

Response to questions / points raised at the HWB 16/05/19
Paul Mitchell & Debi Christie 17.05.19

5.2.1 – What strategies are being used to reduce permanent exclusions?

Officers are working with Bromley schools and our alternative education providers to begin a review of Alternative Provision (AP) in the borough; to explore new ways of working together, to fully understand the needs of AP children and explore how we may commission AP more effectively for Bromley children, the aim will be to intervene earlier with this cohort of children to ensure they receive an appropriate education offer (with suitable support) to reduce the use of exclusions. An early development from this joint working is a new vocational offer for KS4 pupils in Bromley which will be in place for September 2019, funded by the £250k per annum funding agreed by Members for 2 years.

The publication in May of the Timpson Review of School Exclusions and the Government response signal a step change in Alternative Provision going forward with new school accountabilities and responsibilities aligned to changes in the funding of AP (through the High Needs budget). In the future the schools will be accountable for the outcomes of permanently excluded pupils. Government has indicated this change will be aligned to the funding changes. Further detail is awaited from the Department for Education, including the timescales for these changes. A new raft of DfE guidance is anticipated by summer 2020, including a focus on improving partnership working in local areas for alternative provision. Officers have commenced dialogue with Bromley schools on these developments.

5.4.2 – More information in relation to the new Local Offer Development Officer, and if this is a full time post?

The Council is recruiting a Local Offer Development Officer to lead on developing, maintaining and publicising the Local Offer, including:

- developing and maintaining links with local providers
- liaising with families, young people, providers and professionals
- coordinating the production of material for the website and other resources alongside input from professionals and service users
- leading on the provision of a range of social media platforms to promote the Local Offer
- implementing a variety of channels in order to obtain, analyse and report on feedback from stakeholders

The post is permanent, as part of the Customer Engagement and Complaints Service.

5.5.1 – What are the outcomes of the impact of the SEND action plans?

The SEND Governance Board is a multi-agency forum, led by the LBB Chief Executive, which leads implementation of the SEND reforms in Bromley on behalf of the Children's Executive Board. The SEND Governance Board agrees, owns and promotes the SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities, ensuring the reforms are implemented to benefit children and young people in the local area. The role of the Board is also to approve and monitor 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. A performance report is submitted at each Board outlining performance, on an exception basis. The SEND Governance Board is accountable to the Children's Executive Board and provides regular reports on impact and outcomes. The SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities is now being extended into a three-year strategy for 2019-22 and a refreshed action plan will be presented to the SEND Governance Board in July 2019.

5.5.2 – Reference to the number of Children and Young People with Autism being higher than neighbours – understand that the specialist provisions are at all boys schools, so what provision is provided for girls?

Children and young people who have Autism attend a range of settings, including mainstream, Additionally Resourced Provisions and specialist schools. The specialist schools in Bromley are all co-educational and we have a range of mainstream schools that have Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP) as part of their school. All primary ARPs support both boys and girls and within the secondary phase, there are two ARPs, one of which is co-educational and one is located within a boys school. As part of the strategy for ensuring the right level of specialist provision is available in Bromley, we have reviewed the level of specialist provision within our ARPs and are seeking to increase provision for young people who have speech, language and communication needs particularly within the secondary phase for both boys and girls. Additionally, the Council has been successful in the first phase of the Free Special School programme, which seeks to open a Key Stage 2 provision for children who have speech language and communication needs with added complexities including high levels of anxiety and behaviours that challenge. This provision is anticipated to open September 2021.

9. – (Reference to welcoming comments) an understanding of the curriculum content for SEND students. Is it tailored?

The curriculum for children and young people who have SEND should be tailored to meet individualised need. Schools and Settings make reasonable adjustments and individualise support for children and young people utilising a range of funding and strategies. For pupils whose needs sit below the threshold for a statutory EHC Plan, the SEN Notional Budget is used to support needs, underpinned by Quality First teaching. For those who have an EHC Plan and the support needs are over and above what is ordinarily available in the school or setting, additional funding can be provided so that the curriculum and support is appropriate to meet individual needs.

In addition:

- (5.3.1) the Chairman requested that an information paper providing an update on the delivery of the Free Special School be brought to the next meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on 18th July 2019.
- More information regarding the transition from Children's Services into Adult Services, and the provision outside of the 0-25 age range. (The Chairman asked that the HWB be kept informed of the work currently being undertaken.)

Transition is a key feature across education, health and care, but is an area that has not seen the same level of focus as some other areas of the SEND Reforms. The Council and its partners are reviewing the transition process and developing processes and protocols that ensure young people have their needs met in the most effective and timely manner. This work is underpinned by a detailed action plan, the progress of which is scrutinised by the SEND Governance Board.

- In reference to Ofsted telling schools that they can't discount off roll students – does this alter schools decisions, and affect the need for SEND money? What are LBB's intentions?

There are occasions where the practice described can result in placements needing to be sought, often very quickly, which draws more heavily on the high needs block. The additional accountability proposed under the Timpson Review is welcomed by Officers. We will continue to work with schools on the implementation of the revised guidance and review of local arrangements described in 5.2.1.