impact on the Councils finances

In terms of presentation of the DSG deficit of £12,706k up to 31/3/2023 and the estimated in year sum of £4,209k in 2023/24, there will need to be adequate funding from the Councils reserves unless alternative savings can be found. The use of reserves have been assumed in this report, although the specific reserves to use have not been identified at this stage.

3.11 A summary of the main variations can be found within Appendix 1B.

### **Children's Social Care (CSC) - £2,378k overspend**

3.12 The Children's Social Care division is currently overspending by £2,378k. The main areas of over/underspend are highlighted in the paragraphs below and in Appendix 1B.

3.13 These figures include the contribution from Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) of £2.85m for 2023/24, £500k of which is one off funding.

3.14 A challenging target for the budgeted number of children looked after was set at 321 at the start of the financial year (excluding UASC). At the beginning of April the figure was 329 and although this figure has reduced to 325 by June 2023, this still has a significant impact on the budget position. The CLA per 10,000 figures for Bromley continue to be lower than statistical neighbours.

3.15 The profile is slightly different than budgeted with a few more children in residential than expected and more in IFA's leading to an overspend. The trend is seeing this continue as children are presenting with higher end needs than in previous years although the levels of Children Looked After (CLA) appears to be levelling off. There is also increasing pressures in Direct Payments and Domiciliary Care in Children with Disabilities. Officers are looking at further actions that can be taken to mitigate against this.

3.16 Some transformation savings targets have been delayed and therefore are unlikely to be achieved in the financial year, which has caused an overspend position.

3.17 The other main area of risk is staffing. Additional staffing costs are in the region of £1m. This is due to high levels of interims/agency staff, higher staffing costs and continuing temporary staffing beyond budgeted term.

3.18 The budget was set on the basis of 90% permanency across all staff in CSC in 2023/24. Levels are currently around 80% permanent staff, including the 'in the pipeline' appointments. There is an allowance for agency staff within the budget, but this will result in a significant overspend if this continues to be lower than expected. As mentioned above there are staff in pipeline, but this figure will also depend on the level of those leaving the organisation. Like many other professions, recruitment into these roles is becoming increasingly challenging.

3.19 Full details of all the over and underspends are contained in Appendix 1.



#### **4. FULL YEAR EFFECT GOING INTO 2024/25**

- 4.1 The cost pressures identified in section 3 above will impact in 2024/25 by £2,200k. Management action is assumed and contained within this figure. Management action will continue to need to be taken to ensure that this does not impact on future years.
- 4.2 Given the significant financial savings that the Council will need to make over the next four years, it is important that all future cost pressures are contained, and that savings are identified early to mitigate these pressures. However, the continuation of the impact from Covid and the economic impact of the war in Ukraine continue to remain a further factor in relation to these financial pressures. Whether there is an easing of measures in the foreseeable future, the increase in referrals and the complexity is likely to continue over the next year.
- 4.3 Further details are contained within Appendix 1.

#### **5. AGREEMENT TO RELEASE AMOUNTS CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2022/23 BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

##### **5.1 COVID Recovery Grant £130k Dr & Cr**

This is an academic year grant. This allows us to carry forward all or part of the grant to be used in the remainder of the current academic year.

##### **5.2 National Tutoring Programme £22k Dr & Cr**

This is an academic year grant. This allows us to carry forward all or part of the grant to be used in the remainder of the current academic year.

##### **5.3 GLA Adult Education Grant Repayment £16k Dr & Cr**

GLA funding - £15k - this is part of the £25k allocation for the delivery of level 3 provision. This funding has not been spent as level 3 courses have not been running this year so this is likely to be clawed back.

##### **5.4 Deed Settlement for Hawes Down Site £5k Dr & Cr**

The funding was received from the DfE as part of a Deed Settlement following Langley Park Free School's temporary use of the Hawes Down Centre. Terms of Deed of Settlement include that the funds can only to be spent on the centre, and not to carry forward the funding would be a breach of the legal agreement.

##### **5.5 Virtual School Children in Need Grant £82k Dr & Cr**

This money was part of the £100k allocated to virtual school to carry out the new duties – the guidance states that the money only needed to be allocated by March. Therefore, a plan was put in place that would carry the spend through the academic year September to August. The money has been committed again for 2023-24 so we will be able to roll this plan forward. Although we managed to recruit for the needed post on a fixed term contract due to other pressures and staff absence as well as a maternity cover we have again had to put forward the catch up work on this project until the summer term 2023. Some of the funding is currently being used to collect attendance data for CP children.

##### **5.6 Supporting Families; Investing in Practice Grant £475k Dr & Cr**

The new programme, Supporting Families; Investing in Practice, will help families work on issues together, including those impacted by domestic violence, substance misuse or addiction, in order to help create stability in the home for young people and prevent them being taken into

care, where that is in their best interests. This is part of wider Government work to improve outcomes for children in need of support of a social worker, by creating home and school environments in which they can thrive.

#### 5.7 Homes for Ukraine DfE Grant £1,187k Dr & Cr

This Grant is to be used to support Children from Ukraine that have arrived in Bromley. This can be spent on various support to help with their education. The grant can be carried forward to cover on-going support for the children.

#### 5.8 BAEC upgrading hardware and supporting software - GLA Grant £26k Dr & Cr

BAEC received an additional grant allocation of £70k+, of which it was proposed that £50k would be used to improve the IT infrastructure for the service, including an upgrade of the servers. It was agreed that the remaining £20k would be a contribution to the running costs of the service. There has been difficulties with the server supply chain. A new delivery date is yet to be confirmed. Current server hardware is old, inefficient and out of warranty. The upgrade to the server and associated works is urgent to minimise any risk of failure.

#### 5.9 YOT NHS Funding £29k Dr & Cr

This money has been allocated to Bromley Youth Justice Service to be used to support additional health and Justice needs of our children and will be used to fund additional services for children as the need arises. However, an assessment is required (often very lengthy) on every child we work with and based on the assessed needs then services will be commissioned. It is crucial that we have this money to deal with the many trauma's that most of our children experience and to be able to commission to address these needs. The money will be spent by July 2023.

#### 5.10 Homes for Ukraine Main Grant £300k Dr & Cr

This Grant is to be used to additional expenditure in Childrens Social Care, in particular Social Worker posts and Childrens Centre activities. This is an element of the main Homes for Ukraine grant carried forward in the RRH Portfolio.

### **6. REQUESTS FOR DRAWDOWNS FROM CENTRAL CONTINGENCY**

#### 6.1 GLA Free School Meals Grant £6,036k Dr & Cr

The Council has received a one-year (2023/24) grant of £6,036k from the Greater London Assembly for the provision of free school meals (FSM) to Key Stage 3 pupils not eligible under benefit related criteria. The grant criteria indicates an assumption of a 90% take up of meals, with the funding set at £2.65 per meal.

Officers have worked in partnership with Bromley schools, which hold the responsibility for providing free school meals to eligible pupils. Some school leaders have indicated that the level of grant will not meet all costs of extending FSM eligibility at school level, which will create a financial pressure for the school/academy. Schools were provided with the ability to opt out of the scheme, in the event that the associated costs or physical capacity to deliver additional meals was not deemed viable.

The Council will passport funding to Bromley schools in accordance with the grant criteria for the one-year extension of free school meals.

## 6.2 Above inflation pressures on children's placements £1,370k

The additional budget is requested for two streams of expenditure:-

- The government announced increases across the board for Foster carers allowances. This affects all aspects of fostering including Kinship, Special Guardianship and adoption where payments are made. It will also affect payments to IFA's where rates have increased. The payments are split into four bands according to age group. On average the banded rates increased by 12%

The budget was set at an inflationary rate of 6%. The differential between the two rates equates to approximately £420k.

- Although the number of indigenous children looked after appears to have peaked and plateaued at around 330, price increases continue to rise well above current budgetary inflation levels.

A recent analysis has shown that prices have increased year on year for example in Residential community homes (+17%), Other Community Homes (+9%), Boarding schools (+19%) and Secure accommodation (+34%).

There has also been significant increases in CWD Outreach where costs have risen considerably per person and Direct Payments which have risen year on year by 13%. All areas apart from one (Leaving Care accommodation) have seen large above inflation increases

The impact of these increases is a budgetary pressure of £950k

In total there is a pressure of £1,370k and it is requested that this be drawn down from the contingency to cover additional costs incurred.

### Leaving Care allowance uplift Grant £68k Dr & Cr

- 6.3 This is a two year allocation of £68k per year. Statutory guidance requires local authorities to provide a leaving care allowance, to enable care leavers to purchase essentials (such as furniture, white goods and carpets/curtains) when they move into their first home. DfE guidance currently recommends that local authorities should pay a minimum of £2,000.

The independent review into children's social care recommended that the minimum amount should be increased. We are increasing the minimum recommended amount to £3,000 from April 2023. The grant was given to cover Bromley's additional costs.

## **7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Resources Portfolio Plan includes the aim of effective monitoring and control of expenditure within budget and includes the target that each service department will spend within its own budget.
- 7.2 One of the "Making Bromley Even Better" ambitions is to manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents and to meet this we will need to maintain a relentless focus on efficiency, outcomes of services and prudent management of our finances.

- 7.3 The four year financial forecast report highlights the financial pressures facing the Council. It remains imperative that strict budgetary control continues to be exercised in 2023/24 to minimise the risk of compounding financial pressures in future years.
- 7.4 Chief Officers and Departmental Heads of Finance are continuing to place emphasis on the need for strict compliance with the Council's budgetary control and monitoring arrangements.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 A detailed breakdown of the projected outturn by service area is shown in appendix 1(a) with explanatory notes in appendix 1(b). Appendix 1 (c) shows the latest full year effects. Appendix 2 gives the analysis of the latest approved budget. Other financial implications are contained in the body of this report and Appendix 1b provides more detailed notes on the major services.
- 8.2 Overall the current overspend position stands at £2,142k (£2,200k overspend full year effect). The full year effect will need to be addressed in 2023/24 and 2024/25 in due course.
- 8.3 Costs attributable to individual services have been classified as "controllable" and "noncontrollable" in Appendix 1. Budget holders have full responsibility for those budgets classified as "controllable" as any variations relate to those factors over which the budget holder has, in general, direct control.
- 8.4 "Non-controllable" budgets are those which are managed outside of individual budget holder's service and, as such, cannot be directly influenced by the budget holder in the shorter term. These include, for example, building maintenance costs and property rents which are managed by the Property Division but are allocated within individual departmental/portfolio budgets to reflect the full cost of the service. As such, any variations arising are shown as "non-controllable" within services but "controllable" within the Resources Portfolio. Other examples include cross departmental recharges and capital financing costs.
- 8.5 This approach, which is reflected in financial monitoring reports to budget holders, should ensure clearer accountability by identifying variations within the service that controls financial performance. Members should specifically refer to the "controllable" budget variations relating to portfolios in considering financial performance.

## **9. DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS**

- 9.1 The Children, Education and Families Portfolio has a projected overspend of £2,142k for the year.
- 9.2 The Education Division (core funding) has a projected underspend of £236k.
- 9.3 SEN Transport continues to be a risk area. There are a number of causal factors affecting the position on transport:
- An increase in number and complexity of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities over the past five years. The national increase in EHCPs is widely acknowledged as unsustainable and the rate of increase is accelerating across the country. In Bromley, despite gatekeeping measures, the increase in EHCPs has now reached 17%, (higher than the projected increase of 14% used to produce Growth funding assumptions). However, this rate of increase is lower than the national rate of 21% (DfE 2023)
  - The complexity of children and young people's needs continues to be at a higher level than prior to the Covid pandemic. These high levels of demand have continued for the past 3 years. A number of these cases have acute social, emotional and mental health needs,

which require specialist provision which is typically costly independent provision outside of Bromley. Transport is often required and although officers seek to minimise costs, transport is often required to meet children's needs. In recent months we have begun to see a slight easing in the numbers of SEN referrals, which is positive, although it may be too early to be certain that this is a longer-term trend.

- There is continued Transport provider pressures linked to the cost fuel and wages. The number of children requiring transport has increased by circa 17%, but this only accounts for part of the increase in costs. The reduced availability of drivers has resulted in more expensive providers having to be used from the call off framework.
- Immediate management action was taken on the notification of the forecast budget overspend position. A specialist external transport adviser has undertaken a review of SEN transport arrangements, including benchmarking analysis and a full review of processes and eligibility criteria to identify potential savings. This has enabled significant mitigation proposals to be identified as part of the MTFs process, which would offset the forecast pressures on SEN Transport. In addition, work has been undertaken by our AD Strategic Performance resulting in predictive work for the next few years. This work has been incorporated into subsequent budget challenge discussions.

- 9.4 There is a current projected in year overspend in Education (DSG funding) of £4,209k in year. This will be added to the £12,706k carried forward in the reserves from 2022/23. There has been a prior year Early Year adjustment which has increased the 2022/23 DSG allocation by £600k, and this is off set against the DSG reserve that effectively reduces the reserve. This gives us an estimated DSG reserve of £16,315k at the end of the financial year.
- 9.5 We have recently met with representatives from the DfE to review our management of the DSG over-spend. They were able to confirm that they were satisfied with the steps that we continue to take and confirmed that they did not wish to meet with us again until next year.
- 9.6 The impact of additional legal duties from the SEND Reforms, has led to unsustainable financial pressures on High Needs costs within the DSG. An increase in Government funding (>£5m in 2021/22) is not sufficient to meet the increased costs. We are aware that Bromley is one of the last London Boroughs to incur a deficit in the DSG, with some local authorities having deficits in excess of £20m. The legal framework is heavily weighted in favour of parental preference, which is often for independent day and residential provision. We continue to assess all cases carefully and with a view to carefully balancing the education needs of young people and ensuring the best value for money from specialist education placements. Where it is appropriate to do so we continue to defend our decisions at Tribunal.
- 9.7 Nationally, the number of SEND tribunal appeals has increased by 29% from 2021/22 and has tripled since 2014 (DfE, 2023). Out of 5,600 Tribunal hearings last year, only 3.7% of decisions made by local authorities were upheld. The Local Government Ombudsman received 15% more complaints about education and children's services in 2022-23 than in 2021-2022, 84% of which were upheld, higher than any other areas within the LGO's remit.
- 9.8 In the 2022 calendar year, 634 new EHCPs were issued, up from 274 in 2018 and 476 in 2021. We have sought to commission additional local specialist provision, including a new special free school due to open in 2024, but the needs and tribunal challenges are such that

we have no choice but to continue placing children in more costly provision to ensure we are not in default of our legal statutory duties.

- 9.9 A review of High Needs Funding Bands has commenced, with oversight from the SEND Governance Board and CEF PDS. This will consider how the funding bands can be simplified and to identify where any savings can be made. We continue to work on increases to local specialist provision, including the special free school and increases in Additionally Resourced Provisions, which are specialist classes within mainstream schools.
- 9.10 In Children's Social Care the projected overspend is £2,378k.
- 9.11 The ongoing pressures that relate to emotional and mental health concerns for young people, combined with the impact of inflation and cost of living pressures continues, especially in respect of contacts into our MASH. These continue to remain consistently around 1,100 contacts per month with little sign of a reduction. This compares to around 600 in April 2020 and it is the complexity of need from the families and children that have an added dimension.
- 9.12 Although much reduced from the previous year, the financial pressures across CSC continue to be primarily driven by placement costs for young people and also by the cost of agency staff.
- 9.13 Nationally, the cost of residential placements increased by 18.78% in 2022/23 (ADCS 2023) as demand continues to be greater than the number of placements available, particularly for children with complex or specialist requirements. Although our recruitment of permanent staff has increased and we now have fewer agency staff than in the past two years, our spend on agency staff still contributes to the pressures on the CSC staffing budget.
- 9.14 There also continues to be a high level of demand for support particularly in CWD which has meant a rise in demand for our short break provision. In response we have sought to increase the number of nights available for the number of families requiring this. Whilst These continued pressures have meant an increase in our looked after population in CWD despite the innovative and expensive care packages put in to support with health provision short breaks. The resilience for some families is now being significantly tested following two years of Covid challenges. This is primarily seen in families for children with profound and complex health and challenging sometimes aggressive behaviour.
- 9.15 The risks in the Children, Education & Families Portfolio are:-
- Recruitment and retention of permanent staff/ ability to recruit skilled staff for the posts vacant and competitive salaries being paid at this time.
  - Limited supply and increasing costs of residential placements – including the specialist placements for very complex young people. The cost of such placements is high and then with the delay to final hearing families are being retained in these placements beyond the assessment.
  - Continued complexity of children (SEND).
  - Shortage of local school places (particularly for Specialist schools).
  - Increasing High Needs Block expenditure not matched by a commensurate increase in Government Grant.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Legal Implications Personnel Implications Customer Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	2023/24 Budget Monitoring files in CEF Finance Section

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## Children, Education and Families Portfolio Budget Monitoring Summary

2022/23 Actuals £'000	Service Areas	2023/24 Original Budget £'000	2023/24 Latest Approved £'000	2023/24 Projected Outturn £'000	Variation £'000	Notes	Variation Last Reported £'000	Full Year Effect £'000
<b>CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO</b>								
<b>Education Division - Core funding</b>								
Cr 347	Adult Education Centres	Cr 430	Cr 430	Cr 430	0		0	0
576	Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	739	739	620	Cr 119	1	0	0
2,771	SEN and Inclusion	2,525	2,615	2,455	Cr 160	2	0	0
100	Strategic Place Planning	56	56	56	0		0	0
17	Workforce Development & Governor Services	Cr 22	Cr 22	Cr 22	0		0	0
7,516	Access & Inclusion	8,134	9,134	9,177	43	3	0	0
196	Other Strategic Functions	459	369	369	0		0	0
Cr 40	Central School Costs	Cr 60	Cr 60	Cr 60	0		0	0
<b>10,789</b>		<b>11,401</b>	<b>12,401</b>	<b>12,165</b>	<b>Cr 236</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Children's Social Care</b>								
1,911	Bromley Youth Support Programme	1,798	1,798	1,923	125	4	0	0
1,260	Early Intervention and Family Support	1,545	1,545	1,500	Cr 45	5	0	0
10,034	CLA and Care Leavers	11,485	12,352	12,680	328	6	0	300
22,122	Fostering, Adoption and Resources	23,880	24,380	24,348	Cr 32	7	0	500
5,184	0-25 Children Service (Disability Services)	3,714	4,314	5,382	1,068	8	0	1,400
5,073	Referral and Assessment Service	4,765	4,765	5,229	464	9	0	0
4,582	Safeguarding and Care Planning East	4,181	4,181	4,360	179	10	0	0
2,998	Safeguarding and Care Planning West	2,493	2,499	2,715	216	11	0	0
Cr 2,489	Safeguarding and Quality Improvement	Cr 6,255	Cr 6,394	Cr 6,319	75	12	0	0
<b>50,675</b>		<b>47,606</b>	<b>49,440</b>	<b>51,818</b>	<b>2,378</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2,200</b>
<b>61,464</b>	<b>TOTAL CONTROLLABLE FOR CEF CORE FUNDING</b>	<b>59,007</b>	<b>61,841</b>	<b>63,983</b>	<b>2,142</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2,200</b>
129	Total Non-Controllable	1,424	1,424	1,424	0		0	0
11,182	Total Excluded Recharges	7,208	7,208	7,208	0		0	0
<b>72,775</b>	<b>TOTAL CEF PORTFOLIO CORE FUNDING</b>	<b>67,639</b>	<b>70,473</b>	<b>72,615</b>	<b>2,142</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2,200</b>
<b>Education Division - DSG Funding</b>								
21,691	Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA	21,512	21,512	21,410	Cr 102	13	0	0
39,401	SEN and Inclusion	40,787	40,787	45,097	4,310	14	0	0
3,272	Access & Inclusion	3,635	3,635	3,636	1		0	0
22	Strategic Place Planning	94	94	94	0		0	0
6	Workforce Development & Governor Services	20	20	20	0		0	0
130	Other Strategic Functions	481	481	481	0		0	0
Cr 97,312	Schools Budgets	Cr 103,139	Cr 103,139	Cr 103,139	0		0	0
17,840	Special Schools and Alternative Provision	18,983	18,983	18,983	0		0	0
7,847	Primary Schools	10,075	10,075	10,075	0		0	0
4,005	Secondary Schools	3,798	3,798	3,798	0		0	0
0	Charge to Reserves	0	0	Cr 4,209	Cr 4,209	15	0	0
<b>Cr 3,098</b>		<b>Cr 3,754</b>	<b>Cr 3,754</b>	<b>Cr 3,754</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cr 3,098</b>	<b>TOTAL CONTROLLABLE FOR CEF - DSG FUNDING</b>	<b>Cr 3,754</b>	<b>Cr 3,754</b>	<b>Cr 3,754</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
11	Total Non-Controllable	81	81	81	0		0	0
3,087	Total Excluded Recharges	3,673	3,673	3,673	0		0	0
<b>0</b>	<b>TOTAL CEF PORTFOLIO - DSG FUNDING</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL CEF PORTFOLIO</b>								
		<b>67,639</b>	<b>70,473</b>	<b>72,615</b>	<b>2,142</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2,200</b>

**REASONS FOR VARIATIONS****1. Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA - Cr £119k**

The in-house nurseries are currently expected to underspend by £80k, and this is down to an underspend on staffing.

Across the rest of the service there is a £39k underspend relating to staffing

**2. SEN and Inclusion - Cr £160k**

The staffing in this area is currently forecasting an underspend by £153k. This is due to a number of posts that are currently vacant and are currently expected to be filled during the year. The remaining £7k relates to an underspend in running costs.

**3. Access & Inclusion - Dr £43k**

The Education Welfare Service Trading Account is currently expected to under collect on its income by £43k due to the loss of a number of school contracts.

**Children's Social Care - Dr £2,378k**

The current budget variation for the Children's Social Care Division is projected to be an overspend of £2,378k, Additional funding has been identified of £1,370k due to above inflationary increases in prices across the board in CSC. this has been applied but some pressures/demands still remain

**4. Bromley Youth Support Programme -Dr £125k**

The BYSP budget is projected to overspend by £125k this year. The service is currently looking at transformational savings that have not yet been realised.

**5. Early Intervention and Family Support - Cr £45k**

The main projected variance relates to services is a projected underspend on staffing of £82k. This is then offset by a £37k overspend on running costs.

**6. CLA and Care Leavers - Dr £328k**

The service is currently expected to overspend by £328k. This is due to an overspend in staffing of £66k, an under collection of income of £125k and a £15k underspend on running costs. Additional, there are is an overspend of £152k relating to placement costs in the service.

**7. Fostering, Adoption and Resources - Cr £32k**

The budget for children's placements is currently projected to overspend by £88k this year. This amount is analysed by placement type below.

- Community Home's / Community Home's with Education - Dr £804k
- Boarding Schools - Cr £121k
- Secure Placement - Cr £201k
- Fostering services (IFA's) - Dr £309k
- Fostering services (In-house, including SGO's and Kinship) - Cr £568k
- Adoption placements - Cr £199k
- Outreach Services - Dr £143k
- Transport Costs - Cr £79k

Additionally there is an extra £304k worth of income - most of which relates to the cost of the placements. This is then being offset by overspends in staffing of £175k and running cost of £9k.

**8. 0-25 Children Service - Dr £1,068k**

The main area of overspend is the use of Direct Payments and Dom Care to support the client of £1,144k. There is also a overspend in running costs of £24k. These overspends are then being offset by an underspend in staffing of £100k.

**9. Referral and Assessment Service Dr £464k**

The main projected variance relates to a projected overspend on staffing of £573k. This is then offset by a £109k underspend on running costs that mostly relates to No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) clients.

**10. Safeguarding and Care Planning East Dr £179k**

The budget in this area is currently projected to overspend by £179k, and is due to staffing overspends of £169k, with the remaining (£10k) relating to general running costs overspends.

**11. Safeguarding and Care Planning West Dr £216k**

The projected variance relates to a projected overspend on staffing of £39k. There is an additional £177k overspend on running costs that mostly relates to looked after clients.

**12. Safeguarding and Quality Improvement Dr £75k**

The projected overspend of £75k in this area mainly relates to staffing (£53k), and this includes the costs of recruiting and retaining social workers across the whole of Children's Social Care. There is additionally a £22k overspend in running costs.

**Schools Budgets (no impact on General Fund)**

Expenditure on Schools is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) provided by the Department for Education (DfE). DSG is ring fenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget. Any overspend or underspend must be carried forward to the following years Schools Budget.

There is a current projected overspend in DSG of £4,209k. This will be added to the £12,706k carried forward in the reserves from 2022/23. There has been a prior year Early Year adjustment which has increased the 2022/23 DSG allocation by £600k, and this is off set against the DSG reserve that effectively reduces the reserve. This gives us an estimated DSG reserve of £16,315k at the end of the financial year.

**13. Schools and Early Years Commissioning & QA Cr £102k**

The underspend of £102k is due to staffing underspends over a range of cost centres.

**14. SEN and Inclusion Dr £4,310k**

SEN placements are projected to overspend by a total of £4,729k. The overspend is being caused by the Maintained Day (£1,749k), Independent Day (£881k), Alternative Programmes (£1,098k), Maintained Boarding Schools (£259k), Direct Payment (£199k) and Matrix funding (£602k). This is then slightly offset by an underspend on Independent Boarding Schools (£59k).

Additionally to the placement costs, there is an under collection / repayment of grant in this area of £114k, an underspend on staffing across a number of units of £316k, and an underspend on running costs of £217k (of which some relates to the repayment of grant).

**15. Charge to Reserves Cr £4,209k**

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the budget calculations and adequacy of reserves. The 151 Officer within that commentary is now required to consider the Councils DSG deficit position, despite the statutory override being in place.

The statutory override effectively means that any DSG deficits are not included in the Councils main revenue budgets. However funding will ultimately need to be identified

In effect the Council has to still set aside resources to meet the DSG deficit and where no ongoing funding is identified such funding will need to come from the Councils reserves. On that basis the budget monitoring report identifies a deficit of £4,209k which has to ultimately be funded from the Councils reserve.

Although DSG is effectively ring fenced the ongoing increase through funding by reserves (general and earmarked) creates a financially unsustainable position in the medium to longer term

The External Auditor as part of the annual accounts, are required to comment on the Councils Value for money arrangements and will be required to consider any DSG deficit and the impact on the Councils finances

In terms of presentation of the DSG deficit of £12,706k up to 31/3/2023 and the estimated in year sum of £4,209k in 2023/24, there will need to be adequate funding from the Councils reserves unless alternative savings can be found. The use of reserves have been assumed in this report, although the specific reserves to use have not been identified at this stage.

**Waiver of Financial Regulations**

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules state that where the value of a contract exceeds £50k and is to be exempt from the normal requirement to obtain competitive quotations the Chief Officer has to obtain the agreement of the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of Finance and the Director of Commissioning and (where over £100,000) approval of the Portfolio Holder and report use of this exemption to Audit Sub-Committee bi-annually. Since the last report to the Executive, there has been in Children's Social Care there were 4 waivers agreed for placements of between £50 and £100k, 3 between £100k and £150k, and 2 for a value of over £200k.

**Virements Approved to date under Director's Delegated Powers**

Details of virements actioned by Chief Officers under delegated authority under the Financial Regulations "Scheme of Virement" will be included in financial monitoring reports to the Portfolio Holder. Since the last report to Executive, there have been two virements processed :- (1) Transfer of Staff from Learning Disabilities Care Management to Children's 0-25 years' service (£144k) and (2) Transfer of Care Placements Team Staff to Children's Services (£320k)

Description	2023/24 Latest Approved Budget £'000	Variation To 2023/24 Budget £'000	Potential Impact in 2024/25
Children's Social Care	49,440	2,378	The overall full year effect of the Children's Social Care overspend is a net £2,200k, analysed as Residential Care, Fostering and Adoption of £500k, Leaving Care costs of £500k, and CWD costs of £1,400k.

<b>Reconciliation of Latest Approved Budget</b>		<b>£'000</b>	
<b>Original Budget 2023/24</b>		<b>67,639</b>	
<b>Contingency:</b>			
<b>Carry forwards:</b>			
Deed Settlement for Hawes Down Site	expenditure		5
	income	Cr	5
Virtual School - CIN Grant Carry Forward	expenditure		82
	income	Cr	82
Homes for Ukraine DfE Grant	expenditure		1,187
	income	Cr	1,187
BAEC upgrading hardware and supporting software - GLA Grant	expenditure		26
	income	Cr	26
YOT NHS Money	expenditure		29
	income	Cr	29
COVID Recovery Grant	expenditure		130
	income	Cr	130
National Tutoring Programme	expenditure		22
	income	Cr	22
GLA Adult Ed Grant Repayment	expenditure		16
	income	Cr	16
Supporting Families; Investing in Practice Grant	expenditure		475
	income	Cr	475
Homes for Ukraine Main Grant	expenditure		300
	income	Cr	300
<b>Other:</b>			
Transfer of Staff from LD Care Management to Children's 0-25 years' service			144
Transfer of Care Placements Team Staff to Children's Services			320
S31 Leaving Care Uplift Grant	expenditure		68
	income	Cr	68
GLA free school meal payment	expenditure		6,036
	income	Cr	6,036
UKSPF funding	expenditure		275
	income	Cr	275
Above Inflation Pressures on Children Placements			1,370
Drawdown of SEN Transport Reserve			1,000
<b>Latest Approved Budget for 2023/24</b>			<b><u><u>70,473</u></u></b>

Report No.  
CEF23049

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

**Date:** For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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

**Title:** CONSTITUTION OF THE SCHOOLS FORUM

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**Chief Officer:** Director, Children, Education and Families

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for report

1.1 This report provides an overview of the representation on the Schools Forum.

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2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 The Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

- (i) Comment on the Schools Forum constitution with reference to any comments from the Schools Forum;
- (ii) Refer the report to the Portfolio Holder for approval.

2.2 The Portfolio Holder is asked to:

- (i) Agree the constitution of the Forum as set out in the report taking into account any comments from the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee.

### Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. BBB Priority: Health and Integration
- 

### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
  2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Not applicable
  4. Total current budget for this head: Not applicable
  5. Source of funding: Not applicable
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### Staff

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

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

1. The Schools Forum enables the financial strategy of the Dedicated Schools Grant, which has an impact across all school settings and central budgets within Education.
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### Ward Councillor Views

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



### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As part of the Constitution and Terms of Reference, the constitution of the Schools Forum is regularly reviewed to reflect any changes to the make up of the Forum in terms of member representation.
- 3.2 The Constitution was last fundamentally reviewed in September 2012 when Department for Education (DfE) introduced new Schools Forum regulations. Since this point there have been no further major DfE regulations affecting Schools Forums. DfE have said that the role of Schools Forum will be revisited.
- 3.3 The last review to make minor changes was in March 2021
- 3.4 The Constitution will be agreed at the next CEF PDS where any comments from the Forum will be considered.

### 4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM

#### Schools Membership

- 4.1 Representation on the Schools element of the Forum is derived in the main from pupil numbers. Currently there are fourteen members made up of Heads and Governors/Trustees. Current pupil numbers in each sector (primary/secondary/special, etc) have not changed significantly in terms of ratios between each area.
- 4.2 It is proposed to reduce the Membership by two in the Schools Membership removing one Governor/Trustee member from both Primary and Secondary. This is to reflect the difficulty in obtaining a full cohort of membership and changes proposed to ensure that the meetings remain quorate. This proposal will maintain the schools membership at 70%, which is above the DfE guidance of two thirds of the overall membership being from the Schools area.
- 4.3 Therefore overall membership will reduce to twelve.

#### Non Schools Membership

- 4.4 Current representation in the non-schools element of the Forum is five. It is recommended that this remains the same. There is little room for manoeuvre in this area.
- 4.5 A summary of the proposed new Constitution is below.

### CONSTITUTION

Membership	OLD	NEW
<b>SCHOOLS</b>		
Special Maintained school representative governor/head	1	1
Special Academy school representative governor/head	1	1
PRU Academy head/governor	1	1
Primary Academy head representative	2	2
Primary Academy governor representative	3	2
Primary Maintained head representative	1	1
Secondary Maintained head/governor representative	1	1
Secondary Academy head representative	2	2
Secondary Academy governor representative	2	1
	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>

## **NON SCHOOLS**

Early year provider (PVI)	1	1
14-19 partnership**	1	1
Diocese CofE**	1	1
Diocese Catholic**	1	1
Joint Teacher Liaison**	1	1
	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>

## **OTHER NON- VOTING ATTENDEES**

Portfolio Holder/Portfolio Holder Assistant	1	1
Director of Education	1	1
Head of Finance	1	1
Head of Schools Finance Support	1	1
Clerk of the Forum	1	1
	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>

\*\* These members cannot vote on matters relating to the funding formulae to be used by the Local Authority

- 4.6 As there has been no material change in terms of the number of pupils in the different categories then it is proposed not to make any alterations to the makeup of the Forum.

### **Vacancies**

- 4.7 Assuming the new constitutional arrangements are agreed, there are currently five vacancies on the Forum as follows:-

1 Special Maintained Head/Governor  
1 Primary Academy Head  
1 Primary Academy Governor  
Diocese Catholic  
Joint Teacher Liaison

- 4.8 As per the terms of reference the relevant group will be asked to nominate a representative using a democratic process. The Council will assist where necessary. Where this is not possible, the Council will approach the relevant group for nominations.

## **5. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE FORUM**

- 5.1 The Terms of Reference are largely unchanged. However some minor points of clarification are as follows:-

i) included the word 'Trustee' to encompass slightly different arrangements with Academy school in relation to Governors

ii) clarified the 40% quorate meeting arrangement to exclude vacancies

iii) changed the term of office dates

iv) amended the membership numbers as per the recommendation

- 5.2 Terms of Reference are attached in Appendix 1. The latest DfE Forums good practice guide and regulations, powers and responsibilities and structure are contained in Appendix 2, the

relevant Statutory Instrument is contained in Appendix 3 and the workings of the membership numbers in Appendix 4.

## 6. CONSIDERATION BY THE SCHOOLS FORUM

- 6.1 On the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 the Schools Forum considered the proposals on the constitution. Although the Forum has no powers to determine the constitution it is considered good practise to consult them on any potential changes.
- 6.2 One area highlighted by a forum member was the election of the Chair and Vice Chair. In the constitution this was originally set as taking place in the Autumn term. It was discussed and recommended that this should be changed to the first meeting of the Municipal year, which usually takes place in June/July.
- 6.3 The constitution has been amended to reflect this change.
- 6.4 The Schools Forum voted on the constitution and agreed with the changes being proposed by the Council.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Financial Implications Legal Implications Policy Implications Personnel Implications Customer Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	N/A

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## BROMLEY SCHOOLS FORUM

### CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### 1. Membership

##### SCHOOLS

Special Maintained school representative governor/trustee/head	1
Special Academy school representative governor/trustee/head	1
PRU Academy representative head/trustee/governor	1
Primary Academy head representative	2
Primary Academy governor/trustee representative	2
Primary Maintained head representative	1
Secondary Maintained head/trustee/governor representative	1
Secondary Academy head representative	2
Secondary Academy governor/trustee representative	1
	<u>12</u>

##### NON SCHOOLS

Early year provider (PVI)	1
14-19 partnership**	1
Diocese CofE**	1
Diocese Catholic**	1
Joint Teacher Liaison**	1
	<u>5</u>

##### OTHER NON- VOTING ATTENDEES

Portfolio Holder/Portfolio Holder Assistant	1
Assistant Director of Education/Schools	1
Head of Finance	1
Head of Schools Finance Support	1
Clerk of the Forum	1
	<u>5</u>

- 1.1 Those members of the forum marked with an asterisk (\*\*) cannot vote on matters relating to the funding formulae to be used by the Local Authority.
- 1.2 On the matter of de-delegation only the relevant maintained school members of the forum will be able to vote.
- 1.3 The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) are granted observer status at forum meetings with the right to participate in discussions.
- 1.4 Other non voting attendees will attend as and when required or be part of working groups. Examples would be officers from primary, secondary, special and inclusion areas.
- 1.5 Schools membership is determined by pupil numbers. Nursery, Special, Academy, Primary, Secondary and Pupil Referral Units (PRU's) shall be represented proportionally with there being at least one representative in each of the Nursery, Special and Academy areas (assuming that they are represented in the borough).
- 1.6 Pupil number variations between each sector will be reviewed annually (before September of each academic year). Any pupil number variations can then be reviewed. Elections can then be held to rebalance the position in time for the new academic year in September/October.

- 1.7 If this results in a change to the formulation of the forum and a reduction in membership in a particular sector, then the member with the shortest length of membership should be removed from office at the last meeting of the academic year. If there are two members with equal length of membership then the Local Authority (LA) will decide.
- 1.8 School membership will be formulated by ballots in each specific area. The winner of the ballot will become the main representative of the forum.
- 1.9 Non school membership cannot exceed one third of the total membership.
- 1.10 From the schools membership, no two forum members can be from the same School or Multi Academy Trust (MAT). If this does occur then the member with the shortest length of membership should be removed from office. If there are two members with equal length of membership then the Local Authority (LA) will decide.
- 1.11 From the schools membership, alternate members will be nominated by the elected members in each area who can attend and vote in their absence. The Chair must be notified if an alternate is attending in place of an elected member.
- 1.12 The Local Authority (LA) may nominate alternate members for the non school membership
- 1.13 Observers have no voting rights but attend on behalf on the ESFA to advise and guide where appropriate
- 1.14 LA Officers attendance is limited to a relevant Lead Member, Director of Children's Services (or their representative), Chief Finance Officer (or their representative), or if an officer is providing specific financial or technical advice (including presenting a paper to the Forum). Officers have no voting rights.

## **2. Alternate Members**

- 2.1 Alternate members may attend and vote on behalf of members that cannot attend the forum meeting.
- 2.2 A nominated alternate may only replace their nominated forum member.
- 2.3 Alternate members will receive the same documentation as the main nominated forum member.

## **3. Term of Office**

- 3.1 The members of the forum shall serve for 3 years from September 2023. Other members shall serve for 3 years from their date of appointment. However membership can be terminated by the LA using paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 above.
- 3.2 Members who have reached the end of their term of office shall be eligible for re-appointment by the LA. A rolling 3 year term can be agreed by the LA.

## **4. Vacancies**

- 4.1 When a vacancy occurs, self nomination shall be sought from the representative sector, e.g. if the vacancy is for a primary governor/trustee, nominations shall be sought from primary school governors/trustees.
- 4.2 If there is more than one nomination, an election shall be held with those in the representative sector being able to vote.
- 4.3 The exceptions to 4.2 is the Secondary non academy representative, The Special representatives and the PRU representatives. These members could be a head or a governor/trustee. The LA will choose whether the representative should be a Headteacher or a Governor/Trustee in these instances.

## 5. Functions

- 5.1 The forum acts as a consultative body on some issues and a decision making body on others.
- 5.2 The forum acts in a consultative role for:
- changes to the local funding formula (the local authority makes the final decision)
  - proposed changes to the operation of the minimum funding guarantee
  - changes to or new contracts affecting schools (eg school meals)
  - arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in pupil referral units and in early years provision.
- 5.3 The forum decides:
- how much funding may be retained by the local authority within the dedicated schools grant (eg for providing an admissions service or providing additional funding for growing schools)
  - any proposed carry forward of deficits on central spend from one year to the next
  - proposals to de-delegate funding from maintained primary and secondary schools (eg for staff supply cover, insurance, behaviour support)
  - changes to the scheme of financial management.
  - movement of up to 0.5% from the schools to other blocks.
- 5.4 The LA may consult the forum on such other matters concerning the funding of schools as it sees fit.

## 6. Conduct of Meetings

- 6.1 Meetings will be held at least four times a year. These meetings can be held virtually.
- 6.2 The chair and vice chair will be elected at the first meeting in the municipal year.
- 6.3 The vice chair will act in the absence of the chair. The vice chair will have the same powers as the chair in relation to the organisation and running of the meetings
- 6.4 Decisions are taken via a majority vote. In the event of a tie the chair will have the casting vote.
- 6.5 Each member is entitled to 1 vote (subject to paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 above). Alternate members may vote in the place of the specific forum member that they are replacing at a schools forum meeting.
- 6.6 The quorum is 40%. This is 40% of the current membership excluding vacancies. The meeting can continue if inquorate but any advice given to the LA as a result of such a meeting would not have to be taken into account by the Authority.
- 6.7 The forum may have working groups but any advice formally passed to the LA must be approved by the forum as a whole.
- 6.8 Members of the forum must make declarations of interest when relevant, for example, when the forum is considering matters relating to service contracts.

## 7. Working Groups

- 7.1 The forum will make use of working groups when carrying out its business. Working groups will identify and discuss matters that need to be taken to the forum for a decision.
- 7.2 The working groups will be formulated as required and will consist of a mixture of main forum, alternative forum, observers LA representatives and other specific experts.

7.3 The working groups will have no voting rights or decision making powers, but will provide an advisory role to the main body of the forum.

## **8. Confidentiality**

8.1 Confidential items, such as commercially sensitive information regarding contracts or personal information, should normally be discussed by forum members only.

## **9. Attendance**

9.1 If a member of the forum or their nominated alternative member has not attended for two consecutive meetings the clerk shall contact those members. If their reason for non-attendance is deemed inadequate by the chair then an election should be arranged to replace them.

## **10. Administration**

10.1 The LA will provide a clerk for the meetings of the forum.

10.2 Papers for meetings of the forum will be circulated to members during the week before a meeting, preferably at least 5 working days in advance.

10.3 All papers will be sent electronically by email.

10.4 The minutes and relevant papers of meetings (unless confidential) of the forum will be made available on the Council website.

10.5 The LA will pay the reasonable expenses of members of the forum.

## **11. Training**

11.1 Any new forum members must receive training from the local authority on finance matters within two months of taking up the position. Regular attendance at other updates will be required. Further updates will be offered by the LA when appropriate. This applies to the main forum members as well as the alternative members.

## **12. Statutory Instrument**

12.1 The constitution and terms of reference should be read in conjunction with the Statutory Instrument number 2261 (The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012).





Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

# Schools Forum

Operational and good practice guide

March 2021

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## Introduction

1. This guide is designed to provide local authority officers and schools forum elected members with advice and information on good practice in relation to the operation of schools forums.
2. It is organised in two sections:
  - section 1 provides information on the constitutional and organisational requirements for schools forums
  - section 2 covers a number of key aspects of the operation of schools forums at local level, drawing on good practice from a number of schools forums
3. GOV.UK contains details of all the announcements, documents and other information relating to school funding and schools forums, including the National funding formula (NFF) The website also has a range of useful links to other sites that may be of relevance to schools forum members.
4. A short [guide to the schools forum for schools and academies](#), which may be helpful to stakeholders and the wider school family, is available on GOV.UK.
5. If you have any queries about the operation of schools forums please contact Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) using the [ESFA enquiry form](#).

# Section 1 – schools forum regulations: constitution and procedural issues

## Regulations

6. [National regulations](#)<sup>1</sup> govern the composition, constitution and procedures of schools forums. Local authorities can provide schools forum members with a copy of these regulations or alternatively they can be accessed at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2261/contents>.

7. The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021 amended The Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 to make permanent provisions to enable schools forums meetings to be held remotely. This includes (but is not limited to) telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming. Where a schools forum decides to hold a public meeting by remote means only, the forum should provide support or make alternative arrangements so that any interested parties who do not have telephone or online access can attend virtual meetings.

## Schools forum powers

8. Schools forums generally have a consultative role. However, there are situations in which they have decision making powers. The respective roles of schools forums, local authorities and the DfE are summarised in [schools forum powers and responsibilities](#). The overarching areas on which schools forums make decisions on local authority proposals are:

- de-delegation from mainstream maintained schools budgets (separate approval will be required by the primary and secondary phase members of schools forum), for prescribed services to be provided centrally
- to create a fund for significant pupil growth in order to support the local authority's duty for place planning (basic need), including pre-opening and diseconomy of scale costs, and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund
- to create a fund for falling rolls for good or outstanding schools if the schools' surplus capacity is likely to be needed within the next three years to meet rising pupil numbers and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund

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<sup>1</sup> Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2261) (as amended)

- agreeing other centrally retained budgets, including for local authority statutory responsibilities (where these relate to maintained schools only, voting is by the primary, secondary, special and PRU members of schools forum)
- funding for central early years expenditure, which may include funding for checking eligibility of pupils for an early years place, the early years pupil premium and/or free school meals
- authorising a reduction in the schools budget in order to fund a deficit arising in central expenditure, or from de-delegated services, which is to be carried forward from a previous funding period in the 2018 to 2019 funding year the schools block is ring-fenced. Local authorities require schools forum approval in order to move up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks
- in each of these cases, the local authority can appeal to the Secretary of State if the schools forum rejects its proposal.

9. Local authorities should be aware that the provisions of the [Local Government Act 2000](#) restrict the delegation of local authority decisions to Cabinet, a member of Cabinet, a Committee of Cabinet or an officer of the Council, which would not include schools forums. As a result the local authority cannot delegate its decision making powers to schools forum, for example, decisions on the funding formula.

10. Regulations state that the local authority must consult the schools forum annually in connection with various schools budget functions, namely:

- amendments to the school funding formula, for which the voting is restricted by the exclusion of non-schools members except for PVI representatives
- arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs in particular the places to be commissioned by the local authority and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding
- arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the local authority and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding
- arrangements for early years provision
- administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the local authority
- There's no specific definition of these consultation requirements over and above the wording in the regulations. It's a matter for the local authority to decide on the appropriate level of detail it needs to generate a sufficiently informed response from schools forum.

11. Consultation must also take place when a local authority is proposing a contract for supplies and services which is to be funded from the Schools Budget and is in excess of the EU procurement thresholds. The consultation must cover the terms of the contract at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender.

12. The schools forum has the responsibility of informing the governing bodies of all schools maintained by the local authority of the results of any consultations carried out by the local authority relating to the issues in paragraphs 12 and 13 above.

13. Local authorities will need to discuss with the schools forum any proposals that they intend to put to the Secretary of State to:

- vary the MFG
- use exceptional factors
- vary pupil numbers (Secretary of State approval is no longer required for increases relating to changes in admission limits or reorganisations)
- allow additional categories of, or spending on, central budgets
- amend the sparsity factor
- vary the lump sum for amalgamating schools
- vary the protection for special schools and special academies
- move up to 0.5% from the schools block, where the schools forum do not agree, or move more than 0.5% from the schools block

Proposals will then need to be considered by the Secretary of State.

## Membership

14. The Schools Forums Regulations provide a framework for the appointment of members, but allow a considerable degree of discretion in order to accommodate local priorities and practice. A quick guide to the [structure of the schools forums](#) is available.

15. There is no maximum or minimum size of a schools forum. Authorities will wish to take various issues into account in deciding the actual size, including the need to have full representation for various types of school, and the local authority's policy on representation of non-schools members. However, care should be taken to keep the schools forum to a reasonable size to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy.

16. Types of member: schools forums must have 'schools members', 'academies member(s)' if there is at least one academy in the local authority's area and 'non-schools members'. Schools and academies members together must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the schools forum and the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies members must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category, so the structure of Forum should be regularly reviewed, we would suggest good practice is to review the membership as a standing agenda item at each meeting. Academies members must represent mainstream academies and, if there are any in the local authority area, special academies and alternative provision academies. There is no requirement for academies members to represent specific primary and secondary phases, but it may be encouraged to ensure representation remains broadly proportionate to pupil numbers. Academy members must be separately elected and designated from maintained school representatives, please see paragraph 28.

17. Schools forum members will need the skills and competencies to manage Forum business (as detailed in [school forum powers and responsibilities](#)) and to take a strategic view across the whole education estate whilst acting as representative of the group that has elected them. Furthermore, they should be easily contactable and pro-active in raising the profile of issues and communicating decisions, and the reasons behind them, effectively. Good practice for schools forums would be to offer training to new or existing members who may benefit from this.

## Term of office

18. The term of office for each schools member and academies member should be stipulated by the local authority at the time of appointment. Such stipulation should follow published rules and be applied in a consistent manner between members. They need not have identical terms – there may be a case for varied terms so that there is continuity of experience rather than there being a complete change in the membership at a single point. The term of office should not be of a length that would hinder the requirement for the structure of the schools forum to mirror the type of provision in light of the pace of academy conversions. Examples of how this may work include:

- holding vacancies until the schools forum structure is reviewed providing that this does not mean holding vacancies for an unreasonable length of time, for example, we would expect this vacancy to be filled for the following term
- increasing the size of the schools forum temporarily to appoint additional academy members, then deleting schools member posts at the end of a term of office or when a vacancy arises
- considering continuity of service; where an academy conversion affects the school of a current schools member, would academies consider appointing that person as an academies member



19. The length of term of office for non-schools members is at the discretion of the local authority. Schools and academies must be informed, within a month of the appointment of any non-schools member, of the name of the member and the name of the body that that member represents.

20. As well as the term of office coming to an end, a member ceases to be a member of the Schools Forum if he or she resigns from the schools forum or no longer occupies the office by which he or she became eligible for election, selection or appointment to the schools forum. For example;

- a secondary schools member must stand down if their school converts to an academy
- a schools member representing community primary school governors who is no longer a governor of a community primary school in the relevant local authority must cease to hold office on the schools forum even if they remain a governor of a school represented by another group or sub-group
- other situations in which membership of the schools forum ends are if a member gives notice in writing to the local authority and, in the case of a non-schools member, the member is replaced by the local authority, for example at the request of the body which the member represents

## **Schools members**

21. Schools members represent specified phases or types of maintained schools within the local authority. As a minimum, schools forums must contain representatives of two groups of schools: primary and secondary schools, unless there are no primary or secondary schools maintained by the local authority. Middle schools and all through schools are treated according to their deemed status.

22. Where a local authority maintains one or more special schools the schools forum must have at least one schools member from that sector. The same applies to nursery schools and pupil referral units (PRUs).

23. The local authority then has discretion to divide the groups referred to in paragraph 16 and 17 into one or more of the following sub-groups:

- headteachers or headteachers' representatives in each group
- governors in each group
- headteachers or headteachers representatives and governors in each group
- representatives of a particular school category, for example, voluntary aided

24. Headteachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school. Governors can include interim executive members of an interim executive board. The sub-groups do not have to be of equal size; for example, there

may be more representatives of headteachers of primary schools than governors of such schools, or vice versa. The membership structure of the schools forum should ensure there is sufficient representation of each type of schools member in each group to ensure that debate within the schools forum is balanced and representative. As a minimum, there must be at least one representative of headteachers and one representative of governors among the schools members.

25. Whatever the membership structure of schools members on a schools forum, the important issue is that it should reflect most effectively the profile of education provision across the local authority to ensure that there is not an in-built bias towards any one phase or group.

## **Election and nomination of schools members**

26. The relevant group or sub-group is probably best placed to determine how their schools members should be elected.

27. It's good practice for those who draw up the scheme to ensure that a vacancy amongst a represented group would be filled by a nominee elected according to a process that has been determined by all those represented in that group, for example, community primary school headteachers, or secondary school governors, ensuring that everyone represented has had the opportunity to stand for election and/or vote in such an election. The process must be restricted to the group in question; a headteachers phase group could only vote as a whole for headteacher members if the voting excluded academies, as academies members form a separate group.

28. It's not appropriate for a single person to be elected to represent more than one group or sub-group concurrently, for instance, if they were a governor at a primary and secondary school. They can stand for election from either group but can be appointed to represent only one of those groups.

29. The purpose of ensuring that each group or sub-group is responsible for their election process is to guarantee that there is a transparent and representative process by which members of schools forums are nominated to represent their constituents.

30. Appropriate support to each group or sub-group to manage their election processes should be offered by the clerk of a schools forum, or the committee/democratic services of a local authority. This may just include the provision of advice but may also consist of providing administrative support in actually running the elections themselves.

31. As a minimum, we would recommend that the clerk of a schools forum make a record of the process by which the relevant schools within each group and sub-group elect their nominees to the schools forum and be able to advise the Chair

of the schools forum and local authority on action that needs to be taken, where necessary, to seek new nominees.

32. In determining the process by which elections should be operated it is perfectly legitimate for a local authority to devise, in consultation with their schools forum, a model scheme for the relevant schools within a group or sub-group to consider and be invited to adopt. However, such a model scheme cannot be imposed on that body of schools: adaptations and/or alternative schemes may be adopted. A single scheme need not be adopted universally.

33. Care should be taken to ensure that every eligible member of a group or sub-group has an opportunity to be involved in the determination of their group's election process, is given the opportunity to stand for election if they choose to do so, and is involved in the election of their representative(s).

34. It would not be compliant with the regulations for the steering committee or Chair of a 'parent' group simply to make a nomination to represent their group or sub-group on a schools forum. Schools members must be elected, subject to paragraph 39 below.

35. The local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint the schools member if the election has not taken place by that date. The person appointed should be a member of the relevant group.

36. We would recommend that any scheme takes into account a number of factors:

- the process for collecting names of those wishing to stand for election
- the timescale for notifying all constituents of the election and those standing
- the arrangements for dispatching and receiving ballots
- the arrangements for counting and publicising the results
- any arrangements for unusual circumstances such as only one candidate standing in an election
- whether existing members can stand for re-election

37. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, then the local authority must appoint the schools member instead. The local authority may decide to appoint someone else rather than one of the candidates and might wish to take into account the experience or expertise of the individuals, and the balance between the different types of school represented on the schools forum.

## Election and nomination of academies members

38. Academies members must be elected by the proprietor bodies of the academies in the local authority's area, and they are probably best placed to determine the process. Academies members are there to represent the proprietor bodies of academies and are, therefore, not necessarily restricted to principals, senior staff or governors. The same factors should be taken into account as for the election of schools members, set out in paragraphs 28 to 39. For the avoidance of doubt, Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools are classed as academies for this purpose. There is no distinction between sponsored and converter academies.

39. There are three sub-groups for academy members: mainstream academies, special academies and alternative provision academies and it is for the proprietors of academies within each of these sub-groups to elect their representatives. It is not appropriate, therefore, for headteacher phase groups to determine representation unless the academy proprietors have agreed and even then the voting would need to exclude maintained school representatives. There is no requirement for academies members to be split into primary and secondary sub-groups. However, local authorities may wish to encourage academies to consider the pupil proportions across all academies when electing their representatives.

40. Where there is only one academy in a sub-group in the local authority's area, then their proprietor body must select the person who will represent them.

41. It is possible that a single person be appointed as an academies member to more than one schools forum, for example if an academy chain is located across multiple local authorities, providing they are elected on each occasion in accordance with the agreed election process for each separate schools forum.

42. As with schools members, the local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint an academies member if the election does not take place by that date, or if an election results in a tie between two or more candidates.

## Non-schools members

43. Non-schools members may number no more than a third of a schools forum's total membership (excluding observers, see paragraph 58). A representative of providers of 16-19 education must be elected from those providers. This includes those in the FE sector (FE and sixth form colleges) and other post-school institutions that specialise in special education needs (SPNs), where 20% or more of their students reside in the local authority's area. As with academies the providers are probably best placed to determine the election process.

44. The local authority must appoint at least one person to represent early years providers from the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. Early years

PVI settings need to be represented because funding for the free entitlement for three and four year olds and eligible two year olds comes from the Dedicated Schools Grant, and all settings are funded through the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF).

45. Before appointing additional non-schools members to the schools forum, the local authority must consider whether the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses situated in the local authority's area; and, where there are schools or academies in the area with a different religious character, the appropriate faith group, should be represented on the schools forum. If diocesan authorities nominate members for appointment as non-schools members they may wish to consider what type of representative would be most appropriate, schools-based such as a headteacher or governor, or someone linked more generally with the diocese, for example a member of the education board.

46. It's also good practice for local authorities to ensure that the needs and interests of all the pupils in the local authority are adequately represented by the members of a schools forum. The interests of pupils in maintained schools can be represented by schools members. Some pupils in a local authority, however, are not in maintained schools but instead are educated in hospitals, independent special schools and non-maintained special schools. Certain types of non-schools members can play an important role in representing the interests of these groups of pupils. They can also play a role in representing the interests and views of the services that support those groups of vulnerable and at risk pupils who nevertheless are on the roll of maintained schools, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs.

47. The purpose of non-schools members is also to bring greater breadth of discussion to schools forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented. Organisations which typically provide non-schools members are trades unions, professional associations and representatives of youth groups. Parent groups could also be considered. However, as there are clearly limited numbers of non-schools members able to be on a schools forum, care should be taken to ensure that an appropriate representation from wider stakeholders is achieved.

## Other membership issues

48. There are three restrictions placed on who can be a non-schools member of a schools forum. The local authority cannot appoint:

- an elected member of the local authority who is appointed to the executive of that local authority (a lead member/portfolio holder) ('executive members')
- the Director of Children's Services or any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the Director of Children's Services, and who does not

directly provide education to children (or manage those who do) ('relevant officer' (a) and (b))

- other officers with a specific role in management of and/or who advise on funding for schools ('relevant officer' part (c))

49. Schools forums have the power to approve a limited range of proposals from their local authority: the restrictions ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the proposing body (the local authority) and the approving body (the schools forum).

50. However, non-executive elected members and those officers who are employed in their capacity as headteachers or teachers and those who directly manage a service which provides education to individual children and/or advice to schools on, for example, learning and behavioural matters are eligible to be members of schools forums.

51. In the case of non-executive elected members, they may be a schools member (by virtue of them being a school governor), an academies member or a non-schools member. As a non-schools member they may be well placed to fulfil the broader overview and scrutiny role they have within the local authority in general.

52. However, the inclusion of non-executive elected members and certain officers is not a requirement. Many schools forums do not have such members on them and it is for each local authority and schools forum to consider how best to ensure the right balance of school and non-school representation on the schools forum, taking into account their local circumstances and preferences.

## **The role of executive elected members**

53. A schools forum needs to ensure that there are systems in place for executive members of the Council to be aware of its views on specific issues and, in particular, any decisions it takes in relation to the Schools Budget and individual budget shares.

54. Executive members with responsibility for education/children's services or resources of the local authority are able to participate in schools forum meetings. By doing so such elected members are able to contribute to the discussion and receive first-hand the views of the schools forum: it is clearly good practice for this to be the case and the regulations provide the right for executive members to attend and speak at schools forum meetings. However, there is no requirement for this to happen so at the very least there should be clear channels of communication between the schools forum and executive members. Communication may also be assisted if schools forum members attended relevant Cabinet meetings as members of the public, for example, when the funding formula is decided.

## Recording the composition of schools forums

55. Each local authority must make a written record of the composition of its schools forum detailing the numbers of schools members and by which group or sub-group they were elected, the number of academies members and the number of non-schools members, their terms of office, how they were chosen and whom they represent. This record should also indicate the term of office for schools and academies members. It would be helpful if this were published on the schools forum website so schools and wider stakeholders can easily find who their representatives are.

## Observers

56. The Regulations provide that the Secretary of State can appoint an observer to attend and speak at schools forum meetings, for example a representative from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This allows a conduit for national policy to be discussed at a local level and provide access for schools forum to an additional support mechanism, for example, where there are highly complex issues to resolve.

## Participation of local authority officers at meetings

57. Only specific officers can speak at meetings of the schools forum. These officers are:

- Director of Children's Services or their representative
- Chief Financial Officer or their representative
- any person invited by the schools forum to provide financial or technical advice
- any person presenting a paper to the schools forum but their ability to speak is limited to the paper that they are presenting

58. In the majority of cases schools forums are supported by a specific officer. In the course of their work, however, schools forums will be required to consider a whole range of issues and they may consider it appropriate that other officers attend for specific items of business. Where this is the case, the local authority should meet the schools forum's requests as far as possible. It is best practice to record attendance at meetings as well as membership to ensure elected members are attending and contributing to discussions.



## Procedures

59. Many procedural matters are not prescribed in the regulations and are at the discretion either of the local authority or the schools forum itself. However, there are requirements in the regulations relating to:

- **Quorum:** A meeting is only quorate if 40% of the total membership is present (this excludes any observers, and it is 40% of the current membership excluding vacancies). If a meeting is inquorate it can proceed but it cannot legally take decisions (election of a Chair, or a decision relating to funding conferred by the funding regulations). An inquorate meeting can respond to local authority consultation, and give views to the local authority. It would normally be good practice for the local authority to take account of such 'unofficial' views, but it's not legally obliged to do so. In practice, the arrangements for meetings should be made to reduce the chance of a problem with the quorum. The quorum stipulation is in the regulations to help ensure the legitimacy of decisions
- **Election of a Chair:** Under the Regulations, if the position of Chair falls vacant the schools forum must decide how long the term of office of the next Chair will be. This can be for any period, but the schools forum should consider carefully whether a period exceeding two years is sensible. A long period will also cause problems if the member elected as Chair has a term of office as a member which comes to an end before their term of office as Chair ends. The schools forum must elect a Chair from amongst its own members, so it is not possible to elect an independent Chair. In addition any elected member of the local authority or officer of the local authority who is a member of a schools forum may not hold the office of Chair. Schools forums can also appoint to a position of vice Chair to provide cover if the Chair is absent or the post vacant
- **Voting procedures:** The Regulations provide that a schools forum may determine its own voting procedures save that voting on:
  - the funding formula is limited to schools members, academies members and PVI representatives
  - de-delegation is limited to the specific primary and secondary phase of maintained schools members
  - retaining funding for statutory duties relating to maintained schools only is limited to maintained primary, secondary, special and PRU members
- **The powers which schools forums:** have to take decisions on a range of funding matters increase the importance of clear procedures, for example, decisions are made on a simple majority or the threshold to be met if higher. These procedures should take account of any use of working groups by the schools forum, for example a decision might be taken by voting to accept and adopt a report by a working group (see paragraph 65). As part of any voting



procedure there should be clarity in the procedures for recording the outcome of a vote, and any resolutions a schools forum makes in relation to any vote taken

- **Substitutes:** the local authority must make arrangements to enable substitutes to attend and vote (where appropriate) at schools forum meetings. This applies to schools members, academies members and non-schools members. The arrangements must be decided in consultation with schools forum members
- **Defects and vacancies:** The Regulations provide that proceedings of the schools forum are not invalidated by defects in the election or appointment of any member, or the appointment of the Chair. Nor does the existence of any vacancy on the schools forum invalidate proceedings (see paragraph 61 on quorum)
- **Timing:** schools forums must meet at least four times a year
- **Meeting:** schools forums can meet remotely. This includes (but is not limited to) telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming.

60. Where the regulations make no provision on a procedural matter, local discretion should be exercised. It is for the local authority to decide how far it wishes to establish rules for the schools forum to follow, in the form of standing orders. While it is entitled to do so, it is of course good practice to allow the schools forum to set its own rules so far as possible.

## Public access

61. Schools forums are more than just consultative bodies. They also have an important role to play in approving certain proposals from their local authority and are therefore involved in the decision making process surrounding the use of public money at local level. As a result schools forums are required to be open to the public. Furthermore papers, agendas and minutes must be publicly available well in advance of each meeting. It's good practice that notification that the schools forum is a public meeting is included on the website and papers are published at least a week in advance. Local authorities should ensure that the websites are accessible and easy to find.

62. Some schools forums already operate very much along the lines of a local authority committee. This is perfectly legitimate and will provide a consistent framework for the running of meetings that are open to the public, and the publishing of papers and agendas well in advance of the meeting and minutes published promptly as required under Regulation 8(13) of the Schools Forum Regulations 2012.

63. Local authorities should ensure that their schools forum clerk's contact details are published on their website and that it is clear to interested parties how they can attend the meeting remotely.

## Working groups

64. It's open to a schools forum to set up working groups of members to discuss specific issues, and to produce draft advice and decisions for the schools forum itself to consider. The groups can also include wider representation, for example, an early years reference group can represent all the different types of provider to consider the detail of the early years single funding formula. The reference group would then be able to give its considered view on the local authority's proposals to the schools forum. The schools forum should not delegate actual decisions or the finalisation of advice to a working group, as this may have the effect of excluding legitimate points of view. These have proved effective for larger local authorities; examples of some working groups are for high needs and early years.

## Urgent business

65. It's good practice for the local authority to agree with its schools forum an urgency procedure to be followed when there is a genuine business need for a decision or formal view to be expressed by the schools forum, before the next scheduled meeting. The local authority may of course call an unscheduled meeting; but it may also wish to put in place alternative arrangements such as clearance by email correspondence or some other means. Such instances should be avoided so far as possible but are legitimate provided all members of the schools forum have an opportunity to participate, the logistics provide a reasonable opportunity for consideration and the local authority policy on data security is not compromised.

66. It's not legal for the Chair to take a decision on behalf of the schools forum, no matter how urgent the matter in question; but a schools forum may wish to put in place a procedure for the Chair to give the local authority a view on an urgent issue.

## Resources of the schools forum

67. The costs of a schools forum fall in the Central School Services Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

68. It's legitimate to charge the running costs of schools forums to this budget including any agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers and costs room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings. Beyond these costs some schools forums have a budget of their own to use for activities such as commissioning research or other reports.

## Section 2 – effective schools forums

### Introduction

69. As the previous section outlined, local authorities have responsibility for establishing schools forums. They also have an ongoing responsibility to provide them with appropriate support, information and guidance in carrying out their functions and responsibilities.

70. The following outlines some aspects of what local authorities and schools forums should consider in ensuring that their schools forums are as effective as possible. The pace of academy conversions in particular means that this significant sector must be properly represented and feel that it is able to play a meaningful part in the discussions of the schools forum.

71. Central to the effectiveness or otherwise of a schools forum will be the relationship between it and its local authority. The local authority will have a significant influence on this: the support it provides; the resources it devotes and the weight it gives to the views of schools forums all contribute to the nature of the relationship. There are therefore a number of characteristics of this relationship that are particularly important:

- partnership: having a shared understanding of the priorities, issues and concerns of schools, academies and the local authority
- effective support: the business of the schools forum is supported by the local authority in an efficient and professional manner
- openness: it's important that a schools forum feels it is receiving open, honest and objective advice from its local authority
- responsiveness: local authorities should as far as possible be responsive to requests from their schools forums and their members. Schools forums themselves should also be aware of the resource implications of their requests
- strategic view: members of schools forum should consider the needs of the whole of the educational community, rather than using their position on a schools forum to advance their own sectional or specific interests
- challenge and scrutiny: schools forums may be asked to agree to proposals from their local authority that will have an effect on all schools and academies in the local area. The extent to which schools forums can scrutinise and challenge such proposals is an important aspect of their effectiveness

72. The characteristics identified above are just some of the aspects that will contribute to an effective schools forum. The following provides more detail on some of the specific issues that local authorities and schools forums may wish to consider in thinking about their own arrangements.

## Induction of new members

73. When new members join the schools forum appropriate induction materials should be provided. These might include material relating to the operation of the schools forum together with background information about the local and national school funding arrangements. Typically they might comprise:

- the constitution of the schools forum
- a list of members including contact details and their terms of office
- any locally agreed terms of reference explaining the relationship between the schools forum and the local authority
- copies of minutes of previous meetings
- the programme of schools forum meetings for the year
- the local schools forum web address

74. This Operational and Good Practice Guide, suitably supplemented by local material, should also be provided to new members on their appointment.

75. Where there is sufficient turnover of schools forum members in any particular year the local authority may wish to organise a one-off induction event to brief new members. Such an event would usefully include an outline of the role of the schools forum and the national funding arrangements for schools and local authorities. It might also include an explanation of the local funding formula and any proposals for review. The opportunity could also be taken to explain the main reporting requirements for school and local authority expenditure.

## Training

76. Ideally schools forum members should be able to use some of the budget set aside for schools forum running costs for accessing relevant training activities. Some training will be provided by officers of the local authority but members may wish to attend national or regional events, the costs of which, where necessary, can be supported from the schools forum budget. Local and national bodies have a key role to play in developing the competencies of forum members.

77. Training will need to be provided in response to any changes in the role of the schools forum and national developments in respect of school funding, to ensure that members can be fully effective when detailed discussions are taking place.

## Agenda setting

78. The process by which the agenda for a meeting or cycle of meetings is set is in many respects one of the key determinants of the effectiveness or otherwise of a schools forum.

79. The frequency and timing of meetings of the schools forum should be agreed in advance of each financial or academic year; these should take into consideration deadlines for the local authority such as disapplication requests and the submission of the authority proforma tool (APT). It's good practice to publish the dates of meetings on the schools forum website. In drawing up this cycle of meetings, in consultation with the schools forum, the local authority should provide a clear overview of the key consultative and decision-making points in the school funding cycle. These will be drawn from a combination of national and local information and should inform the basic agenda items that each meeting needs to cover. For instance meetings will need to be scheduled at appropriate points to enable the schools forum to consider the outcomes of local consultations and national announcements.

80. Although the business of schools forums must be open and transparent, it is recognised that from time to time items of a confidential nature will need to be discussed. It's recommended that authorities apply the same principles that they apply to Council or Cabinet meetings when judging an item to be confidential and adopt similar practices for dealing with those reports in the meeting, for example placing them together at the end of the agenda.

## Preparation for a schools forum meeting

81. It's vital that the schools forum is transparent, open and has clear communication lines to all of the members that are represented. This ensures the wider school family are aware of the business discussed, the impact on their setting and the reasons for the decisions.

82. The vast majority of a schools forum's business will be transacted on the basis of prepared papers. It is therefore important that these are concise, informative and produced in a timely and consistent manner. Recommendations should be clearly set out at the beginning of each report. It's also helpful if the front of the report confirms whether the report is for information or decision and who is eligible to vote where relevant.

83. It's good practice for the schools forum and local authority to agree a standard for papers. It is usual for papers to be dispatched at least one week prior to the meeting at which they will be discussed to allow members to consider them and if necessary canvass views from the group they are representing. Papers should be published on the local authority's website at this time to enable representations to be made to schools forum members.

84. Consistency in the presentation of papers also contributes to the effectiveness of meetings: it helps set the tone of meetings, facilitate the engagement of all members and signal the importance the local authority attaches to the work of the schools forum. Ideally such a standard should be agreed between the schools forum and local authority. The publishing of papers as a single pdf file is helpful as it saves time and avoids accessing multiple documents both in advance of, and during, the meeting. An Executive Summary of the reports can provide schools forum members and members of the public with an overview of the agenda and the decisions required.

85. The publishing of papers on a publicly available website well in advance of the meeting ensures that all interested parties are able to access papers. Some schools forums ensure that each represented group meets in the days immediately prior to the schools forum meeting to ensure the agenda is discussed and schools forum members are properly briefed by the group they represent. Although on occasions it's inevitable that schools forums will receive late, or tabled reports it does create some difficulty for members as they will not have been able to seek the views of those they represent.

86. Schools forums can consider adopting a flexible arrangement for time immediately prior to the meeting. For example it could be used for training of new members, or as a drop-in session for members to ask items of clarification, or for members to meet without officers to discuss the agenda.

## **Chairing the schools forum**

87. The Chair of a schools forum plays a key role in setting the tone, pace and overall dynamic of the schools forum. They should provide an environment within which all members are able to contribute fully to discussions and guide the schools forum to making well informed decisions.

88. The relationship between the Chair and the local authority is therefore vital. The Chair should be very clear on the substance of the agenda items, understand the issues involved and the decisions and/or actions that need to be taken in respect of School Forum business. It's good practice for there to be a pre-meeting between the senior officer of the local authority supporting the schools forum and the Chair of the schools forum to ensure that all the issues are clearly understood.

89. Equally, the Chair has the responsibility of representing the views of the schools forum back to the local authority: for instance, they should, where appropriate, take the initiative to make suggestions for improvements to the way the business is conducted, and, in exceptional cases and with support of the members of the schools forum take the view that they do not have sufficient information on which to base a decision and ask that an item is deferred until further information is available. However, in doing so, the Chair and schools forum should be fully aware of the consequences of deferral.

90. The independence of the schools forum is paramount. Enhancing the role of Chair to a paid position, rather than the reimbursement of reasonable expenses, could blur the lines of independence. Similarly, if the Chair undertakes significant work for the local authority in another capacity, for example as an external consultant, they could be viewed as equivalent to an officer of the local authority.

91. Local authorities could consider if sharing contact details of the schools forum Chair with neighbouring authorities would be helpful for peer support and improving networking opportunities.

## Clerking the schools forum

92. Clerking of a schools forum should be seen as more than just writing a note of the meeting. A good clerk provides an invaluable link between the members of the schools forum, the Chair and the local authority. It's a role often undertaken by an employee of the local authority though we would recommend consideration is given to the use of an independent clerk.

93. Clerks should manage the logistics of the meeting in terms of ensuring dispatch of papers and producing a note from the meeting. In considering the style of meeting notes consideration should be given to making them intelligible enough for non-attendees to get a sense of the discussion as well as clearly indicating the conclusion and action agreed in relation to each agenda item. Verbatim reports of a schools forum's discussion, however, are unlikely to be very useful. Schools forums may consider whether a simple action log should be maintained by the clerk to ensure all action points agreed are followed up.

94. Beyond this a good clerk can:

- provide the route by which schools forum members can access further information and co-ordinate communication to schools forum members outside of the formal meeting cycle
- respond to any queries about the business of the schools forum from headteachers, governors and others who are not on the schools forum themselves
- be responsible for ensuring contact details of all members are up to date
- maintain the list of members on the schools forum and advise on membership issues in general
- assist with the co-ordination of nomination or election processes run by the constituent groups
- keep the schools forum website up to date, for example by posting latest minutes and papers



- monitor, on a regular basis, the schools forum and general schools funding pages on the GOV.UK website; and arrange for the distribution of any relevant DfE information to schools forum members
- if appropriate, provide technical advice in relation to the schools forum regulations and in relation to the operation of a schools forum's local constitution
- organise, operate and record any voting activity of the schools forum in line with the provisions of its local constitution

95. Not all of these tasks may be able to be undertaken by the schools forum clerk. However, each one is important and there should be arrangements in place to ensure they are discharged adequately.

## Good practice for schools forum meetings

96. Schools forums should ensure there is a clear debate of all agenda items. Whilst sub-group meetings are valuable in working through detailed issues, schools forums should consider that the level of debate held at the schools forum meeting and recorded in the minutes will be the official reflection of the level of challenge and discussion on each issue.

97. The use of nameplates for schools forum members also showing which group they are representing can be helpful to members of the public and presenters of papers. In addition the use of coloured cards or coloured nameplates can be helpful when specific members of a schools forum are eligible to vote on specific items, for example, voting on de-delegation or changes to the funding formula.

98. Consultations with the schools forum are a key responsibility of a local authority, ranging from the funding formula to the letting of contracts. Each consultation will be different and depend on the subject being consulted on, but local authorities should consider the following factors as good practice for effective consultation:

- plan and consult early
- allow reasonable timescales for response (as Forum members may need to consult the groups they represent)
- an open and honest approach
- fully inclusive
- allow for ongoing dialogue
- provide feedback



- clear communications

## Meeting notes and recording of decisions

99. A vital part of the effective operation of a schools forum is to ensure that an accurate record of the meeting is taken. This must include the clear recording of votes where there are contrary views. Recommendations to, and decisions of, schools forums must be clearly set out.

100. Notes or minutes of each schools forum meeting should be produced and published on the local authority website as soon after the meeting as possible to enable members and others to see the outcome of any discussions and decisions and/or votes. It is good practice to formally agree the accuracy of the note and minutes at a subsequent meeting but the publication of the draft minutes should not be delayed as a result. We would recommend that a log of the decisions is published within three working days of the meeting, and the draft minutes within 10 working days so that interested parties can access them and consult on them, if necessary, before the next meeting.

101. In order to provide clarity about representation at each meeting, it is good practice for the minutes to record the group and/ or subgroup that each member represents against their name.

## Communication

102. Communication to the wider educational community of the discussions and debates of, and decisions made by, the schools forum is fundamental to their effective operation. The more schools and other stakeholders know about the proceedings of the schools forum, the more their work will be an important and central part of the context of local educational funding. This is particularly important given the decision making role that the schools forum has. Local authorities should consider the operational differences between the types of stakeholders and plan their communications accordingly. For example ensuring effective communications across the PVI sector may be more difficult than with schools, which are more likely to have existing channels of communication for example, headteacher meetings.

103. Each schools forum should therefore be clear what its channels of communication are. It is fundamental that each member of schools forum represents the views of the group or sub-group that they represent and that all those with an interest in funding work together to ensure that their views are taken into account. Therefore communications directly between members and those they represent is essential; professional associations and phase groups could be suitable channels. This will ensure that schools forum members have an ongoing dialogue with the constituents of their group or sub-group and are therefore well able to represent their

views at schools forum meetings. However, the schools forum should also consider additional communication processes. These could include:

- drawing schools' attention to the fact that all its agendas minutes and papers are publicly available on the local authority's website (this should include the publication of formula consultation documents)
- an annual report on the proceedings of the schools forum
- attendance by the Chair, or other schools forum member, at other relevant consultative or management groups such as any capital working group; or senior management meetings of the Children's Services Department
- a brief email to all schools, early years providers and other stakeholders after each schools forum meeting informing them of the discussions and decisions with a link to the full papers and minutes for further information
- a schools forum newsletter can be a less formal and more interesting way of communicating forum business and raising the profile of the schools forum and its members

## News updates

104. Most, but not all, members of the schools forum will already be in receipt of regular information on school funding matters from the local authority and DfE. Other schools forum members should be copied into such information flows so that they can be kept abreast of developments between meetings.

105. Many local authorities have already established dedicated schools forum websites on which they post key information for schools forum members and other interested parties and updated on a regular basis.



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## Schools forum powers and responsibilities

A summary of the powers and responsibilities of schools forums.

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted [voting restrictions apply - see schools forum structure document] and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	Checks for compliance with regulations
Movement of up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
Contracts (where the LA is entering a contract to be funded from the schools budget)	Proposes at least one month prior to invitation to tender, the terms of any proposed contract	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	None

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
Financial issues relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding</li> <li>• arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding</li> <li>• arrangements for early years provision</li> <li>• administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants</li> </ul>	Consults annually	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	None
Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	Gives a view	Approval to application for exclusions

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
De-delegation for mainstream maintained schools for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contingencies</li> <li>administration of free school meals</li> <li>insurance</li> <li>licences/subscriptions</li> <li>staff costs – supply cover</li> <li>support for minority ethnic pupils/underachieving groups</li> <li>behaviour support services</li> <li>library and museum services</li> <li>School improvement</li> </ul>	Proposes	Maintained primary and secondary school member representatives will decide for their phase. Middle schools are treated according to their deemed status	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
General Duties for maintained schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools <b>(please see <a href="#">operational guide</a> for more information)</b></li> </ul>	Proposes	Would be decided by the relevant maintained school members (primary, secondary, special and PRU).	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>funding for significant pre-16 <a href="#">pupil growth</a>, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy</li> </ul>	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• funding for good or outstanding schools with <a href="#">falling rolls</a> where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years</li> </ul>			
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• early years block provision</li> <li>• funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement</li> <li>• back-pay for equal pay claims</li> <li>• remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies</li> <li>• places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils</li> <li>• admissions</li> <li>• servicing of schools forum</li> <li>• Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools</li> </ul>	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• capital expenditure funded from revenue – projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013 so no new projects can be charged</li> <li>• contribution to combined budgets – this is where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a</li> </ul>	Proposes up to the value committed in the previous financial year and where expenditure has already been committed.	Decides for each line	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal



Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
<p>contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing termination of employment costs (costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013 so no new redundancy costs can be charged)</li> <li>prudential borrowing costs – the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013</li> </ul>	<p>Read <a href="#">establishing local authority DSG baselines</a> for more information.</p>		
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high needs block provision</li> <li>central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State</li> </ul>	<p>Decides</p>	<p>None, but good practice to inform forum</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Scheme of financial management changes</p>	<p>Proposes and consults the governing body and Head of every school</p>	<p>Approves (schools members only)</p>	<p>Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal</p>
<p>Membership: length of office of members</p>	<p>Decides</p>	<p>None (but good practice would suggest that they gave a view)</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Voting procedures</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Determine voting procedures</p>	<p>None</p>

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
Chair of schools forum	Facilitates	Elects (may not be an elected member of the Council or officer)	None

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*Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012. (See end of Document for details)*

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2012 No. 2261**

**EDUCATION, ENGLAND**

**The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012**

*Made* - - - - *3rd September 2012*  
*Laid before Parliament* *7th September 2012*  
*Coming into force* - - *1st October 2012*

The Secretary of State for Education makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 47A and 138(7) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998<sup>F1</sup>:

**F1** 1998 c.31. Section 47A was inserted by section 43 of the [Education Act 2002 \(c.32\)](#) and has been amended by paragraph 7 of Schedule 16 to the [Education Act 2005 \(c.18\)](#); paragraphs 2(1), (3) and (4) of Schedule 5 and Part 6 of Schedule 18 to the [Education and Inspections Act 2006 \(c.40\)](#); section 165 of and Schedule 2 to the [Education and Skills Act 2008 \(c.25\)](#), [section 194](#) of the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 \(c. 22\)](#) and S.I. 2010/1158. For the meaning of “prescribed” and “regulations” see [section 142\(1\)](#) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

**Citation, commencement, application and interpretation**

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 and come into force on 1st October 2012.

(2) These Regulations apply only in relation to England.

(3) In these Regulations—

[<sup>F2</sup>“16 to 19 provider” means—

- (a) an institution within the further education sector, or
- (b) an educational institution other than one referred to in subparagraph (a) that is principally concerned with providing further education suitable for persons over compulsory school age who have special educational needs<sup>F3</sup>...,

where 20% or more of the students at the institution reside in the authority’s area;]

“the Act” means the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;

“Academies member” means a member who represents the proprietors of the Academies situated in the authority’s area;

[<sup>F4</sup>“alternative provision Academy” means an educational institution which meets the requirements of section 1C of the Academies Act 2010;]

“authority” means the local authority in whose area the schools forum is established;

“early years providers” means—

- (a) persons who are registered as early years childminders or other early years providers under Chapter 2 of Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006<sup>F5</sup> (which provides for the compulsory registration of persons providing early years provision) or are exempt from compulsory registration by order of the Secretary of State under section 33(2) or 34(3) of that Act,
- (b) independent schools, and
- (c) non-maintained special schools,

who provide early years provision;

“early years provision” has the meaning given by section 20 of the Childcare Act 2006;

“executive member” means any elected member of the authority appointed to the executive of that authority;

“governor” includes any interim executive member of an interim executive board constituted in accordance with paragraph 2 of Schedule 6 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006<sup>F6</sup>;

[<sup>F7</sup>“mainstream Academy” means an educational institution which meets the requirements of section 1A(1) of the Academies Act 2010;]

“nursery school” means a nursery school maintained by the authority;

“primary school” means a primary school maintained by the authority;

“representative” means either a head teacher or a senior member of staff representing a head teacher or a governor of a school maintained by the authority, save for in [<sup>F8</sup>regulation 7(1)(a) and] regulation 8 where it means a representative of the positions mentioned in that regulation;

“school” means a school maintained by the authority;

“school category” means one of the following categories of school—

- (d) community schools,
- (e) foundation schools,
- (f) voluntary aided schools,
- (g) voluntary controlled schools,

as described in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Act;

“secondary school” means a secondary school maintained by the authority;

“senior member of staff” means a principal, deputy head teacher, bursar or other person responsible for the financial management of the school;

[<sup>F9</sup>“special Academy” means an educational institution which meets the requirements of section 1A(2) of the Academies Act 2010;]

“special school” means a community special school or a foundation special school.

(4) In these Regulations, a reference to a governing body does not include a reference to the temporary governing body of a new school and a reference to a governor does not include a reference to a member of the temporary governing body of a new school, where “new school” has the meaning given by section 72(3) of the Act<sup>F10</sup>.

**F2** Words in reg. 1(3) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/3104\)](#), regs. 1(1), 3(2)

**F3** Words in reg. 1(3) revoked (1.9.2014) by virtue of [The Special Educational Needs \(Consequential Amendments to Subordinate Legislation\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/2103\)](#), arts. 1, 41

- F4** Words in reg. 1(3) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(2)(a)**
- F5** 2006 c.21.
- F6** 2006 c.40.
- F7** Words in reg. 1(3) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(2)(b)**
- F8** Words in reg. 1(3) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/3104\)](#), regs. 1(1), **3(3)**
- F9** Words in reg. 1(3) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(2)(c)**
- F10** Section 72(3) was amended by section 215(1) of, and paragraph 106 of Schedule 21 to, the Education Act 2002.

## Revocation

2. The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010 <sup>F11</sup> are revoked.

**F11** [S.I. 2010/344](#), amended by [S.I. 2010/1172](#).

## Constitution of schools forum

3. Every authority must ensure that the schools forum for their area is constituted in accordance with regulations 4 to 7 by 1st October 2012.

### Membership: general

4.—(1) Subject to the following paragraphs of this regulation, an authority may determine the size and composition of their schools forum and the forum members' terms of office.

- (2) A forum must comprise—
- (a) schools members elected in accordance with regulation 5;
  - (b) <sup>F12</sup>... at least one Academies member elected or selected in accordance with regulation 6; and
  - (c) non-schools members appointed [<sup>F13</sup>or elected] in accordance with regulation 7.

[<sup>F14</sup>(3) If, for any reason, an election for a schools member under regulation 5(1), an Academies member under regulation 6(1), or person to represent 16 to 19 providers under regulation 7(1)(a) either does not take place by the date (if any) set by an authority or results in a tie between two or more candidates, the authority must appoint the schools member, Academies member or person to represent 16 to 19 providers to their schools forum instead.]

(4) Schools members and Academies members must together comprise at least two thirds of the membership of the forum.

(5) At least one member must be a representative of the governing bodies of maintained schools and at least one member must be a representative of the head teachers of such schools.

(6) Subject to paragraphs (7) to [<sup>F15</sup>(10C)], primary schools, secondary schools and Academies must be broadly proportionately represented on the forum, having regard to the total number of pupils registered at them.

(7) Where the authority maintain one or more secondary schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a secondary school.

(8) Where the authority maintain one or more special schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a special school.

(9) Where the authority maintain one or more nursery schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a nursery school.

(10) Where the authority maintain one or more pupil referral units, at least one schools member must be a representative of a pupil referral unit<sup>F16</sup>.

[<sup>F17</sup>(10A) At least one Academies member must be a representative of a mainstream Academy.

(10B) If there are any special Academies in the authority's area, at least one Academies member must be a representative of a special Academy.

(10C) If there are any alternative provision Academies in the authority's area, at least one Academies member must be a representative of an alternative provision Academy.]

(11) An authority may determine that the number of members representing schools in a particular school category must be broadly proportionate to the total number of schools in that category when compared with the total number of schools.

(12) A forum member remains in office until—

- (a) the member's term of office expires;
- (b) the member ceases to hold the office by virtue of which the member became eligible for election, selection or appointment to the forum;
- (c) the member resigns from the forum by giving notice in writing to the authority; or
- (d) in the case of a non-schools member, the member is replaced by the authority, at the request of the body which the member represents, by another person nominated by that body
- (e) whichever comes first.

(13) The authority must maintain a written record of the composition of their forum, to include—

- (a) the number of schools members and by which group or sub-group they were elected;
- (b) the number of Academies members; and
- (c) the number of non-schools members, their terms of office, how they were chosen and whom they represent.

**F12** Words in reg. 4(2)(b) revoked (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by virtue of [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(3)**

**F13** Words in reg. 4(2)(c) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/3104\)](#), regs. 1(1), **3(4)**

**F14** Reg. 4(3) substituted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/3104\)](#), regs. 1(1), **3(5)**

**F15** Word in reg. 4(6) substituted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(4)**

**F16** “Pupil referral units” has the meaning given in section 19(2B) of the Education Act 1996.

**F17** Reg. 4(10A)-(10C) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(5)**

## Schools members

5.—(1) Schools members must be elected to the schools forum by the members of the relevant group, or sub-group, in the authority's area.

(2) The groups are—

- (a) representatives of nursery schools, where there are any such schools in the authority's area;
  - (b) representatives of primary schools other than nursery schools;
  - (c) representatives of secondary schools;
  - (d) representatives of special schools, where there are any such schools in the authority's area; and
  - (e) representatives of pupil referral units, where there are any such schools in the authority's area.
- (3) Each group referred to in paragraph (2) may consist of one or more of the following sub-groups—
- (a) where the authority exercises its discretion under paragraph (4)(a), representatives of head teachers of schools in each group;
  - (b) where the authority exercises its discretion under paragraph (4)(b), representatives of governors of schools in each group;
  - (c) where the authority exercises its discretion under paragraph (4)(c), representatives of head teachers and governors of schools in each group.
- (4) The authority may determine that a certain number of representatives of each group must be—
- (a) head teachers or head teachers' representatives;
  - (b) governors; or
  - (c) head teachers or head teachers' representatives and governors.

#### **[<sup>F18</sup>Academies members**

6.—(1) Academies members representing mainstream Academies must be elected to the schools forum by the proprietors of mainstream Academies in the authority's area.

(2) Where there is only one mainstream Academy in the authority's area, the proprietor of that Academy must select the person who will represent it on the schools forum.

(3) Academies members representing special Academies must be elected to the schools forum by the proprietors of special Academies in the authority's area.

(4) Where there is only one special Academy in the authority's area, the proprietor of that special Academy must select the person who will represent it on the schools forum.

(5) Academies members representing alternative provision Academies must be elected to the schools forum by the proprietors of alternative provision Academies in the authority's area.

(6) Where there is only one alternative provision Academy in the authority's area, the proprietor of that alternative provision Academy must select the person who will represent it on the schools forum.]

**F18** Reg. 6 substituted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), **3(6)**

#### **Non-schools members**

7.—<sup>F19</sup>(1) The schools forum must include—

- (a) where there is at least one 16 to 19 provider, at least one person to represent 16 to 19 providers, that person to be elected by representatives of the 16 to 19 providers, or if there is only one 16 to 19 provider, by the representatives of that provider; and
- (b) one or more persons appointed by the authority to represent early years providers.]

(2) Subject to paragraph (3) and regulation 4(4), the authority may appoint additional non-schools members to their forum to represent the interests of other bodies.

(3) Prior to making any appointment under paragraph (2), the authority must consider whether the following bodies should be represented on their forum—

- (a) the Diocesan Board of Education for any diocese any part of which is situated in the authority's area;
- (b) the Bishop of any Roman Catholic Diocese any part of which is situated in the authority's area;
- (c) where there are any schools or Academies within the authority's area that are designated under section 69(3) of the Act <sup>F20</sup> as having a religious character (other than Church of England or Roman Catholic schools), the appropriate faith group in respect of any such school or Academy.

(4) The authority may not appoint any executive member or relevant officer of the authority to their forum as a non-schools member.

(5) Within one month of the appointment of any non-schools member, the authority must inform the governing bodies of schools maintained by them and of Academies within their area of the name of the member and the name of the body that member represents.

(6) In this Regulation “relevant officer” means—

- (a) the director of children's services of the authority,
- (b) any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the director of children's services, other than one who directly provides education to children or who manages such a person, or
- (c) any officer whose work involves management of, or advice on, school funding.

**F19** [Reg. 7\(1\)](#) substituted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/3104\)](#), regs. 1(1), **3(6)**

**F20** Section 69(3) also applies to independent schools (which includes Academies) by virtue of section 124B, which was inserted by regulations 2 and 3 of [S.I. 2003/2037](#).

## Meetings and proceedings of schools forum

**8.—(1)** The schools forum must meet at least four times a year.

[<sup>F21</sup>(1A) A meeting of the schools forum is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are physically in the same place and includes meetings held through remote means.]

(2) All meetings of the schools forum must be public meetings.

[<sup>F22</sup>(2A) “public meeting” includes a meeting of the schools forum that the public can access through remote means.]

(3) The meetings are quorate if at least two fifths of the total membership is present at the meeting.

[<sup>F23</sup>(3A) For the purposes of regulation 8(3) reference to being “present” at the meeting includes members being present through remote means. A member will not be considered to be present through remote means unless the conditions in 8(3B) are satisfied.

(3B) A member accessing the meeting by remote means must be able to—

- (a) hear and be heard by, and where practicable, see and be seen by any members present;
- (b) be heard and, where practicable, seen by any members of the public at the meeting.]



(4) The following persons may speak at meetings of the forum, even though they are not members of the forum-

- (a) the director of children's services at the authority or their representative;
- (b) the chief finance officer at the authority or their representative;
- (c) any elected member of the authority who has primary responsibility for children's services or education in the authority;
- (d) any elected member of the authority who has primary responsibility for the resources of the authority;
- (e) any person who is invited by the forum to attend in order to provide financial or technical advice to the forum;
- (f) an observer appointed by the Secretary of State; and
- (g) any person presenting a paper or other item to the forum that is on the meeting's agenda, but that person's right to speak shall be limited to matters related to the item that the person is presenting.

(5) The members of the forum must elect a person as chair from among their number and determine the chair's term of office.

(6) The members of the forum may not elect as chair any member of the forum who is an elected member or officer of the authority.

(7) The chair of the forum must decide upon an agenda for the meeting of the forum following consultation with members of the forum.

(8) The authority must make arrangements to enable substitutes to attend and vote at meetings of the forum on behalf of schools members, Academies members and non-schools members, in consultation with members of the forum.

(9) Apart from as provided for by <sup>[F24]</sup>paragraphs (9A) to (10)] all members are entitled to vote on all matters put to a vote.

<sup>[F25]</sup>(9A) Only the schools members of the schools forum who are representatives of primary schools may vote to decide whether or not to authorise the matters referred to in regulation 12(1)(d) of <sup>[F26]</sup>the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2023] where they relate to primary schools.

(9B) Only the schools members of the schools forum who are representatives of secondary schools may vote to decide whether or not to authorise the matters referred to in regulation 12(1)(d) of <sup>[F26]</sup>the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2023] where they relate to secondary schools.

(9C) Only the schools members of the schools forum who are listed in regulation 5(2)(b) to (e) may vote to decide whether or not to authorise the matters referred to in regulation 12(1)(e) of <sup>[F26]</sup>the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2023].]

(10) Non-schools members, other than those who represent early years providers, must not vote on matters relating to the formulae to be used by the local authority to determine the amounts to be allocated to schools and early years providers in accordance with regulations made under sections 47 and 47ZA of the Act.

(11) Subject to paragraphs (8) to (10), the members of the forum may determine their own voting procedures.

(12) The proceedings of the forum are not invalidated by—

- (a) any vacancy among their number;
- (b) any defect in the election or appointment of any member; or

(c) any defect in the election of the chair.

(13) The authority must promptly publish all papers considered by the forum and the minutes of their meetings on their website.

[<sup>F27</sup>(14) “Remote means” means access to a meeting to enable persons to attend or participate simultaneously by electronic means, including (but not limited to) telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming.]

- F21** Reg. 8(1A) inserted (18.6.2020) by virtue of [The Schools Forums \(England\) \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/540\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(2)** (as amended (11.2.2021) by S.I. 2021/59, regs. 1, **35(2)(b)**)
- F22** Reg. 8(2A) inserted (18.6.2020) by virtue of [The Schools Forums \(England\) \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/540\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(3)** (as amended (11.2.2021) by S.I. 2021/59, regs. 1, **35(2)(b)**)
- F23** Reg. 8(3A)(3B) inserted (18.6.2020) by virtue of [The Schools Forums \(England\) \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/540\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(4)** (as amended (11.2.2021) by S.I. 2021/59, regs. 1, **35(2)(b)**)
- F24** Words in reg. 8(9) substituted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(S.I. 2012/2991\)](#), regs. 1(1), **3(2)(a)**
- F25** Reg. 8(9A)-(9C) substituted for reg. 8(9A)(9B) (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2017 \(S.I. 2017/44\)](#), **regs. 1(1), 3**
- F26** Words in reg. 8 substituted (with application in relation to the financial year beginning on 1.4.2023) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2023 \(S.I. 2023/59\)](#), regs. 1(1), **3**
- F27** Reg. 8(14) inserted (18.6.2020) by virtue of [The Schools Forums \(England\) \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/540\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(5)** (as amended (11.2.2021) by S.I. 2021/59, regs. 1, **35(2)(b)**)

### Consultation on contracts

**9.** The authority must consult the schools forum on the terms of any proposed contract for supplies or services (being a contract paid or to be paid out of the authority's schools budget<sup>F28</sup>) where the estimated value of the proposed contract is not less than the threshold which applies to the authority for that proposed contract pursuant to [<sup>F29</sup>regulation 5 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015] at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender.

- F28** “Schools budget” has the meaning given in section 45A(2) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- F29** Words in reg. 9 substituted (26.2.2015) by [The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 \(S.I. 2015/102\)](#), reg. 1(2), **Sch. 6 para. 20**

### Consultation on financial issues

**10.—(1)** The authority must consult the schools forum annually in respect of the authority's functions relating to the schools budget, in connection with the following—

- (a) arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs [<sup>F30</sup>, and in particular—
- (i) the places to be commissioned by the local authority in different schools and other institutions, and
- (ii) the arrangements for paying top-up funding to schools and other institutions];

- (b) arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school [<sup>F31</sup>, and in particular—
- (i) the places to be commissioned by the authority and by schools in pupil referral units and other providers of alternative provision, and
  - (ii) the arrangements for paying top-up funding to pupil referral units and other providers of alternative provision];
- (c) arrangements for early years provision;
- (d) administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the authority.
- (2) The authority may consult the forum on such other matters concerning the funding of schools as they see fit.

**F30** Words in reg. 10(1)(a) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), 3(7)

**F31** Words in reg. 10(1)(b) inserted (with application in accordance with reg. 1(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3352\)](#), regs. 1(2), 3(8)

#### **Information about consultations**

**11.** The schools forum must inform the governing bodies of schools maintained by the authority of any consultation carried out by the authority under regulation 9 or 10, as soon as it reasonably can.

#### **Charging of schools forum's expenses**

**12.** The authority must pay the expenses of the schools forum and charge those expenses to the schools budget.

#### **Members' expenses**

**13.** The authority must reimburse all reasonable expenses of members in connection with their attendance at meetings of the forum and charge those expenses to the schools budget.

Department for Education

*Jonathan Hill*  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

**Changes to legislation:** There are currently no known outstanding effects for the  
The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012. (See end of Document for details)

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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations revoke and replace the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010.

Regulations 3 to 8 provide for the constitution of a schools forum in every local authority in England, including the election of schools members, the election or selection of Academies members and the appointment of non-schools members to the schools forum, their meetings and proceedings. The restriction on non-schools members voting, and the Secretary of State observer status, are new.

Regulations 9 to 11 require the authority to consult their schools forum before entering into certain types of contract and annually in relation to a range of financial issues and the governing bodies of schools maintained by them to be informed of any such consultation.

Regulations 12 and 13 require the authority to pay the expenses of their schools forum out of the schools budget and the reasonable expenses of its members.

An impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no impact on the private sector or civil society organisations is foreseen. The impact on the public sector is minimal.

**Changes to legislation:**

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.

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Report No.  
CEF23045

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE  
AND ADULT CARE AND HEALTH PDS COMMITTEE

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** 0-25 PROGRESS REPORT

**Contact Officer:** Mark Smith, Head of Service, 0-25 Service  
E-mail: mark.smith@bromley.gov.uk

**Chief Officer/  
Sponsor Lead:** Director of Children's Children Education and Families

**Ward:** All Wards;

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## 1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To update the CEF PDS and ACH PDS Committees of the progress of a 0-25 service launched on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022
- 1.2 The Council's [Transforming Bromley roadmap for 2019 to 2023](#) sets out the Children's Services and Education workstream but is cross cutting with Adults, Housing and Health and Commissioning.

This includes 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).
- 1.3 Mark Smith has been appointed as the Head of Service, of the new 0-25 Service. On the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022, the initiation of a 0-25 Service became a reality.
  - 1.4 This report provides a summary of key developments since the meeting of Children, Education and Families PDS Committee on 14 March 2023 and highlights areas for development over the next 6 months.
- 

## 2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the update on the new 0-25 Service be noted.

## Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The 0-25 Service has a significant impact on the support provided for children and young people with SEND and their successful transition into adulthood.
- 

## Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: N/A
  2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority
    - (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.
    - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
- 

## Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
  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):
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
- 

## Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement Non-Statutory - Government Guidance None: Further Details
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive decision.
- 

## Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
- 

## Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
- 

## Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
- 

## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected):
- 

## Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable



### 3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The 0-25 Service is only approaching its first year of development and is a shared service across children and adult services. The Service incorporates Social Work, Short breaks, Occupational Therapy and Preparing for Adulthood Social Care support. This report provides an update on all areas of work, although provides a more detailed focus on Preparing for Adulthood work.
- 3.2 It is widely acknowledged both nationally and locally, that the transition from children to adult services can be a 'cliff edge'<sup>1</sup>. In Bromley, through collaborative working, we have always endeavoured to ensure that pathways are understood, and families and young people's anxieties are minimised. However, we also recognise that we can do more to improve this. We wish to improve transition with a 'smooth pathway', which resulted in the development of the 0-25 service, whilst being more pro-active in our approach to support better individual planning and strategic commissioning.
- 3.3 The changes in the Children and Social Work Act 2017, where the Local Authority is responsible for young people up to the age of 25 and the Children and Families Act 2014 establishing the responsibility to support young people with SEND up to 25, highlights the benefits of a 0-25 Service.
- 3.4 Within children services, there is a collaborative approach with parent/carers and the child. However, when a young person reaches the age of 18 and accessing adult services, the focus rightly moves to the young adult. The service has started this journey of cultural change, discussing how the preparing for adulthood can be owned by all departments and agencies as the children of today become tomorrow's adults. The service has now been initiated, however, at the early stages of cultural change and adult commissioned services gradually changing to have a greater focus on young people from 18-25. It is paramount that we ensure parent/carers and most importantly young people, are part of this process and work together to support this change, prior to the young person acquiring adulthood status.

#### **Vision:**

- 3.5 Our vision was set out in our [SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities for 2019 to 2022](#):
- 'That our children and young people have their needs met locally, as far as possible, growing up alongside their peers and able to live, learn and work in their local community'*.
- 3.6 The collective vision for this project (now the service) was agreed at the 0-25 Governance Board:
- To recognise the vulnerabilities of our children and young people who have SEND and consider the safeguarding issues when reviewing all aspects of this project.
  - To develop meaningful relationships with our children and young people, their parents and carers, our colleagues, and the wider community.
  - To have a strength-based approach, identifying the positive contribution our children and young people who have SEND offer to society.
  - To be aspirational and to support our children and young people to take appropriate risks to reach their full potential.
  - To achieve excellence.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cerebra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/transition-in-england.pdf>

- To embrace the 'Preparing for Adulthood Pathways (PfA)<sup>2</sup> which are Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health.
- To address all forms of discrimination and disproportionality, recognising that children and young people with a SEND are likely to need support and empowerment to achieve, without having to deal further with prejudice and discrimination. The project will need to embrace the nine protected characteristics of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

3.7 The voice of children, young people and their parents are at the centre of [Children and Families Act 2014](#), clearly set out in the principles in [Section 19](#). This dictates that children, young people and their families should be involved in decision making at every level of the system. These values and requirements are key to the service.

### **Present Structure and Progress:**

- 3.8 Following recommendations made to the Transformation Board, an agreement was reached on the development of a new 0-25 Service. The new 0-25 service was initiated on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.
- 3.9 The plan remains that the service will include 4 teams within a 0-25 Service: Social Work team for Children with Disabilities, Short Breaks team, a Preparing for Adulthood Team and the Occupational Therapy (social care) team.

### **Children's Disability Team:**

- 3.10 The Social Work team for Children with Disabilities continues to focus on supporting children and families requiring the most support. This includes Children with Disabilities with a severe/profound disability who need to be safeguarded, Children who are Looked After and Children in Need (where a high level of support is required to prevent a child needing to be looked after, emerging issues of harm and/or complex issues which require a higher level of multi-agency support). The team is also responsible for the completion of children and family assessments.
- 3.11 Since the last progress report, completed at the end of January 2023, a large focus of the work has been on the development of managerial oversight within the service. At an operational level the Group Manager and two Team Managers have changed since the beginning of February 2023. For the Group Manager position, we recruited an experienced manager with disability and preparing for adulthood experience and who was also a previous employee of the Bromley Disability Service. One team manager has been an internal promotion and we have recruited an experienced agency team manager.
- 3.12 There has been a recent review of cases held within the Children's Disability Team, leading to a new categorisation of short breaks. This aids in understanding the level of input required for each child, therefore providing a performance framework to review against. This now includes 'CIN' status which is equivalent to other CIN cases held within social care where the highest level of monitoring is required. 'CIN Support' (level below CIN) identifying children and families where there is complexity, requiring regular visiting and meetings. The remainder are 'CIN Short Breaks' where there is a lower level of monitoring with a minimum of a yearly review.

### **Short Breaks:**

- 3.13 This team continues to develop and still has some work to complete until we are satisfied that it is affective as we aim to be, with the role of reviewing and short breaks being managed within

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/SiteAssets/Downloads/y1fzx4tn636398691202503873.jpg>

the Children's Disability Team. There are two Social Work Assistants and Specialist Information Officer who have focus on lower level short breaks. However, a significant portion of assessing and reviewing of short breaks (which includes the on-line assessments) still remains with Social Workers. As and when specific issues arise regarding safeguarding or complexity with a family receiving low level short breaks, they are transferred to qualified Social Workers.

- 3.14 The aim for short breaks is to develop the short break offer for all children and young people, including improvements for young people 14-25. This year it has been possible, in addition to the [Holiday and Activities Programme Fund \(HAF\)](#), to offer more Short Breaks for children with SEND. This summer there will be 1295 places available over a total of 54 days of provision with four different providers: [Riverside School](#), [Sport Works](#), [Bromley Children and Families Forum](#) and [Family Link](#). This represents an 8% increase in places offered, achieved via an increase in total spend of 12% on the figures for summer 2022 when only 1201 places were offered. We are to work with some of these providers to consider offering support for young people post 18, accessed via direct payments.
- 3.15 These providers now have long-term contracts to provide Short Breaks in Bromley following the Short Breaks Framework tender completed in July 2023 and the re-tendering of the Holiday and Saturday Short Breaks service completed in December 2022.
- 3.16 In order to further decide whether the short breaks team is viable, a review of Local Authority statistical neighbours and Local Authorities where it is possible to compare caseloads of workers within Children's Disability Teams, will be completed. There continues to be difference of opinions by Local Authorities on the level of monitoring required for children and young people receiving short breaks. A number of Local Authorities have decided that due to a status of being classified as Children in Need under [Section 17 of the Children Act 1989](#), they will complete at least 6 monthly review assessments and visits `at least 4 visits per year for all children receiving short breaks. At present, Bromley are of the view that more proportionate reviews of children with disabilities is appropriate. The work Bromley completed in 2015 with the Department for Education and the [Council for Disabled Children](#), recommended proportionate assessments for children with disabilities, recognising the [European Convention of Human Rights - Article 8](#) the right to respect family and private life, without interference from public authority. Bromley interprets that having a child with disabilities and benefiting from short breaks, requires a proportional intervention.
- 3.17 The Bromley recommendation is that a low level short break case, which totals 243 cases warrants, at a minimum, a yearly review. Many children receive short breaks via an on-line assessment which has not warranted visits to the child, but the completion of self-assessments, reference to the child's EHC plan and a conversation with family and verifier. This is viewed as sufficient for the provision of low level short breaks.

### **Occupational Therapy:**

- 3.18 The Occupational Therapy (OT) Social Care team will remain within the present structure in children's social care but are part of the 0-25 service. The primary focus of the service is to assess and review a child's home environment and to consider interventions, aids and adaptations to improve the child/young person's outcomes. The team continue to provide a quality service for the children and young people requiring their support. This requires close working with housing and grants colleagues to support the most cost effective adaptations, whilst ensuring positive outcomes can be achieved for the child and their family. With the OT team being part of the 0-25 service, this supports joint working with families, which is regularly needed as there is a significant overlap of the teams working with the same children and young people.

- 3.19 There is ongoing work between the Integrated Care Board (ICB), the Local Authority and commissioners to ensure the holistic offer of OT support is as seamless as possible for our children and families. The present OT health support is via Bromley Healthcare, whom we are working with to ensure some areas of present overlap are developed and clarified through joint working and reviewing current contracts.
- 3.20 The transition to adult OT is managed well at 18 years of age, with an appropriate transition protocol in place. There is flexibility between teams that if the consistency of support needs to continue for a period within the Children's OT team, this can be managed internally.

### **Preparing for Adulthood:**

- 3.21 The Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) team are working with young people from 14-25. From 14-18 this is alongside the childcare Social Workers, thereafter, taking full case responsibility from 18 years of age. The PfA workers are holding case responsibility whilst an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) plan is in place and until there is transition into adult care services. Once a care package in the home has been implemented or alternative accommodation in place, (such as supported living), a 6 weekly review will be held to ensure the support is meeting stated outcomes and thereafter adult services will take on responsibility. Due to EHC plans potentially going up to 25 years of age, the transfer could occur from 18 years of age up to 25. The PfA Pathways are a key focus of their work, which are Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health.

### **Impact of PfA team:**

- 3.22 There has been the recent agreement and recruitment of a third Social Worker joining the PfA team from the end of May 2023. Within the past 2 months we have been able to address cases waiting for transitional planning. Moving forward this will support more pro-active planning for young people, including those approaching 18, as well as those leaving school or college placement and needing support with their adult life. Until the recent recruitment this has remained a challenge to complete this pro-active planning.
- 3.23 There are approximately 130 young people aged from 17 to 25 that require active work to support them on their journey into adulthood. Recent performance management in the last 2 months has identified cases being presented and agreed at Practice Review Group (PRG) from 17.5 years of age. Prior to the implementation of the 0-25 service and performance prior to May 2023 highlighted this was not achievable.
- 3.24 Since the last PDS committee, the 0-25 service are now in a position to support the PfA work whose primary need is a physical disability. Although in relatively small numbers, for example a young person with muscular dystrophy or acquired brain injury, would now be supported into adulthood via the 0-25 service. This is a positive development, making pathways clearer and seamless for the majority of young people with a severe/profound disability.
- 3.25 The vision remains to support earlier planning, at least from 14 years of age. This will need all members of the 0-25 service to embrace the PfA pathways and will therefore include all Social Care Workers working with young people and families to make them aware of options and processes for young people from 14 years of age. However, more detailed input will be provided through the PfA workers as young people approach 18. As part of this work, a service day was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023, which has encouraged improved joint working and sharing of information between teams within the 0-25 service. A key focus of the day was ensuring there is a shared vision for the service, with a key focus being preparing young people for their journey into adulthood. Practitioners within the service have shared that sharing the same office space supports improved communication and shared vision. An example is workers working across

their previous age barriers. PfA workers have supported with work prior to 18, with issues of deprivation of liberty and Social Workers in the Children's Disability Team are working post 18 to support placement options for children looked after.

- 3.26 The work with adult commissioners is ongoing, with a key area being the development of targeted support for young people transitioning. A key focus has been ensuring the overnight short break provision in adults can offer a similar level of short breaks offered to young people/families as provided prior to 18 years of age. Coffee mornings have been arranged for the parents of 17 year olds currently using Hollybank to visit Widmore Road. It is recognised that there are issues being raised by families and young people regarding the need for adult services, including respite, to be more focused on young people; being able to support young people who might present with behaviours which challenge; having relevant equipment, including sensory stimulation for those young people transitioning, whilst achieving the correct balance to support them as young adults.
- 3.27 Day opportunity providers offer more targeted offers that are attractive to young people, whilst also offering more day opportunities both at weekends and holidays. There needs to be more information and correctly targeted at young people who will have 'care and support' needs as an adult to ensure they are aware of the local opportunities available, instead of opting for more expensive out of borough provision. To date there has been two transition events since the launch of the project. These will continue as this has been an important forum for sharing information and local opportunities available within Bromley and the surrounding area. The inaugural Transition Working Group will lead on organising a future transition event.
- 3.28 At the time of writing, a comprehensive data exercise is being completed to support future commissioning. This is identifying all young people from 14 years of age who are likely to have care and support needs. This will include further information on likelihood of children needing to access a form of residential support, supported living or residential college. This includes young people known to other social care teams, as well as reviewing all those with EHC plans from 14 years of age. The longer term plan is to implement the Transition Plan document for completion at 14 years of age, which will support individual planning and strategic commissioning.

#### **Development areas of the 0-25 Service (next 6 months):**

- 3.29 The commissioning service have identified numbers of young people 18 to 25 that are accessing these services and although numbers are relatively low, there is marked increase in young people accessing local day opportunities. For example, of the 60 attendees to Astley Day Centre, 7 are aged 18-25. This will be an ongoing piece of work to attract young people to the positive day opportunities and provisions that are available post school/college. It is recognised that some out of borough providers have been a preferred option rather than localised provision, which needs further work to consider how this can be replicated locally.
- 3.30 A new Transitional Working Group has been set up with the inaugural meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023. This was attended by colleagues from children and adult social care, SEN, local area representatives, voluntary agencies and health colleagues. We are in the process of establishing parent and young people participation. The group will focus on the PfA pathways, as well as looking at all children with SEN Bromley, which is approximately 9000. The meeting will be held bi-monthly. The next scheduled meetings will identify each one of the pathways and invite appropriate representatives to review the present offer and consider how this information is shared and identify any gaps in provision which need addressing. The group will report into the SEND Governance board. The group will also develop the present SEND action plan, to have greater focus on the PfA pathways, which is shared with the SEND Governance board.

- 3.31 The transfer of budgetary responsibility is being discussed in further detail, with the proposal of a portion of the adult budget to transfer to the 0-25 service, to support levels of monitoring and accountability. The present process is that all decision making is made at the Practice Review Group, chaired by adult services and attended by the 0-25 Head of Service, each Friday. It is acknowledged that as yet significant savings have not been possible, with the present growth of young people meeting the Care Act Criteria. However, the long term aim remains that more cost effective options will be provided for young people, alongside supporting better outcomes of our young people in Bromley.
- 3.32 Additional training sessions continue to be provided for members of the Children's Disability Service not yet trained in Mental Capacity Assessments. This is alongside relevant work shadowing opportunities through the PfA team, Deprivation of Liberty and Adult Learning Disability Service. The Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) have now been confirmed are delayed at least until a new Government is formed. Therefore, the 0-25 Service will continue to review all young people where there is a deprivation of liberty and ensure there is the appropriate authorisation from the courts.
- 3.33 The transition for young people whose primary need is a mental health condition will remain the same, whereby if a young person meets the threshold for intervention for adult mental health they will transition on to a well-established multi-agency community mental health team based within Oxleas Foundation NHS Trust at 18. Although as part of the work on transition development, we will need to ensure that the same key performance indicator of completion of Care Act Assessments at 17.5 is adhered to.
- 3.34 The Learning Disability Transition Nurse continues to fulfil her role in supporting young people with learning disabilities to support their health transition into adulthood. Although meetings have been held, a decision is still required as to how this work can be strengthened through working with the 0-25 service. She is a representative on the Transition Working Group. Bromley Healthcare have a transition working group and their work will link in with the Transition Working Group to ensure holistic support to young people with disabilities. There is also continued joint working with the [LeDeR](#) lead (Learning from Lives and Deaths of people with a Learning Disability and autistic people) to ensure the safeguarding of young people with disability is a priority of the service.

#### **Governance Arrangements:**

- 3.35 The Head of Service, 0-25 Service reports to Vicky West, Assistant Director for Specialist Services in Children's services, whilst having scheduled discussions with Dirk Holtzhausen, Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Practice, Provider Relationships, Adult Social Care.
- 3.36 The SEND Governance Board is now responsible for reviewing the progress of the 0-25 service, which is attended by relevant senior managers/directors and local area representatives.
- 3.37 The newly formed Transition Operational Working Group will report progress as well into the SEND Governance Board.
- 3.38 In addition, there has been oversight through approximately 3 monthly meetings with the Chief Executive and Directors to ensure the service is progressing in the right direction of improving outcomes, whilst being a cost effective development.

#### **4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

- 4.1 The Impact of the work of the 0-25 yrs service has been set out in detail within the above report. In summary the focus of Service is designed to make a positive impact on the following key areas;

- Improving Transition arrangements between Children's Services and Adult Services.
- Ensuring stronger communication and planning for people with a disability
- Strengthening the engagement of parents and carers
- Promoting independent living options where it is safe to do so and reducing reliance on costly residential care.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Policy/Financial/ Personnel/Legal/Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]

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Report No.  
CEF23035

## London Borough of Bromley

### PART ONE - PUBLIC

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Decision Maker: **SCHOOLS' FORUM**

Date: **13<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Decision Maker: **CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: **13<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

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

**TITLE: SPENDING BY PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL  
MAINTAINED SCHOOLS IN 2022/23**

Contact Officer: Julie Crew, Schools Funding Manager  
Tel: 07918 334 930 E-mail: Julie.Crew@liberata.com

Chief Officer: Jared Nehra, Director of Education

Ward: Boroughwide

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1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides information on all revenue and capital balances held by Primary, Secondary and Special Maintained Schools as at 31 March 2023, and also provides a comparison to the balances held at the same time in the previous year.
- 

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 **The Committee is invited to consider the financial position of Primary, Secondary and Special Maintained Schools at the end of the 2022/23 financial year and to identify any matters for specific comment and referral to the Portfolio Holder.**
- 2.2 **The Schools' Forum is asked to note the balances for information.**

### Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: N/A
  2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
- 

### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
  2. Ongoing costs: N/A
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23
  4. Total current budget for this head:
  5. Source of funding: Dedicated Schools Grant
- 

### 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: n/a No Executive Decision.
- 

### Customer Impact

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

### Ward Councillor Views

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

### 3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 This report highlights the financial position of Primary, Secondary and Special Maintained Schools as at 31 March 2023 the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
- 3.2 Balances are reported in accordance with the DfE Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) Regulations. This is the framework for reporting income and expenditure and balances. It provides schools with a benchmarking facility for comparison between similar schools to promote self-management and value for money. A CFR return is produced for all schools maintained by the Local Authority as at 31 March 2023.
- 3.3 The CFR framework consists of five balances, which provide an overall picture of a school's resources available from one year to the next, and gives information on balances carried forward. The balances are categorised as follows:
- BO1 Committed Revenue Balances
  - BO2 Uncommitted Revenue Balances
  - BO3 Devolved Formula Capital Balances
  - BO5 Other Capital Balances
  - BO6 Community Focused Extended Schools Balances

To be noted, **BO4 Other Standard Fund Capital Balances** has been deleted as it related to Standards Funds which no longer exist.

The average level of revenue balances (BO1 and BO2) both committed and uncommitted for Maintained Primary School stands at 16% of School Budget Shares which represents an increase from the previous year. Secondary School balances have decreased to 3%. Special School balances have remained static at 13%.

- 3.4 There are six Maintained schools remaining. These can be further split into 3 separate groups:-
- (i) There is one Community school. This is maintained by the Local Authority, but they have their own budgets and manage their own affairs. Religious education and worship is non-denominational and in accordance with an agreed syllabus.
  - (ii) There is one Voluntary Aided (VA) school. These were originally provided within the borough by voluntary bodies such as the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. These are now maintained by the Local Authority but manage their own budgets and affairs. Religious education will conform to the agreed syllabus and to the school's trust deed. Voluntary Aided Schools set up by voluntary bodies continue to accept most of the costs of maintaining the school and manage their own affairs. The Governors of the school exercise control over religious education and it will follow the teachings of the denomination set up within the school.
- 3.5 There are four Foundation schools. These have opted out of Local Authority control and the Governors have accepted full responsibility for running the school. Their funding comes via the Local Authority

3.6 A comparison of the levels of school balances as at 31 March 2023 compared to the previous year is shown in the table below.

	Primary Schools £000	Secondary Schools £000	Special Schools £000
<b>Revenue balances only as at: 31.03.23</b>			
Committed Revenue Balances (BO1)	122 (2%)	50 (0%)	797 (7%)
Uncommitted Revenue Balances (BO2)	905 (14%)	165 (3%)	642 (6%)
	1,027 (16%)	215 (3%)	1,439 (13%)
<b>Revenue balances only as at: 31.03.22</b>			
Committed Revenue Balances (BO1)	112 (1%)	0 (0%)	408 (4%)
Uncommitted Revenue Balances (BO2)	813 (12%)	229 (4%)	959 (9%)
	925 (13%)	229 (4%)	1,366 (13%)

3.7 Full details of school's balances can be seen at **Appendix 1**

3.8 All schools with un-committed balances in excess of 8% have been asked to complete pro-forma detailing the reason for holding a high balance and their plans for reducing the balance in year.

3.9 The DfE also require further analysis to be undertaken in relation to this data. LAs are required to provide information on how they are proposing to address the issue if an:

**A:** LA has overspent its Dedicated Schools Grant by 2% or more (i.e. it is 2% or more in deficit)

**B:** LA has underspent its Dedicated Schools Grant by 5% or more (i.e. it is 5% or more in surplus)

**C:** LA has 2.5% of its schools that have been in deficit of 2.5% or more for the last 4 years and their individual deficit must have been at least £10,000 each year. We will only ask LAs for more information where at least three schools in the LA meet the criteria

**D:** LA has 5% of schools that have had a surplus of 15% or more for the last 5 years and their individual surplus must have been at least £10,000 each year. LAs will only be asked for more information where at least three schools in the LA meet the criteria.

Details of schools balances are contained within **Appendix 2** – for 2022/23 none of the four categories above apply to Bromley.

3.10 This report also provides information on those schools with a deficit revenue balance. As at 31 March 2023, there are no schools with a deficit balance.

3.11 In accordance with DfE requirements the Schools Finance Team will work with schools with high balances to ensure that they are being used effectively. Schools are advised that revenue funding is allocated on an annual basis to support the cost of education for

their current pupils and therefore it is not acceptable for schools to retain high levels of revenue funding to protect against possible funding reductions in future years.

3.12 Those schools with high balances have been requested to provide evidence of future expenditure to justify high balances.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Whilst this report provides details of school balances, there are no financial implications to be considered.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Policy, Legal and Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	

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	2022-2023									2021-2022			
	BO1 Committed Revenue Balances	BO2 Uncommitted Revenue Bal 31/03/2023	B02 Rev Bal as % of 2022/23 SBS	BO1 & B02 Rev Bal as % of 2022/23 SBS	School Budget Share 2022/23	BO3 Devolved Formula Cap Balances	BO5 Other Capital Balances	BO6 Community Focussed Ext Schools	Total Balance C/fwd as at 31-Mar-23	BO1 Committed Revenue Balances	BO2 Uncommitted Revenue Bal 31/03/2022	B02 Rev Bal as % of 2021/22 SBS	BO1 & B02 Rev Bal as % of 2021/22 SBS
	£	£			£	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Primary Schools</b>													
Edgebury Primary	0	402,463	21%	21%	1,954,053	17,709	0	0	420,172	0	312,715	18%	18%
Poverest Primary	88,200	260,760	10%	14%	2,536,240	0	36,189	-10,131	375,018	73,189	266,248	11%	14%
Southborough Primary	34,000	242,089	12%	14%	2,026,508	0	44,022	0	320,111	38,318	234,370	12%	13%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>122,200</b>	<b>905,312</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>6,516,801</b>	<b>17,709</b>	<b>80,211</b>	<b>-10,131</b>	<b>1,115,301</b>	<b>111,507</b>	<b>813,333</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Secondary Schools</b>													
St. Olaves	50,506	164,651	3%	3%	6,487,059	0	0	0	215,157	0	229,449	4%	4%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>50,506</b>	<b>164,651</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>6,487,059</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>215,157</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>229,449</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Special Schools</b>													
Marjorie McClure	497,410	0	0%	16%	3,065,061	23,905	0	0	521,316	171,297	287,971	10%	17%
Riverside	300,000	641,982	8%	12%	7,806,213	0	80,441	194,751	1,217,174	236,571	670,684	9%	12%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>797,410</b>	<b>641,982</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>10,871,274</b>	<b>23,905</b>	<b>80,441</b>	<b>194,751</b>	<b>1,738,489</b>	<b>407,868</b>	<b>958,655</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>970,117</b>	<b>1,711,945</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>23,875,134</b>	<b>41,614</b>	<b>160,652</b>	<b>184,620</b>	<b>3,068,948</b>	<b>519,375</b>	<b>2,001,437</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>

	<b>2022-2023</b>		<b>2021-2022</b>		<b>2020-21</b>		<b>2019-20</b>		<b>2018-19</b>	
	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Combined Rev Bal</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Rev Bal as % of 2022/23 SBS</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Combined Rev Bal</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Rev Bal as % of 2021/22 SBS</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Combined Rev Bal</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Rev Bal as % of 2020/21 SBS</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Combined Rev Bal</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Rev Bal as % of 2019/20 SBS</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Combined Rev Bal</b>	<b>BO1 &amp; B02 Rev Bal as % of 2018/19 SBS</b>
<b>Primary Schools</b>										
Edgebury Primary	402,463	21%	£312,715	18%	£268,012	16%	£80,515	16%	£185,736	15%
Poverest Primary	348,960	13%	£339,437	13%	£333,496	13%	£205,265	14%	£235,349	14%
Southborough Primary	276,089	14%	£272,688	13%	£258,845	12%	£266,015	11%	£163,263	9%
<b>Secondary Schools</b>										
St. Olaves	215,157	3%	£229,449	4%	£233,215	4%	£247,820	5%	£3,267	0%
<b>Special Schools</b>										
Marjorie McClure	497,410	16%	£459,268	17%	£431,974	15%	£268,629	10%	£226,972	9%
Riverside	941,982	15%	£907,255	12%	£865,695	12%	£422,988	6%	£501,166	8%



Report No.  
CEF23048

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT

**Contact Officer:** Cathy Lloyd-Williams, Head of Service for Children in Care and Care Leavers  
Tel: 0208 461 7792 E-mail: [cathy.lloydwilliams@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.lloydwilliams@bromley.gov.uk)

**Chief Officer:** Richard Baldwin, Director of Children, Education and Families

**Ward:** All Wards

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## 1. REASON FOR REPORT

This report is to provide a mid-year update of the progress of Children in Care in Bromley and identify progress made against the outcomes identified in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

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## 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee is asked to 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

1. Summary of Impact: Our looked after children and care leavers remain one of the most vulnerable groups in our community due to their adverse childhood experiences. The report details work undertaken to offer services and support to improve outcomes for these children and young people.
- 

## Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate):  
(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.
- 

## Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
  2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost:
  3. Budget head/performance centre:
  4. Total current budget for this head: £
  5. Source of funding:
- 

## Personnel

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

## Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance:
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive Decision
- 

## Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
- 

## Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: N/A
- 

## Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: N/A
- 

## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected):
- 

## Ward Councillor Views

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

### 3. COMMENTARY

The year July 2022-2023 has been a busy, varied, and productive year for the Children Looked After service. Following the restriction of the 'covid years' and repeated lockdowns, working with our children face to face again, seeing them regularly in 'Our House' dedicated hub and enjoying many activities with them including the summer programmes has been really enjoyable again for our staff. As well as this staff have enjoyed learning from one another by being back working regularly in the Civic Centre which allows us more opportunities to meet parents, carers, as well as our children and young people.

Our corporate parenting strategy 2021-2024 states that :

'We recognise that children and young people in the care of the Council will have experienced disruption in their childhoods and are amongst the most vulnerable in our community. All too often our children fall behind in education and struggle to achieve their potential due to their earlier life experiences.'

This report sets out the work we have completed in 2022-2023 to support our children and young people develop and thrive.

### 4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN:

#### Children Looked After

On the 22nd of July 2023 Bromley had 344 Children in Care, which is an increase from 326 at the end of May 2022. Bromley's rate of Children Looked After per 10,000 has historically always been significantly below the national average. In 2019-20, our rate was 44 per 10,000 compared to the national average of 64. This figure remained static over 2020-21 although there has been a slight increase to 45 per 10,000 in in the reporting year. The vast majority of our children enter care due to abuse or neglect.

Of our Children Looked After, 58% are male and 42% are female. The majority of young people coming into care are older adolescents. There has always been a greater proportion of boys in care. Several older teenagers being accommodated have been to the risk of Extra Familial Harm. The majority of our unaccompanied asylum-seeking children ( UASC) are also male. We currently support 17 UASC aged under 18 and 16 are male. UASC are now representing 5% of our in care population.

As of July 2023 we had 40 children aged 0-4 years in care, 58 children aged 5-9, 137 young people aged 10-15, and 89 are 16 and 17 year olds. The number of adolescents (10–15-years-old) is currently 40% of our cohort, remaining slightly above the London average of 39%. Our 16–17-year-old cohort represents 26% of our in-care population which is 12% below the London comparator (38%). This is partly in testament to our Staying Together Team which leads on supporting young people to repair relationships with their birth family and remain in the family home despite challenges that are causing family unrest and unhappiness at the time.

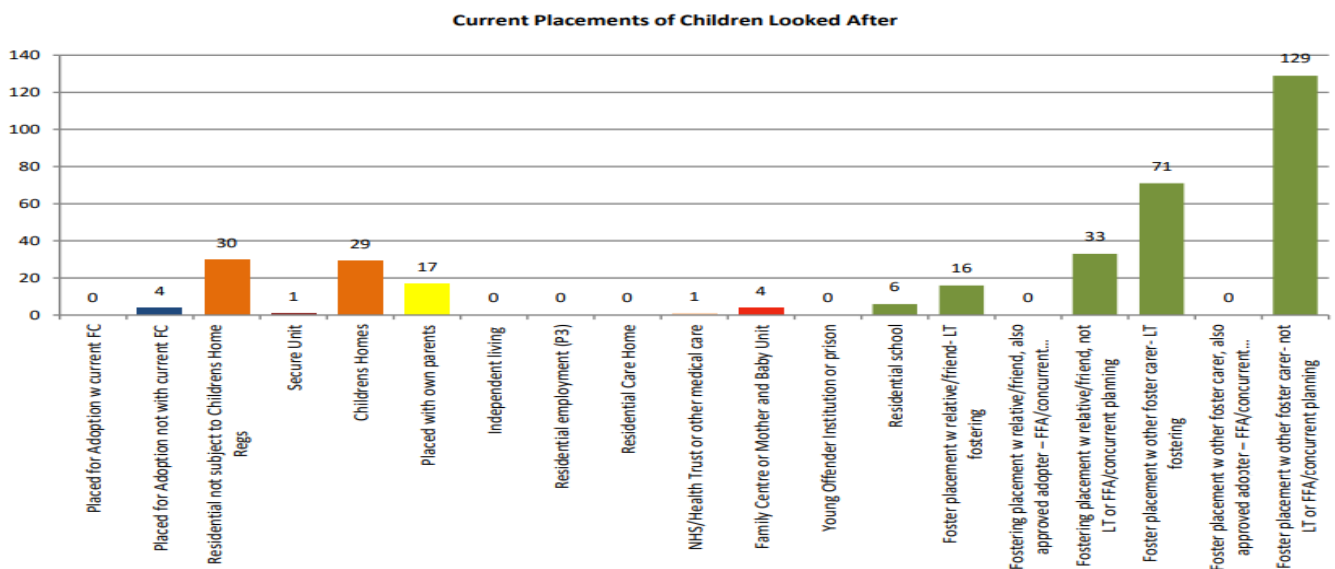
Currently 55% of our in-care population are White compared to 53% this time last year. We are currently caring for 13.5% of children with mixed White / Black Caribbean heritage, 9% of children with Black African heritage, 9% of children with Black Caribbean heritage, 5% of children with Other White heritage, 3% of children with Asian heritage, and another 8% of Mixed backgrounds. In Bromley, 77% of our population are White British and a further 6% of residents self-classify as White Irish, Traveller, or White Other heritage. We have 5% of people with Asian heritage, 3% Black African, 4% Black Caribbean and 1% Black British/Other, 4% of mixed Black African

Caribbean or Asian and White heritage (23% in total from Global Majority groups). This clearly shows a disproportionate number of children from Black, Asian or mixed heritage groups in our community being represented in our care population.

There has been work completed by the Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (BSCP) Board and the Youth Justice Board to address disproportionate representation of Citizens of the Global Majority in statutory services. CLA services have also extended training and staff development to ensure we are addressing the culture and identity needs of young people who do become looked after.

As a Service we have remained committed to recruiting and retaining 100% permanent workforce as we recognise the importance of a stable staff group in order to be able to deliver relationship-based practice. Performance remains strong. Visits to Children Looked After happen within statutory guidance at 97% across all the Services. 98% of Care Plans have been completed within the last 6 months.

We currently have 251 children in foster placements (72%) compared to 233 last year (69%) and 241 and (73% ) in 2021 which does represent a slightly improving picture. Of that number 87 (25%) are with in-house foster placements, 109 (32%) in Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements, and 55 (16%) with connected persons / family placements. It is positive that we are supporting more young people to be placed with family and friends as this has risen from March from 42 to 55 over the reporting year.



Our residential population in July 2023 has slightly decreased to 75 from 76 in June 2022. Three of these are families in assessment centres, 38 are in a residential children’s home, 18 of whom are children with disabilities with complex learning needs and physical disabilities. The other 20 are placed in residential care due to complex emotional and behavioural needs. A further 31 children (aged over 16) are placed in semi-independent accommodation that supports young people who may struggle to settle within a family setting and are working towards independent living. All these placements are kept under frequent review for suitability to meet need through a weekly Placement and Resource Panel which is chaired by the Head of Service and supported by partners in Health (ICB) and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Service to promote better joint working and explore shared costs.

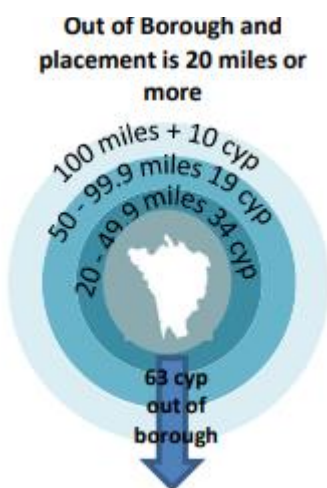
We remain ambitious in our search for placements in what has increasingly been a challenging market. In January 2023 the children’s commissioning team moved line management to become part of the Children’s Services Directorate as part of our ongoing improvement journey. The team are co-located with the CLA service enabling greater communication and joint work between the services. In our annual disruption report it is evident the placement break downs are sometimes

attributable to poor matching. By working alongside placement officers, we will achieve better matching and strengthen stability.

Our QA framework is strong, and we have the benefit of a contract and compliance officer within the team. She can respond flexibly to visit new placements to strengthen relationships or visit providers in the event of a concern to provide assurance. A promotion event took place in April with providers of semi – independent accommodation and our commissioning team. This enabled us to consult with our partners around the new regulatory framework that is being introduced in 2023 from Ofsted for this type of provision to ensure readiness with new compliance measures. In October 2023 we are reconvening the meeting with our providers to ensure they are making progress to be fully compliant.

We remain ambitious about long-term fostering options as a step down from residential settings for children with emotional or behavioural needs that may make significant progress in residential care and can be ready for a return to family life offered within a fostering placement. The New Horizons Project within the Permanency Service is being supported by practitioners from the THRIVE Therapeutic Service to look at up-skilling carers who can support children exiting from residential care. The stability work force has also undertaken engagement events in March and November 2022 with IFA fostering partners to strengthen relationships and promote placement choice for children with complex needs.

The percentage of young people placed 20 miles or more from the borough has remained static at 19%. We also have 60% of our young people living outside of Bromley. Whilst every effort is made to keep children closer to home some children are placed at a distance due to safeguarding concerns, particularly those who were being exploited in the community. Bromley only commission placements that are rated ‘Good’ or above by Ofsted. Given the increasing demand of placements for children with extremely complex needs this does mean at times we need to extend the search nationally to find a suitable match for the child. There continues to be pressure nationally around the sufficiency of placements and this area has been highlighted as requiring some innovative solutions in the Government’s Children’s Social Care Review which was published in May 2022.



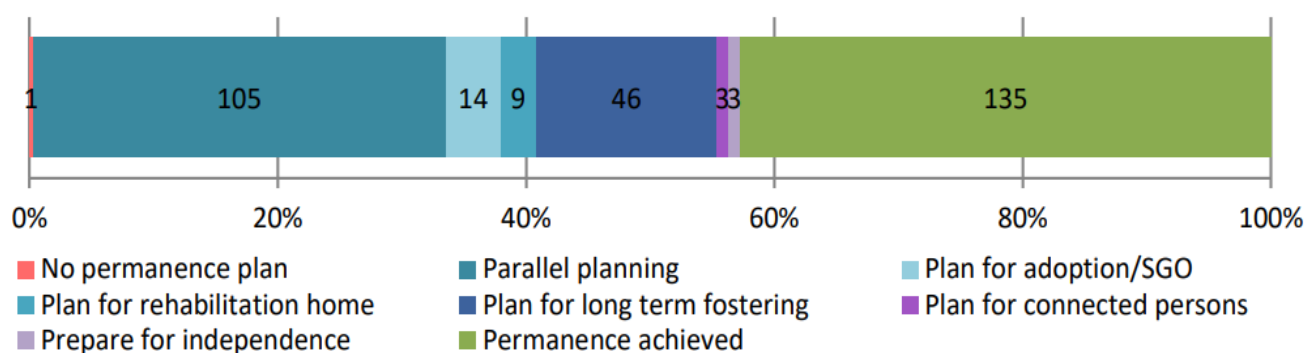
Bromley are members of the Commissioning Alliance to improve our opportunities to quality assure providers and centralise referrals, the pandemic and cost of living crisis has seen several providers struggle to recruit staff to be able to run placements safely leaving Local Authorities competing over scarce resources. Bromley are running profiling workshops with all staff to improve our quality of referrals and strengthen matching practice.

We have continued to make improvements in achieving long-term stability for our children. It is vital for children who have already experienced significant harm, disruption and loss to have a sense of belonging in their care setting. This is measured by DfE by the number of children aged 16 and under who have been in their placement for two years or more. As of March 2020, this was true of 54% of Children Looked After. This percentage rose over the course of the year to 66% in March 2021, and as of July 2023 is 70% which is line with national parameters. This is testament to the huge amount of work we have undertaken in training staff in the ‘secure base’

model of care and positive joint work with colleagues in the Permanency Service to create thoughtful and effective support plans for carers when placements become fragile.

We also benefit from a strong Virtual School who support us in identifying suitable education providers to minimise disruptions in placement change and support social workers in challenging potential exclusions given the significant correlation between placement and education stability. Our Virtual School Head teacher sits in our weekly Permanence Panel which is chaired by the Head of Service for CLA and attended by allocated social workers and reviewing officers. This meeting has a strong role in driving joint work to achieve stability and progressing work to achieve permanence for our young people. All looked after children have a permanence plan by the second looked after review – within 3 months of entering care. For many young people we continue to explore the possibility of rehabilitation whilst supporting alternative care arrangements. Children placed for long term fostering are required to be presented at a matching panel to ratify the suitability of the match and underline the commitment from the carers to look after the child throughout their childhood. Our bimonthly stability and sufficiency working group also supports colleagues in commissioning, fostering and children’s social work teams to work together to learn from placement disruptions, communicate and plan strategies to engage with the placement market and drive proactive practice to promote stability.

### Permanence plans for current children looked after



The number of young people who have experienced two or more placement moves has reduced to 8% in July 2023 which is below national benchmark of 10%. We have a small cohort of young people who are hugely vulnerable and may be harder to match to a suitable resource. Some of these young people may experience multiple placement break downs because of challenging behaviours that lead to a provider serving notice. This can lead to some children moving to ‘bridging placements’ whilst we continue to search for a suitable long-term placement which again impacts on the short-term stability indicators. Staff work hard to avoid placement disruption and ensure we are doing everything possible to promote a sense of stability and security for our young people.

The number of children leaving care for adoption has remained fairly static for the last three years. We achieved 10 adoptions in 2020-21 compared to 11 in 2022-23. Similarly, the number of days between a child entering care and being placed for adoption has varied from 427 to 431 since 2019. In 2022-2023 this number has risen to 509. This has been slightly skewed by a much older child ( 17) achieving adoption with his long-term foster carers in response to his own wishes and feelings. Similarly, there were 11 SGOS achieved in 2021-22 and 10 in 2022 -2023.

There was a noticeable drop in the number of children placed for adoption and placed with carers under Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) since we concluded 27 in 2019. This is in part due to an unprecedented delay in court proceedings being finalised due to the pandemic. New practice guidance was published in March 2021 by the Public Law Working Group which underlined the importance of the child having lived with the relative for one year prior to the making of the Order. This has led to the lengthening of care proceedings as these arrangements are monitored and reviewed to ensure they meet the child’s needs.

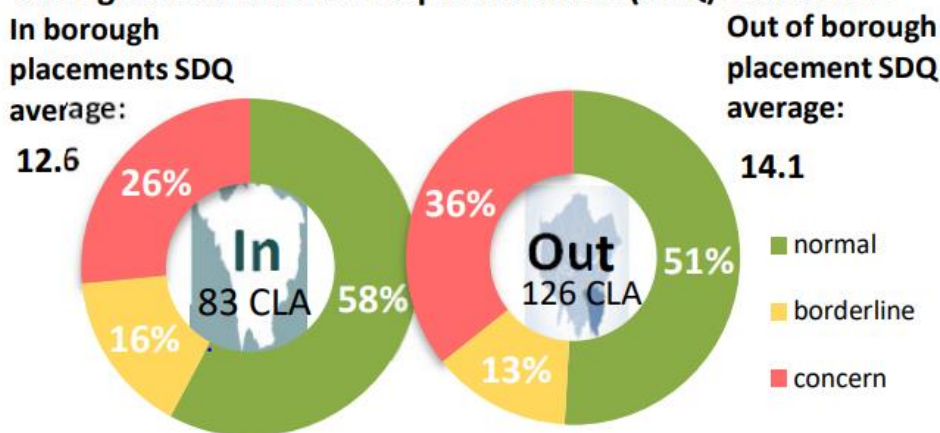


## Health

As reported in our year end data to Department of Education in March 2023 94% of our Children Looked After had received a health assessment in the reporting year. 95% of young people were up to date with immunisations by July which is in fact an increase from 78% at end of year March 2020. The percentage of young people with an up-to-date dental appointment which dropped to 64% by January 2022 as part of covid recovery is increasing and now 91% of young people have had a dental check in the last 12 months. The Service is working hard with Health colleagues to improve this figure and we have now built an alert into our database so Social Work staff are also aware of the annual renewal date of the dental check and therefore able to prompt carers to complete. Our admin support is collecting data on all children's health appointments and the Head of Service meets quarterly with CLA Health staff to review the information and ensure a proactive resolution for any child who has not attended their appointments.

8% of our young people were identified as having a substance misuse issue. Change Grow Live provided training to all CLA staff in 2022-23 and continue to work flexibly and online to try to engage young people. A strengths and difficulties questionnaire is completed for all children who have been in care more than 12 months. The returned data suggests that children placed outside of the borough are more likely to be struggling with their mental health than those who live in Bromley. This is perhaps unsurprising as it is generally the more complex young people who are more likely to be placed at a distance.

### Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) score 2022



Waiting lists for Bromley CAMHS have been a challenge in line with the national picture over the last 12 months. Demand has risen post pandemic and we are supporting more young people with complex mental health needs, self-harm and suicidal ideation. However, they have benefitted from 50% increase in staffing and are working creatively to reduce wait times and meet demand. As outlined, most of our young people also live outside of the borough which would inhibit them from receiving services at Bromley CAMHS. We have an effective relationship with the ICB who attend our weekly resource panel to consider commissioning tailored packages of therapeutic support that can be delivered local to placement or as part of a residential care package. The ICB also fund an additional post in our Thrive service to deliver support to our young people with their wellbeing. We have also invested in therapeutic life story work training for a social worker in CLA to take a lead in co working with young people with significant trauma to understand their lived experience. This work is already underway with a small cohort of young people who are being offered intensive 1:1 work.

## Education

CLA Services work closely with the Virtual School to ensure best outcomes for Children in Care. Attendance is back to pre-pandemic levels and Bromley continues to exceed national averages in terms of attainment at GCSE level. This is in part due to initiatives such as Fresh Start and First Star Scholars that we have commissioned to provide opportunity for additional learning and tutoring to raise ambition and improve confidence. This is particularly impressive given 41% (72) of our young people have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which is above national averages of 29%. A further 18% (26) of young people require SEN support in school which is below national benchmarking at 27%. This could indicate looked after children with Bromley are more likely to achieve an EHC plan if they are identified as having additional needs.

The majority of our children make expected level of progress at every stage of learning. This is driven by PEP meetings which set out a personalised education plan for each child which is held in partnership with schools, social workers and virtual school staff every term. Performance reporting on PEPs shows 88% are happening within timescales as of Spring term 2023.

	Summer Term 2021/22 Progress	Cohort size as at end of July 2022	CLA with available progress data (No)	Making Expected Progress - English (No)	Making expected progress - Maths (No)	Making Expected Progress – English (%)	Making expected progress – Maths (%)	CLA making Expected Level of overall progress based on end of July 2022 cohort (No)	CLA making Expected Level of overall progress based on end of July 2022 cohort (%)
Statutory School Age CLA	KS1	34	31	20	21	65%	68%	26	76%
	KS2	52	47	37	41	79%	87%	46	88%
	KS3	80	73	57	54	78%	74%	66	83%
	KS4	67	56	33	36	59%	64%	48	72%
	In borough	146	130	92	92	71%	71%	114	78%
	Out borough	85	77	55	60	71%	78%	72	85%
	Those with EHCP	82	73	53	55	73%	75%	71	87%
	Those with SEN (not EHCP)	54	48	32	32	67%	67%	41	76%
	Those with No SEN	97	86	62	65	72%	76%	74	76%
	All Pupils	233	207	147	152	71%	73%	186	80%
Post -16	Post 16 (Years 12 and 13)	111	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	71	64%

The virtual school as part of pilot project with the DfE have provided additional support to children aged 16 and 17 to ensure they have clear transition plans as they leave secondary school and put intensive support to young people in year 12 and 13. 92% of this cohort are currently in education or training showing impact of this project.

## Extra Familial Harm/Exploitation

Over 66% of our Children Looked After are secondary school age and over and 67 children coming into care for the first time were aged between 13 and 17 last year. Older adolescents are sometimes received into care due to concerns of extra familial harm due to identifiable risks from peers or exploitative adults in the community. This cohort of children are tracked through MEGA (Missing, Exploitation, and Gang Affiliation) Panel.

55% of children presented to the MEGA Panel are Looked After. This is primarily due to the additional vulnerability of children living away from their birth family who have experienced previous trauma and abuse. The primary reasons for CLA being presented to MEGA is child criminal exploitation which continues to be one of greater challenges. The numbers are low (6 currently open) but associated risks of youth violence are significant. We work with statutory and



voluntary sector partners to ensure multi-agency plans are in place to increase safety. We are working with 8 young people also known to Youth Justice services, but we work in close conjunction with police and youth justice staff.

Bromley entered a programme of support and intervention for this cohort of young people, known as Your Choice which ensures young people get intensive visiting and Cognitive Behaviour Therapeutic (CBT) support. Initially our Youth Justice Service (YJS) staff were trained in these techniques and one CLA team have been trained to deliver this intervention to support some of four of our most vulnerable young people as part of the initial research. This is an initiative in partnership with the Youth Endowment Fund, the London Improvement and Innovation Alliance (LIIA), the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), and the Anna Freud Centre. The cohort is small but one young man supported in this programme has gone from 20% school attendance to a full time place with the Prince's trust. The other three are also all engaged with ETE full or part time. Other CLA teams are now due to embark on the Your Choice initiative in the autumn.

The number of missing episodes for CLA has remained fairly static. In July 2023 children in our care experienced 75 missing episodes taken up by 25 young people. This usually rises in summer months due to warmer weather and increased social activities and longer evenings. The cohort of young people going missing has also remained similar compared to 22 young people went missing in April 2022. There can be a complex mix of push and pull factors that encourage children to work with carers and key workers to reduce risk of harm in the community. Some of these missing episodes are tied to concerns regarding extra familial harm and some are also linked to unauthorised contact with family members. We risk assess all family contacts to ensure children are having positive contact and work with police, legal, and providers if we need to take emergency safeguarding action. All children who do go missing are offered a return home interview by a professional who are not their social worker, to offer them a chance to share feelings and experiences with a trusted adult.

91% of these interviews were offered within 72 hours of the child returning to placement. Ofsted noted during the Focused Visit in September 2021: 'Risks to Children Looked After are clearly understood and responded to well. Strategy meetings are held as required. Children who go missing receive a bespoke response according to their need'. We believe this is still the case.

## **CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE**

As of 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023, 274 young people were open and allocated in the Leaving Care Service (LCS) in contrast to 244 who were actively receiving services in March 2021, and this is rising exponentially. The role of the allocated young person's advisor is to advise, befriend and assist the young person as they transition to adulthood. It is indicative of a strong Service that young people are more routinely choosing to stay in touch post-21. We are currently supporting 109 young people that are aged between 21 and 25. Much of this work involves supporting young people who may be completing university courses but also young people leaving custody or navigating between Adult Mental Health (MH) and Learning Disability (LD) Services. We recognise that the average age of moving out of the family home in London is 24 and with 25% of Care Leavers nationally becoming homeless at some stage in their lives we need to work with our corporate parents to support young people more effectively over a longer period of time.

We are required to report on 243 Care Leavers between the ages of 18 and 21. We are in touch with 218 (89%). Of The 25 we are not in touch there are 7 qualifying young people after their status has changed, as they returned home or were made subject to an SGO. There are 7 former UASC who are either missing and/or Appeal Rights Exhausted. There are 5 serving long term

prison sentences and 3 who disengaged and are now closed. Three transferred from the Children with Disabilities Service to Adult Learning Disability but not to the Leaving Care Service .

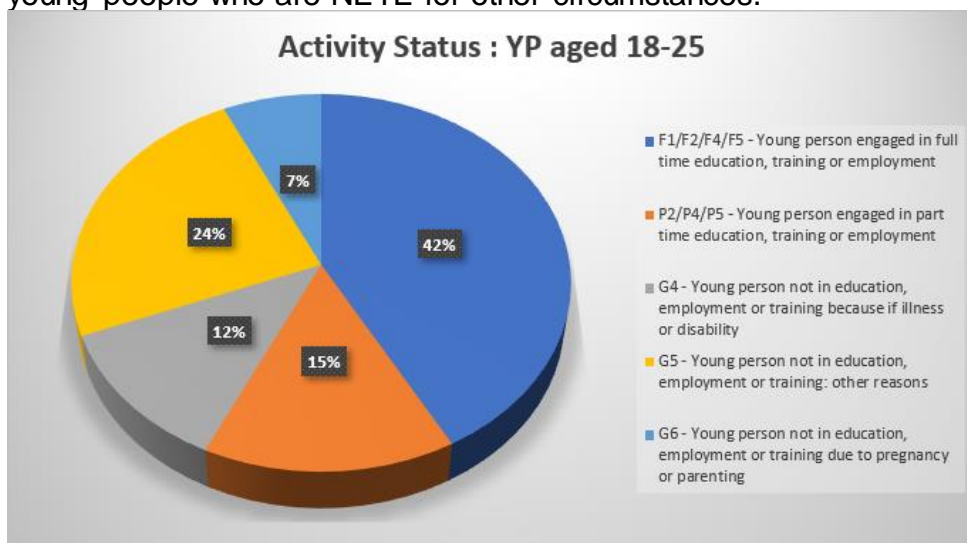
We reach out to all young people aged 18-25 on an annual basis to remind them of the potential to return for support and signpost young people towards our local offer. This was recently extended to become open ended for any Bromley care experienced person to seek advice and guidance.

Of our total cohort in July 2023 83% have a visit within statutory timescale. This is despite our rising numbers. We are also working hard to introduce the YPA to young people sooner in their leaving care journey by allocating a named worker to attend CLA reviews and offer joint work to young people aged 16 and 17. In response we have created three new young person’s advisors posts in Leaving Care to manage demand.

The CLA and Leaving Care team fall under the same line management and benefit from joint training and regular joint service meetings and training events.

The handover from social worker to YPA has been a bespoke offer in Bromley with all young people being allocated a YPA by age 17 to offer joint work ahead of transfer. We run a 16 plus leaving care service with mixed teams of social workers and YPAs with a qualified SW as TM. The team receive young people coming into care in later adolescence and we manage the handover from CLA service according to need and wishes and feelings of young people. Some of our most complex young people remain allocated to a leaving care social worker post 18. The Leaving Care Service and the young people we support benefits from a 100% permanent workforce that enables young people to retain helping relationships with trusted staff where this is beneficial to their progress. A ‘Real Talk’ group created by the senior YPAs for young people preparing to transition to the Leaving Care Service has been held twice in school holidays, which enables young people to get to know staff from the Leaving Care Service.

As of June 2023, we had 116 out of 278 young people employed in either full time work or study (42%). 19 are in higher education (beyond A level study). 4 are in full time apprenticeships and another 48 young people are in full time employment (17%). We have a further 42 in part time higher education, employment, or apprenticeships (15%). 19 (7%) NETE due to pregnancy or childcare, and another 32 (12%) NETE due to illness or disability. Overall, we have 66 (24%) young people who are NETE for other circumstances.



## **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People**

Our Care Leaver population is also 60% male and therefore young men are disproportionately represented. Young people from Black, Asian, or Mixed heritage origin also represent 48.5% of our leaving care population which is also not representative of the wider demographics of Bromley. This is in part due to our growing UASC population. It is almost exclusively young men that arrive seeking asylum due to the perilous nature of their journey. Citizens of the Global Majority have greater representation in our care leaver population as most young people who present are older adolescents and quickly transition to adulthood. We are currently supporting 84 young people who arrived unaccompanied to claim asylum in the UK. 18 are under 18 and a further 66 are over 18. The numbers of the younger cohort have risen since we commenced receiving from the National Transfer Scheme in November last year. We are also supporting the London Borough of Hounslow and have received four young people who were placed in hotels in that area and have agreed to take 12 more over the next 12 months. They have a large population of UASC who were placed in hotels after the closure of Manston reception centre in October last year. We have also ensured all our staff are age assessment trained and have completed one age assessment where the young person was found to be over 22 and returned to the home office for support.

Of the 18 young people under the age of 18, 11 arrived from Afghanistan since conditions in that country deteriorated. Of the other young people, three are from Iran, one from Turkey, one from Egypt and two from Albania. Of the over 18s only 5 are from Afghanistan, 9 are from Albania, 19 are from Eritrea, one is from Ethiopia, 7 are from Iran, 6 are Iraqi, one from Kuwait, 3 from Sudan, one from Syria, one from Uganda 14 from Vietnam.

All young people who are received as asylum seekers are supported in the same way as all our other looked after children. They are all allocated social work support and placed in appropriate quality assured accommodation. We have made strong links with Bromley college in terms of offering ESOL support and we have made additional efforts to support children / young people with their cultural faith and identity needs. We have supported young people with therapeutic needs and worked with the refugee council to access counselling as well as sports clubs- for example they run a cricket club and some of our Afghani boys have attended. Some of our UASC take part in our care leaver, staff monthly football sessions.

We also support young people gain access to legal instructions to support their immigration claim and offer support to attend home office interviews. We ensure all asylum-seeking young people have triple planning built in their pathway plan so any young person who has been refused status and has lost all further appeals can either be supported with repatriation or referred on to community services.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 13 of our young people from our Muslim community attended an EID celebration meal with our Assistant Director of Performance and Strategy attending alongside, allocated workers and other professionals. The evening created a sense of belonging and community. We ran a follow up cooking session for this group on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May at Our House.

## **Suitability of Accommodation**

We have 96% of young people in suitable accommodation which has improved from 86% last year and 78% in the previous reporting year. Young people in custody are regarded as not in suitable accommodation and this accounts for all 9 of our young people in this cohort. They will

remain supported by their YPA and in receipt of a Pathway Plan to help prepare them for release back into the community. We continue to offer financial support given the vulnerability of this group, many of whom are completely estranged from their family and friends.

Our commissioning team run a Young Inspectors Programme supporting young people to work alongside the placement officer in visiting providers and providing feedback for young person led feedback. So far 10 young people have been trained and two young people have completed 10 visits between them since April 2023 to a variety of different placements. The feedback is shared with social care staff and commissioning managers to ensure we continue to commission high quality placements. On April 19<sup>th</sup> Children's Commissioning Team and Leaving Care team invited our providers into our Civic Centre to engage with them around the new regulatory framework. 9 different agencies attended, all but one intends to comply and gave positive feedback about the event. A further information session will be held with providers on 5<sup>th</sup> October to confirm their progress in Ofsted registration and offer the Young Inspectors a forum to feedback the themes identified in their research.



We ensure young people are supported to move on to their independent living when they are ready to do so. Bromley has a positive story around ensuring all our care leavers achieve a social tenancy. We currently have 24 young people aged 21 or over who are still in placements and step down gradually on a need led basis. The senior YPAs run a move on group to support young people gaining skills to manage their own home. This ran for the second time in Easter 2023 and was attended by 9 young people who learned about financial literacy as well as how to put up flat pack furniture. We have regular meetings with colleagues in housing who partner on our Leaving Care panel and are having a built in alert on our housing benefit system should our care leavers fall behind on rent so we can offer budgeting support and prevent tenancy breakdown.

### **Mental Health Practitioner**

Some of our young people struggle to engage with statutory community mental health teams due to their own adverse childhood experiences which has left them struggling to form trusting relationships and manage regular appointments. We have been fortunate to obtain funding from the ICB and from Public Health to create a full time Mental Health Practitioner post who sits within the Leaving Care Service. This project is now in its second year. The post holder offers support to young people who may struggle to engage with clinic-based support. To date 48 young people have been referred for a variety of interventions such as support and safety planning around anxiety and depression, planning around hospital discharge, and identification of future therapy.

The worker also supports the Come Dine With Me group to support young people talking about mental health and wellbeing over a meal. The Come Dine With Me group operates out of 'Our House'. Feedback has been hugely positive about the impact of the role for young people. The funding has now been agreed for a further 12 months by the ICB.

## Education Training and Employment (ETE)

Our ETE work sets out our ambition for young people to secure employment training of education opportunities as a means of securing financial security but increasing social capital, gaining life skills and improving self-esteem. Our established partnership with Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), partners in the Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP), as well as the Virtual School helps us identify bespoke opportunities for our young people who are presented at our weekly Leaving Care panel chaired by the Head of Service. An ETE worker meets all young people ahead of panel to capture their talents and ideas in order to match to relevant openings. The Panel also promote holistic planning to address any potential barriers to ETE such as unresolved immigration status substance misuse or unmet mental health needs.

Our end of year return to Department of education for 2022-2023 reported 55% of our young people were engaged in ETE. This is in line with national trends and an improvement from 42% in 2020-2021. As of July 2023 we have 116 out of 276 young people employed in either full time work or study (42%). 20 are in higher education (beyond A level study). 4 are in full time apprenticeships and another 44 young people are in full time employment (17%). We have a further 41 in part time higher education, employment or apprenticeships (14%). This represents 56% in total in ETE. 18 (6%) of young people are NETE due to pregnancy or childcare, and another 31 (11%) NETE due to illness or disability. Overall, we have 67 (24%) young people who are NETE for other circumstances. This could be due to offending behaviour, unresolved immigration status, or learning / MH need. We continue to offer these young people a high level of tailored support in recognition of the benefits of the role of learning and development in improving wellbeing, increasing financial stability, and building social capital. Bromley's regeneration team are currently supporting us in a bid to commission bespoke work coaching support from Drive Forward to strengthen our offer which we hope will go live in September.

Our New Beginnings pre-employment group work programme supports young people aged 17 plus who have been Not in Education, Training, or Employment (NETE) for over three months. This group ran for the sixth time in April and 23 young people have attended with 9 young people having secured and maintained full time education or employment subsequently and another three having gone on to secure work experience. The group offers pre-employability skills, interview training and an opportunity to complete a first aid course for an accredited qualification.



Young person on the first aid course

In conjunction with HR, we have created a Care Leaver youth work apprenticeship in the Active Involvement team. This is a fixed term contract offering one young person youth worker training



during an 18-month placement in the team. This has gone out to advert and has attracted a strong field of candidates.

In year 2021-22 we employed a care leaver in a DWP funded Kickstarter role for 6 months. She has gone on to achieve full time work in the Premier Inn and also maintained a casual post working on face-to-face projects with younger children. We also have two Care Leavers that have completed their Assessed Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) in Social Work, based in the Youth Justice Service in August 2022 and another Care Leaver completed a Social Work placement in CLA in May 2022. All three young people are currently employed by Bromley and have returned to offer mentoring support to our Care Leavers aspiring to university at an event curated by the Active Involvement Team.

Care leavers attending university are offered financial support for books equipment and living costs. YPAs visit young people during term time and liaise with teaching staff if the young person wishes. Staying put arrangements are kept on retainer during term time if suitable and we have a mentoring programme specifically for young people aspiring higher in education to match them to professionals within their area of interest. Our local offer was extended in March 2023 to include financial support to students completing an access to university year or a Masters course.

Young parents are also offered ongoing learning and training opportunities such as online courses and functional skills training if needed. Active Involvement have established a young parent's group with outings and activities to provide an inclusive space for young parents to gain support. The group was launched 4.7.23 and we are looking forward to our zoo outing and group work moving forward. A practitioner from Thrive and our CLA nurse support the project to offer advice guidance and therapeutic input.

## AIM Event- Aspire, Inspire and Motivate



**AiM**  
ASPIRE \* INSPIRE \* MOTIVATE

**\* EVENT FOR \*  
PROFESSIONALS  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Supporting our young people aged from 16 to 25 with

**\* EDUCATION \* TRAINING  
\* EMPLOYMENT \* FINANCES**

**24th April 2023**

**9.30am to 1.30pm**

**LSEC Bromley, Rookery Lane,  
Bromley, BR2 8HE**

An event for:

- Social workers
- Young Person Advisors
- Staying Put and Supported Lodgings carers
- Placement Keyworkers
- Young people aged 16-25

There will be presentations and an opportunity to get detailed information on what Bromley Council and our partners have on offer. Key partners such as LSEC Bromley, DWP, Bromley Education Partnership, and Princes Trust.

We will have a tour of key departments at Bromley College, including: construction, motor mechanics, and hair and beauty.

If you will be attending please register with:

Melissa Bob-Amara  
Email her at [melissa.bob-amara@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:melissa.bob-amara@bromley.gov.uk)  
Or call her on 020 8461 7869



**Bromley**  
THE LONDON BOROUGH

Allied professionals such as providers, carers and support and social care staff were invited to highlight and signpost workers and young people to the different opportunities within the community around education, employment and training and finance. We had over 40 attendees including 8 young people, who had the opportunity to hear from partners such as DWP, Bromley College, Palace for Life, The Education Development Trust and the Lewisham and Bromley Credit Union. On the day of the event 3 of our young people signed up for further services, 2 of whom started courses the same week.



## **Bright Spots - Coram**

Children Looked After and Leaving Care Services ran a survey for all young people called 'Bright Spots' in conjunction with Coram. The survey is run nationally and allows us to benchmark our results against other Local Authorities. Senior leaders, young people, and social care staff met at dissemination meetings last year to discuss ideas for practice improvement and the Living in Care Council and Change for Care Leavers Forum have tracked progress on suggestions highlighted below. The survey for Care leavers 18-25 went out in Oct- Dec 2022 to fall over care leavers week. The CLA survey went out in Feb/ March and the findings have now been returned. A dissemination meeting will be held on October 9<sup>th</sup> with the staff, young people and senior leaders to consider how to progress the findings.

32% of our care leaver population responded and highlighted many 'bright spots of practice'. The survey demonstrated the impact of a stable work force and showed positive trusting relationships between staff and young people.

**Leaving care support**

**Continuity**

- Care leavers in Bromley enjoyed greater stability of worker than care leavers in other LAs: Seven in ten (70%) of Bromley's care leavers had kept the same leaving care worker in the previous year, compared to 60% of care leavers in other LAs. **This is a Bright Spot of practice.**

**Trust**

- 99% of the young people trusted their leaving care worker ('all or most of the time' or 'sometimes').

We saw proportionate rises in the number of young people reporting they had good friends, had a trusted person and someone to listen to.

There were also increases in the number of young people who said they felt involved in their pathway planning and felt satisfied with their life overall.

Whilst the majority of care leavers nationally report low wellbeing – this was proportionately lower in Bromley

The main area for improvement is around supporting young people to understand their care journey. Leaving Care Service has commissioned trauma informed practice training for all the staff to support them in undertaking this challenging work which started June 2023.

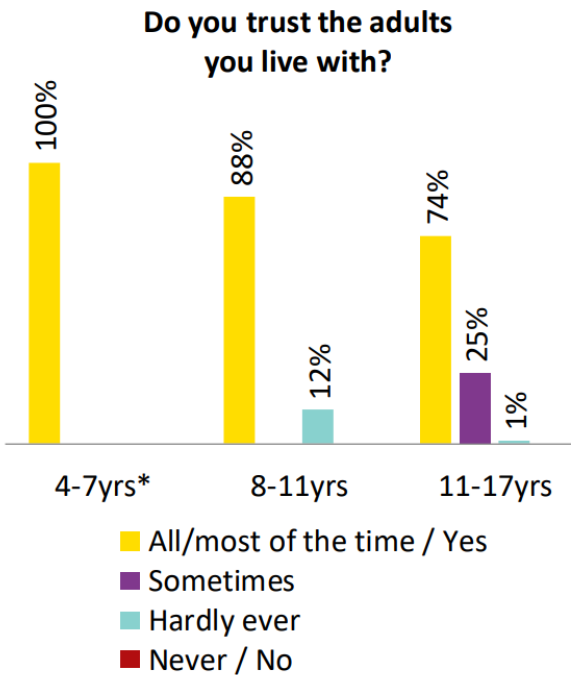
**Housing**

**Feeling safe**

- Compared to care leavers (64%) in other LAs, care leavers (78%) in Bromley more often reported 'always' feeling safe at home. **This is a Bright Spot of practice,**

**I feel safe in my home**

Response	Care leavers Bromley	Care leavers other LAs
Always	78%	64%
Sometimes	20%	28%
Hardly ever/never	2%	8%



30% of our CLA population answered the Bright Spots Survey which was returned June 2023. Again it highlighted several key results such as 100% of children who responded felt safe where they lived and trusted the adults caring for them. 92% of young people said they trusted their social worker said they always spoke to them alone. This represents a bright spot of practice and an improvement since the last survey. The results were also encouraging in terms of overall wellbeing with 88% of young people saying their life was getting better and 92% of children reporting having at least one really good friend.



Another area we have demonstrated improvement was placement stability. 46% of our young people said they have been in the same placement for more than a year compared with 34% in other LAs. Although less than half of our young people said they were seeing enough of their birth family. This will be an area of development for the service moving forward.

## **PROGRESS OF PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT 2020-21**

Co-production has been at the heart of our corporate parenting strategy. It is important that young people feel heard with respect to their own care plan and feel empowered to chair their looked after reviews but that they also invited to impact on service delivery and design.

The subgroups that had traditionally led on the activity coming out of the Board were reworked into task and finish groups to produce clear outcomes that would make a tangible difference for young people. These outcomes were co-created between the subgroup leads and the young people at the Living in Care Council (LinCC) / Change for Care Leavers (CfCL). LinCC and CfCL that ran for 2 years from Easter 2021 -2023. The priorities and subsequent actions are outlined below.

### **Priority 1: Having a Say**

The Active Involvement Team in conjunction with our young people have created and delivered a training package for all staff across Children's Social Care and foster carers to focus on the quality of relationships. The session included films the young people had made about race and identity as well as about their care journey. The training has been delivered to social workers across the directorate during 2022-23. It has subsequently been delivered to our foster carers, reviewing officers and has been shared with elected members for their learning. The training was also delivered to the Fostering Panel. Lincc and CFCL also delivered training to the Designated teachers conference in July. This has proved a powerful tool to highlight the importance of putting children's wishes and feelings at the centre of care planning.

The savings and pocket money policy has been reviewed and new guidelines created in response to concerns raised about young people being able to manage financially into the future. It was agreed all children's savings will be paid directly into savings accounts held by the council to ensure young people have a financial cushion on leaving care in addition to their Setting Up Home Allowance. Previously it was an expectation of carers that they set up and managed a child's savings account. This new approach went live in September 2022 will mean that savings will be guaranteed even if a child has a disrupted placement history.

Young people continue to be involved in recruitment activity across Children's Services. Young people were involved in the recruitment for the new Placement Officer, Young Person's Advisors, Group Manager and Team Manager in the Leaving Care Service throughout 2022-23. Our relaunched Young Recruiters project was launched at the Corporate Parenting Board July 12<sup>th</sup>. This will ensure care experienced young people will share their lived experience to support workforce development.

The Group Manager from the Leaving Care Service has also developed the Local Offer for Care Leavers in discussion with the Change for Care Leavers Forum. This can be accessed via our website: [www.linkinbromley.co.uk](http://www.linkinbromley.co.uk). This involves consideration of revision of funds for the small cohort of young people at university. This will slightly reduce the grant to be more in line with other Local Authorities but also allow us to extend the offer to young people taking access or entry level courses pre-university. With this adjustment we will create an additional discretionary fund for the

wider cohort of young people to set towards driving lessons or alternative training courses. The young people felt this was a fairer distribution of funding and were happy to endorse these suggestions. Since its inception young people have used the support to access a variety of opportunities such as driving lessons, or swimming sessions to support wellbeing, and gym memberships.

Active Involvement will lead a dissemination event in September to invite senior leaders and young people to consider the feedback from Bright Spots Survey and choose some areas to take forward as projects to improve the service to ensure young people are engaged in impacting on service delivery and design.

## **Priority 2: Support, Stability and Security**

The support and stability group chaired by the Head of Permanence specifically commissioned a training video by the young people to use as part of the skills to foster training in 2022-23. The young people created a film during the summer programme called 'Same but different at the same time' and reflects their experience and what they would want from prospective carers.

Young people had also asked for greater support for their birth parents. Thrive service ran a support group for parents in response to the feedback to promote better contact and repair relationships. This group has now evolved into 1 - 1 support but has made a positive impact in supporting rehabilitation and re-establishing family time. We are also in the process of recommissioning our contract for Family Group Conferences to be offered to families where children are returning home from care as well as for older young people wanting to explore support within extended family networks.

The Leaving Care Service and Permanency Service worked together to develop better support for Staying Put Carers. This has involved a training programme and monthly support groups to ensure more carers are willing to support young people post-18 to remain in family-based placements. We currently have 27 young people in staying put arrangements which has risen slightly from 25 last year.

Moving forward the group are working on creating trusting relationships between carers and young people and are looking at reviewing placement plans to be more child friendly that offer children greater chance to demonstrate greater responsibility.

## **Priority 3: Health and Wellbeing**

The health and wellbeing subgroup have two major work streams. These include a project around achieving free prescriptions for young people in care. This is being led by the Designated Nurse for CLA and partners across London and was launched in June 2023. All our young people have been written to with details of how to apply and can register for a card to take to the pharmacy for those who would otherwise be charged for medication.

The subgroup supported the Come Dine With Me club for Care Leavers. The project was created to reduce social isolation and create opportunities for young people to come together over a meal with Health professionals and talk about healthy eating and positive wellbeing. This has run monthly since Easter 2022. Session times have alternated to offer different groups a chance to attend. We have hosted Sunday roast lunches and weekend barbecue events as well as evening meals and lunch time sessions. We have been supported by sexual health nurses, substance misuse teams and the MH worker. The new priority involves empowering young people to take ownership of their health and health history, which has included learning ways to access their health records and training around use of the NHS App.

## **Priority 4: Education, Training, Employment and Achievement**

The Education and Achievement subgroup have also successfully created a mentoring scheme for young people aspiring to professional careers or university education called 'Motivating Young Minds' run by Bromley Mentoring Programme. We have successfully matched a number of young people with a professional who matches their chosen career path.

The Virtual School and Active Involvement team also piloted a weekly revision session for young people preparing for exams. The young people that attended benefited in different ways, one young person commented that the sessions enabled him to learn how to read a clock, whilst others commented on the space and support to undertake A level revision .

Lincc and CFCL are looking forward to working with the Virtual School head teacher on involving children and young people in creating trauma informed practice training for teaching staff in schools as their new priority. They delivered their first session to a teacher conference at the civic centre on 28.6.23 which was universally well received.

## **Priority 5: Transitions and Independence**

The Leaving Care Service have created a 'moving on group' which has now run twice over the last 12 months. The Senior YPAs devised the group and offered sessions focused on support for young people moving into their own tenancy. This included workshops around budgeting, managing relationships, and housing rights and entitlement. The seniors also deliver the 'Real Talk' group for young people moving from the CLA Service to the Leaving Care Service in October 2022 to meet the team and offer advice and support around transitions to adulthood.

The Senior YPA's also redesigned the Independence toolkits, designed to support our young people to learn practical living skills in their placements. The toolkits were reviewed and signed off by our CFCL group.

The project CFCL chose to take forward with this sub group is around supporting young people with financial management and aims to work with partnerships within the community such as Lewisham and Bromley Credit Union.

## **Active Involvement/Participation**

The Active Involvement team ran a packed agenda of events over 2022-23:

### **Corporate Parenting Fun day**

We were excited to hold our first in-person Corporate Parenting Fun Day at London South East College (LSEC) in July 2022. This offered workers, carers and children and young people to share food fun and games in a family barbecue style event. We had over 140 young people and carers at the event. We hold an annual photography auction at the event to fundraise for luxury housewarming gifts for care leavers, this year we raised over £1200 as a result of the auction. The next fun day event is being held on 30.7.23 again at LSEC with a sports day theme.



## Summer Programme

We ran a programme of in-person social events over summer 2022 including a film project, a photography project, a residential trip, a trip to Brighton and another to Thorpe Park. We also partnered with the Churchill Theatre to run a drama project where young people created a drama piece to present to their carers. We ran a young men's group a speed boat on the Thames trip and a gentleman's tea with senior leaders. The girls group 'Fierce and Flaysome' offered a trip to Buckingham Palace and 'crafternoon' tea session. We also delivered a poetry project with Lemn Sissay, where 5 of our young people attended weekly sessions with Lemn and then performed at the London Poetry Cultural Evening in the Churchill Gardens in Central Bromley.

We are delighted to have Lemn back to have lunch with our young people on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 at Our House before he gives a reading to our young people and staff. Our young people will then provide their own presentation to staff and hold a Q&A session with staff.

### Poetry Workshops and Performance with Lemn Sissay OBE

#### About Lemn Sissay:

Lemn Sissay OBE is an award winning poet, playwright, performer, author and broadcaster who has read on stage throughout the world. Lemn was the official poet for the London 2012 Olympics. Lemn is a trustee of the Foundling Museum and has created many opportunities for looked after children including establishing and running the first Lemn Sissay PhD scholarship for Care Leavers at the University of Huddersfield. Having been a care leaver himself, Lemn strives to provide opportunities for looked after young people and as part of his residency with Bromley Libraries, is offering workshops for looked after young people. To learn more about Lemn's experiences, you can visit his website: <https://www.lemnssissay.com/>



#### The Project:

Lemn will run two workshops to support young people to create their own poetry. There will also be a performance workshop/ rehearsal before participants either perform themselves at the Young Poet Festival on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July or their work is read aloud by Lemn.

#### Key Dates:

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 5.30pm – 6.30pm (workshop)  
 Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 5.30pm – 6.30pm (workshop)  
 Monday 25<sup>th</sup> July 5.30pm – 5.30pm (rehearsal for performance)  
 Performance Slot Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July 5.30 – 7pm (performance)

#### Venue

Bromley Central Library  
 High Street Bromley  
 BR1 1EX

## Celebration of Success – 28<sup>th</sup> October

Our annual celebration event for our wonderful care leavers was held at the Civic Centre in the Old Palace, over 100 young people were nominated and attended to collect their awards. Awards included achievements in Higher Education, Parenting and making healthier life choices. The young people enjoyed a BBQ feast followed by Karaoke. The entire event was planned and hosted by CFCL. To close the awards ceremony young people also presented their workers with awards.



### **Care Leavers Christmas Party – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

As part of the Mayors funded Come Dine with Us project we delivered a Christmas Party for our young people. They all received gifts on the night and had a fantastic time on the karaoke. We collected charitable donations for Christmas presents, such as clothing, books and beauty products. We received so many, workers were able to collect gifts for some of our other vulnerable young people.

### **LinCC and CFCL Christmas Dinner 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022**

It is a tradition that at the end of the year to say thank you to the members of LinCC And CFCL for their hard work throughout the year with a traditional Christmas dinner. This year we stayed in the Old Palace and had caterers serve them their dinner, we played family games and gave speeches of appreciation.

### **International Women's Day – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Last year we introduced an International Women's Day event, where our female Senior management team dine with some of our young women, this year the Mayor of Bromley Cllr Hannah Gray also joined the group. The evening allowed young women to have conversations with women in leadership roles and consider their own ambitions.





### **Young Men's Football**

We host a monthly Young men's football session which is an opportunity for our young men and our male workers and managers to hit the pitch. We have delivered 4 sessions to date and it has been a great way to building positive relationships all round.

### **City Hall Visit – 13<sup>th</sup> April**

14 young people attended City Hall at the invitation of our GLA member and former portfolio holder Peter Fortune. The young people held a debate in the chamber considering the benefits and challenges of being care experienced. It was a moving and thought provoking event.

### **LinCC and CFCL Joint Training Residential – 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> April 2023- Skreens Park Chelmsford**

This was our first joint LinCC and CFCL training residential. 17 young people that attended the trip aged 12-22. The aim of the training residential was to deliver training and teamwork sessions to prepare the groups for the next years work programme and ran workshops such as:

- The care system, this year 2 of the CFCL members delivered this and included a quiz and role playing foster carers and social workers
- Change, Challenge and Choice – supporting the group to think about their own experiences and how they will need to embrace these elements of life in order to achieve the groups aims

During the residential the young people held elections for the new chairs and vice-chairs.

There was also dedicated time for the Corporate Parenting Subgroup leads to dial into the residential and pitch ideas for the next set of co-produced priorities. Once the residential was over the LinCC left with 3 new priorities and CFCL 4 for 2023-2025.

They also participated in team building activities such as orienteering, raft building, bridge building a food challenge and a talent show.



## **Come Dine with Us**

Once a month we deliver a cooking session at Our House, the evening provides an opportunity for young people to cook and eat together alongside health professionals on hand to offer support. The last financial year the Mayor of Bromley chose the project as her charity and therefore frequently attended the sessions. The young people have made lots of international dishes and had support around topics such as mental health and sexual health.

## **Summer Programme 2023**

We are about to launch our summer programme for Summer 2023 which includes a trip to Margate for our care leavers, a studio music project which will create a piece of music which will be performed at next year's care leaver celebration. We are running a collaboration with Southwark to create a film about their care experience. We are re running our girls group Fierce and Flawsome to build self esteem and confidence amongst our teenage young women. Our photography project will offer the young people a chance to compose pictures for public display in our new office following our move and our residential in August will offer our young people a trip outside of London to gain new experiences and challenge themselves outside of their comfort zone.

## **CONCLUSION**

It has been a year of continuous development and improvement for the CLA and Leaving Care Services in response to feedback from young people. 'Our House' on the civic site has been a fantastic addition to our service and allowed us to offer creative ways to engage our young people. Our Local Offer and participation programme demonstrate Bromley's commitment to improving outcomes for our young people. Our full programme of group work has allowed staff and young people multiple opportunities to put relationships at the heart of our practice and reflect Bromley's Relationship Model.

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Report No.  
CEF23038 A

## London Borough of Bromley

### PART ONE

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**Decision Maker:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY, DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** PERFORMANCE REPORTING – CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT

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

**Chief Officer:** Richard Baldwin, Director Children’s Services

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for report

1.1 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 June 2023.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 The Committee note and comment on the June 2023 outturns of key performance indicators and associated management commentary.

### Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children.
- 

### Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: 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.
  2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate):
    - (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.
    - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
- 

### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
  2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
- 

### Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
- 

### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive decision.
- 

### Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
- 

### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): Not Applicable
- 

### Ward Councillor Views

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

### 3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, stipulates that the Children's PDS Committee should receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services. Reports should enable Members to *'ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.
- 3.2 This specific 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual Education Outcomes reports – already received by the Committee. 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.
- 3.3 The 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is selected from a much wider set of data collected and reported both internally and externally in respect of children's services, it acts as a regular 'health check' on key areas of service delivery to enable scrutiny and enquiry from elected members.
- 3.4 The Committee initially agreed a proposed suite of indicators in March 2018, these indicators are reviewed and updated annually. A narrative on "why this indicator is important" has been provided to ensure that scrutiny is well informed and effective.
- 3.5 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. Quarterly reports provide management commentary against those indicators that are performing below expectation. Directors have also committed to reporting on any other indicators not in the index, by exception, should they have concerns or if they wished to report particularly good performance.
- 3.6 Directors have provided number and percentage outturns in order to allow the Scrutiny Committee to gain a sense of scale and relativity.
- 3.7 **MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY ON EXCEPTION – Index indicators performing below expectation.**
- 3.8 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 the Part 2 report.
- 3.9 As at the end of June 2023, the following Children's Scrutiny Dataset key performance indicators were performing below expectation.

**Indicator 18a: Number of in-house fostering households recruited** – Amber (See part two report)

**Indicator 26: Average Caseloads** – Amber

Average caseloads are reported as 16 cases per social worker in Safeguarding and Care Planning against our caseload promise of 12-15. This is moving in the right direction compared to previous months.

Additional cases reflect the additional demand pressures on the front door (higher levels of referrals and assessments).

Additional staffing capacity has been put in place.

Members will be reassured to note visits to children subject of a social care plan remain good despite the higher caseloads, child in need visits 89% and child protection visit 85% in time. This should be noted as proxy indicators as to the manageability of caseloads.

### **Indicator 31: % of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20-week timescale (excluding exception cases) - Red**

Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) timeliness is reported on a calendar year basis. Performance is reported as 20% for the Q2 2023, representing a significant reduction in performance against the target of 65%. In Q2 97 EHCP's were issued, which includes 14 exceptions.

This decline in performance relates to workforce challenges and significant delays in the receipt of professional advice required to complete the statutory needs assessment process, including from health partners. Monthly performance fluctuates during the year, due to variability in the time taken for professional agencies to provide advice. The SEN Service has continued to pursue advice rigorously and a range of mitigating actions are in place across education and health. A number of strategic reviews are underway to address the increased volume and complexity of need and associated demand pressures. The publication of EHC Needs Assessment Eligibility Criteria in January has started to show a reduction in the requests for statutory assessment.

Additional capacity has been commissioned including additional assessments for Educational Psychology and Occupational Therapy, with early signs of improvement taking place. The SEN Service has recently recruited successfully to fill vacancies and increase capacity, ahead of wider service transformation. The SEN Service continues to review each outstanding case on an individual basis and wherever possible expedites the decision.

## **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. TRANSFORMATION/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. CUSTOMER IMPACT**

- 6.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, stipulates that the Children's PDS Committee should receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services. Reports should enable Members to *'ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.
- 6.2 This specific 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual School Standards

reports – already received by the Committee. 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.

<b>Non-Applicable Headings:</b>	Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications and Ward Councillor Views
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Children’s Scrutiny Dataset, agreement of regular performance monitoring (March 2018) <a href="http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=593&amp;MId=6166&amp;Ver=4">http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=593&amp;MId=6166&amp;Ver=4</a> Children’s Performance Management Framework (updated January 2023)

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# Children, Education and Families Scrutiny - Performance Index 2023/24

No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Polarity	Target or Range of acceptable performance	Benchmarking and trend																Year to Date	Notes
					Bromley 2022/23	Bromley 2021/22	Bromley 2021/22	England	London	RAG rating	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24		
<b>Early Help</b>																						
1	Total Footfall Children & Family Centres	Data provides an indication of early identified support and help provided.	n/a	95000	52059	28,613	6,668	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	3742	9122	15316								15316	
2	Children supported by the Bromley Children's Project (Children referred)		n/a	1700	1063	1,755	1,869	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	98	109	123									330
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%	96%	97%	97%	89%	93%	GREEN			96%								96%	School year is academic year not financial year
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 provision for pupils who are permanently excluded.	Low	0	0	1	0 (rate: 0.00)	Rate: 0.01	Rate: 0.00	GREEN	Data suppressed, see part 2 report											School year is academic year not financial year
5	Number of Secondary permanent exclusions (Bromley schools) (Number YTD Academic year)		Low	22-36 (rate of 0.10-0.16)	33	Provisional (47)	17 (rate:0.07)	Rate: 0.1	Rate: 0.09	GREEN	3	1	16									52
<b>Safeguarding and Child Protection</b>																						
6	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	Not a target measure	4513	4032	3,827	646,120	100,620	This is not a target measure	268	509	492								1269	
7	% 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%	93%	96%	85%	83%	82%	GREEN	96%	95%	93%								93%	
8	Number of Childred in Need (Statutory threshold Section 17)	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.	n/a	Not a target measure	920	915	615	n/a	n/a	This is not a target measure	895	849	850									including DCT
9	Number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan		n/a	Not a target measure	315	346	283	51,080	7,760	This is not a target measure	312	282	288									
10	% 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%	
11	% 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%	86%	90%	100%	92%	96%	GREEN	100%	97%	100%								100%	
12	% of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time (year to date)	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%	23%	19%	14%	19%	15%	GREEN	15%	19%	12%								12%	
	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	Provisional (45)	Provisional (44)	49	41	32				41									Awaiting publication

No.	Performance Indicators	Why is this important?	Polarity	Target or Range of acceptable performance	Benchmarking and trend										RAG rating													Year to Date	Notes
					Bromley 2022/23	Bromley 2021/22	Bromley 2021/22	England	London	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23		Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24							
<b>Children Looked After and Care Leavers</b>																													
14	Children Looked After rate per 10,000	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.	n/a	Not a target measure	45	43	46	62	52	This is not a target measure			46									46							
15	Number of Children Looked After	Actual numbers of looked after children should be considered alongside demand pressures on social work capacity and placements/budgets required to fulfil statutory responsibilities.	n/a	Not a target measure	342	328	341	72,670	9,910	This is not a target measure	336	340	344									344							
16	% 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.	High	100%	100%	100%	100%	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	100%	100%	100%								100%								
17	% 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%	94%	95%	93%	Not available	Not available	GREEN	95%	94%	96%								95								
18a	Number of in-house foster households recruited (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 Bromley, can result in placements being commissioned from independent sector providers. Recruitment processes can take 5 to 7 months. Agency foster carers are often profit making organisations, carers are often not local and carers are not supported or managed by Bromley services. Also, placements are typically significantly more expensive thus adding to pressure on placement budgets. Our aim is to reduce dependency on IFA placements. This indicator should be reviewed with the numbers of children in care at any given point, the profile of these children and their likely needs and our progress in recruiting in-house foster carers.	High	15	6	11	10	Local Measure	Local Measure	AMBER	Data suppressed, see part 2 report																		
18b	Number of in house fostering households in the assessment process (Stage 1 & Stage 2)	Recruitment processes can take 5 to 7 months. Agency foster carers are often profit making organisations, carers are often not local and carers are not supported or managed by Bromley services. Also, placements are typically significantly more expensive thus adding to pressure on placement budgets. Our aim is to reduce dependency on IFA placements. This indicator should be reviewed with the numbers of children in care at any given point, the profile of these children and their likely needs and our progress in recruiting in-house foster carers.	High	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	Data suppressed, see part 2 report																		
18c	Number of in house fostering households currently approved and in the assessment process	Recruitment processes can take 5 to 7 months. Agency foster carers are often profit making organisations, carers are often not local and carers are not supported or managed by Bromley services. Also, placements are typically significantly more expensive thus adding to pressure on placement budgets. Our aim is to reduce dependency on IFA placements. This indicator should be reviewed with the numbers of children in care at any given point, the profile of these children and their likely needs and our progress in recruiting in-house foster carers.	High	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Not a target measure	Local Measure	Local Measure	This is not a target measure	Data suppressed, see part 2 report																		
19	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%	11%	11%	7%	10%	10%	GREEN	9%	9%	8%								8%								
20	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)	79%	71%	66%	69%	68%	GREEN	77%	77%	70%								70%								
21	Number of Children Looked After who achieved permanency after an Adoption Order or Special Guardianship Order was granted	The key aim for looked after children who cannot return to their families of origin is to find alternative permanent families. Numbers of adoptions and special guardianship arrangements are, therefore, closely monitored by managers. More recently, there has been a big push in supporting family members (or adults known to the child) in achieving special guardianship for our children rather than adoption, hence the drop in adoption numbers, as previously the same children would have left care under this arrangement. It is therefore vital to look at this data across, to show the number of children achieving permanency in total.	High	14	22	21	43	Local Measure	Local Measure	GREEN	Data suppressed, see part 2 report																		





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Report No.  
CEF23039

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES RISK REGISTER –  
UPDATE: QUARTER 1 – 2023/2024

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

**Chief Officer:** Richard Baldwin, Director of Children Social Care

**Ward:** N/A

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1. Reason for report

- 1.1 Risk Management is the identification, analysis and overall control of those risks which can impact on the Council's ability to deliver its priorities and objectives. This report enables the Members to scrutinise risks and the actions taken to control them in line with Audit Sub-Committee recommendations.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are asked to note:

- The current Children, Education and Families Risk Register and the existing controls in place to mitigate the risks.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:
- 

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Safe Bromley Supporting Independence Healthy Bromley
- 

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
  2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
  3. Budget head/performance centre:
  4. Total current budget for this head: £
  5. Source of funding:
- 

Personnel

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

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement Non-Statutory - Government Guidance None:  
Further Details
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive decision.
- 

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? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

### 3. COMMENTARY

#### Background

- 3.1 Risk Management is the identification, analysis and overall control of those risks which can impact on the Council's ability to deliver its priorities and objectives. The Children, Education and Families Risk Register feeds into the Corporate Risk Register, via the Corporate Risk Management Group, and comprises the high-level departmental risks which are underpinned by more detailed registers contained within the divisional business plans.
- 3.2 Audit Sub-Committee agreed that the Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers would be reviewed at their meetings twice a year and then subsequently scrutinised by the relevant PDS Committee. Internal processes require that the departmental risk registers be updated and agreed by the departmental Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a quarterly basis and be reviewed by the Corporate Risk Management Group.
- 3.3 The Children, Education and Families Risk Register is attached as Appendix 1. The risks included in the Risk Register are outlined below.

Risk Ref	Risk Description
1	Failure to deliver Children's Services Financial Strategy
2	Failure to deliver effective Children's services
3	Recruitment and Retention
4	Business Interruption / Emergency Planning
5	School Place Planning
6	SEND Transport
7	SEND Reforms
8	Youth Offending
9	Out of Borough Placements (Children and Young People)
10	Speech and Language Therapy
11	School Attendance

- 3.4 The updates around the control of all risks and actions taken to mitigate them are detailed in the register.

### 4 IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 The controls already in place and the further actions outlined in the Risk Register mitigate the adverse impacts on vulnerable children.

### 5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no policy implications arising directly from this report. Any policy implications arising from the existing controls and the further action required to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

### 6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Any financial implications arising from the existing controls and the further action required to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

### 7 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications arising directly from this report. Any personal implications arising from the existing controls and further action to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

## 8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Any legal implications arising from the existing controls and further action to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

## 9 PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no procurement implications arising directly from this report. Any procurement implications arising from the existing controls and further action to mitigate against the risks are reported to the Sub-Committee separately.

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

# Children, Education and Families Risk Register

Q1 2023/24

REF	DIVISION	RISK TITLE & DESCRIPTION (a line break - press shift & return - must be entered after the risk title)	RISK CAUSE & EFFECT	RISK CATEGORY	GROSS RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)					EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE RISK	CURRENT RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)					FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	RISK OWNER
					LIKE	LIHO	OD	IMPACT	RISK RATING		LIKE	LIHO	OD	IMPACT	RISK RATING		
1	Children's Services	<b>Failure to deliver Children's Services Financial Strategy</b>	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continual reduction in Central Government funding</li> <li>- Demographic changes</li> <li>- Increased demand for services</li> <li>- Demand led statutory services (c. 80% of operations) which can be difficult to predict</li> <li>- Increasing cost volatility due to rise of complex, high cost families or placements requiring services.</li> <li>- Specific cost factors impacting transport services</li> </ul> <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower than anticipated levels of financial resource</li> <li>- Failure to achieve a balanced budget</li> <li>- Failure to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of use of resources leading to a Qualified Independent Auditors' Report</li> <li>- Objectives of the service not met</li> <li>- Reputation is impacted</li> <li>- Wider goals of the Council are not achieved</li> </ul>	Financial	5	5	25	<p>Growth and mitigation discussions informed by robust demand forecast analysis</p> <p>Medium financial term strategy reviews informed by evidence of demand pressures.</p> <p>Match financial planning to Council priorities</p> <p>Budget monitoring and forecasting</p> <p>Regular reporting to Members via the Committee reporting process</p> <p>Effective contract monitoring to ensure quality of service provision and value for money</p> <p>Internal audit framework to test financial controls</p> <p>Constantly reviewing service operations for potential efficiencies</p> <p>Developed a series of commissioning plans, with mitigating actions, for Children's Social Care and SEND including mitigating actions addressing financial pressures</p>	4	5	20	<p>Transformation work being undertaken on CLA Placements Sufficiency, High Needs spend on SEND and Transport. Further engagement / coproduction sessions with CYP, parents, schools &amp; setting re strengthening the SEND Graduated Approach - website design and graduated approach being received well.</p> <p>Transformation work being undertaken on CYP Integrated Therapies designed to strengthen the borough's graduated approach and more proportionately engage children and young people at the level meeting their need. Increased funding has been required historically and currently to attempt to increase capacity in relation to SLT and OT to meet increased demand - this work, and the development of a Therapies Commissioning Framework aims to reduce the current over reliance and funding of specialist services and to ensure value for money as well as quality and consistency. DSG Deficit Recovery Plan principles agreed by SEND Governance Board and Schools Forum. Detailed Plan in development.</p> <p>Work to ensure equitable funding contributions to placements across E, H &amp; C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health (Community Paediatric) now participating into EHC Needs Assessment Panel (NAP) to ensure earlier and more effective multi-agency working and triaging, more informed decisions regarding which CYP require EHC Needs Assessment and Plan and those that may be offered more appropriate / proportionate resource / service across the levels of the Graduated Approach.</li> <li>- Commissioning Framework document in development to be circulated and used across all therapy providers to ensure increased quality, safety, consistency and pave way for preferred list of providers moving forward</li> <li>- Plans are in place in Children's Social Care for improving CLA placement sufficiency</li> </ul>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)				
2	Children's Services	<b>Failure to deliver effective Children's services</b> The Council is unable to deliver an effective children's service to fulfil its statutory obligations in safeguarding and protect those at risk of significant harm or death, sexual exploitation or missing from care	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local authority response to Bromley Safeguarding Children's Partnership following Wood Review.</li> </ul> <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact on life chances and outcomes for children</li> </ul>	Legal, Reputational	3	5	15	<p>Scrutiny of Performance Management Framework and Indicators with regular deep live reporting</p> <p>Quality Assurance Framework overseen by independent Practice Improvement Board</p> <p>Engagement and Influence, Bromley relationship Model ensure user feedback informs continuous improvement.</p> <p>Multi Agency Bromley Children's Safeguarding Partnership (BCSP) Training programme in place.- Training plan for qualified social workers and other professionals reviewed and updated quarterly.</p> <p>Dedicated HR programme of support in place to enable recruitment and retention.</p> <p>Effective procurement framework and contract monitoring arrangements ensure acceptable quality of service provision and value for money</p> <p>Continued review of caseloads &amp; within Caseload Promise on average and assurance of manageable caseloads</p>	3	3	9	<p>Phase 3 'to excellence' plan continues with Performance Improvement Board (PIB)</p> <p>Robust audit cycle in place.</p> <p>Demand Management forecasts informing MTFS</p>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)				
3	Children's Services	<b>Recruitment and Retention</b> Failure to recruit and retain key skilled staff with suitable experience/qualifications	<p>Cause(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Failure to compete with other organisations to recruit the highest quality candidates to build an agile workforce</li> <li>- Small pool of experienced children's Social Workers and other qualified roles (Nursery Practitioners, Supervised Contact Workers)</li> </ul> <p>Effect(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Failure to identify and meet service user needs</li> <li>- Provision of service to ineligible clients</li> <li>- Provision of service prior to/without appropriate authorisation</li> <li>- Lack of skill set results in an inability to deliver effective children's services to fulfil statutory safeguarding obligations, impacting on life chances and outcomes</li> </ul>	Personnel	5	4	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dedicated HR team to support managers in recruiting staff to hard to fill positions in CSC and Education</li> <li>- Joint meetings held between HR and employment agencies to improve the quality and speed of locum assignments</li> <li>- Review of the current Recruitment and Retention package and associated strategies through corporate Recruitment and Retention Board</li> <li>- Recruitment drive to convert locums to permanent staff</li> <li>- Utilisation of bespoke recruitment tools to directly source staff</li> <li>- Commissioning of improvements to the Council's recruitment web site to include a video virtual tour of the Council</li> <li>- Support in effectively managing staff performance</li> <li>- Provision of training measures to include targeted leadership and management training programmes including partners and other stakeholders</li> <li>- Tailored individual career plan for staff</li> <li>- Launch of Social Work Academy in April 2019.</li> <li>- Bespoke training for first line managers on-going</li> <li>- Training and quality assurance of practice</li> </ul> <p>Established Social Work Academy with bespoke training offers to support career progression</p>	3	4	12	<p>Continued review of caseloads in children social care and assurance of manageable caseloads</p> <p>Caseloads in SEN Statutory Assessment Team above London and statistical neighbour averages. Transformation plan for SEN being developed</p>	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)  Director, Human Resources (Charles Obazuaye)				

# Children, Education and Families Risk Register

Q1 2023/24

REF	DIVISION	RISK TITLE & DESCRIPTION (a line break - press shift & return - must be entered after the risk title)	RISK CAUSE & EFFECT	RISK CATEGORY	GROSS RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)				EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE RISK	CURRENT RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)				FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	RISK OWNER
					LIKE	LIHO	OD	IMPACT		RISK RATING	LIKE	LIHO	OD		
4	Children's Services	<b>Business Interruption / Emergency incident</b> Failure to provide Council services or statutory requirements, or mass illness/fatalities scenario following a business interruption or emergency incident	Cause(s): - Business Interruption could be caused by Loss of Facility (fire, flood etc.), Staff (illness, strike) or IT (cyber attack) or loss of Key suppliers. - Mass fatalities or illness has a range of causes and this risk to the council could be caused by council staff being impacted resulting in failure to manage statutory requirements Effect(s): - Business interruption - failure to deliver services, loss of customer / resident satisfaction. - Emergency planning - failure to deliver statutory duties.	Personnel, Reputational	3	4	12	Business Interruption - Civil protection and emergency planning policies in place at corporate level overseen by the Corporate Risk Management Group - Business Continuity Plans in place at service level - Contracts contain business continuity provision, yearly review of key suppliers BC plans - Communication to all staff prior to all impending industrial action, informing of any possible service disruption as well as explaining implications of strike action for individual staff members Emergency Planning - Robust plans in place, including major incident plan / concept of operations document for emergency response and recovery - Annual Flu vaccination programme in place - Introduction of Humanitarian and Lead Officer (HALO) role	3	3	9	Business Continuity Plans reviewed annually. Key suppliers BCPs to be reviewed annually	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)		
5	Education	<b>School Place Planning</b> Failure to meet the statutory requirement to ensure sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in the area	Cause(s): - Failure to secure sufficient Primary and Secondary school places in the area - Failure to secure sufficient educational placements for children with disabilities and special educational needs - Failure to secure sufficient alternative provision Effect(s): - Disruption to the education of children and impact on their life chances	Political, Legal, Professional	3	4	12	- Strategic needs analysis (birth rate, dwelling stock and migration) to project demand - Review analysis of demand annually - SEN sufficiency strategy will inform long term planning of specialist provision - Implement Basic Need programmes - Maintain relationships with DfE ESFA to support delivery of Free School and PSBP programmes - Monitor contractor performance in uncertain market	4	3	12	- DfE Investment Committee had approved the secondary free school scheme and the DfE's feasibility on the scheme is currently underway. - Further delays have arisen in the DfE-led new school projects - Harris Kent House and Redwood Special School. Officers are pressing DfE for urgent escalation	Director, Education (Jared Nehra)		
6	Education	<b>SEND Transport</b> Failure to provide appropriate home to school transport assistance for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities	Cause(s): - Fluctuating demand year on year - Rising numbers of children meeting criteria for transport provision and associated increase in costs - Cost pressures from market place and rising fuel prices Effect(s): - Disruption to education - Impact on life chances and outcomes for children and young people	Legal Financial	5	3	15	- Budget monitoring and forecasting - Effective contract monitoring arrangements to ensure acceptable quality of service provision and value for money - Tender exercise completed and framework contract awarded - Monitoring of market place fluctuations - Purchase of route optimisation software 'QRoutes' - Introduction of Independent Travel Training offer	3	4	12	SEND transport review undertaken. Proposed initiatives have passed through PDS Committee and Executive. Once complete and following consultation, revised transport policies will seek to be adopted which will create greater opportunities and flexibilities in the transport offer including opportunities for Independent travel training, and access to personal transport budgets. Significant work has been undertaken to optimise the routes into schools to ensure vehicles operate at greater capacity and vehicle numbers reduced as a result. The tendering exercise based on the optimised routes has been successfully delivered reducing the numbers of vehicles operating and reducing the average daily costs of routes. Numbers continue to come through (as they will throughout the year) and these introduce new challenges. At this point in the year there is limited spare capacity which in turn demands a premium price. Formal consultation has been completed and final approval decision taken. Full implementation now underway.	Director, Education (Jared Nehra)		
7	Education	<b>SEND Reforms</b> Failure to meet expectation of SEND reforms	Cause(s): - Ineffective and inaccurate identification of SEND - Failure of schools to make reasonable adjustments to meet needs of individual children and young people - Failure to provide appropriate and effective support for children with identified needs and their schools - Pattern of provision which does not meet the needs of the local population resulting in placements in independent schools Effect(s): - Costs associated with the Legal process - Escalating cost of provision - Impact on education and life chances of children and young people	Financial Legal Professional	4	4	16	- SEN service realigned to improve decision making and management oversight - Service Level Agreements being established with mainstream settings with additionally resourced provisions to provide clarity across both parties - Legal advice to be drawn in to support complex tribunal cases - Local Area Autism Partnership established with Autism strategy developed - Annual review programme, with additional resource identified - Covid-19 programmes established - data reporting, collaborative risk assessments, vulnerable CYP programme and CFA Modifications - Special Free School tendering process underway, Specialist placement planning model commissioned - Engagement framework finalised, CYP participation officer in place - Additional capacity in the Statutory assessment team agreed, recruitment in train with specific focus on vulnerable groups including CLA/LC cohort, CME/CMoE, NEET and EHE - increased resource identified to support schools in confidence to deliver education for CYP who have Dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties (SpLD) - investment in two new posts (SEN Placements Manager and SEN Annual Reviews Manager) to focus support in these two key areas	3	3	9	Revised SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities has been agreed by SEND Governance Board, with a greater focus on driving outcomes and ensuring the sustainability of High Needs funding Transformation work is ongoing, linked closely with the DSG deficit recovery management plan Bromley Teaching Schools leading SEN training collaborative to support school improvement. - Annual review project reviewed and re-established and broadened with multi-agency task and finish group - Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework revised and changes currently being embedded - Explore commissioning options for therapy capacity - Special Free School approved and in pre-opening status - Increase resource for Educational Psychology agreed, challenge with shortage of EP nationally – blended model of delivery developed - PRA approach revised - SEND / AP green paper published - partnership response and consideration of existing activities aligned with direction of travel - HNF Banding Review programme in train to develop equitable funding system, with a focus on sustainability	Director, Education (Jared Nehra)		



# Children, Education and Families Risk Register

Q1 2023/24

REF	DIVISION	RISK TITLE & DESCRIPTION (a line break - press shift & return - must be entered after the risk title)	RISK CAUSE & EFFECT	RISK CATEGORY	GROSS RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)					EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE RISK	CURRENT RISK RATING (See next tab for guidance)					FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	RISK OWNER
					LIKE	LIHO	OD	IMPA	RISK		CT	RATI	NG	LIKE	LIHO		
8	Children's Social Care	<b>Youth Offending</b> Failure to deliver effective youth offending services to protect children and young people and reduce their vulnerability	Cause(s): - Increase in youth offending  Effect(s): - Impact on life chances and outcomes for children - Failure to protect the public and actual or potential victims (assessment of risk to others and planning to manage the risk and protect the public)	Professional Reputational		3	4	12	Youth Justice Strategy 2020-2023 in place, annual reports submitted in a timely way. Quality Assurance and auditing programme established. YOS performance monitoring reviews KPIs, act upon trends and drive improvement plan - Triage support to divert low level offenders from YJS - Packages of support to manage young people's risk appropriately in the community for those who are sent to custody. - YJS Strategic Board chaired by the CEO		2	4	8	Ongoing preparedness for Youth Offending Service inspection, self evaluation established. Continued focus on early intervention and disproportionality work.	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)		
9	Children's Social Care	<b>Out of Borough Placements (Children and Young People)</b> Inability to reduce reliance on out of borough placements  Financial implications	Cause(s): - Failure to provide/commission sufficient local placements for children with disabilities and children in care  Effect(s): - Cost implications of out of borough placements (Cross refer Budget risk) - Impact for children's welfare and development	Professional Financial		3	3	9	- Close monitoring of placements and eligibility criteria at multi agency resource panel - Budget monitoring and forecasting - Effective contract monitoring arrangements to ensure acceptable quality of service provision and value for money - Review of children's residential, IFA and semi-supported 16+ market in borough and discussions with Bromley providers to increase our ability to place with them. - Step down from residential to foster care programme in place. - Work with housing to support Young People moving to own tenancy when ready and reduce risk of homelessness		3	3	9	CLA Sufficiency Strategy, annual updated and agreed at PDS In-house foster care recruitment stretch target remains in place, additional funding agreed to enable recruitment strategy . Successful ongoing engagement with local residential providers discussing, quality and commissioning, strengthening relationship and joint working. Visits undertaken by commissioning, CSC and Central Placements Team to ensure a joint and integrated approach Compliance Officer in place to ensure quality, safety and effectiveness of placement and experience for our CLA New Horizons project established to enable step down placements to foster care Review of Commissioning alliance allowing for greater access to local placements, review of alternative block arrangements	Director, Children's Services (Richard Baldwin)		
10	Education	<b>Speech and Language Therapy</b> Failure to provide appropriate SaLT services to children and young people	Cause(s): - Current service provision not meeting needs of children and young people in a timely way  Effect(s): - Failure to meet the need of children and young people including those with SEN/D and other vulnerabilities	Legal Reputational Professional		4	3	12	- Multi-agency review of SaLT provision - Work with core provider (BHC) regarding SLT provision capacity undertaken given current levels of demand and pressures/demand on the system - Engagement Working Groups undertaken with children, young people, parents and schools & settings in February and March 2022 to coproduce this strengthened SLT offer.		4	3	12	Occupational Therapy - urgent actions being taken to identify support for EHCP Needs Assessments professional advice - sourcing urgent specialist - BHC has employed an experienced Therapies Project Manager to deliver on the organisation's Therapy offer and plan. Project Manager has been working on a plan for SLT (and OT and Physio) to restructure the service offer in a way that mirrors and reflects the borough's wider piece of transformation work to strengthen the Graduated Approach - meaning earlier support, signposting and multi-agency collaborative working to better enable a more appropriate and proportionate offer in line with the specific and individual needs of CYP in the borough -Publication of the B-hive website is the first step in establishing a whole system approach to supporting SaLT needs, led by Integrated Commissioning	Director of Education (Jared Nehra)		
11	Education	<b>School Attendance</b> Ensuring return of children to school	Cause(s): - Children not returning to school following Covid-19 lockdown - Increased EHE declarations - Lack of real time data from schools  Effect(s): - Children may not be in receipt of satisfactory education	Legal Reputational		3	4	12	- EWOs support schools with improving attendance - EHE officers monitor and follow up on new EHE cases & CSC involvement checked - Mental health and wellbeing initiatives being prioritised		2	4	8	Monitoring of EHE and non-attendance is ongoing Work closely with schools through their Single Points of Contact (SPOC) Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit embedded in schools. Attendance and Inclusion Taskforce has introduction of 'Studybugs' a specialist data provider to capture and report on live data from schools. Most schools are now signed up. This will inform targeted support and assistance from the Education Welfare Service. Attendance of vulnerable groups remain a key priority, with the new data analysis functionality enabling greater targeting of resource. The Service plans to publish Local Inclusion Dashboards by September 2023.	Director of Education (Jared Nehra)		

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Report No.  
CEF23046

## London Borough of Bromley

### PART ONE - PUBLIC

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

**Date:** 13 September 2023

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

**Title:** EDUCATION HEALTH CARE (EHC) – DEEP DIVE

**Contact Officer:** Jared Nehra, Director of Education  
E-mail: Jared.Nehra@bromley.gov.uk

**Chief Officer:** Richard Baldwin, Director of Children, Education and Families

**Ward:** All Wards

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#### 1. BROMLEY CONTEXT

- 1.1. The London Borough of Bromley (LBB), South East London Integrated Care System (SELICS) and Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) share a strong commitment to improving the education, health and wellbeing outcomes for Children and Young People (CYP) who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This commitment comes from the highest levels and is implemented through effective joint governance which is driving, and will sustain, rapid improvement. Bromley aspires to provide outstanding services for children and young people which safeguard them, give them the right help at the right time, by the right professional in their lives and which achieve positive outcomes for their journey into adulthood.
- 1.2. 73,119 Bromley residents are aged 0 – 18, representing over a fifth of the population. Live births peaked at 4,230 in 2016/17 but have since fallen back below 4,000. The school age population has risen by 4.4% since 2010 but is projected to fall by 1.4% by 2027. The fall is due to a reduction in the primary aged population which will fall by 1,377 by 2027, whilst the secondary aged population will increase by 533. By 2027 the number of 0–3-year-olds is projected to decrease by 717 or 4.9%.
- 1.3. There are 27,203 children enrolled in state funded Bromley primary schools, 24,505 pupils in secondary schools and 868 in our Special Schools. Bromley is a net importer of pupils with 8,560 (16%) of pupils in Bromley schools being resident in another Borough, whilst 4,568 (10%) of Bromley pupils are being educated in another Borough. For special schools, cross borough flows are broadly equal with 14% of places at a Bromley special school being occupied by an out of borough pupil,
- 1.4. With regards school organisation, there are 100 open schools, with all but 6 being academies. 11 are standalone academies and the rest operate within 22 multi academy trusts (MATs).

There are four open special schools, plus a special free school in the pre-opening phase. There are currently 351 pupils at the Council's SEN units and resource provisions.

- 1.5. NHS SE London (Bromley Place) encompasses 44 GP practices. The main providers of community services for children and adults in Bromley are Bromley Healthcare (therapies, community nursing, school nursing, community paediatrics); Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust (health visiting, adult mental health, adult learning disability services, CAMHS) and Bromley Y, a voluntary sector organisation (providing a wellbeing and early intervention service).
- 1.6. Most CYP who have SEND will have their needs met by the help available through their education setting, which is known as SEN Support. For a relatively small number of CYP, their needs cannot be met by the provision that is normally available within the education setting (SEN Support) and an EHC Plan may be required in order to meet needs.
- 1.7. The number of CYP in Bromley recorded as accessing SEN Support was 6,597 (January 2023 census). As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (SEN nationally published data), the number of CYP who have an EHC Plan was 3,582, the number of requests for EHC Needs statutory assessments received was 913, with 634 being agreed (69.4%). Pupils with EHC Plans are placed within a range of settings both within Bromley and out of borough.
- 1.8. It should be acknowledged that the current pressures are recognised by Government in its SEND and AP Green Paper as being system wide, with all services under significant pressure. The SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan is a clear reflection of the systemic challenges at a national level. Please see section 10 for further information.

## **2. EHCP PROJECTIONS**

- 2.1. Detailed analysis of the 2023 SEN 2 data is continuing, but initial analysis indicates that the number of children and young people in receipt of an EHCP has increased from 1,826 in 2015 to 3,582 in 2023, an increase of 91%. The number of Bromley EHCPs have increased by 44% since 2020 alone and growth outstrips the London and national averages across each of the last 4 years.
- 2.2. Nationally, the number of children and young people with an EHCP has continued to rise; 66,356 EHCPs were in place in 2022, which is a 7% increase on 2021. In Bromley, there were 3582 EHCPs in 2022 compared to 3241 in 2021, a 10.52% increase. Requests for assessment have also increased in line with national trends. Bromley has seen a 28.77% increase in 2022, compared to the previous year. Nationally the increase in requests for assessment increased by 23%.
- 2.3. The percentage annual rate of increase between 2022 and 2023 has slowed to 11%, however the actual number of net additional EHCPs is almost identical in 2023 to 2022 due to larger base EHCP population.
- 2.4. The Council has been working with a specialist data analytical consultant Mastodon C to project the future number, need and setting type of children with EHCPs. Their analysis of the 2022 SEN2 census predicts that based on their median projection model there would be 4,126 EHCPs by 2026 and 4,768 by 2031. Their high growth model shows EHCP numbers rising to 4,715 in 2026 and 5,468 by 2031.
- 2.5. The table below details how the projected increase in need will be distributed across Key Stages. This demonstrates that increases in EHCPs will be greater in older age groups, with the greatest increase amongst the 18+ age group.

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2031</b>	<b>Change 2022-31</b>
KS1	410	473	424	3%
KS2	767	936	911	19%
KS3	699	957	1009	44%
KS4	416	625	706	70%
KS5	360	502	668	85%
18+	486	652	926	90%

- 2.6. The SEN2 data includes the stated primary need of each EHCP. The primary need most commonly stated on EHCPs in is Bromley is Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) followed by Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH). SEMH is projected to overtake ASD as the second most common primary need by 2025. The projected number of CYPs with ASD, SLCN and SEMH in 2026 and 2031 are set out below.

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2031</b>
<b>ASD</b>	638	884	1,010
<b>SLCN</b>	930	1,239	1,465
<b>SEMH</b>	598	934	1,096

- 2.7. The table below sets out the need by type of setting in 2026 and 2031. The projected overall increase in EHCPs as outlined in 2.3 above is going to place pressure on all setting types, It should be noted that the ARP and special school capacity is not currently sufficient to deliver the increase in need set out below. There also needs to be further consideration of the future need for FE provision arising from the increasing number of EHCPs post 16.

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2031</b>
<b>ARPs</b>	398	451	462
<b>Further Education</b>	451	606	859
<b>Mainstream</b>	943	1,248	1,317
<b>Maintained Special Schools</b>	870	1,134	1,246
<b>Independent Special Schools</b>	229	329	392

- 2.8. Projects currently underway in order to increase capacity include the delivery by the Department for Education (DfE) of a new Special Free School in Chislehurst and new Additionally Resourced Provisions at Oaklands Primary School and The Highway Primary School.
- 2.9. The Local Area Partnership continues to work together in order to manage demand and is accountable to the SEND Governance Board. Key areas of work include:
- The EHC Needs Assessment Eligibility Guidance, which has been coproduced with partners and parent/carers, was published in January and has been positively received across the Local Area Partnership. Schools are reporting that they have a better understanding of the assessment process and are more confident in responding to parental requests. The quality of referrals has improved enabling a more robust decision-making process. This has led to a decrease in the number of assessments being agreed at the Needs Assessment Panel (NAP). There are early indications of a reduction in the number of requests for statutory assessment, which will continue to be monitored.
  - Data in the calendar year to 30 June 2023 shows that 418 requests for EHC Needs Assessment have been considered at Needs Assessment Panel compared to 490 in the

same period in 2022. Significantly, since the introduction of the EHC Needs Assessment Eligibility Guidance the number of EHC Needs Assessments agreed has reduced from 70% to 61%. This is attributed to more consistent decision making across weekly panels, which are attended by professionals on a rotational basis; increased confidence in schools to work with the Local Authority when SEN Support is required to meet presenting needs rather than an Education Health and Care Plan and the introduction of Funded Inclusion Plans.

- Health and Social Care representation on decision making panels is valued in supporting decisions for children and young people with complex presentations and/or family situations. This is contributing to more effective decision making at an earlier stage, leading to a reduction in the number of requests being agreed.
- The SEN Advisory Teams continue to support schools and settings, providing support and training across a wide range of areas, across the graduated approach, universal, targeted and specialist. As part of the Education Transformation (see section 11), the role of the Advisory Teams will be further strengthened with a greater focus on prevention and early intervention.
- The introduction of the Bromley Funded Inclusion Plan (FIP), following a review of the Pupil Resource Agreement (PRA) model supports a 'watch and wait' approach to determine if an EHC Needs Assessment is required, with resource available to provide short term interventions that sit above SEN support.
- The development of sessions to support parent/carers understanding of the statutory assessment process and the entitlement for their child or young person below the statutory threshold. This is contributing to a shared understanding between families and education settings, ensuring SEN support is being fully accessed, and monitored to assess impact, before consideration of an EHC Needs Assessment.

### **3. EHC PLANS**

- 3.1. The SEN service uses weekly data analysis to measure the progress and timeliness of EHC Needs Assessments and to forward plan the agenda for decision making panels.
- 3.2. Review of data compared to statistical neighbours, shows Bromley to be an outlier in the number of referrals made for Early Years children. Currently 26% or 115 children are under assessment.
- 3.3. This high level of demand has led to an enhanced focus on early help and Early Years SEN Support. In November 2022 a dedicated Early Years Needs Assessment Panel was introduced to specifically focus on the high levels of referrals and to enable signposting to specialist support services to help families receive the help that they need through SEN Support
- 3.4. Advice requests made to key partners in health, social care and Education Psychology are analysed and followed up weekly to ensure that cases progress to decision making panels at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.5. Decision making following EHC Needs Assessment in Bromley is through the Multi Agency Statutory Assessment Panel. The panel meets weekly and has representation from Health, Social Care and Education. On Average 88% of decisions are to Agree to Issue an Education Health and Care Plan which is in line with the national average.

3.6. The 20-week timeliness metric is carefully scrutinised through monthly SEN Assurance meetings, the SEND Governance Board and the Department of Education. Data to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 is as follows:

Description	2023 - Quarter 1						2023 - Quarter 2					
	Jan-23		Feb-23		Mar-23		Apr-23		May-23		June- 23	
<b>Number of EHCPs issued</b>	<b>35</b>		<b>51</b>		<b>39</b>		<b>34</b>		<b>30</b>		<b>33</b>	
<b>Of which, on time</b>	9	26%	7	14%	1	3%	5	15%	3	10%	5	15%
<b>Of which, late</b>	26	74%	44	86%	38	97%	29	85%	27	90%	28	85%
<b>Of which, late &amp; exception agreed</b>	18	51%	27	53%	11	28%	6	18%	4	13%	4	12%
<b>Revised 'count'</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>24</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>26</b>		<b>29</b>	
<b>20 weeks - % of revised 'count'</b>	9	53%	7	29%	1	4%	5	18%	3	12%	5	17%
<b>CUMULATIVE</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>41</b>		<b>69</b>		<b>97</b>		<b>123</b>		<b>152</b>	
	9	53%	16	39%	17	25%	22	23%	25	20%	30	20%

- 3.7. The Council recognises the significant ongoing challenges in meeting demand and its duties pertaining to the issuing of EHC Plans within 20-weeks. To this end, the Council has invested significant resource across a range of service areas in order to build capacity.
- 3.8. When an EHC Needs Assessment is agreed, a range of advice from professionals is requested (education, health and care), relevant to the child or young person's individual needs. In order for the Council to make a decision as to whether a child or young person requires an EHC Plan, it is normal practice to consider submissions from all the professionals that have been asked to provide advice.
- 3.9. All cases are considered on an individual basis, according to presenting need, however under the Children and Families Act (2014) Education Psychology (EP) advice is required for every Needs Assessment and is therefore impacted more heavily than other services.
- 3.10. The Council has commissioned an external organisation to provide EP advice, complimenting the existing EP Service. The additional capacity is showing significant improvements in the timeliness of EP advice being provided.
- 3.11. There have been challenges in meeting increasing need for therapy assessments to the EHC process from Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy. To address these issues Bromley Council and South East London ICB have been working with Bromley Healthcare to agree new delivery models and resources to meet increasing demands.
- 3.12. The speech and language offer is being transformed as part of a whole system approach from universal, targeted to specialist offer and the detailed modelling for this will be finalised in coming months. Whilst this work is being undertaken, resources have been agreed to increase capacity of SALT over coming months. The funding identified is being used to increase Speech and Language Therapists and Assistants to deliver provision.
- 3.13. The Occupational Therapy developments have included agreeing short term non recurrent funding to address children waiting for an assessment. It has also included recurrent funding for an ongoing arrangement to provide sustainable resources to meet demand for OT input into EHC assessments. This arrangement is overseen by Bromley Healthcare, currently via a subcontracting arrangement.

3.14. The Council has also invested further resource to support the SEN Service in the writing of EHC Plans. This is a commissioned service for a two-year period, which will provide much needed capacity to improve the timeliness of issuing EHC Plans, if agreed following an EHC Needs Assessment.

#### **4. PARENT/CARER ENGAGEMENT**

4.1. Bromley Council, Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) and SELICB (Bromley) are strongly committed to “working in a way which ensures that children, young people and their families feel that they have participated fully in the process and have a sense of co-ownership” (Section 4.9 of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years)

4.2. Effective engagement with parents, children and young people is central to the delivery of better outcomes and remains a SEND strategic priority. The Council in partnership with our strategic SEND Parent Engagement partner offer an active programme of engagement and support for children, young people, and their families.

4.3. Local Area partners are responsible for planning services for children and young people who have SEND. It is important that we can consider how engagement informs and supports the work of the Partnership as part of an integrated approach to shape the services we offer through the Local Offer and deliver better outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Bromley. This effective engagement allows partners to listen to parent/carers and understand their concerns. Together, we identify themes and issues that are being experienced by families across the borough and co-develop solutions. Examples include:

- Coproducing a pathway for children and young people with Down Syndrome
- A programme to increase the number of Changing Places toilets across the borough
- Monthly EHC Information sessions for parents where the Local Authority has agreed to undertake a EHC Needs Assessment for their child
- Co-produced EHC Eligibility guidance - Parent Friendly version
- Coproduction of the B-Hive Website to help families to access information, advice and strategies to support their child’s development
- Engagement opportunities to contribute to Ordinarily Available Provision and Graduated Approach Framework
- Introduction of SEN Support Information sessions for parents to help families to access universal and targeted support for their child
- Annual Review Information sessions
- Transition Events
- Embracing Diversity Project and Project Me

4.4 Further examples of the impact of our engagement with children, young people and families are captured in our quarterly ‘You said, We did’ engagement reports. These reports are available on the [Bromley Local Offer](#) and are shared with parent carer networks and voluntary section partners.

4.5 The council is working with Contact to develop a new Parent Carer Forum (PCF) which is funded by the Department for Education. Parent Carer forums provide an opportunity for parents and carers to express their views and input into the planning and delivery of SEND services. The forum will be a member of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF).

#### **5. PARTNERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

5.1. Partnership working is critical to the effective delivery of support for children and young



people who have SEND and their families. The Council has strong partnership governance, reporting to a range of boards, providing robust accountability.

5.2. The Children's Executive Board (CEB) brings together commissioners and providers across the local network of services for children, led by the Director of Children's Services. The CEB oversees the action being taken across agencies to tackle local priorities and it provides a problem-solving forum to raise and address barriers to improvement by agencies working collaboratively. Partners are committed to working together to develop practice across agencies, to increase integration of services where it makes sense to do so and to strengthen joint accountability for improving outcomes for young people in Bromley.

5.3. The SEND Governance Board is a multi-agency forum, led by the LBB Director of Children's Services and Director of Education, which leads implementation of the SEND Action Plan in line with the SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities on behalf of the Children's Executive Board.

5.4. The five main priority areas under the SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities for 2022-23 are:

PRIORITY 1 - Embed effective engagement with parents, children and young people and all partners as central to the delivery of better outcomes.

PRIORITY 2 - Children and young people receive early support through universal and targeted provision, reducing reliance on specialist provision.

PRIORITY 3 - Increase local capacity across education, health and social care for children and young people with more complex needs.

PRIORITY 4 - Ensure robust multi-agency decision making processes are embedded across the SEND Partnership enabling sustainable, timely integrated support for children and young people with more complex needs and their families.

PRIORITY 5 - Enable all our children and young people to transfer successfully to the next stage of their education or into employment, and to transfer to an independent adult life in their local community.

5.5. The SEND Governance Board has a range of responsibilities:

- agrees, owns and promotes the SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities, ensuring actions are implemented to improve outcomes for children and young people in the local area
- approves and monitors the implementation and impact of the multi-agency SEND Action Plan to ensure that our work across the local area is leading to improved outcomes for children and young people
- advises on the prioritisation of the agreed actions, tackling those areas of greatest concern to children, young people and families
- problem solves to remove any barriers identified and ensure milestones are met
- ensures resources are identified to complete the agreed actions
- reports on progress, challenges and outcomes to the wider stakeholders across the local area.

5.6. The Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) is a forum for developing joint strategies and initiatives where joint commissioning decisions are made. The ICB agrees an annual work plan which identifies opportunities for joint commissioning, including work to deliver effective SEND services to improve and re-shape our local services to meet local needs. The leadership and director level membership demonstrates the significance that both health

partners and the Council attach to the work of this Board.

- 5.7. The One Bromley Children and Young People's Integrated Care Partnership is a partnership that is delivered within the governance of the One Bromley joint working arrangements. The objectives are aligned with the NHS Long Term Plan which intends that local areas will design and implement models of care that are age appropriate, closer to home and bring together physical and mental health services. These models will provide holistic care across local authority and NHS services.
- 5.8. The Health and Well-Being Board, chaired by a senior Elected Member, brings together LBB and partner agencies whose role is to understand the health needs of the local community and to encourage commissioners to work together to meet agreed priorities and ensures that health and wellbeing priorities for children are acted upon by the partnership. The Board keeps track of the implementation and impact of SEND through reporting from the SEND Governance Board.
- 5.9. The Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee regularly reviews progress made on SEND, including scrutiny of the Director of Education and continues to be a high priority on the annual work plan for scrutiny.
- 5.10. The Executive Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families and Deputy Leader of the Council meets regularly with senior officers to ensure further scrutiny and challenge.
- 5.11. There is strong input from Health and Social Care to the SEND Governance Board, EHC processes and partnership arrangements. This includes strategic oversight from the ICB and BHC and Oxleas into the SEND Governance Board and other associated strategic planning processes. It also includes input to the EHC decision making panels to ensure effective clinical input to decisions around children's needs and services provided. The areas of improvement around Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy are taken forward via a partnership approach across Health, Education and Social Care.
- 5.12. The social care landscape is increasingly complex with a number of overlapping pieces of legislation, such as the Children and Families Act 2014; the Care Act 2014; and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 all of which must interact with the existing duties set out in the Children Act 1989 and section 2 of Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's Act 1970 when we are thinking specifically about disabled children and young people and those with SEN.
- 5.13. The Council continues to review arrangements across the partnership to ensure high quality input and engagement. With this in mind, we are considering implementing the role of a Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) within social care. Implementing this role will further strengthen the role of social care within the EHC process, bringing systems together and improving knowledge and understanding.

## **6. HIGH NEEDS FUNDING AND ESTATES REVIEW**

- 6.1. The High Needs Funding and Estates Review is a project to review both the funding model for specialist provision and the suitability of SEN premises to improve the quality of provision and make extra capacity available.
- 6.2. The estates review is currently part way through reviewing all specialist accommodation (Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and Special Schools) in Bromley to identify where additional capacity could be delivered. A number of schools/trusts have also expressed that they would like to consider opening new ARPs. This work will lead to a forward programme of work (dependent on available funding) to deliver additional capacity.

6.3. The Council receives High Needs Capital Funding (HNCF) to support the provision of new specialist capacity and to make improvements to existing provision to increase its effectiveness. £15,336k of which £2,626k is still to be allocated to schemes.

## 7. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT – DEFICIT RECOVERY PLAN

7.1. The budgets for the DSG for 2023/24 for the four blocks are as follows:

<b>Block</b>	<b>Budget (ignoring recoupment)</b>
Schools	£257,152,000
High Needs	£74,299,000
Early Years	£22,251,000
Central	£2,045,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£355,747,000</b>

7.2. The deficit brought forward into 2023/24 was £12,705,000. The overall in year deficits are shown below and have risen due to recent grant announcements inferring a smaller increase in grant levels.

2023/24	£3.8m
2024/25	£5.4m
2025/26	£4.9m
2026/27	£4.8m

7.3. The Bromley DSG Deficit Recovery Management Plan has been prepared by the Children, Education and Families department of the London Borough of Bromley, in response the growing financial pressures on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), primarily within the High Needs Funding block, which is primarily where the pressure sits.

7.4. A report outlining the DSG Deficit Recovery Management Plan was presented to this PDS on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022 (report number CEF22076) and Officers continue to meet with representatives from the Department for Education to discuss the Council's five year plan to address the DSG deficit. The most recent meeting took place in July 2023, with DfE colleagues noting that they were content with the actions being taken by Bromley and had no further suggestions to put forward to address the deficit position. This committee will continue to receive updates regarding the plan and the impact of actions taken on the DSG deficit.

## 8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

8.1. The Bromley Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement Framework (for ease referenced as the QA Framework) was introduced in 2019, responding to key actions set out within the SEND Reforms Action Plan, accountable to the SEND Governance Board.

8.2. The QA Framework is a multi-agency approach to improve the quality of the EHC process, spanning professional advice, EHC Plans and Annual Reviews. In addition, this approach contributes to valuable learning and professional development across the partnership in promoting a shared understanding of high-quality practice and strengthening multi-agency working across Education, Health and Care.

8.3. The cycle of quality assurance is one that drives continuous service improvements and encompasses four strands:



8.4. Each cycle focuses on a key theme/cohort, the most recent cycles have included:

- Preparing for Adulthood
- Youth Justice System
- Children Missing Education
- Elective Home Education
- Children Looked After (and leaving care)
- Early Years

8.5. The QA Framework is currently under review as part of the Education Transformation Programme to ensure that impact continues to be demonstrable. A new cycle of multi-agency quality assurance will commence in Autumn 2023.

## 9. AREA SEND INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

9.1. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission issued the new framework and handbook for SEND area inspections, which came into force on 1 January 2023. The framework includes the introduction of a multidisciplinary inspection team comprised of education, health and social care inspectors.

9.2. The aim is to strengthen accountability and support continuous improvement across the SEND system. The framework has been designed to inspect the system as it is now. We await further details from the government on the SEND Review including the DfE plans to clarify the roles and responsibilities of partners across, education, health, care, and local government (SEND Partnerships) and how they will be held accountable in future.

- 9.3. The lived experiences of children and young people with SEND will be central to the assessment. This will be done through surveys, talking to parent carer and children and young people representative groups and looking at a minimum of six representative case studies chosen by the inspectors.
- 9.4. The strategies and plans Bromley have in place must demonstrate that they are making a real difference to, and improve the lives of, children and young people with SEND and their families. The inspection will also consider whether local authorities' approach to commissioning and overseeing alternative provision arrangements for children and young people in the local authority area meets their duties as set out in statutory guidance.
- 9.5. Inspectors will evaluate the impact of the local area partnership's SEND arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND, including the extent to which:
- children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way
  - children, young people, and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support
  - children and young people receive the right help at the right time
  - children and young people are well prepared for their next steps, and achieve strong outcomes
  - children and young people are valued, visible and included in their communities.
- 9.6. Inspectors will also evaluate how the local area partners work together to plan, evaluate, and develop the SEND system, including the extent to which:
- leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND
  - leaders actively engage and work with children, young people, and families
  - leaders have an accurate, shared understanding of the needs of children and young people in their local area
  - leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people, including commissioning arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision
  - leaders evaluate services and make improvements
  - leaders create an environment in which effective practice and multi-agency working can flourish.
- 9.7. There will be three categories of judgement given to local areas following inspection and ratings will determine the type and time scale of the next inspection:

<b>Inspection outcome</b>	<b>Type and time scale of next inspection</b>
Local area SEND arrangements lead to positive experiences for CYP with SEND	Engagement meetings with a full inspection within 5 years
Local area SEND arrangements lead to inconsistent experiences of CYP with SEND	Engagement meetings with a full inspection within 3 years
Local area SEND arrangements show failings and lead to significant concerns about the experiences of CYP with SEND	Engagement meetings, priority action plan, monitoring within 18 months, full re inspection within 3 years

- 9.8. Through the accountability of the SEND Governance Board, the Bromley partnership is taking a number of key actions to ensure preparedness, including:

- Reviewing the Self Evaluation
- Reviewing joint commissioning arrangements
- Ensuring a shared understanding of accountability across partners
- Raising awareness of the forthcoming inspection across the partnership
- Continue to engage and work with children, young people and their families to capture and improve their lived experience.
- Actively monitoring outcomes from inspections that have taken place under the new framework and working in partnership with regional and national organisations to improve learning as the framework embeds

## 10. SEND AND ALTERNATIVE PROVISION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 10.1. The Government has published its [SEND and Alternate Provision Improvement plan](#) which sets out the plans to change the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) system in England.
- 10.2. The Government recognises, that to deliver for children, young people and their families, a stronger emphasis is needed on improving the underpinning drivers that will make a national system a reality: a clearer workforce plan; strengthened accountabilities; and sustainable and fair resourcing. The Improvement Plan sets out its roadmap for implementing a single, national system and achieving real change in practice so every child and young person can thrive.
- 10.3. In reviewing the SENDAP Improvement Plan, it is clear that Bromley is 'ahead of the curve' in relation to several key actions set out in the plan including, the EHC online portal, the development of an inclusion dashboard and the High Needs Funding and Estates Review.
- 10.4. We await further information from the Department for Education in terms of next steps as the improvement plan progresses.

## 11. EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

- 11.1. The Education Transformation programme seeks to restructure the Education teams which sit within the Council's Children, Education and Families Directorate.
- 11.2. The proposal is designed to enable the services to have greater impact and effectiveness in supporting the delivery of sustainable, high-quality services and reflects the Council's commitment to new ways of working that ensure children and young people, adults and their families, are well supported and empowered to lead full and rewarding lives.
- 11.3. The key principles informing the management proposals include:
- Staff wellbeing is a guiding principle. Staff are working incredibly hard and yet not able to keep up with current levels of need and demand
  - Education services are not sustainable in their current structure. Current levels of need are unrecognisable from when services were previously restructured – statutory requirement to ensure that services can keep pace
  - Greater focus on prevention and early intervention to improve outcomes for those we serve. Need to refocus our finite resources on early intervention for vulnerable children and working with partners to support those with the most complex needs
  - The Council has statutory and regulatory responsibilities to ensure that its services are able to respond effectively to external drivers, including:
  - Need for service realignment to maximise efficiency/reduce service pressure and ensure services are manageable and dynamic

- The department has a moral and legal duty to ensure we can serve children, young people, adults and families most effectively. Some areas of significant performance challenges indicate that systemic changes are required
- Requirement for all services to be manageable, efficient and effective
- Need to find creative ways to work differently and more effectively
- To improve staff retention and recruitment and identify and nurture talent/succession planning
- Ensure clear accountability through the department and partner agencies, with the expectation that partners will fulfil their responsibilities with support and challenge
- Ultimately, focus on improving the lived experience of children and young people, adults and families with high quality, sustainable services

11.4. Consultation on the proposal was open for 30 days (closed 12<sup>th</sup> July) and provided an opportunity for staff to feed in their thoughts and ideas, which were carefully considered by management.

11.5. Implementation of the proposal, if formally agreed, would take effect from 4<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023.

## **12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1. The DSG budget implications are set out in an earlier section of this report. There are no direct financial implications in terms of the report to Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committee).

## **13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are overlapping duties on local authorities and the NHS to support children and young people who have SEND. The Primary legislation includes:

- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Care Act 2014
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- National Health Service Act 2006
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Social Care Act 2012

13.2 Given the extensive crossover in statutory duties pertaining to education, health and care, there is an overriding need for different elements of public services to work together to provide excellent outcomes for children and young people and their families.

## 14. NEXT STEPS

14.1 The Council and the wider partnership have and will continue to actively take steps to make changes in order to address the challenges as outlined in this report. The SEND Governance Board will continue to oversee and scrutinise progress against the detailed local area SEND Action Plan and extensive partnership efforts to improve the consistency of the lived experience of CYP who have SEND in Bromley. The following actions are being prioritised by Officers as next steps:

- Restructuring services, through Education Transformation to ensure the right resource is in the right place
- Investment in additional staffing in order to free up resources dedicated to working with partners and providers, delivering effective case work
- Strengthening the early support model, focusing on the graduated approach ensuring families and partners are accessing the right support
- Working in partnership with our parent groups to strengthen our relationships and ensure meaningful co-production

<b>Non-Applicable Headings:</b>	Commentary, Financial and Legal Implications, Implications for other Governance Arrangements, Boards and Partnership Arrangements, including any Policy and Financial Changes required to Process the Item, Comment from the Director of Author Organisation.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	



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