

# CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION DIRECTORATE PLAN

## 2022-24

### DIRECTORATE VISION

We will support families to keep children and young people safely at home, and work with education providers to offer every child and young person an opportunity to develop, learn and be inspired.

### DIRECTORATE VALUES

- Promoting equality and inclusion in the community and in our workforce
- Listening to and acting on the voices of children and young people, and celebrating their achievements
- We are one team – across the Directorate, the Council, with our partners and our community
- We will tackle difficult issues together, across the Directorate and across the Council

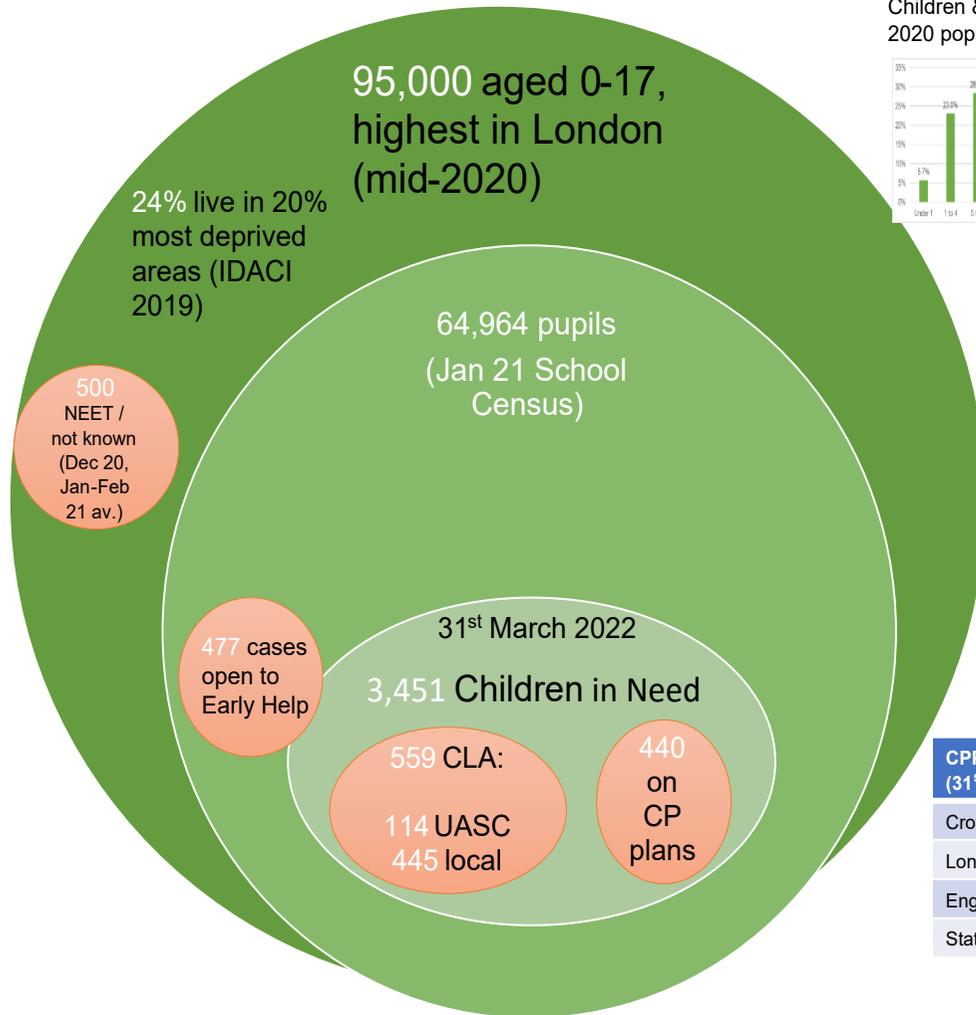
### TOP DIRECTORATE PRIORITIES

1. Continue to keep children and young people safe from harm, offering help early through partnership working, with sustained improvement in the quality of practice in early help and children's social care.
2. Develop local SEND provision so that more children and young people with SEND attend and thrive in Croydon schools.
3. Working across the Council, and with our partners, implement a one-council response to the issue of Serious Youth Violence.

This is an exciting time for our directorate. Together we are committed to improving the outcomes for children and families in Croydon. We recognise that to do this we need to work with each other and across the council, as well as with our partners – health, the police, schools, the voluntary sector as well as with our most important partners: children, young people and their families.

We have a talented, committed and passionate workforce across the directorate, all of whom work in different but equally important ways to support Croydon's children and young people to achieve the good outcomes they deserve. As we move into a new phase where we build on the improvement work undertaken and systems and processes now in place to maintain efficient and effective good quality services at value for money, we need to ensure we have the support and opportunities in place for staff to develop and progress in Croydon.

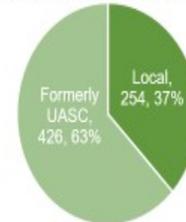
# Children and Young People in Croydon



Children & Young People by age band (mid - 2020 populations estimates)

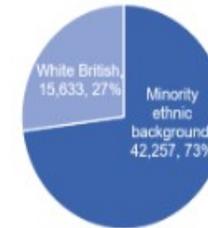


786 Care leavers (31st March 2022)

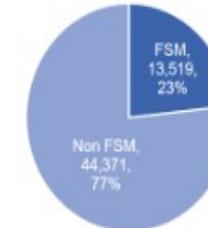


CPP - Rate per 10,000 population (31st March 2021)	
Croydon	29
London	36
England	41
Stats. Neigh	38

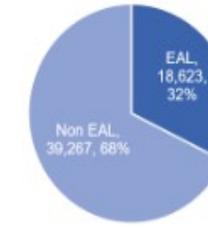
## Pupil characteristics, Jan 21



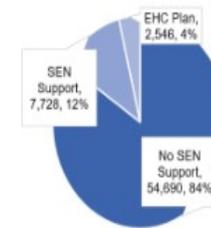
Minority ethnic background	
Croydon	73%
London	73%
England	34%
Stats. Neigh.	77%



FSM	
Croydon	23%
London	19%
England	21%
Stats. Neigh.	21%



EAL	
Croydon	32%
London	44%
England	19%
Stats. Neigh.	46%



The Children, Young People & Education (CYPE) Directorate is made up of three divisions:

- Children's Social Care and Early Help (Director, Róisín Madden)
- Education (Director, Shelley Davies)
- Quality, Commissioning, Performance & Improvement and Deputy DCS (Director, Kerry Crichlow)

## **CONTEXT – Croydon and National**

### **CROYDON CONTEXT**

The service transformation that lifted children's services from an inadequate Ofsted rating to overall good in March 2020 was underpinned by significant investment to drive the transformation of services. The children in care and care leavers services were rated as requires improvement and Ofsted made 4 key recommendations for continued improvement across the service.

In June 2021 Croydon received an Ofsted focused visit which looked at the Front Door and Early Help and reported that despite the immense challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the significant changes to the permanent senior leadership team and the considerable, ongoing and far-reaching local authority financial challenges, staff at the front door were making safe and appropriate decisions on most referrals.

In October 2021 the SEND Local Area inspection found that leaders in Croydon understand the context of the area well and, especially since 2018, have used their knowledge to develop a coherent and ambitious SEND strategy. This has improved the pace of improvement and means that leaders are tackling the right things in the right order. Croydon is one of the few areas that was not required to complete a statement of action.

Croydon sees a disproportionate number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children arriving due to the location of the Home Office's Lunar House. Following lengthy negotiations with the Department for Education, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up and Communities a grant award of £2.357m was secured in August 2021 to address the substantial, additional and

disproportionate costs falling to the council in 2021-22 as a result of the location of Lunar House in the borough. Modelling suggests that even with this grant, there will continue to be a gap in funding over the lifetime of this plan, and we will continue to engage with central government in order to highlight this.

Over 2021, significant work was undertaken to assess how we deliver children's social care services in Croydon in order to reduce the cost of services and work within the council's available resources, delivering ambitious savings as part of the MTFS. Recent benchmarking is showing that if the MTFS savings are achieved as planned, Croydon will have moved from one of the highest children's services spenders to below London average by 2023-24 if unaccompanied asylum seeking children costs are removed.

Croydon children's services are therefore in a much stronger position than two years ago. The directorate now needs to focus on the next phase: building on the positive feedback from regulatory visits and addressing the recommendations and learning points, retaining its sharp focus and grip on spend, and maximising opportunities with its partners to support children and young people to achieve the very best outcomes possible.

## **National Context**

### **SEND Green paper**

On 29 March the Government published the [SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time](#), a consultation on the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and alternative provision system in England. The consultation sets out proposed reforms to the SEND and alternative provision (AP) system that seek to address three key challenges:

- poor outcomes for children and young people with SEN or in alternative provision
- navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is not a positive experience for children young people and their families
- despite unprecedented investment the system is not delivering value for money for children young people and families

The plans to reform the system will be open for a 13-week public consultation, and Croydon will be submitting a response.

## Schools White Paper

On 28 March the Government published the [‘Opportunity for all Strong schools with great teachers for your child’](#) White Paper. The White Paper sets out proposed reforms to the education system focussed on providing an excellent teacher for every child, delivering high standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance, targeted support for every child that needs it and; a stronger and fairer school system.

The Schools White Paper sets out a series of new measures to support the delivery of these ambitions, including:

- Schools will offer a minimum school week of 32.5 hours by September 2023
- Ofsted will inspect every school by 2025, including the backlog of ‘outstanding’ schools that haven’t been inspected for many years
- By 2030 all children will benefit from being taught in a school in, or in the process of joining, a strong multi-academy trust, which will help transform underperforming schools and deliver the best possible outcomes for children
- At least £100m to put the Education Endowment Foundation on a long-term footing so they can continue to evaluate and spread best practice in education across the country
- Councils will be able to form and run Multi-Academy Trusts under the provision of this White Paper.

## Health White Paper - Joining up Care for People, Places and Populations

The Health White Paper [Joining up care for people, places and populations](#) , sets out the government's proposals for health and care integration

Integrated care is about giving people the support they need, joined up across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional divisions between hospitals and family doctors, between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services. In the past, these divisions have meant that too many people experienced disjointed care.

Integrated care systems (ICSs) are new partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups.

We are moving to an ICS from July. This will mean that the CCG ceases to exist and instead we plan and co-ordinate these services through the Integrated Care System. This will impact on commissioning, which is an integrated team, with changes expected from April 2023. This will be an opportunity to develop an integrated approach to meeting the needs of children and young people.

### **Children's Social Care: National Reviews**

In May 2022 the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's review into the deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson were published. The content of and recommendations contained within these reviews will take some time for local and national social care systems to consider and digest, both individually and as a profession. Opportunities to reflect and discuss in depth what the recommendations mean for Croydon and explore what they will mean for the children, young people and families who are at the centre of our work are being created. Both reviews represent an important opportunity to shape a new future for children's social care and will shape the further development of this Directorate Plan.

The Independent Care Review report can be found [here](#)

The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's report can be found [here](#)

## DIRECTORATE PLAN

This is the high-level CYPE Directorate plan. The details that underpin these high-level actions can be found in the relevant service plans

Theme: Service transformation and redesign			
Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Develop a Family Hub model which integrates Children's Centre functions with earlier help for children and young people	Shelley Davies	March 2023	Families are able to access a wide range of support and earlier interventions
Extend the locality SEND support model across the borough	Shelley Davies	March 2023	More children and young people with SEND are educated in schools in the borough (mainstream?)
Co-produce and publish our Early Years Strategy along with a plan to translate it into action.	Shelley Davies	December 2022	More children achieve the best possible health, wellbeing and education outcomes from pre-conception to age 5
Developing Young Croydon to provide an integrated and holistic response to service delivery, ensuring easy access to a range of interventions. Helping young people at an earlier stage, working systemically and collaboratively to keep families together safely whilst preventing young people from entering the care system	Roisin Madden	March 2023	Young people will remain living at home with their families safely, whilst being supported by appropriate services; leading to reductions in serious youth violence, young people open to the Youth Offending Service and young people coming into care
Transform early help in Croydon to deliver innovative services and achieve value for money	Kerry Crichlow	December 2022	Families access the right support at the right time and referrals for statutory assessment support and intervention reduce

Review the Children's Social Care Front Door to optimise triaging and signposting to other preventative services where this is a better option for the child than referral into social care.	Roisin Madden	August 2022	Families receive appropriate support at the right time. Potentially reduced costs as more children are signposted into support other than children's social care where this is appropriate.
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### Theme: Working in Partnership

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Work across the council and with our partners to develop a one council response to reduce serious youth violence in Croydon	Debbie Jones	On going	There is a reduction in serious youth violence in Croydon with a joined-up system of response, reduced duplication, and improved use of resource and opportunities
Work with schools to develop and agree an Education Partnership across the borough	Shelley Davies	December 2022	A well-developed and appropriate traded services offer to schools that is cost neutral to LBC
Support and enable the partnership review of the overall effectiveness of the CSCP	Kerry Crichlow	July 2022	The Partnership is able to evaluate itself, draw its conclusions and address recommendations for change

### Theme: Ensuring all children and young people can develop, learn and be inspired

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Review the Fair Access Panel processes	Shelley Davies	September 2022	Ensure all local schools are engaged in a Fair Access process which has been developed and agreed by the schools

			Reducing the number of managed pupil moves which take place outside of the agreed process
Agree data sharing across education provision	Shelley Davies	September 2022	Improved quality of local management information and reducing safeguarding risks
Develop and extend the use of Team Around the School	Shelley Davies	September 2022	Better shared oversight of vulnerable pupils by strengthening schools awareness and access to appropriate support

<b>Theme: Quality Assurance and Challenge</b>			
Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Ensure thorough inspection and regulator visit readiness across the directorate	Kerry Crichlow	Ongoing	The Directorate has an accurate assessment of its strengths and weaknesses and sound plans in place to address
Ensure inspection recommendation responses are tracked and appropriately evidenced	Kerry Crichlow	Ongoing	Service improvement includes the evidence to address recommendations
Establish refreshed governance to monitor and provide robust challenge to performance and practice across the directorate	Kerry Crichlow	July 2022	Performance and practice challenges are identified and mitigated at an early stage, successes are celebrated and shared
Deploy data insights to shape interventions and track the impact of services	Kerry Crichlow	September 2022	A robust evidence base for the impact of services

### Theme: Listening to the Voices of Children and Young People

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Establish a Voice of the Child working group across the CYPE Directorate to listen to feedback and engage with CYP and their families	Roisin Madden	March 2023	CYP voices are heard, and shape and inform service development and commissioning

### Theme: Valuing our Workforce

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Engage with and listen to our workforce, recognising the diversity of our workforce and the value that brings, and working towards ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of staff	Debbie Jones	Ongoing	Continued engagement and communication to ensure our workforce feels able to raise difficult issues and more feel happy and proud to work in Croydon CYPE Directorate
Develop a directorate approach to recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in hard to recruit, specialist disciplines	Kerry Crichlow	September 2022	An increasingly stable, dedicated workforce by reducing reliance on agency staff and the costs associated with this. Each permanent recruit will represent a saving to the Council.

### Theme: Ensuring value for the Croydon pound

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Expected outcome
Develop and implement a robust approach to benchmarking services for cost and volume	Kerry Crichlow	September 2022	Assurance on quality and value for money of services
Implement our plan to increase the number of foster carers employed by the council, enabling	Roisin Madden	Ongoing	Cost reduction in IFA employed foster carers, and a stronger foster carer

us to reduce costs of funding foster carers employed through IFAs, and to focus on ensuring high quality support and training is in place			workforce who can better support our vulnerable children and young people
Capitalise on our buying power as a large authority to secure best value from commissioned services for children and young people	Kerry Crichlow	Ongoing	Benchmarked care service costs put Croydon at or below comparator averages
Maintain a robust budget monitoring plan for the High Needs Block, and continue to implement the high needs deficit recovery plan	Shelley Davies	Ongoing	Recovering the high needs budget deficit within five years