

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE
20 MARCH 2024

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

1. From Debra Rose, Local Resident

Following the LGSCO ruling in 2022, Bromley agreed, "Within three months of my final decision the Council will review its alternative provision policy / procedure to ensure it promptly secures alternative provision for children who don't have access to full-time education at school." Which specific changes did Bromley make?

Reply:

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decision required the Council to review its policy and procedures in relation to accessing its alternative provision. Officers carried out a review of the Council's policy and found this to be suitable and appropriate. Some internal procedures were revised in relation to the officer decision functions designed to improve the speed of the ARP procurement process. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman wrote to the Council on 31 October 2022 confirming that the remedial actions were satisfactorily completed.

Supplementary Question:

So how is it that in two subsequent rulings with exactly the same stock ruling on failure to provide statutory alternative provision, one that was given on 5 October 2023 and the other one was given on 14 November 2023 with exactly the same issues towards Bromley's lack of provision of alternative provision?

Reply:

Officers always seek to work in partnership with families to put in place suitable alternative provision where a child is unable to attend school. The Council has sought to review its arrangements for putting alternative provision in place including an Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) package and access to alternative resources and provisions but this remains an area of challenge. The Local Authority is aware of all Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman rulings and has taken all required actions.