

REPORT TO:	SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE November 2019
SUBJECT:	Croydon Children with Special Educational Needs
LEAD OFFICER:	Robert Henderson, Executive Director - Children, Families and Education
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Alisa Flemming - Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning
	Shelley Davies, Interim Director of Education Alison Farmer, Head of 0-25 SEN Service

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:

‘Our children and young people thrive and reach their full potential, ensuring that all children and young people in Croydon are safe, healthy and happy. The future is theirs.’

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	<i>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</i>
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	Action: Report on drivers and demographic of SEND children population growth – 2015-2019.

Drivers and demographic of children with special educational needs and disability.

Please refer to document (slide attached) entitled:
Prevalence and characteristics – School Population Croydon (November 2019)

During the period 2015 to 2019 and since the introduction of the Children & Families Act 2014 Croydon has seen a year on year increase in the number of Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment requests and EHC Plans maintained by the Local Authority. The number of Croydon EHC Plans rose from 1800 in 2014 to 2999 in January 2019.

For children with additional learning needs supported in mainstream schools the proportion of children identified as having SEN Support has remained relatively

constant with 11.7% of school age children and young people consistently being reported by schools as falling in this category.

The drivers that have led to the increase in the number of children with special educational needs for whom the Council maintains an EHC Plan are mirrored across London and nationally. Nationally there was a 35% increase in EHC Plans between 2014-2018.

The Local Government Association commissioned report - (<https://www.local.gov.uk/have-we-reached-tipping-point-trends-spending-children-and-young-people-send-england>) has detailed these drivers, which have been summarised below.

The Children & Families Act 2014 increased the age range of young people eligible for statutory SEN assessment and for whom Local Authorities maintain an EHC Plan from 0-18 to 0-25 years. Additionally EHC Plans were introduced for young people attending further education colleges, previously these young people had Learning Difficulty Assessments, which did not have the legal status of an EHC Plan.

Currently, in Croydon approximately 25% of EHC Plans are for young people aged post 16, for whom the Council would not have maintained an EHC Plan, prior to the 2014 Children & Families Act.

National policy decisions, which taken together, have not created an environment in which mainstream schools are incentivised for being inclusive and pressures on school budgets have had the combined effect of driving up demand for EHC Plans. Schools are less able to support young people with SEN without recourse to the additional funds that an EHC Plan brings.

There are other factors which have contributed to the increase in identification of young people with special educational needs and EHC Plans, which include advances in medical practices leading to better survival rates of children born with disabilities; increased diagnosis of children and young people with autism; increased mental health issues in young people and families affecting capacity for learning and engagement in education more broadly.

Appendix i

Table 1: Number of EHC Plans 2018 and 2019 by age range

Age Range	Number of EHC Plans SEN2 2018	Number of EHC Plans SEN2 2019	% change
Under age 5	120	132	10.0
Aged 5 to 10	1019	1072	5.2
Aged 11 to 15	984	1092	11.0
Aged 16 to 19	506	601	18.8
Aged 20 to 25	64	102	59.4
	2693	2999	11.4

Table 2: Number of new EHC Plans issued 2018 and 2019

Age Range	Number of EHC Plans SEN2 2018	Number of EHC Plans SEN2 2019	% change
Under age 5	116	132	13.8
Aged 5 to 10	170	162	-4.7
Aged 11 to 15	71	77	8.5
Aged 16 to 19	7	17	142.9
Aged 20 to 25	1	1	0.0
	365	389	6.6