

**REPORT OF THE EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE
2016/17**

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION & NEET
Youth Offending Service Update
SEND Update
Review of Select Committee Process

Meeting Date: Thursday 23 March 2017

Present:

Councillor Nicholas Bennett J.P. (Chairman)
Councillor Neil Reddin FCCA (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Kathy Bance MBE, Kim Botting FRSA, Mary Cooke, Judi Ellis
and Chris Pierce

Emmanuel Arbenser, Parent Governor Representative (Special Schools)
Tajana Reeves, Bromley Youth Council Representative

Also Present:

Councillor Peter Fortune, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children’s Services
Councillor Tom Philpott, Executive Assistant for Education

Witnesses

Mrs Betty McDonald, Head of Youth Support
Ms Debi Christie, 16-25 Commissioning Manager (SEND)
Ms Linda King, Youth Support Programme Manager (Universal)
Ms Stella Marshall, NEET Support Programme Officer
Ms Jenny McDonald, Senior Education Welfare Officer (SEWO)
Ms Helen Priest, Head Teacher Bromley Virtual School (Written submission)

The Committee gives its sincere thanks to the witnesses for their contribution to the
Education Select Committee.

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The Education Select Committee met on 17th March 2017. A written submission by the Head Teacher of Bromley Virtual School was circulated to the Committee subsequent to its consideration by the Children's Services Improvement Governance Board. The Committee met again on 9th May to consider the recommendations.

1. Executive Summary

Recommendation 1:

That schools across the Borough be encouraged to alert the Senior Education Welfare Officer where a child's sporadic and irregular attendance becomes a cause for concern.

Recommendation 2:

That the Chairman of the Education, Children & Families Select Committee write to the Department for Education (DfE) to encourage exercise of its powers through the regular to ensure that all London Authorities comply with the London Protocol and provide notification when families move from one Local Authority area into another.

Recommendation 3:

That the Local Authority approach the Department for Education (DfE) to seek a review of the Participation Formula used by the DfE to identify NEET status as the current approach does not take young people's personal circumstances into account and skews the data.

Recommendation 4:

That the Council's newly established Housing Panel ensure that young and vulnerable people are always given priority in respect of available support in line with the Local Authority's Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

Recommendation 5:

The Committee notes that as Corporate Parents the Council maintains a responsibility to support young care leavers into any suitable education, employment and training.

2. Portfolio Scrutiny

As part of its regular work the committee was briefed by the Portfolio Holder on matters which had developed since the previous meeting. The Committee questioned him on the following matters:

Adult Education Ofsted
Youth Offending Ofsted
SHAW Futures Academy

Proposed Catholic Secondary School
National Funding Formula
Acadamisation progress.

3. Youth Offending Service

3.1 Ms Betty McDonald, Head of Youth Support and the Youth Offending Service gave an oral update on progress to improve the service following the Ofsted Report in 2015.

3.2 A full joint inspection of the Youth Offending Service led by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation took place early in 2017. The inspectors have given positive feedback around progress made in improving the service over the past 15 months and the management capability to support continued progress, although a number of issues still need to be addressed. Work to improve the service was underway, including staff development. The inspection report will be published in April 2017.

3.3 The committee had noted in 2015 that there were 37 staff for about 100 offenders. Ms McDonald reported that there were now 25 staff within the Youth Offending Service, which included 12 frontline practitioners. A number of staff members were inexperienced, particularly around the theoretical elements of their role, and work to recruit qualified social workers continued. A Member queried if the introduction of the 'Caseload Promise' within Children's Social Care services which aimed to allocate no more than 12-15 cases per social worker would assist recruitment. The Head of Youth Support and the Youth Offending Service explained that caseloads worked differently in the Youth Offending Service, but that lower caseloads would be helpful in promoting the Local Authority as a good place to work.

3.4 The Committee was told that the Youth Offending Service worked closely with the National Probation Service as young people transferred to adult services, but that there is a need to develop stronger links with the London Community Rehabilitation Company which has undergone a number of changes to its operational delivery model and has recently stopped providing the unpaid work service for the Youth Offending Service.

3.5 The Committee was told that due to the process for analysing and authenticating reoffending data there is a delay of approximately 18-24 months before this information is provided to the Local Authority. To address this, the Youth Offending Service is gathering 'live' data to track the existing cohort young people within the Youth Offending Service to better understand their activity and identify effective interventions. The Youth Offending Service supports young people aged 10 to 18 years. In considering current caseloads, the largest group is young people aged 17 years, but young people aged 10 to 13 years currently make up 20% of the cohort which is a concern, and early intervention work is being undertaken to divert these young people away from offending.

3.6 Parenting orders are still pursued where appropriate, but the Youth Offending Service prefers to refer parents to early intervention services or parenting classes that can provide the required support outside the Court system.

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3.7 The Committee agreed to a further update at its meeting on 17th October 2017.

4. SEND UPDATE

4.1 The Committee received an oral update from Ms Debi Christie 16-25 Commissioning Manager (SEND) on the new SEND Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Framework that came into operation from April 2016 to evaluate how well local areas are implementing the reforms introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014. The 'local area; for Bromley is the Council area. Inspections under the Framework will concentrate on how the local areas identify, assess and meet the needs, and improve the outcomes of children and young people with SEND from birth to 25 years. 20 local area outcomes letters have been published, five of which require their local areas to produce a written statement of action on how performance will be improved. Improvement plans will be developed by all local areas to maintain and develop the strengths identified through an inspection and to address any weaknesses.

4.2 Bromley and its partners participated in a pilot inspection programme in October 2015 to support the Department for Education and its partners in refining the Framework. The Council is expecting a formal inspection under the Framework shortly. A new SEND Reforms Governance Board has been established, chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive with representation from key partners from across the local area including the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group, schools, the voluntary sector and parents and carers.

4.3 Should the local area be issued with a written statement of action to improve performance, the Local Authority and Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group would have joint responsibility for addressing the identified weaknesses. The Committee underlined the need to identify best practice from high performing local areas, and requested that an update be reported to the Committee following the local area's formal inspection.

5. Review of Select Committee Process

The Committee has conducted an in depth review of its operations in the trial year as a select committee. A survey by questionnaire had been conducted of all Members of the Select Committee, the Portfolio Holder and Executive Assistant, witnesses to the Select Committee, as well as to the Director: Education and the Clerk to the Committee. The result of the survey indicated that all those who replied wished the new system to continue. Some further new ways of working would be tried in the new municipal year.

6. Children Missing Education and NEET

6.1 The Committee main inquiry for the March meeting was 'Children Missing Education'. The objective was to establish the principal reasons a small minority children miss education and to recommend ways this might be addressed, we decided that a separate strand of evidence on post 16 aged young people who were considered to be NEETS (Not in Education, Training or Employment) should be

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considered as part of the same inquiry although originally submitted as part of our annual update.

6.2 We were provided with written evidence in advance of the hearing from Linda King about (NEETS) and subsequent to the hearing a report by Helen Priest on 16+ Children Looked After (CLA) which had been prepared for another meeting was circulated to the committee and agreed as additional evidence and from Jenny McDonald on Children Missing Education.

6.3 The Education Welfare Service discharges the Local Authority's statutory duties in relation to children missing education and holds parents to account for ensuring the regular attendance of their children at school.

6.4 The Ofsted Inspection in published in June 2016 stated:

"The local authority is more effective in tracking and identifying children and young people missing education. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children missing education, with staff demonstrating tenacity and determination in locating them. They liaise effectively to undertake relevant checks with other agencies such as revenue and benefits, schools and other local authority services to establish children's whereabouts. Of 199 referrals, only one child could not be traced. Most return to school or join a new school"

6.5 Children Missing Education is defined as all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time.

6.6 Ofsted, when undertaking inspections of Local Authorities, has broadened the definition of CME to also include those young people at risk of becoming CME and who are:

- attending alternative provision;
- have been permanently excluded;
- in receipt of home tuition due to medical needs
- whose parents have declared elective home education
- are currently looked after by the Local Authority

Recommendation 1: That schools across the Borough be encouraged to alert the Senior Education Welfare Officer where a child's sporadic and irregular attendance becomes a cause for concern.

6.7 There is an expectation that Local Authorities will have mechanisms to identify and monitor this cohort on a regular basis. Bromley has a Children Missing Education Policy that has been cascaded to all schools and partner agencies.

6.8 Schools are expected to notify the Local Authority of any child that they intend to remove from their school roll prior to removal as well as notifying the LA of any child that has failed to attend school for 10 consecutive days and they have been unable to trace. This is now available as an on line service referral.

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6.9 Partner agencies, Health and Voluntary organisations are able to refer into the LA any child they believe to be out of education. This is now available as an on line service referral.

6.10 There is one dedicated officer within Education Welfare Service who receives CME referrals. On receipt of a referral the officer will undertake all relevant enquiries including making contact with the family and young person in order to support them to reengage with education and liaising with supporting agencies as necessary

Number of referrals for Children Missing Education	213
Identified as being at a Bromley School	100
Identified as attending other LA Schools	16
In receipt of home tuition as provided by LA	3
Identified as being Electively Home Educated In Borough	10
Returned to school	3
Moved out of Borough	44
Moved overseas	36

6.11 We were told by the Senior Education Welfare Officer (SEWO) that there were a number of reasons for children missing education, including families frequently changing addresses. There were currently 300 Bromley families in temporary accommodation, many of whom were housed out-of-Borough, and work was being undertaken to develop a dual registration scheme with schools in the area where families were housed to support children in maintaining their education. the Senior Education Welfare Officer reported that there was no single database system that brought together information from all key partners to track children from birth to school age.

Recommendation 2: That the Chairman of the Education, Children & Families Select Committee write to the Department for Education (DfE) to encourage exercise of its powers through the regular to ensure that all London Authorities comply with the London Protocol and provide notification when families move from one Local Authority area into another.

6.12 It was noted by the Committee that an IT system (Integrated Children's System) that was supposed to assist with safeguarding was abandoned by the Labour Government in 2009, and ContactPoint which would have been accessed by hundreds of thousands staff in local government, the NHS and the Police was scrapped by the incoming Coalition Government in 2010. Both were considered expensive, unworkable and ineffective.

6.13 Once a child had entered formal education there are systems in place to monitor their activity and a new requirement has been introduced from 1st

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September 2016 for all schools to work more closely with the Local Authority in tracking pupils as they move schools, including where families are moving overseas. Additional discretionary powers have also been provided to the Local Authority to require the same information from schools about standard transition points, such as when a pupil leaves school at the end of their final year.

6.14 Families and young people who have not been traced are placed on a national data base called S2S. This operates on 2 levels, firstly as a resource for schools to upload Common Transfer Files (CTF) of students who have left. It will record either the proposed destination of the child or the fact that the destination is unknown. Secondly it operates as a resource for Local Authorities. The LA permissions allow access to the school section as well as sending alerts to all or specific LAs requesting they check their databases in order to trace and locate children deemed as missing. The LA checks this database on a regular basis as a safety measure, taking note of children who have been removed from roll or where schools have not previously notified the LA and undertakes enquiries as is necessary to discharge the LA's duty.

6.15 School attendance

S7 of the Education Act 1996 requires:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

6.16 The Local Authority discharges its statutory duty to investigate poor attendance through the Bromley Education Welfare Service. All schools are able to refer to the EWS via an on line referral. All referrals received for investigation adhere to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and Criminal Procedures and Investigation Act 1996

6.17 Historically, The Education Welfare Service visited all Bromley Schools and assisted the schools in identifying poor attenders and delivering an early intervention service to prevent cases escalating to a legal arena.

6.18 Since the conversion of most schools to academies responsibility and funding has transferred to schools the Local Authority now concentrates on its statutory duties in this area.

6.19 Following investigation, cases can be disposed through either issuing a penalty notice; a summons or a simple caution or penalty notice warning letter.

6.20 The table below lists the outcomes following referrals received from schools and interventions from education welfare officers delivering a sold service.

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	Academic Year 2015-2016	Academic Year 2014-2015
Sold Service Schools interventions by EWS service	1082	1041
In school surgeries with parents	456	466
Attendance work following surgeries	137	127
All other interventions and advice	464	468
All Legal Referrals for poor attendance	66	88
Sold Service Schools	8	9
All other schools	58	79
Total Of Penalty Notices issues for Holidays in term time	273	249
Total Penalty Notice Warning Letter issued	90	87
Sold Service Schools	18	11
All other schools	72	76
Total Penalty Notices Issued for Attendance	81	88
Sold Service Schools	23	43
All other Schools	58	45
Simple Cautions Given	5	7
All cases in the court arena	56	52
Sold Service Schools	20	13
All other Schools	36	39

6.21 Schools are expected to notify the Local Authority of any child that fails to attend school for ten consecutive days and whom they are unable to trace. Schools are also required to notify the Local Authority on a termly basis where a pupil has attendance of 90% or below, including authorised leave. Where Penalty Notices have been previously issued the Local Authority takes action when required to ensure that parents are responsible for their children's regular attendance at school. The Education Welfare Service works to support improved attendance at schools in the Borough; however academy schools can choose to buy in their own independent educational welfare provider and are not required by law to make referrals to the Local Authority where concerns are identified.

6.22 Some parents who have been prosecuted have subsequently chosen to electively home educate their child. This has been challenged by the Local Authority in Court where there it is believed that the children are not being educated.

6.23 The Virtual Head Teacher closely monitors the school attendance of all children looked after. There are currently four children looked after who were missing from education this is due to recent changes to their placements and the need to identify specialist education provision. One-to-one tuition is provided to all children looked after missing from education for up to 15 hours per week. We refer later to the situation of children leaving care who are NEETs.

6.24 Elective Home Education

6.24.1 Our Second Report '*Alternative Education*' (September 2016) dealt in detail with Elective Home Education and we refer readers to that report and recommendations.

6.24.2 We received the following additional information

"The last 3 years has seen a consistent and widespread increase in the numbers of UK families declaring home education and this is the case within Bromley. 156 children were declared as being Electively Home Educated with 59 of those children returning to a mainstream school and 12 becoming post compulsory school age at the start of this academic year.

6.24.3 The general information available from inter authority meetings supports the view that Bromley's position regards EHE is reflective of our geographical and statistical neighbours and there appears to be no significant issues unique to this borough".

6.25 Not in Education Training or Employment (NEETS)

6.25.1 The Education and Skills Act 2008 introduced a duty on all young people to participate in education, employment or training (EET) until their 18th birthday. This was implemented in two phases. From September 2013, young people were required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From 2015, they are required to continue until their 18th birthday. This does not necessarily mean that young people have to stay in school beyond the age of 16.

6.25.2 All young people are classified as being NEET where they are not in education, employment or training up to the end of the academic year in which they turn 18 years, including young parents.

6.25.3 The NEET Support Programme works with young people on a one-to-one basis to identify an appropriate route into education, employment or training; however, the Participation Formula used by the Department for Education to identify NEET status does not take young people's personal circumstances into account and young people accessing short courses or in part and full-time employment where the accredited training requirement is not met are classified as being NEET.

Recommendation 3: That the Local Authority approach the Department for Education (DfE) to seek a review of the Participation Formula used by the DfE to identify NEET status as the current approach does not take young people's personal circumstances into account and skews the data.

6.25.4 They are able to choose from one of the following options:

- ✓ full-time education, such as school, college or home education;
- ✓ work-based learning with training, such as an apprenticeship;
- ✓ employment, self-employment or volunteering with accredited training

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6.25.5 The Education and Skills Act 2008 also introduced the following duties on Local Authorities (LAs):

- to promote the effective participation in education, employment or training (EET) of young people in their area;
- to make arrangements to identify young people not participating in education, employment or training (NEET) – i.e. maintaining a comprehensive tracking system.

6.25.5 These complement existing duties to:

- ✓ secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all 16-19 year olds;
- ✓ have processes in place to deliver the September Guarantee (the offer, by the end of September of a suitable place in learning to young people academic age Yr 11 and Yr 12);
- ✓ track young people's participation

6.25.6 From September 2016 the Department for Education (DfE) have changed the tracking requirements on local authorities. Local authorities are required to track young people who have reached the compulsory school leaving age, up to the end of the academic year in which they have their 18th birthday i.e. academic age 16 (Yr 12) and academic age 17 (Yr 13). Local authorities are no longer required to routinely track young people of academic age 18 (Yr 14).

6.25.7 However, DfE expects local authorities to:

- ✓ continue to meet all their obligations under the Education and Skills Act 2008 as they relate to young people and young adults with a current education, health and care plan;
- ✓ introduce locally designed procedures to identify those academic age 18 yr olds (Yr 14) who need support to engage with education or find work and who aren't already receiving support from Jobcentre Plus;
- ✓ intensify efforts to ensure all academic age 16 and 17 year olds are tracked efficiently to reduce the proportion whose activity is recorded as not known and to increase the proportion participating in EET after leaving school.

6.25.8 Bromley Youth Support Programme (BYSP) takes the lead role in delivering these duties. In September 2015 BYSP was restructured resulting in a reduction in targeted support staffing, a change in delivery methods and the development of key partnerships. The restructure also brought the Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP) under the wider remit of the BYSP, enabling greater coherence in the planning of provision for young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.

6.25.9 The participation of young people in EET is recorded on a national database called the Client Case Load Information System (CCIS). The contracted South London CCIS Service manages this on behalf of Bromley, Kingston, Merton Richmond and Sutton. On a monthly basis, statistical returns on the number of young people who are NEET and the number of young people whose participation status in 'Not Known' are made to DfE.

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6.25.10 For the 3 month average period in 2016-17 there were 112 NEETS and 119 'Not Knowns' a total of 231, the lowest rate in the South London CCIS region.

6.25.11 Detailed analysis of the academic age 16-17 NEET group in January 2017 highlights the following:

- the majority (77%) of the academic age 16-17 NEET group were young people academic age 17yrs (Yr 13);
- there are more males within the NEET Group than females with totals of 60 (59.4%) and 41 (40.6%) respectively;
- 72 (71.3%) of young people within the NEET had a recorded ethnicity of White;
- 22.8% (23) of the total young people within the NEET group were unavailable to the labour market. Young people who were teenage parents and young people who had an illness made up the largest proportion of the unavailable group in January 2017 with 8 (34.8%) and 14 (60.9%) young people respectively.
- 15 young people joined the NEET group and 22 left the NEET group in January 2017, with 13 going into employment, 6 going into education, 2 into work preparation courses and 1 moved away
- the Bromley wards of Mottingham and Chislehurst North and Cray Valley West had the highest number of young people in the NEET group, with 16 (12.7%) and 15 (11.9%) of the total NEET respectively;
- of the academic age 16 -17yr old NEET group recorded on CCIS in January 2017:
 - 9.9% (10) were SEND;
 - 8.9% (9) were teenage mothers;
 - 9.9% (10) supervised by Youth Offending Service (YOS);
 - 2.0% (2) were pregnant;
 - 3.0% (3) were Children Looked After (CLA);
 - 2.0% (2) were care leavers;
 - 2.0% (2) young carers;
 - 1.0% (1) refugee/Asylum Seeker

6.25.12 'Not Known' within the NEET statistics applies to young people who have been recorded as being within the Borough in academic year in which they turn 17 and 18 years old, but whose current whereabouts are unknown. The NEET Support Programme works with partners to locate these young people but cannot remove them from Bromley's NEET cohort until their new address has been confirmed, and there were 90 young people classified as 'Not Known' in Bromley in January 2017. The 'Not Known' classification regarding EET status is entirely different to children identified as being missing from home whose cases are taken forward as a priority by the multi-agency Atlas Team.

6.25.13 In Bromley, the NEET figures for 2016/17 demonstrated a significant improvement on the previous year for both the NEET and the 'Not Known' categories. The percentage of young people within this age group who were NEET had decreased from 1.8% to 1.7% between 2015/16 and 2016/17, and the percentage of young people whose EET status was 'Not Known' figure had reduced from 3.5% to 1.8% during the same period.

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6.25.14 The percentage of young people within this age group who were either NEET or whose EET status was 'Not Known' had reduced from 5.3% to 3.4% between 2015/16 and 2016/17. Bromley is in the top fifth of London Boroughs in supporting young people into education, employment and training and is in the top two-fifths for identifying the status of 'Not Known' young people, but as the NEET cohort shrinks it will be more difficult to deliver this continual reduction.

6.25.15 Fuller details and information on the tracking process, the work of the Bromley Business Partnership, the Bromley Mentoring initiative and support for vulnerable students can be found in the report to the Select Committee (*Agenda item 12 Pages 71-92*).

6.26 16+ Children Looked After and Care Leavers who are NEETS

6.26.1 Helen Priest, Head Teacher of Bromley's Virtual School, reported subsequently to the Children's Services Improvement Governance Board meeting on April 21st 2017 on the position concerning Children Looked After who are 16+ and Care Leavers who are NEETS. With the agreement of Mrs Priest and the Select Committee we have included the key findings of her report in our enquiry.

6.26.2 There are 18 Bromley CLA aged 16-18 who are not engaged in education, training or employment (as at 13/04/2017). Characteristics of this group of young people are shown in table 1, below.

Characteristics	YR12	YR13
Whole cohort number	30	59
Number and percentage of NEET	7(43%)	11 (20%)
Number of YP with identified SEN	1	5
Number of Young people with YOs involvement	3	3
Number of young parents/pregnant YP (G6)	2	2
Number with physical/mental health problems (G4)	0	1
Number who became CLA after YR11	3	7
Type of accommodation	Foster care 4 Semi-ind 3	Foster care 0 Semi ind 11
Number actively seeking ETE	4	3

6.26.3 These young people have a high level of special and additional needs, often not properly addressed during their school careers. Most of them are became CLA in YR11 or later, though they have often been known to social care for many years.

6.26.4 In the YR12 NEET group, only one young person had been in the care of the local authority for the whole of YR 11, with all of the others becoming CLA late in the academic year or since the end of the school year 2015/16. One young person is an unaccompanied minor, who arrived in March 2016, but the remaining young people n cohort had all missed large periods at school during KS4 and most did not finish YR11. The Virtual School provided 1:1 tuition in school for only young person to

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facilitate attendance and the young person successfully finished the year and sat exams.

6.26.5 Only 1 of the current group of YR12 NEETs started the academic year without education provision; that young person was already a young parent. All 5 of the young people who started the academic year in FE colleges had left the course or had been off-rolled within 2 months, mostly as a result of poor or non-attendance issues. One young person, in an alternative post-16 provision also failed to attend and has subsequently started and stopped several other programmes. He continues to battle with mental health problems and is engaged in frequent low-level criminal activity.

6.26.6 A larger proportion of young people in the YR13 group have been CLA for longer, with 4 of them actually in care during YR11. Of those 4, however, 3 young people failed to complete the academic year or sit examinations, either because of refusal to engage with school or because of periods missing from home or care. Most of the young people have been accommodated since the end of YR11 and were NEET before they become CLA. The pattern of disengagement has continued for a number of young people, some of whom have never engaged with education, training or employment since YR11. Several of the young people have been offered and even started numerous courses with a range of providers but have been unable to sustain engagement.

6.26.7 One feature that the young people across both these year groups have in common is that most of them live in semi-independent or supported housing. Only 4 of them in YR12 are in foster homes (2 in mother and baby placements). It is easy to conclude that 16 and 17 year-olds living in semi-independent accommodation, often with chaotic lifestyles are not capable of sustaining engagement and attendance in education or training without significant additional support.

Recommendation 4: That the Council's newly established Housing Panel ensure that young and vulnerable people are always given priority in respect of available support in line with the Local Authority's Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

6.26.8 Although young people have an allocated Social Worker until they are 18 years old and are then provided with a Young Person's Adviser, these professionals do not have the skills or the knowledge base to provide careers information, advice and guidance. All agree that resourcing of this area needs to be reviewed in order to offer the level of support required for the approximately 60 young people aged 16-18 and 180 young people 18+ in the service.

6.26.9 Analysis of this cohort shows that young people coming into care in mid-late adolescence have high levels of previously unidentified needs. These include:

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- Unidentified special needs
- Frequent school changes because of exclusion (or the threat of it), or relocation
- Poor attendance leading to disengagement
- Family dysfunction/domestic abuse
- Mental and emotional health issues

6.26.10 The act of accommodation and the provision of a safe place to live are not sufficient to ensure re-engagement. Despite the intervention of professionals, these young people fail to secure qualifications at the end of KS4 and do not have the skills to motivate themselves or the confidence to plan their futures.

6.26.11 There is no lack of college and alternative provision for YR12 starters; courses are available at every level.

6.26.12 Many of these young people express a wish to find an apprenticeship rather than attend a college course. what they find is that there is a shortage of level1 and level2 apprenticeship places. Competition is strong and their CVs are thin and their interview and assessment skills let them down. The apprenticeships on offer through the local authority programme are likely to require higher levels of literacy and numeracy than these young people can offer at this stage.

Recommendation 5: The Committee notes that as Corporate Parents the Council maintains a responsibility to support young care leavers into any suitable education, employment and training.

6.26.13 CLA and care leavers who are NEET occasionally ask for support to re-take their GCSEs or even for an opportunity to take them for the first time. There is no provision for this in Bromley at present. Even at YR12, young people can only undertake GCSEs or functional skills alongside a vocational programme. Though it is possible to find an alternative provider that is willing to register a young person as an examination candidate, there is no provision for tuition or enrolment on an actual course and enrolment for retakes is dependent on finding a an institution registered for the same examining boards.

6.26.14 The Virtual School Head reports that there are a range of strategies underway to reduce NEET numbers amongst post 16 Children Looked After, we note two of them:

- investigation of possible access to the KS5 vocational provision for SEMH in Bromley;
- the relationship with Bromley College (LSEC) needs developing. It has been agreed to explore a possible 'Pathways to Engagement' project with Bromley College or other provider. A payment-by results project, this would be a 6-8 week roll-on/roll-off scheme, possibly using an existing provider for individual support for young people. The programme would help young people to acquire skills for

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work with possible pathways into mainstream college, apprenticeships or employment.