

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET: 25th JANUARY 2023	
DATE OF DECISION	NO DECISION	
REPORT TITLE:	EDUCATION STANDARDS 2022	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Debbie Jones – Interim Executive Director of Children Young People & Education Shelley Davies - Director of Education	
LEAD OFFICER:	Julie Ralphs, Head of Education Services <u>Julie.ralphs@croydon.gov.uk</u> X 24196	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children Young People & Education	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report summarises the education performance and outcomes of children and young people in Croydon schools for the academic year 2021/22, across all phases from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Key Stage 5 (KS5).
- 1.2 The academic year 2021/22 saw a return to primary national curriculum assessments, and end of year 11 and 13 examinations (including GCSE & A levels) following two years of teacher/centre assessed grades. The DfE did not publish performance data for 2019/20 or 2020/21, nor were schools obliged to share their outcomes with us.
- 1.3 The DfE has announced that it will:
 - return to publishing primary assessment data in performance tables with effect from the 2022/23 academic year;

- publish data pertaining to the 2021/22 academic year between October 2022 and Spring 2023, and therefore some data is either not available or provisional at the time of writing including data relating to specific cohorts of pupils.

1.4 This means that there is extremely limited published data for either 2019/20 or 2020/21, so in most cases comparison is made to 2018/19 (the last year available). This is not a completely fair comparison as pupils have experienced two years of disrupted education caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and some adaptations to assessment and exams have been applied in 2021/22

HEADLINE PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

- 1.5 87% of Croydon schools are graded good or better by Ofsted, which is in line with the national average, but below the London average.
- 1.6 The proportion (67.4%) of children at early years foundation stage achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) is well above the national average, but slightly below the London average.
- 1.7 In 2022, we saw the return to formal assessment and examinations at Key Stages (KS) 1, 2, 4 & 5, following 2 years of adaptations in 2020 and 2021.
- 1.8 Our KS1 pupils achieved better than both the London and national averages in reaching expected standards in reading, writing and maths.
- 1.9 At KS2, 60% of Croydon's pupils achieved the expected standard in reading writing and maths which is better than the national average but low amongst our statistical neighbours.
- 1.10 Provisional KS4 data shows a trend of improving results, however overall performance remains below national and regional averages although there are indications that we are slowly reducing the gap.
- 1.11 Croydon has a broad KS5 offer, but with a surplus of available places. Our monthly Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) rates consistently place us in quintile 3 nationally, but the number of NEET referrals is increasing.
- 1.12 Persistent absent rates have increased compared to 2020/21 but remain below the national average.
- 1.13 There were 27 permanent exclusions in 2021/22, all at secondary phase. This is the same volume as 2020/21 and a reduction on previous years.
- 1.14 There is a focus on improving the quality and monitoring of Personal Education Plans (PEP) for our Children Looked After (CLA). School attendance rates by our CLA cohort are better than overall cohort attendance rates.

- 1.15 The timeliness of assessment and issuing of Education Health & Care Plans (EHCP) within the 20-week period has risen to 77% as of November 2022, 17% better than the 2021 national average.
- 1.16 Performance data can be found in Appendix 1: Education Dashboard (Oct 2022)
- 1.17 Our closest statistical neighbour authorities are: Birmingham, Brent, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Haringey, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton and Waltham Forest

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report [and its appendices], the Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note this report, and commend the continued actions being taken by all partners to secure improvement in pupil educational outcomes
- 2.2 Note that pupil attainment/school outcome data has not yet been fully published for the 2021/22 academic year
- 2.3 Note our activities, planned and underway, to improve pupil and school outcomes as set out within this report

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that Cabinet have oversight of the outcomes for children and young people within the borough and future activity within this area to secure improvements

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

4.1 OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOMES

Ofsted Inspection arrangements

- 4.1.1 The current OFSTED Inspection Framework (2019, updated September 2022) for schools, applies to all maintained schools, academies, further education and skills provisions, and registered early years settings in England.
- 4.1.1 Inspections were paused in March 2020 and graded inspections were resumed in the autumn 2021 term. Schools are normally inspected as per the following (although there are 5 to 6 term extensions arising from the pandemic pause):
 - i. New schools, including academies, are inspected within 3 years of opening.
 - ii. Outstanding schools are no longer exempt from inspection.
 - iii. Most good and outstanding graded schools are inspected every 4 years to confirm they remain good/outstanding (no graded judgements). If they are found to have improved or standards may be declining, they may get a full inspection with graded judgements within 1-2 years. Some good and outstanding schools will receive a graded judgement due to risk assessment or for quality assurance purposes.

- iv. Requires Improvement and Inadequate schools are inspected within 30 months.
- v. Where any school, irrespective of its current OFSTED grade, is deemed to have serious concerns (for example safeguarding) they may be inspected immediately.

4.1.2 We currently have several schools who are due or over-due an inspection in accordance with the above criteria.

4.1.3 There is a nationally reported trend of a low proportion of outstanding schools retaining their outstanding status upon inspection against the current Inspection Framework.

Croydon's current OFSTED grading summary

4.1.4 At the time of writing 87.2% of Croydon primary and secondary schools that have been inspected are judged to be good or better by Ofsted. This includes both LA maintained and academy schools. This is in line with the national average of 87.1% but below the London average of 93% and statistical neighbour average of 92%.

Table 1: Current overall Ofsted ratings for schools as at 31 August 2022

OFSTED judgement	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not yet inspected
Croydon: Number of Schools	26	79	11	4	5
Croydon: % of schools	22%	66%	9%	3%	N/A
London: % of schools	28%	66%	4%	1%	N/A
England: % of schools	18%	70%	9%	3%	N/A

Action being taken to improve Ofsted judgements:

- 4.1.5 Categorisation of schools is undertaken annually (and reviewed if circumstances change) using a combination of risk factors. An appropriate level of support (Universal, Universal+ or Targeted) is offered to improve pupil attainment and Ofsted outcomes. Refer to Appendix 2 for a summary of our current support offer.
- 4.1.6 The School Forum has approved Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding of £227,442 a year for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to maintain the current levels of support for all schools (as per Appendix 2) plus provide additional CPD for school staff covering specialist forums and training. This is in response to the Department of Education's withdrawal of the School Improvement and Monitoring Grant to LAs from 2023/24 and in recognition of the valuable resource and expertise provided to local schools. This also provides a stability of LA service delivery for the next two years covering the period to 31st March 2025.
- 4.1.7 Continuing Professional Development has been provided to our primary schools to prepare them for the Deep Dive into reading and mathematics, and in the wider

curriculum for history, geography in 2021-22 and science in Autumn 2022. More subjects will be addressed this year.

- 4.1.8 Ofsted update training is provided at least annually for school leaders and separately for governors. Additional specialist consultancy and training is available as part of the Council's traded offer to schools.

4.2 EARLY YEARS/EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) OUTCOMES

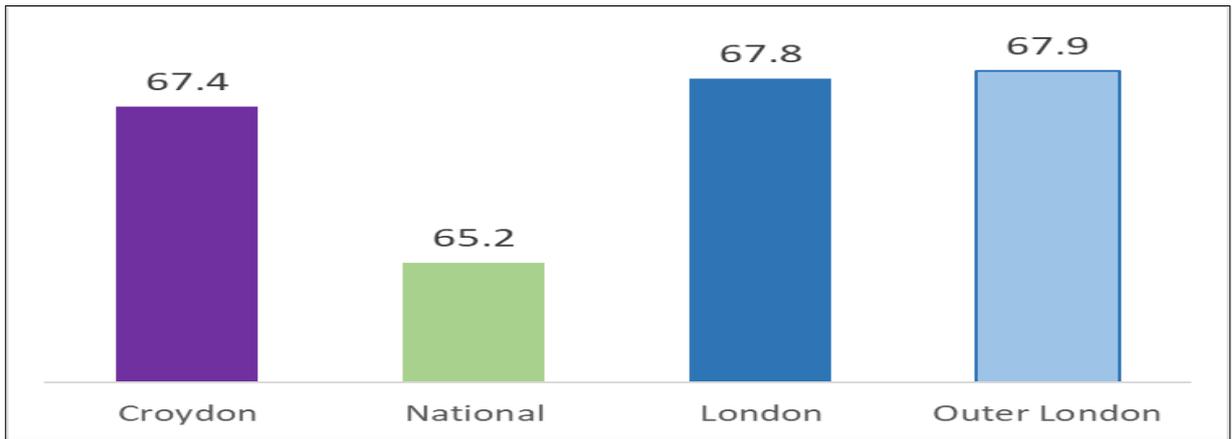
EYFS arrangements

- 4.2.1 The EYFS Statutory Framework covers all settings and practitioners who work with children from birth to the end of the reception year in school (0-5yrs). There are three statutory assessments for children in the EYFS:
- 4.2.2 All children who attend an early years setting (including a childminder) must be assessed between their 2nd and 3rd birthdays. This is known as the Two-Year-Old Check and assesses whether children are making appropriate progress in the areas of communication & language development; personal, social & emotional development; and physical development.
- 4.2.3 All children in maintained schools and academies must take the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within 6 weeks of starting in a reception class. This assessment is used solely to measure a school's effectiveness as the results are held for 7 years and then compared to the cohort's Year 6 SATs results.
- 4.2.4 At the end of the reception year, all children will be assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) which cover the 7 areas of learning and development in the EYFS. This assessment is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). The purpose of the EYFSP is to support a successful transition to Key Stage 1 and to inform parents about their child's development.
- 4.2.5 Children are assessed as "Emerging" or "Expected" against the criteria in each ELG. Children who are assessed as "Expected" in the areas of communication & language; personal, social & emotional; physical; literacy; and mathematics are deemed to have a Good Level of Development (GLD).
- 4.2.6 In 2021-22 a new EYFS Statutory Framework was introduced with new ELGs and it is therefore difficult to compare results with previous, pre-pandemic, years. In previous years, a judgement of "Exceeding" (worth 3 points) could be given – this has been withdrawn and children are now assessed as "Emerging" (1 point) or "Expected" (2 points). The maximum points a child can get is now 34 (previously 51).

Croydon's latest EYFS outcomes

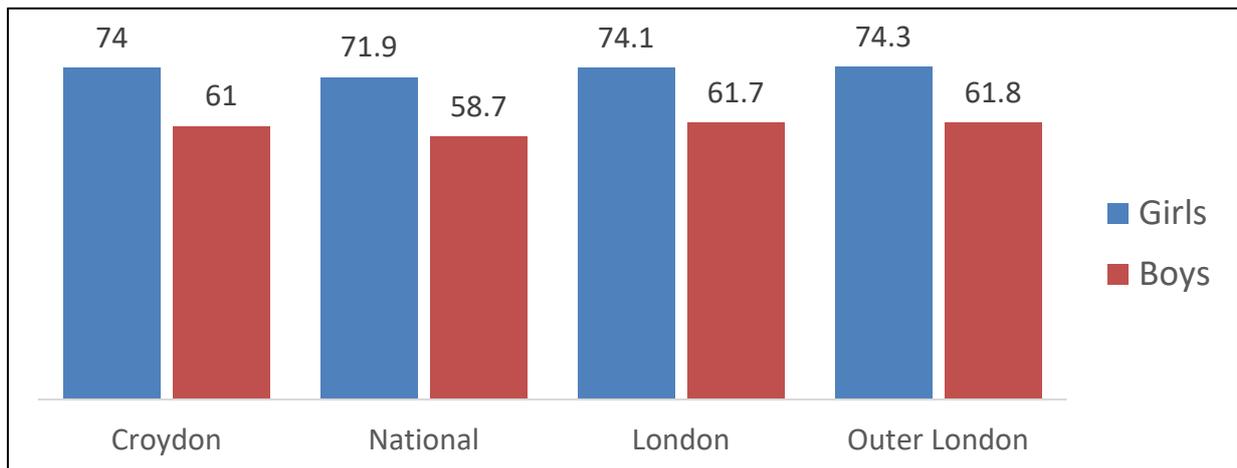
- 4.2.7 67.4% of children in Croydon attained a GLD in 2021-2022, which is better than national but below London and statistical neighbour averages. Whilst much lower than previous pre-pandemic years, this does reflect both the considerable effects of the pandemic on our youngest children, together with the introduction of new ELGs. In addition LAs no longer have a statutory duty to moderate EYFSP judgements which may have affected the scores. Of the regions, Outer London had the highest percentage of children with a good level of development.

Table 2: % of children attaining GLD 2022 – Overall



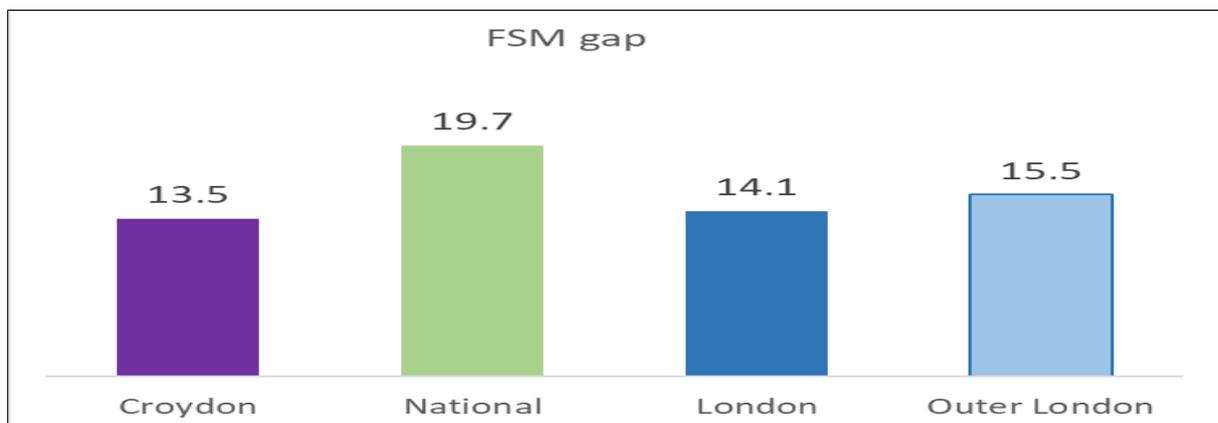
4.2.8 There is a GLD gender gap in Croydon, 61% achievement of this measure by boys compared to 74% for girls. This is in line with all children nationally:

Table 3: % of children achieving a GLD 2022 - by gender



4.2.9 In Croydon, 56.7% children entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) achieved a GLD compared to 70.2% of their peers who did not claim FSM. This 'gap' of 13.5% is the narrowest of all the comparable regions:

Table 4: Children achieving GLD 2022 – FSM gap



Action being taken to improve EYFS outcomes

- 4.2.9 We continue to support early years practitioners to develop their skills in all areas of the EYFS curriculum, with an emphasis on communication & language; personal, social & emotional; and physical development as the cornerstones of learning.
- 4.2.10 Work continues to address the gender gap, particularly in literacy. The final cohort of schools and settings are using "Helicopter Stories" which is proven to support boys' communication, language and literacy.
- 4.2.11 We offer a range of support and training to our early years settings and practitioners, including curriculum and statutory training, professional development forums and moderation sessions for reception teachers.
- 4.2.12 Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings benefit from annual support visits, pre-Ofsted support programmes, including focussed visits on 'less than good' provision.
- 4.2.13 Our maintained nursery schools have a named link adviser and are subject to the same support and categorisation process as our primary and secondary schools (refer paragraph 4.1.5).

4.3 KEY STAGE 1 (KS1) & KEY STAGE 2 (KS2) OUTCOMES

KS1 & KS2 arrangements

- 4.3.1 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, external assessments did not take place in 2019-20 or in 2020-21. The assessments in 2021-22 were set at the same standard as 2018-19 to measure the effects of the pandemic on pupil achievement. As such, drops in attainment were expected.
- 4.3.2 In the Summer term of 2022 externally validated teacher assessments took place for the first time in three years at the end of KS1 in reading, writing and mathematics, supported by tests taken during May 2022 in reading and mathematics.
- 4.3.3 Externally marked tests took place at KS2 for the first time in three years in reading, mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) in May 2022, together with externally validated teacher assessments in writing in June 2022.
- 4.3.4 Research has shown that the effects of the pandemic on attainment were exacerbated for disadvantaged pupils and the impact of this is likely to have differed between schools depending on their level of disadvantage. The DfE website states that "Performance data for 2022 should not be directly compared with 2019 and earlier. Comparisons should not be made between schools. This is because schools may have been affected differently by COVID-19."

Croydon's latest KS1 and KS2 outcomes

- 4.3.5 In 2021/22 the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at KS1 in all of reading, writing and mathematics in Croydon was 57%. This is 4% higher than the

national average. 8% of children reached the higher standard in all three compared with 6% nationally.

All individual subjects were higher than national averages at both the expected standard and at the higher standard.

Data at this stage in the year refers to the provisional dataset and may be subject to change when finalised in December 2022.

4.3.6 In 2021/22, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at KS2 in all of reading, writing and mathematics in Croydon was 60%. This is the 3rd lowest compared to our statistical neighbours, but above the national average.

In 2018-19 the percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in reading, writing and mathematics in Croydon was 67%. The drop of 7%, a result of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, was in line with that of other local authorities and national figures.

4.3.7 Strengths: Croydon attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above national averages in reading, mathematics and writing at both KS1 and KS2 and in GPS at KS2 at the expected standard by between 1 and 4%.

4.3.8 Weaknesses: Croydon attainment in science is in line with national at KS2 but below national by 2% at KS1. Croydon is below London averages by between 1 and 4% for all subjects at both key stages.

4.3.9 Progress scores for KS2 and attainment and progress for groups such as disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND or EAL has not been published at the time of writing.

Action being taken to improve KS1 & KS2 outcomes

4.3.10 School Improvement visits challenge and support leaders on the quality of education, including teaching and learning, and provision for specific pupil groups including those with SEND needs and those who are disadvantaged. The number of visits is graduated according to need, as outlined in Appendix 2. School visits include learning walks which often include both lesson visits and book scrutiny for evidence of the curriculum over time. This ensures that any issues are picked up quickly and school leaders are supported with making improvements.

4.3.11 Our most vulnerable schools have formally recorded School Progress Review Meetings (SPRM) termly to track progress to a judgement of at least good in an Ofsted inspection. This ensures that appropriate challenge and support is given to the leadership and management of the school to ensure accelerated progress. An element of inspection readiness is introduced into the programme at the appropriate time, and often includes preparing middle leaders and governors for their part in the process.

4.3.12 A comprehensive programme of assessment and moderation training is provided at KS1 and KS2 to ensure assessments are robust and accurate. This includes training for teachers who are new to Year 2 and Year 6, and for strong teachers to join the LA

team as moderators which builds capacity in their schools as well as for the LA. Moderation clusters at KS1 and KS2 support teachers in developing and assuring their judgements. In line with statutory responsibilities schools' assessments are moderated in phonics in Year 1, reading, writing and mathematics at KS1 and in writing at KS2.

- 4.3.13 Termly briefings share good practice across the borough in English and mathematics and enable a focus on current areas of priority for improvement, as well as assessment and Special Educational Needs. Strong partnerships will continue to be forged with the local mathematics and English hubs, funded by the government to provide support to schools in these areas.
- 4.3.14 The Schools Forum agreed funding for 2023/24 and 2024/25 will ensure that the above support can continue without additional funding pressures on either the Council's General Fund or on school budgets.

4.4 KEY STAGE 4 (KS4) OUTCOMES

KS4 arrangements

- 4.4.1 This academic year saw the return of the summer exam series, after they had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 and 2021 grades were based upon teacher and centre assessed grades. This change in grading methodology resulted in higher grades being awarded, both locally and nationally, compared to 2019.
- 4.4.2 As part of the transition back to the summer exam series adaptations were made to the exams (including advance information) and the approach to grading for 2022 exams broadly reflected a midpoint between results in 2019 and 2021.
- 4.4.3 Provisional KS4 results for 2022 were published in October 2022, with the validated results due in early 2023. All KS4 data in this report therefore refers to the provisional dataset and may be subject to change.
- 4.4.4 For data comparison purposes, comparison of 2022 to 2019 is more meaningful, although there are some differences in testing methodology.

National KS4 measures are based upon:

- 4.4.5 Percentage of pupils achieving at least a grade 4 or 5 in both English and maths GCSE.
- 4.4.6 Attainment 8 measure which shows the average academic performance of a secondary school. It is calculated by adding together pupils' highest scores across eight government approved school subjects.
- 4.4.7 Progress 8 is a 'value-added' measure that indicates how much a secondary school has helped pupils improve (or progress) over a five-year period when compared to a government-calculated expected level of improvement.

Croydon's provisional KS4 outcomes

- 4.4.8 Overall, Croydon is currently under performing against most national and regional KS4 averages. Whilst progress in Croydon is being made over time to reduce the gap, when compared with other London boroughs we are still behind on all measures.
- 4.4.9 Achievement of Grade 4 or above in English & maths GCSE: 67.7% of Croydon pupils achieved this in 2022, which is 5.3% below the national average (73%). However, this represents a 6.5% improvement in Croydon compared to 2019, which is 0.5% better than the national improvement rate meaning we have reduced the gap slightly. Compared to 2021, our rates fell by 2.7% compared to a national drop of 3.9%, which suggests an encouraging trend to close the gap.
- 4.4.10 Achievement of Grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE: This is considered a 'strong' pass grade. We perform slightly better in this measure with 48.7% of our pupils achieving this, although still below the national average (49.6%). We have improved by 8.2% compared to 2019, compared to 6.4% national improvement rate, again demonstrating progress being made to close the gap.
- 4.4.11 Attainment 8: Croydon's provisional Attainment 8 score was 47.4 making it 31/32 of London Boroughs. (Lambeth coming 32nd), compared to the London average of 52.7.
- 4.4.12 Progress 8: Croydon (-0.02) performed slightly better than the national average (-0.03) and the score confirms that pupils are making the expected level of progress compared to their KS3 starting point.
- 4.4.13 Cohorts of pupils performing better than expected:
- i. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.
 - ii. Girls are making positive progress, specifically Black African and travellers of Irish heritage.
- 4.4.14 Cohorts of pupils not making expected progress and/or lower attainment:
- i. Boys, specifically mixed-white/Caribbean, Caribbean and Traveller.
 - ii. Disadvantaged pupils - those who have received Free School Meals (FSM) in past 6 years
 - iii. High Prior Attainment (HPA) pupils – suggesting a lack of stretch and challenge.

Action being taken to improve KS4 outcomes

- 4.4.15 School Improvement visits challenge and support leaders on the quality of education, including teaching and learning, and provision for specific pupil groups including those with SEND needs and those who are disadvantaged. The number of visits is graduated according to need, as outlined in Appendix 2. School visits include learning walks which often include both lesson visits and book scrutiny for evidence of the curriculum over time. This ensures that any issues are picked up quickly and school leaders are supported with making improvements.

- 4.4.16 Promoting teaching and learning partnerships across the borough to develop shared practice and standards between high performing schools and lower performing schools with similar pupil demographics. This is done via targeted CPD (for example focus on programmes for disadvantaged pupils), facilitating school visits and opportunities across schools to share best practice locally and from other boroughs.
- 4.4.17 Focus on English and maths programmes for male pupils – specifically targeting pupils within the demographic identified as having the most barriers to success—particularly Caribbean and mixed white-Caribbean boys.
- 4.4.18 The Schools Forum agreed funding for 2023/24 and 2024/25 will ensure that the above support can continue without additional funding pressures on either the Council’s General Fund or on school budget.

4.5 KEY STAGE 5 (KS5) OUTCOMES

KS5 arrangements

- 4.5.1 This academic year saw the return of the summer exam series, after they had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 and 2021 grades were based upon teacher and centre assessed grades. This change in grading methodology resulted in higher grades being awarded, both locally and nationally, compared to 2019.
- 4.5.2 As part of the transition back to the summer exam series, adaptations were made to the exams (including advance information) and the approach to grading for 2022 exams (similarly to KS4) provisionally reflect a midpoint between results in 2019 and 2021.
- 4.5.3 Published data from the DfE for KS5 is not available until February 2023 therefore we are unable to compare across boroughs/ disadvantaged groups or any other measure. Destination Data for KS5 2021-22 is not released until October 2023.
- 4.5.4 Data and information in relation to 2022 results referred to in this report is therefore provisional data provided by local post-16 settings and may be subject to change when final validated data is published.
- 4.5.5 Typically, KS5 students in Croydon enter Level 3 courses (e.g. A Levels) with lower-than-average KS4/GCSE attainment levels, with migration out of Croydon (for example to selective schools in neighbouring boroughs) for post-16 studies.
- 4.5.6 All young people must stay in education, employment with training or training (EET) until their 18th birthday. Those identified as not EET (NEET) must be supported to find and sustain suitable provision.

Croydon’s provisional KS5 outcomes

- 4.5.7 A Levels: Local performance remains below regional, statistical neighbour and national averages, but continues to improve year on year. Our provisional A level pass rate (97.9%) data suggests that we are just below the reported national average of 98.4%. The percentage of Croydon students achieving at least 2 A levels has improved significantly in recent years – from 58.8% in 2017/18 to 77.2% in 2021/22 – but remains below all comparator averages, as does the achievement of higher grades.
- 4.5.8 Other level 3 courses (e.g. BTECs, Diplomas, T Levels): We continue to have strong performance with high numbers of students achieving high grades in Technical qualifications - Our Technical qualification students achieved better than all comparator averages by +3.1 points (statistical neighbours) to +4.5 points (London). Performance on Applied General qualifications is less favourable, returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- 4.5.9 Areas of strength: We have individual schools within the borough who are within the top 10 percentile nationally for outcomes.
- 4.5.10 Areas of development: Viability of some school sixth forms and surplus sixth form places - We have a high number of small sixth forms across Croydon who cannot offer the breadth of curriculum to meet the needs of all their KS4 leavers. With typical entrance requirements for A levels being a grade 6+ including English and maths at GCSE and only 48% of students in Croydon gaining a G5+ including English and maths, a 'traditional' school sixth form academic curriculum offer does not meet the needs of a considerable proportion of students.

Whilst introduction of other types of post-16 courses, for example BTECs and T Levels, would enable more students to access suitable post-16 pathways within their school, the nature of these courses in terms of teaching expertise, resources and premises often proves prohibitive for schools, meaning colleges or specialist/niche post-16 providers are better placed to meet the needs of many students.

- 4.5.11 NEET data is not published annually for the Sept-Nov period due to the volatility of the cohort and data. In the August 2022 tables we were placed in position 10 (of 30) in quintile 3, placing us in the top half nationally. Our combined NEET/not known figure was 4.9% (5.3% in 2021) of the total 16/17-year-old cohort, which equates to 238 young people who are identified as NEET and 229 whose status is not known.
- 4.5.12 Approximately 60% of our NEET/not known cohort are male, and 54% are White, with 35% of Black or Mixed ethnicity. 35% of the cohort reside in New Addington, Broad Green or Woodside. Approximately 20% of our NEET young people are not available to participate in EET for reasons of pregnancy, caring responsibilities, medical or being abroad.
- 4.5.13 The number of complex NEET young people referrals is increasing.

Action being taken to improve KS5 outcomes

- 4.5.14 Improvement of KS5 outcomes across Croydon will be driven by improvement in our KS4 outcomes and therefore the actions being taken as outlined in section 1.5. apply as improvement arrangements for KS3 to KS5 have been aligned.
- 4.5.15 Ensuring the provision of high quality, appropriate careers, information, advice and guidance to ensure all students are on the right KS5 pathway is essential to improving outcomes. Whilst schools and colleges have a statutory responsibility to ensure the provision of this, the LA has historically provided support and a centralised approach to this. However, local and national funding reductions in recent years has significantly reduced the resource and capacity for this.
- 4.5.16 We are developing post 16 partnerships and training across the borough through the Post 16 Forum. We will use this as a vehicle to review the local post-16 offer, share good practice, promote collaboration and inform discussions with post-16 providers on their KS5 offer.
- 4.5.17 Improving Oxbridge, Russell Group and Top Third Access to University as well as degree apprenticeships is a focus. We are doing this by strengthening partnerships with the widening access teams of Higher Education Institutions and exposing Croydon's young people to the possibilities of University and degree apprenticeships through more networking events. This includes work we have been undertaking with Cambridge University.
- 4.5.18 Croydon Council brokers a data management, analysis and monitoring tool (ALPS) at reduced cost for local post-16 centres, which includes training sessions. This tool is used to identify areas for improvement and strength, enabling sharing of good practice across centres, as well as supporting pupil tracking and monitoring.
- 4.5.19 We have a small NEET casework team who provide focussed advice and support to help young people into education and training, track young people whose education status is unknown and one officer dedicated to working with social care colleagues to support CLA/care leavers who are NEET.
- 4.5.20 We continue to produce the annual Croydon Post 16 prospectus [My Choices at 16+ | Croydon Council](#) , now available digitally. This provides details of the full local post-16 offer, plus an enhanced section for young people with SEN, careers information advice and guidance and links to support (e.g. financial) available.

4.6 PUPIL ATTENDANCE

Attendance arrangements

- 4.6.1 The DfE has advised that all schools should return to normal post covid arrangements which means return to focusing on the improvement of school attendance. Croydon Council has adopted a staged approach to improving poor school attendance. This model has three stages:
- i. Universal,
 - ii. Support & Intervention, and
 - iii. Enforcement.

- 4.6.2 These stages underpin the belief that whilst there is an appropriate role for taking legal enforcement measures against parents, ensuring families can receive effective support at an early stage is more likely to resolve patterns of poor attendance. Legal enforcement measures will therefore only be instigated when patterns of poor attendance continue, and evidence exists that demonstrates that parent/carer has not engaged with interventions put in place to support them to improve their child's attendance.
- 4.6.3 The most recent DfE validated data is for the autumn and spring terms of the 2019/20 academic years and is used in this report unless indicated otherwise. Full academic year data for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 will be published in March/April 2023.
- 4.6.4 There are two measures for absence from school. These are overall absence and persistent absence. Overall absence is the percentage of total school sessions that were recorded as an absence. Persistent absence is the percentage of pupils who are absent from school for more than 10% of the possible sessions.

Croydon's current attendance

- 4.6.5 Croydon primary school persistent absence rate in 2018/19 was 8.53% which was a decrease of 0.31 from the previous academic year. The primary school figures for the academic year of 2019/20 were not published by the DfE due to covid-19 implications. However, the data for 2020/21 stood at 8.26%. which is better than our statistical neighbours. The data for 2021/22 indicates an increase in persistent absence from the previous academic year of 8.05% however, despite this increase, the data suggests Croydon's primary school persistent absence rate is better than the national average by 1.91%.
- 4.6.6 Croydon secondary schools' persistent absence rate in 2021/22 has increased by 11.64% from the previous academic year. Despite this increase nationally, Croydon secondary school percentage remains below the national average by 2.65% which is a better than the rate for England overall.

Action being taken to improve pupil attendance

- 4.6.7 Croydon LA has commissioned Studybugs which is able to extract live data feed from schools in line with the Government Green Paper statements on school attendance. This gives Croydon staff members access to live pupil data, which can be used to target needs within schools.
- 4.6.8 Monthly whole school attendance touch base meetings led by Croydon LA officers have been rolled out to all Croydon schools to support with all whole school attendance matters.
- 4.6.9 The attendance improvement practitioners undertake individual casework around complex cases of children who are missing out on education. They also promote the

use of the Early Help pathway and conducted reviews of whole school attendance practice in schools where this is a concern.

4.6.10 The local authority also supports schools by taking enforcement action, where this is appropriate, against parents who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly. In the 2021/22 academic year 578 penalty notices were issued for unauthorised absence at school and 22 prosecutions were undertaken by the service.

4.6.11 LA education officers in the Access to Education Team continue to work to improve attendance through individual casework with appropriate cases; whole school support with priority schools; liaison with independent education welfare providers; raising awareness of attendance; and exploring opportunities provided by the Locality Early Help teams.

4.7 PUPIL EXCLUSIONS

Exclusions arrangements

4.7.1 Pupils can be excluded from school either permanently or for a fixed period. These are formal sanctions that occur in response to breaches of the school's behaviour policy and there are regulations and guidance covering their use. Parents have various rights of representation in response to an exclusion.

4.7.2 The DfE publishes the national comparative rates for exclusions from academies and local authority-maintained schools. This data is published annually in the summer following each academic year once it has been validated. The most recent national data release was for the 2020/21 academic year.

4.7.3 The data captures three measures, which are broken down by primary and secondary schools. These are:

- i. The number of permanent exclusions and this as a percentage of total pupil numbers.
- ii. The number of fixed period of exclusions and this as a percentage of total pupil numbers; and
- iii. The number of pupils with one or more fixed period exclusions and this as a percentage of total pupil number.

Croydon's current exclusions

4.7.4 There were 27 permanent exclusions from Croydon secondary schools during the 2021/22 academic year. This is the same number as in the 2020/21 academic year. We have seen a steady decrease in the number of permanent exclusions at secondary school in recent years.

4.7.5 There were 0 permanent exclusions of primary school pupils during 2021/22, which is a reduction on previous years.

4.7.6 There were six permanent exclusions of Croydon resident pupils from schools in other local authority areas.

4.7.7 A further five permanent exclusions were subsequently withdrawn and two were reinstated by the governing body.

4.7.8 The trend shows that Croydon is currently below the national average in the number of permanent exclusions from maintained Croydon schools, academies and free schools over recent years as well as the permanent exclusion rates compared with national, London and statistical neighbours which is extremely positive.

4.7.9 The table below indicates the drop in school-based suspensions in the last two academic year we have seen a dramatic drop of 817 less suspensions/fixed term exclusions.

Table 5: Volume of fixed term and permanent exclusions 2018/19 to 2021/22

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of suspensions (fixed term exclusions)	1665	1400	1470	653
Number of permanent exclusions	43	41	27	27
Number of permanent exclusions reinstated	2	2	0	0
Number permanent exclusions withdrawn	8	4	2	5

4.7.10 In line with the national situation, Black Caribbean pupils in Croydon still have the greatest level of disproportionately high levels of exclusion from school. Black Caribbean pupils made up 44% of permanent exclusions from Croydon schools during the 2021/22 academic year, but Black Caribbean pupils account for 10.5% of the Croydon school age population.

Action being taken to improve reduce pupil exclusions

4.7.11 The Access to Education Team currently has several preventative models designed to support the reduction of pupils at risk of exclusion. These should be explored before considering the lines of permanent exclusion:

- i. Missing Monday Panel meeting: The purpose of this panel is to help reduce the numbers of children and young people in Croydon who are absent from education, at risk of permanent exclusion or who go missing from the school roll, whilst also ensuring that issues of safeguarding are prioritised by schools in their duty of promoting the well-being of all children.
- ii. The team around the school approach, a multi-agency early intervention support for schools which includes officer visits by both LA officers and partner organisations – supporting all Croydon schools on a range of inclusion matters. This includes support with pupils who are at risk of exclusion.

- iii. Fair Access Panel (FAP) and Primary School Forum have been used for several years as a mechanism through which schools, with parental consent, broker managed moves to other mainstream schools or alternative provision settings. Using these mediums means that a pupil does not need to be permanently excluded.
- iv. Frontline support from Attendance and Inclusion Officers - holistic support for pupils and their families.
- v. Provision of exclusions advice and guidance.
- vi. Safeguarding visits consider exclusions within the wider safeguarding context.

4.7.12 Steps are being taken to work with schools to reduce their need to exclude pupils; this includes a major piece of work that began in February 2020 championing a renewed focus on disproportionality of exclusions amongst different groups of pupils. Example approaches includes the team around the school model, which focuses on early intervention support at the earliest point of concern, holistic practitioner 1:1 intervention for pupils at risk exclusion, thematic workshops and group intervention for vulnerable year groups.

4.8 CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA) OUTCOMES

4.8.1 Due to trauma and significant issues emanating from trauma, the Virtual School works alongside stakeholders, especially social services, to address and to share understanding and knowledge of how to bridge the gaps and ensure that education is an active part of the Care Plan, and to improve the education outcomes of our CLA.

4.8.2 The role of the Virtual School (VS) is to:

- i. Monitor and promote the educational progress and achievement of children looked after and care leavers.
- ii. Ensure that Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are current, relevant and effective.
- iii. Promote and monitor the use of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG).
- iv. Support schools and designated teachers to develop effective strategies and support for children looked after.

Croydon's Provisional CLA outcomes

4.8.3 EYFS: We do not have specific data for this cohort of CLA.

4.8.4 KS1 – Year 1: We have 9 children in year 1, 2 of which were disapplied from the phonics testing due to their SEND levels. Of the remaining 7 children, 3 passed the year 1 phonics screening and the remaining 4 are being provided with support and intervention by the VS and their schools in preparation for re-taking the screening in year 2.

4.8.5 KS1 – Year 2: Of the 13 children in this cohort, 6 have SEND needs – 2 with EHCPs and 4 on school level support plans. 7 of the 13 pupils met their teachers' and schools' own targets for the year, and of the 12 pupils taking their phonics screening 7 passed which is pleasing given their level of SEN needs.

- 4.8.6 KS2 – Year 6: We had 23 reportable pupils in this year’s KS2 testing cohort, of which 35% (8 pupils) were working at the combined ‘expected standard’ in reading, writing and maths. This is in line with the reported national average for the CLA cohort.
- 4.8.7 KS4 – Year 11: There are 58 young people in this cohort with 30 entered for Level 1 and Level 2 exams and 20 young people were entered for (Attainment) 8 eligible subjects. 15% of these pupils were forecasted by their schools (in their PEPs) to gain 5 or more GCSEs grades 9 - 4 including English and maths. 20.69% of pupils achieved grades 9 – 4 and over a quarter of these pupils achieved a grade 4 or higher in maths and English.
- 4.8.8 KS5 – Year 13: There are 129 in the Yr. 13 cohort of which 9 achieved a Level 3 qualification, 23 young people achieved a Level 2 qualification and 19 achieved an Entry Level qualification. There are 2 young people that we are still waiting for exam data and 76 that do not have any results - The high mobility and contextual changes that occur in this cohort which affects the figures regarding no results include:
- Entering care at a late age, sometimes at Year 11, and no support with previous educational experience
 - Poor transition plans that do not reflect the step up to Post 16 education
 - Mental Health and other health issues
 - Housing
 - Incarceration
 - PPG+ funding ending in Year 12 and lack of support
 - Post 16 educational placements are not trauma trained
 - Exclusions
- 4.8.9 Attendance: There are 626 pupils in the CLA cohort with attendance rates at 93.56% at primary phase and 88.67% at secondary. The 2020/2021 persistent absence data for our CLA primary cohort is 6.44%, which is better than the overall Croydon primary pupil rate. There is a similar trend with the CLA secondary cohort, with an absence rate of 11.33% which is slightly better than the overall secondary cohort rate.
- 4.8.10 Exclusions: At the primary phase, there were no permanent exclusions, with only one at secondary phase. 3 permanent exclusions were successful rescinded at secondary phase, which included intervention by the Virtual School.

Action being taken to improve CLA education outcomes

- 4.8.11 Advisory Teachers and Education Advisers hold a cohort of specific year groups for at least 2 years to ensure continuity and stability for the children, young people and their carers.
- 4.8.12 The VS is applying additional support for children and young people with the effective use of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG+) to promote inclusion, reduce exclusion, ensure quality transitions and to raise attainment. All of this reinforces the Advisory Teachers’ relationship building and thus more effective intervention with children, young people and stakeholders.

4.8.13 There is a dedicated focus on improving the quality of PEPs, so that they robustly reflect the child / young person's circumstances. Activities around this include delivering high-quality training to Designated Teachers (DTs) [this is via the termly *Arena* programme] and by also continually updating the design of the PEP form so that it reflects the voice of the child or young person. Furthermore, there has been a change in requirement, whereby Advisory Teachers and Education Advisers are required to attend at least one PEP meeting per term for the children / young people in their cohort.

This improvement in completion rate can directly be attributed to a change in approach. Prior to 2020, two colleagues from the Senior Leadership team quality assured a high percentage of PEPs. In 2020, this approach was changed in line with an overall team operations overhaul. Advisory Teachers (ATs) and Education Advisers (EAs) were allocated specific cohorts within the education phases spanning EYFS through to KS5 and were responsible for ensuring PEPs were completed to a specific standard whilst also ensuring that the number of deferred PEPs were kept to a minimum. Deferred PEPs are those that were missing information from the team around the young person or where a PEP meeting did not take place. Furthermore, during the academic year 2020/2021, the assessment category '*Requires Improvement*' was introduced, which enabled more thorough feedback to educational establishments with regards to the quality of the PEP, which in turn increased awareness and support required for the CLA cohort. The table below illustrates the upward trend in PEP quality since 2018/19.

Table 6: PEP quality assurance trends 2018/19 to 2020/21

Academic Year	Excellent Rating	Good rating	Requires Improvement Rating	Deferred Rating
2018/2019	7.05%	52.47%	n/a	40.48%
2019/2020	20.36%	74.56%	n/a	4.97%
2020/2021	22.89%	70.60%	3.11%	3.39%

Source: <https://epeponline.co.uk/dashboard/vs>

4.8.14 Monitoring and actively responding to pupils' absence continues to be a focus for the Virtual School.

4.9 PUPILS WITH EDUCATION HEALTH & CARE PLANS (EHCP) OUTCOMES

EHCP arrangements and context

4.9.1 We currently have 4014 children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans in Croydon. There are approximately 8,000 more registered at SEN Support.

4.9.2 Timeliness of assessment and issuing of plans within the 20-week period has risen from 21% in July 22 to 77% as of November 2022. This is compared to a national performance figure of 60% in 2021. Such timeliness in the issuing of plans is critical to ensuring positive outcomes for each child.

4.9.3 Availability of validated attainment data for 2022 is limited at the time of writing.

Croydon's latest pupil with EHCP outcomes across all educational phases

4.9.4 Across KS1 the data shows that those with an EHCP achieve lower than our statistical neighbours, London and England.

4.9.5 Progress scores for KS2 and attainment and progress for specific groups of learners, including those with SEND, has not been published at the time of writing.

4.9.6 Latest KS4 data shows that those with an EHCP achieved above other statistical neighbours in the Progress 8 measure and there is an upward trend for those achieving grades 4-9 in English and maths.

4.9.7 Latest figures for persistent absentees with an EHCP show that Croydon performs better than our statistical neighbours and England.

4.9.8 Specific exclusions data for those with an EHCP is yet to be published.

Action being taken to improve pupils' with EHCP education outcomes

4.9.9 Autism Education Trust (AET): A considerable number of pupils and students with EHCPs have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Conditions. For the last 2 years we have worked with the AET in our Early Years settings to ensure training and resources are available to meet needs. We have now purchased the AET licence for a further three years and for all phases of education so that this effective approach will be embedded across all settings in Croydon. This also addresses the needs of the children and young people in a timely way whilst referral and full assessment is completed.

4.9.10 The Locality SEND Support (LSS) service provides early help, advice, training, resources and support at the point when difficulties are emerging and identified by school SENCOs. This takes a range of forms but consists of training and shared expertise across all settings. This approach is now borough wide as of September 2022 and will have a positive impact on the outcomes of learners with SEND. Those that require further assessment and support will be well presented with real time reports and evidence of strategies already undertaken. Current activities are outlined below:

Table 7: Work of Locality SEND Support (LSS) in terms of contribution to professional development, SENDco support and early support

ACTIVITY	IMPACT
CPD delivered to SENDCos on the SEND aspects of Ofsted's Educational Inspection Framework	Over 70 SENDCos had two training sessions on how Ofsted inspect SEND. At least six schools have subsequently received Ofsted inspections.
Parental Webinar on Neurodiversity	Six sessions have been delivered – each one oversubscribed. Over 100 parents have had help to support their neurodiverse children and support them with their learning to raise standards.

CPD delivered to SENDCos on the new DfE behaviour guidance (Summer 2022)	Training offered to 110 schools through SENDCo forums with over 85% attendance. Support given to improve schools' behaviour policies and hence improve behaviour; creating a calmer atmosphere conducive to learning and higher attainment.
CPD delivered to SENDCos on sickle cell disease awareness	Raise awareness amongst 110 schools so CYP with SCD can be supported with their learning and attendance
Early help team attended each Locality SENDCo forum to discuss ways of supporting families and raise awareness of EHT.	EHT had a productive discussion with almost 80 schools on how to signpost parents and families to early help support.
LSS Provided training for school finance staff	Over 50 school finance colleagues attended training on how to ensure financial support gets quickly to SEND CYP who need it within the Localities.
Governor training for LSS awareness	There have been two governor training sessions. The training was offered through Octavo to governors of over 110 schools and each session was well attended. This training enabled governors to better monitor the support that schools are giving to CYP with SEND
Half termly Headteacher meetings	All 110 mainstream headteachers are offered a half-term catch-up session. These sessions enable them to understand and be able to engage fully with the LSS process. This helps them to provide early support to CYP with emerging needs and improve academic outcomes.
Presentation to Therapies Work group	This work helped to enable all SEND professionals working with CYP to offer a joined-up approach.
LSS webinar to SENDIS (Kids) Parents	Several sessions were offered to parents (fully subscribed) to enable parents and carers to understand LSS and better support their children
LSS liaison with Children's Social Services	This work helped to enable all professionals working with CYP to offer a joined-up approach, improving support.

4.9.11 Increased specialist provision is enabling more children and young people to attend good quality provision within the borough. A review of our Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) is underway as well as a strategic plan to develop additional ELPs to address gaps in provision as evidenced by data.

4.9.12 Improved real time data has enabled robust forecasting of needs within year groups and informed practice and placement development. Included in this is the close monitoring of attendance and exclusions of which we have none to report as at this time. Improved attendance will support and improve outcomes and greater learning.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Not applicable

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 This report is for information purposes only – to provide an annual overview of education standards and pupil outcomes – and therefore consultation is not appropriate.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 This report provides information to support delivery of the following Mayor's Business Plan 2022-2026 outcomes and priorities:

Outcome 3: Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential

Priority: Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential

- Enable more pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to attend and thrive in Croydon schools.
- Develop an effective Education Partnership with schools.
- Work with schools to improve support for vulnerable pupils and to continue to reduce exclusions.
- Develop and deliver an Early Years Strategy to ensure every child is given the best start in life.
- Work with all education providers to improve attendance, inclusion and standards for all, so that more of our children and young people can fulfil their potential.

Priority: Work closely with health services, Police and the VCFS to keep vulnerable children and young people safe from harm

- Implement a programme of continuous improvement to sustain the quality of services relating to children, young people and education.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 There are no Finance implications arising from this report

8.1.2 Approved by: Charles Quaye Acting Head of Finance – Education on the 13th December 2022

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Head of Litigation & Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer that

- Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to secure (so far as their powers enable them to do so) that efficient primary, secondary and further education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area.
- Section 13A requires local authorities to ensure that their relevant education and training functions are exercised (so far as they are capable of being so exercised) with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential for children and young people in their area.
- Section 14 requires local authorities to secure sufficient schools for primary and secondary education for their area, and sufficient is defined by reference to number,

character and equipment to provide appropriate education based on age, ability and aptitude, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their needs.

These duties are overarching duties and apply regardless of whether schools are maintained by the local authority or independent of local authority support.

8.2.2 Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation & Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer on the 15th December 2022

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 Not applicable

8.4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.4.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from this report.

Approved by: Debbie Calliste, Head of HR for Children, Young People and Education on behalf of the Chief People Officer on the 10th December 2022

9. APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1: Education data dashboard (Oct 2022)

Appendix 2: School improvement link adviser support levels (2022/23)

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None

11. URGENCY

11.1 Not applicable