

Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee Agenda



To: Councillor Robert Ward (Chair)
Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Sue Bennett, Mary Croos, Jerry Fitzpatrick, Maddie Henson,
Maggie Mansell, Helen Redfern.
Leo Morrell, Elaine Jones, Dave Harvey, Paul O'Donnell and Victoria Maltby

Reserve Members: Margaret Bird, Sherwan Chowdhury, Patsy Cummings,
Felicity Flynn, Patricia Hay-Justice, Ian Parker, Andy Stranack and
David Wood

A meeting of the **Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Monday, 14 January 2019** at **2.00 pm** in **The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

JACQUELINE HARRIS BAKER
Director of Law and Governance
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Stephanie Davis
02087266000 x84384
stephanie.davis@croydon.gov.uk
www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Friday, 4 January 2019

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting.
If you require any assistance, please contact the person detailed above, on the righthand side.

N.B This meeting will be paperless. The agenda can be accessed online at www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings

AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for absence

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Sub-Committee.

2. Minutes of the previous sub-committee meeting (Pages 5 - 18)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2018 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosures of interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality to the value of which exceeds £50 or multiple gifts and/or instances of hospitality with a cumulative value of £50 or more when received from a single donor within a rolling twelve month period. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Democratic Services representative at the start of the meeting. The Chair will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5. Update on the development of Croydon's proposed new safeguarding arrangements

To hold a discussion with the Three Strategic Partners, the Council, Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police on the emerging proposals of the new safeguarding arrangements. Additionally to receive a presentation outlining how the emerging proposal meets the requirement of 'Working together 2018'.

6. Work Programme 2018/19 (Pages 19 - 22)

To approve the work programme for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

“That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.”

Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 27 November 2018 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber - Town Hall

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Robert Ward (Chair);
Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Sue Bennett, Jerry Fitzpatrick, Maddie Henson, Maggie Mansell
and Helen Redfern

Also Present: Councillor Shafi Khan (Deputy Cabinet Member Children Young People and Learning)
Robert Henderson, Executive Director Children Families and Education
Phillip Segurola, Interim Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
Clare Davies, Complaints Manager
David Butler, Director of Education and Youth Engagement
Alison Farmer, Head of 0-25 SEN and Disability
Shelley Davies, Head of Education Standards Safeguarding and Inclusion
Chris Roberts, Head of Learning Inclusion
Nicholas Soar, Executive Head of Harris South Norwood and Upper Norwood School
Gizle Landman Head of Academy, Harris South Norwood School

PART A

29/18 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Alisa Flemming gave her apologies and Councillor Shafi Khan was in attendance in her absence.
Paul O'Connel and Dave Harvey gave their apologies.

30/18 **Minutes of the previous sub-committee meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2019 were approved and signed as a accurate record.

31/18 **Disclosures of interest**

There was none

32/18 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

33/18 **Children's Complaints Overview Report**

The Complaints Manager presented the report which outlined the volume of statutory complaints received across Children's services for the period of July-September 2018.

The Sub-Committee learned that Stage 1 complaints increased by 54% in comparison to the previous year's Quarter 2 performance, however this may be partly attributed to incorrect logging in previous years. Responses to Stage 1 complaints within statutory timeframe rose by 11% in comparison to the previous year. There was a 10% increase in the percentage of upheld complaints against the previous year's performance.

Learning and Action Plans to be implemented within the service in Quarter 3 included the following:

- Clear and regular communication with service users.
- Appropriate management of cases, with administrative duties to be kept up to date.
- Improvement of performance reports, assessment and meetings.
- Appointment of a new permanent Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding, with a review of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework being undertaken.
- Partnership working between the Complaints Manager and the Head of Quality Assurance on the implementation of these actions

The Chair thanked officers for the report.

The Sub-Committee came to the following **Conclusions**:

- i. The Sub-Committee noted the content of the report
- ii. That this was the first quarterly report following the Annual Report that had been considered at the Sub-Committee meeting on 18 September and reassurance could be taken that the report demonstrated that the issues relating to the volume of complaints had been clearly recognised. Officers were clearly working on compliance and the Sub-Committee looked forward to seeing further progress made on improvements in future reports.
- iii. That comparison figures against other boroughs needed to be made evident in future reports.
- iv. That the Sub-Committee was encouraged by the plans in place to collate thematic analysis of complaints received and would welcome the receipt at future meetings of applied learning from the information gathered.

34/18 **Children's Improvement Plan Update**

The Programme Director introduced the report which provided details of the reviewed and refreshed improvement plan one year into the improvement journey.

This review had taken place in order to drive forward identified priorities at an increased pace and respond to feedback from the monitoring visits that had taken place following the Ofsted Inspection and published report in September 2017.

The Plan outlined the actions to be taken in 2018/19 and included the following:

- Sharper focus on narrow set of priorities.
- Improvement on management and practice.
- Improved partnership working.
- Strengthening of corporate support services.
- New internal governance arrangement.
- Creation of a culture of shared ownership and social work values.
- New programme reporting arrangements in line with Strengthening Families model.
- Attraction and retention of a skilled committed workforce.

In response to a question about where management oversight was focused in order to share practices with each other, officers stated that there was a month by month audit of completion of supervision. It was acknowledged that there was a need to focus on quality and impact of management oversight which Ofsted referred to seeing some evidence of but concluded that it needed to be more effective and consistent.

As a follow up it was questioned whether the dissemination of good practice was evident and how to understand what this looked like. Officers replied that the challenge by Ofsted was that they disagreed with some of the outcomes presented. This highlighted the importance of a regular audit process with the requirement for oversight to be more transparent and visible. The directive from the last monitoring visit was that effectiveness must be evident by the next monitoring visit in February 2019.

Questions were raised on the management of staffing levels, managing newly qualified social workers and the ability to persuade good locums to convert to permanent contracts. Officers advised that staffing levels varied between the teams. Significant additional resources had been put into the service, with recruitment and retention remaining a priority. Across the teams there were 1800 cases at the end of July 2018, this was now down to 760. The aspiration was for caseloads of 20 per social worker and this was now being achieved. It was emphasised that in order to persuade locums to convert the offer must be good, and support in place as well as manageable caseloads.

It was questioned how Priority 7 of the improvement plan 'Creating a culture of shared ownership and social work values' would be monitored. Officers responded that this priority was in line with the Councils focus on organisational culture and was formed out of recommendations by the Staff Reference Group. There was an emphasis on talking with and listening to staff who had voiced their desire to be part of a high performing authority. Improvements would be monitored through regular formal feedback opportunities, an annual survey, quarterly checks, staff conferences as well as

attention to staff wellbeing. Direct feedback would be the key to achieving the set outcomes for the priority.

It was further commented that this was one of the most important paragraphs in the report and there was a concern about lack of progress in relation to corporate initiatives such as this. In order to track improvement, timescales and the attendance of a staff representative at the next meeting would be beneficial.

The Executive Director of Children Families and Education said that the voice of staff was central to the achievement of Priority 7 and this was clear and being taken into consideration. Relationships were being built and successes celebrated.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Learning further stated that the Council had to be clear when recruiting staff to ensure that they shared the vision. Progress of staff and management was to be consistently monitored with appropriate support and focus on services as well as challenge where appropriate.

The Chair questioned the transition of interim to permanent staff, the quality of the process and maintenance of management oversight during the process. Officers highlighted that all transitions were difficult but confirmed that the handover was progressing positively.

The Chair and Sub-Committee Members thanked and commended Phillip Segurola for all his hard work which has been fundamental to driving forward intended outcomes as part of the improvement journey of children's services.

In reaching its recommendations the Sub-Committee came to the following **Conclusions**:

- i. There were concerns regarding the handover from interim staff to permanent staff at senior levels and whether this was being carried out appropriately, due to the complexity of the borough and in light of the journey of the service following the Ofsted inspection.
- ii. That the hard work and commitment of assisting to transform the service by Phillip Segurola, the Interim Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care, who was departing be commended.
- iii. It was important to understand how the improvements of priority 7 of the improvement plan 'Creating a culture of shared ownership and social work values' would be monitored in order to assess if intended outcomes were being realised.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to recommend that:

- i. That a staff representative be invited to attend a future meeting to provide insight into and their view on the progression of developments for the workforce as described in the Improvement Plan.
- ii. Evidence be provided to the Sub-Committee on the progress of Priority 7 in the Improvement Plan through timescales of implemented actions.

Children's Social Care Practice Week Summary September 2018

The Interim Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care presented the report which recapitulated the findings of Practice Week, held every six months as outlined in the Quality Assurance Framework.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the theme for the most recent Practice Week was children under 12 years of age in care for 12 months and over, those that had left care and corporate parenting responsibilities.

42 cases were audited by senior managers with the following findings:

- Improvement in quality of decision making although noted to not be timely or well recorded.
- Improvement in effectiveness in review and challenge.
- Improvement in permanency planning although there were some delays in implementation noted.
- Evidence of good partnership in permanency and fostering and adoption service with carers well supported.
- Practitioners had good relationships with child and carers
- Good partnership working.
- Inconsistency in quality of care plans, with discrepancies in quality against outcomes with limited detail on evidence of work that went into achieving outcomes.
- In adoption work identification of placement and long term fostering arrangements needed to be more robust.
- There was some evidence of productive and imaginative life story work but there were inconsistencies in the quality of life story work practice by some social workers.
- Management oversight and supervision remained an area of concern with a lack of regular supervision identified.
- More consistency on sharing of practice and the narrative of tracked cases required.

In response to a query about the reasons behind the difference in outcomes for a child in care less than three months than that of longer term cases, officers stated that different measures were used for each group.

The importance of life story work was noted, observed to be an area that required improvement and the steps taken to maintain consistency in standards was questioned. Officers acknowledged that this was an area of priority but it was also an area where targeted learning and training was required. In order to develop the skills required to produce good life story work resources would be put in to address the gaps identified. Additionally senior management needed to be more robust in checking that life story work had been completed prior to adoption orders being made.

It was questioned how well social workers understood the importance of parallel planning, preparation of more than one outcome for a child that comes into care in order to avoid drift and delay. Officers confirmed that this was a key message following the Ofsted monitoring visit and that

assessments with stronger analysis of risks must be produced. Evidence of intervention was not robust and duality of plans were not as consistent as needed to be. As a result further resources in terms of training and development as well as regular audits and supervision were being implemented in this area.

The Chair thanked officers for their response to questions.

The Sub-Committee came to the following **Conclusions**:

- i. The Sub-Committee welcomed the opportunity to receive the detailed report on the activities of Practice Week which had a vital role in the Annual Audit Plan and was a fundamental aspect of the Quality Assurance Framework for Early Help and Children's Social Care.
- ii. The Sub-Committee was encouraged by the commitment of staff and senior officers to work together to address areas highlighted as requiring improvement as a result of case discussions and observations completed during Practice Week.

36/18 **Special Educational Needs**

The Head of 0-25 SEN and Disability presented the report which covered four aspects of Croydon's work with Special Education Needs (SEN) children. One of the elements was the development of the SEN Strategy which was in its draft stage and would be out for consultation from the 3rd of December until mid-January 2019. The consultation programme would include engagement with parents and young people in different settings.

The Strategy, which was being developed following engagement with young people and their families, covered 4 key areas that had been identified as requiring improvement. These were the following:

- Early identification of children with SEN
- Response time and engagement
- Effective partnership working
- Pathways for Post 16 into adulthood and local provision

The report also covered the performance and changes to the 0-25 SEN service following the restructure and a focus on statutory duties for two teams of Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) co-ordinators for young people aged 0-11 and 11-25. The change had been made to enable transition planning into adulthood at an earlier stage. There had been an increase of EHCP coordinators to the team in order to reduce caseloads and a senior practitioner employed to focus on peer support as well as quality assurance. A business relations team had been employed to develop and improve relationships with schools.

The performance of the team was included in the report which showed 90% of ECHP completed within timeframes in 2017. There had been an increase in ECHP since January 2018 when there were 2600 plans to an increase of over 300 new plans in the last seven months. This increase will have an impact on

the number of plans completed within timescale, the results of which will be reported in January 2019.

The report also focussed on funding, which remained challenging for high needs children. The projected overspend in that area this year was £5.2mil which was similar to the previous year, with an accumulated overspend projected at approximately £15mil by the end of 2019. There was in place a five year strategy to reduce the overspend which included local provision and less reliance on the independent sector, better pathways for post 16, a focus on inclusion for SEN children in mainstream schools and increased numbers of needs to be met within these schools.

The Chair highlighted the importance of the means by which Councillors and Members of the Sub-Committee could supply comment and recommendations as part of the consultation process.

It was questioned whether parents would have the opportunity to feed back as part of the consultation and what assurances were in place to ensure that these voices would be heard. Officers advised that there would be sessions held at various locations in the borough in both special schools as well as mainstream schools. The dates of the meetings would be published, parent partnerships would be involved in co-ordinating the forum groups. Members were encouraged to share suggestions and in particular ideas on the transition of post 16 provision.

The Chair went on to suggest that performance measures for children with SEN would be useful such as the transition of young people with Learning Difficulties into employment, evidence of multiagency working and sharing of best practice and the commitment to provision of local support.

There was a concern that as there was a large range of needs for young people with SEN it was important to have information about how the Council was improving the quality of life of young people with different needs. The Strategy also had to be clear on the commitment to the provision of local services.

Officers stated that following the adoption of the Strategy, there would be an implementation plan which would detail how the aspirations of the Strategy would be realised.

A Member highlighted a concern of parents that devolved funding did not always meet the needs of the individual as it was meant to and as it was essential to ensure that it did questioned how the Council would maintain effectiveness. Officers responded that funding for Early Years children would be in place for children starting reception in September 2019 with inclusion funding provision till the end of early years without an EHCP plan being put in place and would be targeted to the individual. The provision of early targeted funding could result in a child not requiring an EHCP plan as well as enabling schools to have greater control of funding and make decisions on allocation of funds for children or to develop specific SEN related services.

It was further questioned how the allocation of funding would be audited effectively by the Council. Officers confirmed that they were currently working with 12 head teachers of various schools to draw up accountability measures which should enable the monitoring of funding allocations.

Additionally an Inclusion Officer had been appointed, with part of the role being to oversee inclusion within schools in relation to the specific amount of funding received through the explicit grant process. There would be a challenge to schools found not to be utilising the funds in the way expected. There would also be various models of accountability such as a Locality SEN Coordinator to investigate inconsistencies in uniformity of practice. The Council would continue work with Head Teachers to ensure resources were appropriately placed.

It was questioned how the Council would cope with increasing demand, with concerns raised about how the devolving of funds would mitigate against costs pressures and increased demand. Officers responded that evidence of demand was being driven by two factors, which were the challenge faced by mainstream schools in terms of finance and funding, and challenges relating to behaviour of pupils. Devolved funding would allow schools to address the need for local provision and procure behavioural support services. The Strategy could not preclude an increase in EHCP plans and in response, the intention would be to devolve funds earlier. Croydon was a growing borough, with many children being born with complex medical needs and as a result a child's needs must be met at an earlier stage of life. Training in school and the sharing of expertise was vital, this was evident in Teacher Training which had very little SEN component as a result a lot of work was needed to skill up and equip teachers in this area.

It was highlighted that there were an increasing number of young people with SEN who also presented with mental health needs and as such questioned whether these complex needs were factored into the Strategy and if sufficient services were being commissioned to meet these needs. Officers replied that the whole system was looking at ways to support young people with mental health needs as part of the commissioning strategy and this was also evident in the Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) refresh. This area of need was part of the ongoing collaborative work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

It was further noted that despite the strategic drive to ensure local provision for 16-25 year olds, they may need to be placed outside of the borough where their needs could be met. Officers confirmed that it was true in some cases that local provision was not always available but stressed that numbers of pre 16 children in out of borough provision was 15% and 55% for post 16. The strategy provided an opportunity for improvement in the pathways for post 16. Conversations were taking place with settings to explore how needs could be met locally where this had not previously been considered. Officers also confirmed that action taken was based on individual need and the Council wanted to be in a position that if a young person was in out of borough

provision, it was because it was the best place for them and not due to lack of local provision.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Learning assured the Sub-Committee members that there was a lot of good work happening in the service despite financial pressures. There was a national issue with an increase in demand for SEN services, even though there had been a 40% funding cut in Children's Services. In spite of the challenges experienced, there was an additional provision for 144 SEN places with 75 extra places available at Croydon College for post 16.

In response to a question about whether the Strategy would impose a requirement for assessments to be completed promptly and services made available with limited delay, officers advised that assessment of EHC needs were within timescales. Early assessment in schools would ensure children were supported earlier due to introduction of inclusion and intervention to support settings. Additional training was also being provided for SENCO's on identification of support needs for reception children.

It was queried what direct role 'voice of the child' had in the Strategy and how the intended outcomes could be ensured. Officers replied that the Strategy was informed by the voice of the child. An external agency was employed to engage with young people as part of this project. It was realised that there was a lot of work to be completed on engagement in order to improve pathways. In order to realise outcomes, during reviews and assessment young people put forward their views and these views had to be considered as it was implicit in improving pathways into adulthood. There was however a realisation that the service had to be explicit in this area at an earlier stage. There was concern noted that the voice of the child, choice and inclusion was explicit enough in the strategy document.

The input of partners such as the Health Service in the production of the Strategy given their own pressures was questioned. Officers confirmed in response that the Strategy was being drawn up in conjunction with the Clinical Commissioning Group who would be dealing with feedback received on resourcing.

The Chair thanked officers for their responses to questions.

In reaching its recommendations the Sub-Committee came to the following **Conclusions:**

- i. The Sub-Committee welcomed the opportunity to receive the draft of the SEN Strategy
- ii. That there were concerns about how effective the consultation process would be as it was being run during a busy holiday period.
- iii. That Members' would welcome the opportunity to feed into the consultation process.
- iv. Support and input from Partners was vital to the success of the Strategy.
- v. It was concerning that Croydon had one of the highest rate of 16-25 year olds not in work education or training.

- vi. It was difficult to benchmark or measure the outcome of the performance of children with SEN due to the varying complex needs and individual attainment targets set.
- vii. The Sub-Committee raised concerns regarding the content of the strategy which appeared to lack definitive details on decisions and actions to be implemented.
- viii. The suggestion that an implementation plan would follow the strategy did not provide assurance to the Sub-Committee of the steps and actions that would be taken to deliver on outcomes.
- ix. Whilst the objectives of the strategy were clear it was unclear how improvements to the lives of children and families with SEN would be achieved.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- i. Recommend to the Council that the Consultation period be extended in light of the busy holiday period in order to afford people more opportunity to be involved.
- ii. Recommend that Officers inform Members how they are able to pass on their suggestions and comments as part of the consultation process.
- iii. Recommend to the Council that support from the partners (Health, CCG) be made evident within the Strategy.
- iv. Recommend to the Council that the final report needed to be written in a way that is clear to the public.
- v. Recommend to the Council that it needed to prioritise and target support to 16-25 year olds which was an area that required immediate intervention.
- vi. Recommend to the Council that there was a need to be more explicit on accountability for the attainment of SEN.
- vii. Recommend that the voice of the child was explicit throughout the Strategy.
- viii. Recommend that the Strategy must make clear how it proposed to achieve its intended outcomes.
- ix. Recommend that the Strategy is tabled at the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 12 March 2019, prior to the papers being presented at Cabinet.

37/18 **Performance of Academy Schools in Croydon**

The Chair wanted it noted that this item was mis-titled as the Sub-Committee would be looking at the audited performance of schools at the next meeting on 5 February 2019. The main focus of this item was on exclusions and children missing in education.

The Head of Education Standards Safeguarding and Inclusion introduced the report and directed Members to two main highlights. The Sub-Committee noted that it was difficult for the department to provide conclusive overarching comparative data on performance due the fluctuation in performance in different areas periodically for maintained schools and academies, as well as the fact that there was a distinctively smaller number of maintained secondary schools in comparison to academies in the borough.

In terms of permanent exclusions, Croydon schools compared favourably nationally in primary and secondary level with strong engagement by schools in the fair access process which reduced the number of permanent exclusions. Figures showed that 71% of referrals that went to the Fair Access Panels secured places at alternative mainstream schools. Secondary fixed term exclusions were above the national average whilst primary school figures were below average. Elective Home Education figures show a disproportionate figure in the numbers for academies. It was important to note that it was difficult to provide an overarching reasons for this as figures showed that one academy has 10 referral in the period.

There had been a rise in the figures for children missing from education due to a change in the regulations that came into effect in 2016 that required local authority and academies to record any pupils coming off the school roll.

It was queried whether there had been any further exploration of the particular themes emerging from one of the main reasons behind elective home education, which was dissatisfaction in the system. Officers advised that it was difficult to quantify the reasons why people were dissatisfied with the education system as this was individual to the parent. It also could not be specifically attributed to either academies or maintained schools.

The Chair commented that he had visited different schools and spoken extensively about the issues of children in danger of exclusions and explored the processes of Fair Access Panels for both primary and secondary schools. Concerns were expressed around the robustness of the process in primary schools in comparison to secondary schools. Primary schools have recognised there are issues with inconsistency and were working to make their processes more robust. In terms of exclusions, levels were high in some schools and low in others, which led to concerns regarding the variation. Information on children sent to Pupil Referral Units (PRU) was also needed in order to understand the totality of the picture.

The Executive Head of Harris Schools commented that in terms of the data provided on the fair access protocol, it may be helpful to look at the data over a number of years in order to form an understanding of what was meant by referrals and offers. The data does not show that while a school may have offered to take a child for a period of 12 – 14 weeks, the provisional move may have failed or that failures sometimes occurred at the end stage of the provisional move. It was suggested that the Sub-Committee may want to look at patterns for successful or failed moves.

It was important to note that while fair access formal meetings occurred every two weeks, heads of schools also engaged in informal discussions and conducted geographical transfers so the data provided while good did not reflect the whole picture. There was also the issue of children that come off the schools system for periods due to different reasons such as going abroad for a period of time.

In response to a question about the definition of an informal or managed move, the Executive Head of Harris Schools advised that it was the same process as a Fair Access Panel, a 12 week provisional move with a review held at week six. It was conducted informally between schools and with informal documentation so there was no recording of this with the LA.

A Member commented that whilst informal or managed moves were completed with good intentions, accountability and transparency was difficult to achieve in these circumstances.

The Head of Learning Inclusion stated that it was challenge was to produce a whole picture of pupil movement. Fair Access Panels provided a level of security and that when schools engaged in managed moves it was difficult for the local authority to track pupils as they only receive data when a pupil comes on or off roll. This did not always reflect whether they were just moving to another part of the borough so the reasons for movement were not always clear.

It was questioned whether the local authority had knowledge of unlawful exclusions, with officers responding that the nature of the exclusions being unlawful would mean the Council had no knowledge. There had been cases that had come to the attention of the local authority in the past

The Chair commented that it was difficult to ascertain if the Council had a grip on the process of formal and managed moves and whether it was effective in producing good outcomes for pupils or not. Officers advised that the process in primary schools was more complex. Initially when a placement was breaking down, some schools wanted an instant solution such as moving the child to another school. There was now a staged approach for fair access with a forum to manage each case through conversations, the provision of support and shared expertise, which was proving to be more successful. Managed moves had now been incorporated into that process. In terms of secondary school provisional moves, it would not be expected for the move to break down in for example the 11th week as any signs of this should have been identified earlier in the process with additional strategies put in place to address any issues.

It was questioned whether the Fair Access Panel was making a difference in Croydon and what evidence could be provided of this as it was important to the community that we serve to provide feedback on services. Officers responded that the papers to be presented at Cabinet in March 2019 would provide some information. It was important to note that all schools in Croydon would have a high level of mobility and this was why the role of Child Missing for Education (CME) officers were vital to services, in particular due to safeguarding reasons.

The Sub-Committee Members' raised questions on whether there were occurrences where a child had been referred to the Fair Access Panel and had had their referral rejected and if this would result in permanent exclusion from their school. Officers confirmed that this did occur but not often due to

effective challenge by the panel on what solutions had been sought and if all that could be done for the pupil had been explored

A Member commented that whilst the report tried to cover various aspects, it was difficult to be effective as there were different issues experienced in different schools. There were concerns of a marked reduction in GCSE outcomes in some academy chains, in addition to the issues of children coming off the school roll. It was suggested that it would have been interesting to review data on the comparison of some academy chains against national figures on the level of year 10 and 11 GCSE children coming off the school roll which was a crucial school year.

The Executive Head of Harris responded that Members take account of the demographics of London compared to the rest of the country when looking at any comparative data. Members were informed that any academy school did not want to lose pupils and that in Harris schools when looking at mobility, his figures reflected that since September 2018, 37 pupil had left the school but 50 had joined the school. If the school was losing students it also had to recruit students and pupils did not tend to leave in years 10 and 11 as these were exam years, the number of pupils at his school's in year 10 were no different to that in year 11.

Concern was raised that the majority of the discussion had focused on data and not necessarily on exclusions and the reasons behind the rate of occurrences. It was questioned whether there was an assumption that if some academies excluded more than others it made them an unsatisfactory chain of schools. In response, the Executive Head of Harris School highlighted that they had the lowest exclusion rate of schools in the borough and Ofsted had mentioned in their reports. The school saw itself as a second chance for some pupils.

The Executive Director for Children, Families and Education stated that discussions would be held with senior officers on how to capture information on all areas of the discussion covered in order to provide assurance on these matter and to reflect on the issues and challenges presented from this meeting.

The Chair and fellow Sub-Committee members were explicit in their requirement for any data supplied to be Croydon specific and broken down by individual schools due to the variance in the demographics of the borough and its complexity.

In reaching its recommendations the Sub-Committee came to the following **Conclusions**:

- i. That the Secondary School Heads Associations appeared to work well and were engaged in their meetings
- ii. It was difficult to understand the process regarding the exclusion of children and the Fair Access Panels.
- iii. The Local Authority did not have sight of managed transfers.

- iv. There was limited comprehensive data available regarding those children that came off the school roll and their outcomes.
- v. The Sub-Committee would welcome further information on the progress of the recently launched staged approach for Primary Schools which enabled PRU places at Bramley Bank.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- i. Recommend to the Council that further information be provided to the Sub-Committee on exclusions and the flow of children through the education system.
- ii. Recommend to the Council that better monitoring of managed transfers was required to ensure the Local Authority better oversight of outcomes for children involved in the process.
- iii. Form a Task Group to investigate and collate data on children coming off the school roll and the mechanisms involved, with a view to reporting back at the Sub Committee meeting on the 12 March 2019.

38/18 What Difference has this meeting made to Croydon's Children

The Sub-Committee Members felt that officers understood the importance and requirement for full information to be contained in reports or circulated separately ahead of each meeting. Reports did not always reflect what was required or expected and this will be challenged where necessary. Challenge will be made to officers on how they will convince Members about changes to organisational culture.

39/18 Work Programme 2018/19

It was agreed for a Task and Finish group to be set up to collate data and evidence on the off rolling of pupils in Croydon schools and for findings to be reported to the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 12 March 2019

The Sub-Committee agreed the additional items to meetings for the remainder of the municipal year.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Signed:

Date:

Agenda Item 6

REPORT TO:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY SUB- COMMITTEE 14 JANUARY 2019
SUBJECT:	WORK PROGRAMME 2018-19
LEAD OFFICER:	Simon Trevaskis, Senior Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny
CABINET MEMBER:	Not applicable

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Work Programme is scheduled for consideration at every ordinary meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub - Committee.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To consider any additions, amendments or changes to the agreed work programme for the Committee in 2018/19.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This agenda item details the Committee's work programme for the 2018/19 municipal year.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee has the opportunity to discuss any amendments or additions that it wishes to make to the work programme.

2. WORK PROGRAMME

2.1 The work programme

The proposed work programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Members are asked to note that the lines of enquiry for some items have yet to be confirmed and that there are opportunities to add further items to the work programme.

2.2 Additional Scrutiny Topics

Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to suggest any other items that they consider appropriate for the Work Programme. However, due to the time limitations at Committee meetings, it is suggested that no proposed agenda contain more than two items of substantive business in order to allow effective scrutiny of items already listed.

2.3 Participation in Scrutiny

Members of the Sub-Committee are also requested to give consideration to any persons that it wishes to attend future meetings to assist in the consideration of agenda items. This may include Cabinet Members, Council or other public agency officers or representatives of relevant communities.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Sub-Committee is recommended to agree the Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19 with any agreed amendments.
- 3.2 The Sub-Committee is recommended to agree that topic reports be produced for relevant substantive agenda items in the future.

CONTACT OFFICER: Stephanie Davis
Democratic Services and Governance
Officer- Scrutiny
020 8726 6000 x 84384

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDIX 1

Work Programme 2018/19 for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Children & Young People Sub-Committee 2018/19 Work Programme

Meeting Date	Item
19 June 18	- Learning & Development Session
18 September 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's Improvement Plan Update - Recruitment & Retention Update - Performance Data - Children's Statutory Complaints Update - Children's Safeguarding Board Annual Report (S)
27 November 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's Improvement Plan Update (S) - Children's Complaints Overview Report - Academies - Special Educational Needs - Practice Week
14 January 2019	- Review of New Safeguarding Arrangements Proposals
5 February 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children, Young People & Learning Q & A (S) - Education Budget (S) - Education Standards (S)
12 March 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's Improvement Plan Update (S) - Update on SEN Strategy - Task and Finish Group- Exclusions and Off Rolling - Children's Social Care Annual Report (S)

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