

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Agenda

Monday 31 January 2022 at 6.30 pm

This will be held as an informal remote meeting

You can watch live on YouTube: youtu.be/PUeb0q_GhdU

MEMBERSHIP

Administration	Opposition
Councillor Alexandra Sanderson (Chair) Councillor Lucy Richardson Councillor Asif Siddique Councillor Mercy Umeh	Councillor Mark Loveday
Co-optees	
Eleanor Allen, London Diocesan Board for Schools Nandini Ganesh, Parentsactive Representative Nadia Taylor, Parent Governor Representative Matt Jenkins, Teacher Representative	

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www.lbhf.gov.uk/committees

Date Issued: 21 January 2022

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

31 January 2022

<u>Item</u>		<u>Pages</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
	<p>If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.</p> <p>At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.</p> <p>Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Standards Committee.</p>	
3. MINUTES	<p>To note the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021.</p>	4 - 10
4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	<p>This meeting is being held remotely. If you would like to ask a question about any of the items on the agenda please contact: david.abbott@lbhf.gov.uk</p> <p>You can watch the meeting live on the Council's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/hammersmithandfulham</p>	

- 5. 2022 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY** 11 - 34

This report sets out the budget proposals for the services covered by this Committee. An update is also provided on any proposed changes in fees and charges in the budget.
- 6. ADOPT LONDON WEST – ASSURANCE REPORT** 35 - 45

This report provides a briefing on the progress and activity of Adopt London West, adoption performance data, and how good outcomes are being achieved for children.
- 7. EDUCATION OUTCOMES UPDATE** 46 - 53

This report covers educational outcomes for key stage 4/5 for 2021 with extra information on destinations and young people not in education, employment, or training.
- 8. UPDATE ON AFGHAN FAMILIES** 54 - 57

An update on the support provided to Afghan families resettled in the borough.
- 9. WINTER 2021 HOLIDAY SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN** 58 - 64

This item provides an overview of the support for children over the 2021 winter holiday.
- 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note the date of the next meeting: 28 March 2022

Agenda Item 3

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Tuesday 16 November 2021

NOTE: This was held as an informal remote meeting

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Alexandra Sanderson (Chair), Lucy Richardson, Asif Siddique, Mercy Umeh and Mark Loveday

Co-opted members: Nandini Ganesh (Parentsactive Representative) and Matt Jenkins (Teacher Representative)

Other Councillors

Councillor Larry Culhane (Cabinet Member for Children and Education)

Officers

Jacqui McShannon (Director of Children's Services)

Mandy Lawson (Assistant Director, Education and Disabilities)

Jan Parnell (Director of Education)

Sarah Bright (Assistant Director, Children's Commissioning)

Amana Gordon (Operational Director, Children and Young Peoples Service)

Elizabeth Spearman (Head of ACE and School Admissions)

Karen Galey (Assistant Director for the Economy)

Matthew Coulbeck (Secondary Adviser and 14-25 Development)

Tom Perrigo (Industrial Strategy Officer)

Keith Tysoe (Principal Adviser SEND and Inclusion)

Satwinder Saraon (Strategic Lead for Early Years and SEND Transformation)

Phil Tomsett (Head of Early Years)

David Abbott (Head of Governance)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Eleanor Allen and Nadia Taylor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2021 were noted.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions were received.

5. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Elizabeth Spearman (Head of ACE and School Admissions) presented the report that outlined the key legislation and guidance governing how the Council works with parents and carers who have elected to home educate their children. The report also discussed the impact of the pandemic on the numbers of children being electively home educated and the resource implications.

Elizabeth Spearman noted that any family can elect to home educate their children. The Council has a duty to put support in place but has no right to inspect or assess. In H&F the team has taken a robust approach – contacting all families as soon as it's known they intend to home educate and setting out our expectations on how we can work together to ensure a suitable education. The Council has a very experienced home education advisor and families worked constructively with us. She added that since the beginning of the pandemic there had been a significant increase in numbers, up to 190 at present, which may create capacity issues.

Councillor Lucy Richardson asked if officers felt the sudden rise in figures was a temporary or permanent change. And what would be the impact on resources? Elizabeth Spearman said initially officers expected the numbers to reduce over time, but they hadn't yet. And it was the same picture across the country. Officers had been encouraging parents to consider returning to school, but it was a balance – parents views had to be respected. Regarding resources, the home education advisor had been managing while discussions were online, but officers wanted to reinstate in-person contact for new families.

Nandini Ganesh noted that at the national level there were several pressure groups encouraging parents to home educate and avoid contact with the councils. She asked if that was happening in H&F. Elizabeth Spearman said most families did cooperate. Home educating families often feel passionately that they don't want state involvement. She gave a recent example of a family who were told not to engage with the Council because it might lead to us taking their children into care. Officers were working to dispel those myths. Prior to the pandemic the team held an annual event to engage families and they also organised family events like days out, theatre trips etc.

Councillor Asif Siddique asked if there was any mechanism in place to reliably communicate with the parents about key issues. Elizabeth Spearman said there was a lot of guidance online. Officers also gave parents ideas about using local and resources, and textbooks to support their children's education. The team was keen

not to recommend other providers because it wasn't possible to quality control them. But the advisor would look for gaps and steer families towards resources.

Councillor Siddique suggested putting a secure online portal for families in place. Elizabeth Spearman said officers would give it consideration. But she noted that many families wouldn't even provide the Council with an email address.

Councillor Mark Loveday asked what level of Section 437 orders the team were making – and if those number had changed since the pandemic. Elizabeth Spearman said taking legal action in the form of a school attendance order was a decision the Council didn't take lightly. To do so the Council had to prove families weren't educating children which was often very hard to do. The team did raise it as a tool to engage parents. At present there was only one order ongoing. The most during the period was six and two of those went to court.

Councillor Loveday noted the low level and asked if it was something the team wanted to use more often, or if they felt those powers should only be for very rare cases. Elizabeth Spearman said they tried to avoid them as it often wasn't in the best interests of the child. Officers made families aware of the legal framework, but their preference was to work with parents to resolve any issues. Officers weren't looking to increase the numbers, but it was important to have the option there when it as required. Elizabeth Spearman added that she would like the Department for Education (DfE) guidance around home education tightened-up. Different boroughs had quite different approaches and that could cause issues when families move.

Councillor Loveday asked if there was an opportunity for London-level coordination of home education policy. Elizabeth Spearman said she had personally pushed for greater coordination at a national level. The latest DfE guidance was partially based on H&F's guidance.

Nandini Ganesh asked if parents of children with education health and care plans could home educate and still retain access to therapies and other support. Mandy Lawson added that, if parents could meet the specification of the plan, the local authority would support them with resources as required.

Councillor Mercy Umeh asked if there had been safeguarding issues and if officers worked closely with social care colleagues to look for issues.

Elizabeth Spearman said there was no evidence that children who were home educated were more at risk than those in school. The home education advisor was trained in safeguarding, but social care would have to act on any safeguarding issues.

Councillor Loveday suggested the following recommendations:

- That the Committee endorsed the Council's efforts to lobby government to improve the guidance and legal framework around elective home education.
- That the Committee endorsed greater coordination of elective home education policies between London boroughs and asked the Cabinet Member for Education to raise the issue as London Councils.

The recommendations were agreed.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee endorsed the Council's efforts to lobby government to improve the guidance and legal framework around elective home education.
2. That the Committee endorsed greater coordination of elective home education policies between London boroughs and asked the Cabinet Member for Education to raise the issue as London Councils.

6. FAMILY SUPPORT IN-HOUSE TRANSFER

Amana Gordon (Operational Director, Children and Young Peoples Service) introduced the item on the transfer of Early Help and Early Years staff and services within Family Support to Children's Services Education and Children and Young People's department. She noted that some areas for improvement had been identified, particularly around data collection, and officers had been working with the Performance and improvement and Business Intelligence teams to ensure officers had access to high quality data and quality indicators.

Councillor Lucy Richardson asked if there had been training for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) on Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding to improve the low take up.

Satwinder Saraon (Strategic Lead for Early Years and SEND Transformation) said officers had spoken with SENCOs about why take up was low and had held webinars to go through the process and regularly review it to ensure take up was sufficient.

Councillor Richardson asked if Early Help and Early Years were now part of Family Support. Jacqui McShannon (Director of Children's Services) said Family Support incorporated several services including Early Years and Early Help. Now all those services were back in the Council's Children's Services department and more tightly integrated.

Councillor Richardson asked for clarity around the traded offer referenced in the report. Jacqui McShannon said it allowed schools to purchase an enhanced offer, e.g. additional Early Help practitioner support. Satwinder Saraon noted that all schools had access to specialist teachers across areas such as behaviour, speech and language, autism etc.

Councillor Richardson asked if officers were planning to have a data dashboard providing comparisons with other London boroughs and the London average. Jacqui McShannon noted Children's Services had invested a lot in the last two years around data for front door services to monitor their performance – and they were planning the same for Early Help.

Councillor Asif Siddique asked how the Council was communicating this change to parents – particularly the roughly 20 percent of families where English was not their first language. He also asked if there was a mechanism for families to provide

feedback to the service. Satwinder Saraon said a number of Children's Centre sessions were translated. Officers also reached out to key stakeholders like childminders and community leaders about offers and children's centre sessions. It was an area that officers were monitoring and looking at ways of improving. The Council also had the Family Information Service which provided information on services and was translated into a wide range of languages.

Councillor Mark Loveday asked why these services were not brought back into the Council's control earlier. Jacqui McShannon said the original idea was to bring services together in an innovative way, but it was never fully realised. The landscape had changed and it was decided to bring them back in-house.

Councillor Loveday noted that there were no benchmarks for the Committee to measure future performance against and asked if officers had a list of key performance indicators (KPIs) for the service. Jacqui McShannon said the service leads had a clear plan of action and areas for improvement, including qualitative data from audits. Councillor Loveday said it would be helpful for the Committee to see a clear set of KPIs. Jacqui McShannon said there would be further reports where performance can be tracked across a number of areas.

Nandini Ganesh asked if there was additional funding for nurseries where children with special needs were identified. She said Parentsactive came across a number of families where children were not accepted due additional needs. Satwinder Saraon said funding was available to all settings for children under 5 with emerging needs (including pre-diagnosis).

Nandini Ganesh made a general point that the group of services, as presented to the committee, was not that clear. She asked that future papers focussed on individual programmes, including statistics and its impact.

Councillor Mercy Umeh asked for clarification on the additional community support for families. Jacqui McShannon said it was a 'step down' service so that families finishing work with Early Help didn't experience a 'cliff edge' where support dropped away completely.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted and commented on the report.

7. H&F INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Tom Perrigo (Industrial Strategy Officer) and Matthew Coulbeck (Secondary Adviser and 14-25 Development) introduced the item that covered how the Council's Industrial Strategy was being used to improve opportunities for young people in the borough.

Councillor Lucy Richardson asked how the Council was working with businesses to use unspent apprenticeship levy funding and encouraging local businesses to offer inclusive apprenticeships. Tom Perrigo said officers were looking at options to use unspent levy money through a transfer scheme that the London Progression

Collaboration were running. The scheme was designed to give smaller and medium sized businesses access to funding and enable them to create apprenticeship opportunities. Further details could be provided to the Committee as it progressed.

ACTION: Tom Perrigo

Councillor Richardson noted how important it was to create opportunities for young people to get the required English and Maths qualifications if they had failed them in school as it prevented them from accessing many of these opportunities. Officers agreed and said work was being done with West London College and other providers.

Councillor Richardson asked how T Levels were progressing in the borough. Matthew Coulbeck said it was still in the early stages. It was still not clear how T Levels would replace BTEC qualifications, which were strongly embedded in the borough with West London College, William Morris, and other providers. It was important that any change didn't reduce participation.

Councillor Richardson asked if the change would put more pressure on teachers. Matthew Coulbeck said it would.

Nandini Ganesh welcomed the initiative. She noted that her son had been working in an inclusive apprenticeship as an admin assistant in the Economy department and was doing well. She asked officers to ensure the Council was promoting and supporting inclusive internships across a range of organisations and businesses.

Matt Jenkins asked what the Council could do to increase quality work experience opportunities. Matthew Coulbeck said work experience was difficult to manage for schools. It was costly for schools to find placements. The Council had set-up a careers network and careers cluster to help with this, allowing schools to connect with different organisations that could help them.

Councillor Asif Siddique asked how the Council was reaching out to small businesses who were interested in offering work experience but put off by onerous requirements around insurance etc. Matthew Coulbeck said small and medium sized businesses could contact Workzone for advice and support.

Councillor Richardson asked if officers had looked at skill mapping. Tom Perrigo said officers were looking at procuring a career and skills advice tool to help guide people by both assessing their skills and tracking which skills, technologies, and approaches were most in demand.

Councillor Larry Culhane (Cabinet Member for Children and Education) paid tribute to Tom Perrigo, Matthew Coulbeck, and the rest of the team. He said the Council's industrial strategy was at forefront of change, improving opportunities for everyone in the borough. He also noted that the H&F Education Project Team had been highly commended at the LGC Awards for their work on climate education. He thanked Jan Parnell and her team.

8. H&F AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

Keith Tysoe (Principal Adviser SEND and Inclusion) and Satwinder Saraon (Strategic Lead for Early Years and SEND Transformation) gave an update on the resettlement programme and education offer put in place for 126 Afghan evacuees who arrived in Hammersmith and Fulham in August 2021.

9. SUMMER IN THE CITY PROGRAMME - FOOD PROVISION DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Sarah Bright (Assistant Director, Children’s Commissioning) provided an update on the Summer in the City programme and food provision in the school holidays.

The Committee praised the programme and thanked the officers and partners involved.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The committee noted the following dates of future meetings:

- 31 January 2022
- 28 March 2022

Meeting started: 6.30 pm
Meeting ended: 9.06 pm

Chair

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Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting as a correct record of the proceedings and any amendments arising will be recorded in the minutes of that subsequent meeting.

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Report to: Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 31/01/2022

Subject: 2022 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

Report author: Head of Strategic Planning and Monitoring – Andrew Lord
Head of finance, Children’s Service and Education – Tony Burton

Responsible Director: Director of Finance – Emily Hill
Director of Children’s Services – Jacqui McShannon

SUMMARY

Cabinet will present their revenue budget and council tax proposals to Budget Council on 24 February 2022. A balanced budget will be set in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

In recognition of the significant increases in the cost of living of residents due to inflation and Government tax increases, the administration proposes to freeze council tax and not to apply the government modelled 1% adult social care precept increase. Despite this freeze, council savings and other areas of income are used to fund £7.4m in increased investment in services, including over £5m in adult social care and public health.

This report sets out the budget proposals for the services covered by this Policy and Accountability Committee (PAC). An update is also provided on any proposed changes in fees and charges in the budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Policy and Accountability Committee (PAC) considers the budget proposals and makes recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.
 2. That the PAC considers the proposed changes to fees and charges and makes recommendations as appropriate.
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Wards Affected: All

Our values	Summary of how this report aligns to the
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	H&F values
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	We need to always confirm that spend fits our Council's priorities; challenge how much needs to be spent; and achieve results within agreed budgets. Finance is everyone's business and every penny counts.

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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

PROPOSALS AND DETAILED ANALYSIS

The budget requirement and gap

1. The gross General Fund budget¹ rolled forward from 2021/22 to 2022/23 is £533.5m of which a **net budget requirement of £160.4m** is funded from council resources (such as council tax and business rates) and general government grant.

Table 1 – Budget rolled forward from 2021/22

2021/22 budgeted expenditure	£m
Housing benefit payments	98.0
Social care and public health	112.0
Children's services (excludes schools delegated budgets)	113.0
Economy	48.0
Environment (includes parking)	110.0
Corporate (Finance, Resources and Council wide)	52.5
Gross budgeted expenditure	533.5
Less:	
Specific government grants (including housing benefits and dedicated schools grant)	(242.0)
Fees and charges	(67.0)
Contributions (e.g. health, other boroughs)	(47.0)
Other income (e.g. investment interest, rentals and recharges)	(17.1)
Budget requirement rolled forward to 2022/23	160.4

2. The budget proposals for 2022/23, and forecast to 2025/26, are summarised in Table 2. A balanced budget is projected for 2022/23 with a contribution to reserves and balances of £2.1m. A council tax freeze is modelled, and the Council will step in to fund significant social care growth rather than applying the Government's modelled increase in the adult social care precept.

Table 2 – Budget summary

	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Base budget rolled forward	160.4	160.4	160.4	160.4
Provision for inflation	10.0	16.0	22.0	28.0
Investment	4.8	10.8	16.8	22.8
Covid-19 impact	2.7			
Net cost of borrowing	0.4	1.7	2.1	2.1
Savings and additional income	(4.9)	(5.3)	(5.3)	(5.4)
One-off Covid contingency	1.5			

¹ Figures exclude capital charges and internal service level agreements. These have a net nil impact on the budget.

	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Increase in the unallocated contingency	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Covid-19 impact on concessionary fares	(2.3)			
Recognition of current income projection	(3.4)	(3.4)	(3.4)	(3.4)
Contribution to reserves and balances	2.1			
Budgeted expenditure	171.8	180.7	192.9	204.8
Government resources	(44.45)	(40.9)	(40.9)	(40.9)
Business rates (net of tariff)	(57.2)	(59.3)	(60.7)	(61.9)
Council tax	(68.45)	(69.1)	(69.7)	(70.3)
Use of developer contributions for law enforcement team and gangs unit	(1.7)	(1.7)	(1.7)	(1.7)
Budgeted resources	(171.8)	(171.0)	(173.0)	(174.8)
Budget gap	0	9.7	20.1	30.2

Budget assumptions

3. Supply constraints, driven by Covid-19 and Brexit, have led to higher prices and pressure on wages. The Consumer Price Index has reached 5.1% in the 12 months to November 2021 and the government² forecast that it will still be 4.4% in the second quarter of 2022. The pressure on wages is compounded by the Government's introduction of the health and social care levy which will increase employer national insurance costs by 1.25%. This will impact on both Hammersmith & Fulham staff costs and suppliers. The 2022/23 budget includes a **£10m provision for inflation**. This allows for:

- contract inflation of £3.15m.
- catch up inflation of £1.75m regarding 2021/22 pay - a wage freeze was assumed in the 2021/22 budget but the latest national pay offer is for a 1.75% increase.
- £1.25m regarding the 1.25% increase in employer national insurance contributions (the health and social care levy).
- £2.35m provision for a 2022/23 pay award (this equates to a 2.3% pay award).
- A retained contingency of £1.5m as mitigation against additional inflationary risk.

Beyond 2022/23 headroom of £6m per annum is modelled for future inflation.

4. For **fees and charges**, levied by the Council, the inflation assumption is:
- Frozen for Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Housing.

² Autumn 2021 budget statement.

- Commercial services that are charged on a for-profit basis, will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in response to market conditions and varied up and down as appropriate, with proper authorisations according to the Council Constitution.
 - Parking charges and fines are set in line with transport policy objectives and not considered as part of the budget process.
 - A standard uplift of 3.8% to be applied, based on the July 2021 Retail Price Index, for other non-commercial and non-parking fees.
- There are no exceptions to these assumptions for this Committee.

5. Allowance is made within the budget for an increase in the **net cost of borrowing** in line with the 2022/23 capital programme commitments. Whilst the current low interest rate environment enables Hammersmith & Fulham to borrow at low rates it also means that minimal returns are earned on the Council's cash balances.
6. The Council has determined that a key priority area for the investment of available **developer contributions**, with general purposes, is to support the Law Enforcement Team and Gangs Unit. An on-going investment of £1.7m per annum is included within the financial forecast and this can be met from receipts currently in hand.
7. **General government grant funding** of £44.45m is forecast for 2022/23. This is an increase of £6.2m from 2021/22. £1.8m of the grant increase is not new money but compensation for the government decision not to increase business rates in 2022/23. The extra grant is also meant to recompense local authorities for the extra costs that will arise from the Government's 1.25% increase in employer national insurance contributions (estimated at £1.25m for H&F staff costs). Historically, government funding has reduced by £58m from 2010/11 to 2022/23. The 2022/23 grant funding includes an extra £2.7m for social care support. This has part funded the new investment in children's and adult social care of £5.6m and contributed toward inflationary pressures.
8. No grant allocations are confirmed beyond 2022/23 following the government decision to announce a single year local government finance settlement (LGFS). The lack of future certainty continues to undermine effective medium-term financial planning and the risk of future funding reform and levelling up remains with the government making clear that the new 2022/23 'services grant' of £4.234m will be potentially subject to significant redistribution in 2023/24. The government have stressed that authorities should not assume that 2022/23 funding allocations will be fully protected in 2023/24.
9. As part of the LGFS, the government calculated that Hammersmith & Fulham spending power will increase by 6.3% in 2022/23. This is below the London average increase (6.7%) and national average increase (6.9%). The government spending power calculation assumes that authorities will increase council tax (including the adult social care precept) by 3%, which the Council is proposing to freeze, and that business rates collection is not adversely impacted by rating appeals or lower collection rates experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Should Budget Council confirm a council tax freeze the Hammersmith & Fulham calculation is that spending power will increase by 2.1%.

Council Tax and Business Rates

10. A freeze in the Hammersmith & Fulham element of **council tax** is proposed for 2022/23. This is proposed by the administration in recognition of the significant increases in costs faced by residents due to inflation and Government tax increases. This includes not levying a 1% 'adult social care precept' increase or increasing council tax by 2% as assumed by central government in their spending power calculations. A tax freeze will provide a balanced budget whilst not increasing the burden on local taxpayers. The council tax freeze has been delivered despite the upturn in inflation with the November 2021 Consumer Price Index standing at 5.1% causing significant pressure on Council costs.
11. Due to the anticipated impact of Covid-19 the budgeted council tax collection rate reduced from 97.5% in 2020/21 to 97% in 2021/22. A 97% collection rate continues to be modelled for 2022/23. For years beyond 2022/23 a tax freeze is modelled with the tax base increasing in line with trend data for increases in dwelling numbers. As set out below, only 52% of households are liable for 100% council tax, with the remainder receiving discounts or council tax support from the council.

Table 4: Liability for council tax

Total dwellings in the borough	92,148
Reductions:	
Exemptions (mainly students, includes care leavers)	(3,780)
Council tax support claimants (elderly & working age on low income)	(10,819)
Single person discount (25% discount)	(30,060)
Dwellings liable for 100% of council tax	47,489

12. As part of the Autumn 2021 Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that a new temporary 50% **business rates** relief will apply for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure properties for 2022/23. In addition, a new 100% improvement relief will be available where eligible improvements increase rateable value. There will also be a business rates freeze in 2022/23 (no increase in line with the multiplier). Local authorities will be compensated by the government for the resultant loss of income from these measures.
13. The detail of the business rates changes has yet to be confirmed. For financial planning purposes the budget assumes that Hammersmith & Fulham will receive the minimum amount guaranteed, the safety net threshold, by government. This is £57.2m for 2022/23. The safety net threshold is £4.6m less than that assumed by the government in their spending power calculation. For years beyond 2022/23 a 2% inflationary increase to the safety net is modelled.

Investment, savings and risks

- Investment in services (increasing the available budget) and savings proposals (reducing the available budget) for the services covered by this PAC are set out in Appendix 1 with budget risks set out in Appendix 2.

Investment

- Investment is required to fund expenditure on priority areas and/ or to meet the costs associated with demographic or demand led pressures. Growth is also required to fund the new additional costs arising from government reform (such as the impact on suppliers of the increase in employer national insurance contributions). Investment in services is summarised by department in Table 4 and by category in Table 5. Beyond 2022/23 headroom of £6m per annum is modelled to fund new investment.

Table 5: 2022/23 investment proposals

Department	£m
Children's Services	0.534
Social Care and Public Health	5.031
Economy	0.650
Environment	0.878
Corporate (Finance, Resources and Council wide)	0.341
Total	7.434

Table 6: Categorisation of investment proposals

Investment categories	£m
Increase in demand / demographic growth	2.311
Resident priority	0.690
Budget pressure	0.655
New burden / government pressure	1.137
Impact of Covid-19 / economic downturn	2.641
Total	7.434

Savings and Income Generation

- After ten years of austerity it is increasingly difficult to identify and deliver substantive savings. However, further savings are necessary if the financial challenge of real terms government funding cuts, unfunded burdens, inflation, and demand and growth pressures is to be met and the Council has to consider all available options to operate within the funding available to it.
- The proposed savings (including additional income) for 2022/23 are set out in Table 7. London Councils have also indicated that a further short-term saving of £2.3m for 2022/23 will arise from the reduced cost of the concessionary fares

scheme (freedom pass). This is due to lower usage of the pass during lockdown and more broadly in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a short-term saving the majority of this sum will be added to reserves and general balances in line with the Council's reserves strategy.

Table 7: 2022/23 firm savings and additional income

Department	£m
Children's Services	(0.533)
Social Care and reinvestment in Public Health	(1.670)
Economy	(0.235)
Environment	(1.184)
Corporate (Finance, Resources and Council wide)	(1.229)
Total savings	(4.851)

18. The saving proposals are categorised by type in Table 8.

Table 8: Categorisation of 2022/23 savings

Savings categories	£m
Commercialisation / income	(0.650)
Outside investment	(0.035)
Procurement / commissioning	(1.828)
Service reconfiguration	(0.892)
Staffing / productivity	(1.446)
Total savings	(4.851)

Risk and financial resilience

19. An updated reserves strategy and action plan will be included within the suite of finance reports presented to Budget Council.
20. The current reserves forecast is set out in Table 9 and models a fall in overall general fund reserves and balances to £97.0m by 2025/26. This assumes a balanced budget is set each year with no further call on reserves. Allowance is made for the forecast (month 6) 2021/22 underspend of £4.7m and a budgeted 2022/23 contribution of £2.1m.

Table 9 – Reserves and general balances - cash flow forecast to 2025/26

	2021 £m	2022 £m	2023 £m	2024 £m	2025 £m
Opening balance					
General balances	19.3				
Earmarked reserves – unrestricted	63.7				
Covid-19 related	51.4				
Earmarked reserves – restricted	10.4				
Subtotal	144.8	93.1	85.0	84.4	97.0

Forecast movement	(56.4)	(10.2)	(0.6)	12.6	
Forecast 2021/22 underspend	4.7	0	0	0	
2022/23 new contribution	0	2.1	0	0	
Closing balance	93.1	85.0	84.4	97.0	
Revenue developer contributions	46.0	Subject to separate monitoring and approval			

21. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised that councils need an adequate safety net to manage increased levels of financial risk. The experience of several councils, including Croydon and Bexley in London, has shown the difficulties that can arise when reserves are not maintained at a sufficient level. The Council's reserve forecast includes a general balance of £20.4m which represents 3.8% (equivalent to 14 days spend) of the Council's gross spend of £533.5m. As part of the 2022/23 budget, consideration will be given to increasing the general balance by £0.6m to £21m. The Director of Finance has recommended that the optimal range for the general balance is between £19m and £25m.
22. The key financial risks that face the Council have been identified and quantified and total £14.1m. Other substantive risks include:
- The Covid-19 recovery and addressing pent-up demand
 - An upturn in inflation post Brexit and Covid-19
 - The future impact on London of the government's 'levelling-up' agenda and wider local government finance reform (such as business rates)
 - The impact of the wider economy on major Council development projects and future contributions from developers
 - The impact of, and costs of tackling, climate change
 - The challenge of identifying further significant future savings that balance the budget over the longer-term.

Departmental risks for the services covered by this PAC are set out in Appendix 2.

23. Reserves are also a key enabler for future service transformation. The financial challenge facing the Council will require investment to deliver future efficiencies to enable the Council to balance the budget in future years.

Comments of the Director for Children's Services on the 2022/23 Budget Proposals

24. It has been another challenging year in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Children's Services responded rapidly to the pandemic; services have continuously adapted and mobilised effectively to continue to deliver services safely. We are proud of the way in which our staff, partners and community have demonstrated resilience, resolve and heart to keep priority services going and

have come together to help those children and young people most in need; going over and beyond standard expectations to ensure that all children are able to reach their full potential.

25. Through the pandemic, Children's Services have been able to accelerate the pace of change, including working more creatively to engage and support schools, families and young people in continuing to strengthen and improve services. The learning curve was steep, but it has given us renewed confidence in our ambition to go above and beyond to deliver outstanding services and give our children and young people the best possible start in life. As the pandemic situation evolves, we continue to evolve and respond dynamically; blending our learning from the pandemic with our existing plans for improvement and transformation to develop a positively renewed position that almost integrates the Covid-19 response into our business as usual. Strong departmental and corporate leadership and support is providing pace, focus and capacity.
26. We are strongly focused on a number of priorities, including improving early support and family intervention work, improving educational attainment and avoiding exclusions, tackling gangs, diverting young offenders and co-producing an improved local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) offer and wider Youth Ambition agenda. This work is being undertaken on a corporate basis and within the context of good overall performance, a strong set of inspections across our key services and good support from housing, supported employment, local NHS and voluntary sector services. As we are now returned to something approaching business as usual, albeit susceptible to unexpected spikes such as Omicron, our learning from the pandemic has brought a level of significant change to how we are working and what we are committed to deliver. A key aspect of our recovery has been about picking up the pace to make up for some lost time and carefully revising our plans with the learning and insights that we have.
27. Overall, our performance is strong and, where required, well developed improvement plans are in place. There are substantial risks around increasing needs and demands, financial constraints, market management and assuring quality and safety. However, we have well developed systems to monitor and manage them with the Children's Leadership supported by its own Performance and Improvement service.
28. Over the last year, Children's Services have continued to strengthen practice and services to improve outcomes for all children and young people including returning the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP), the Placements Team to a sovereign service and returning the Local Authority Traded Company (LATC) Family Support team to Hammersmith & Fulham.
29. We are continuing to develop our performance data and ensure this is robust and embedded as an effective management tool across the department. Our most recent inspections include; Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in 2018 and the 2019 Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS), in which we were judged good in both.

30. We have subsequently had our annual education and children social care conversations with Ofsted; discussions were positive and highlighted our continued strengths and our ability to identify and respond to challenges quickly. We additionally participated in Ofsted's review in response to the Everyone's Invited website, receiving positive feedback for our partnership response to the issues raised. An assurance visit from Skills for Care confirmed the strength of our Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme for newly qualified social workers, and the performance in all phases of education continues to be excellent with a strong collegiate approach which is evidenced in school inspection outcomes.
31. Over recent years the Children's Services department has experienced increasing demand for its services which has put significant strain on the limited resources available. Despite this we have managed to continue to balance our budget and strengthen our financial standing through the extremely challenging economic impact of the pandemic, including:
- Continued investment in services to ensure we are able to identify and meet need earlier within the local area.
 - Proactive engagement and management of pressures throughout the pandemic – embedded throughout our structure and Managers Forum resulting in a forecast of an almost balanced budget for 2021/22.
 - We fully utilised grants and made additional provisions where required.
 - Negotiated a £20m Department for Education (DfE) Safety Valve Agreement against the High Needs Block deficit and a further £1.2m DfE Capital grant to support the High Needs Block strategy.
 - We have continued to maximise income generation (CCG contributions, traded income) and Section 106 developer contributions.
 - We have continued to work in consultation with schools with regards to central Education functions via top slices of school budgets as opposed to central services Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
 - Throughout the pandemic we have continued to reduce our numbers of agency staff. Agency as a % of total spend was 16.6% in 2019/20, down to 14.1% in 2020/21 and 11% year to date in 2021/22.
 - The staffing establishment is now aligned to the new structures and fully funded with vacancy factors removed. Establishment pressures have been removed through restructures and post efficiencies.
 - Successful growth bids, effective budget management and strong financial planning have enabled children's services to balance the budget from 2020/21.
32. As we look forward to 2022/23, reflection and learning around our biggest achievements, challenges and opportunities through the pandemic has shaped our road map into recovery and renewal.
33. The department's approach to identifying potential savings is consistent with the vision for Children's Services which is:

We are committed to making Hammersmith and Fulham a place where every child has the best possible start in life, grows up feeling cherished, loved and realises their full potential as young citizens. We will provide the right support at

the right time to enable our families and communities to ensure all children are safe, healthy and thrive. We will nurture relationships that are respectful, collaborative and empowering. Our highly skilled teams will work in partnership to ensure services remain efficient, responsive and support the building of resilience and prosperity for all children and young people.

34. The aspiration and ambition to ensure consistent and compassionate care and improved outcomes is underpinned by a continuing commitment to protect the quality of services to the most vulnerable members of the community within the statutory framework required of the department. Equally strong is the central commitment to work with children, young people and their families in the design and development of services that affect them. This was evident throughout our response to Covid-19 and in our overarching commitment to active engagement and inclusion of all children and young people and their parents and carers.
35. A key priority remains to review services against the need to ensure that they are as responsive and efficient as they can be and offer the right outcomes for children and young people. There will be a focus on review and enhancement of the early help offer to ensure families receive the right service at the right time; to intervene early and prevent escalation.
36. Improved performance information and business intelligence underpin this priority. It is noted however, that the ongoing pandemic is likely to have a further impact on demand over the longer term as more families experience prolonged duress and the impact of possible further economic downturns.

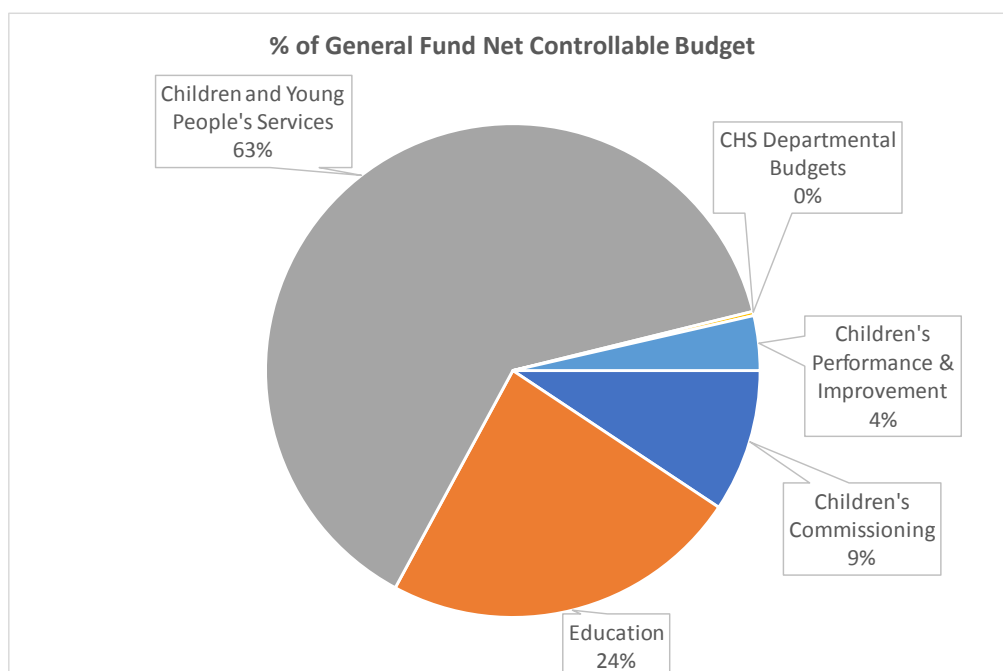
Table 10 – Children’s Services key budget changes

Directorate	2022-23 Savings £'s	2022-23 Contract Inflation £'s	2022-23 Growth £'s
Children's Commissioning	-92,000	41,700	0
Education	0	177,100	189,000
Children and Young People's Services	-441,000	403,300	345,000
CHS Departmental Budgets	0	2,800	0
Children's Performance & Improvement	0	18,400	0
Total	-533,000	643,300	534,000

37. The department’s proposed net budget for 2022/23 is £51,788,100. Within this sum are areas over which the department has little direct control, these are defined as non-controllable and include contributions to Corporate Services and capital charges. In total these add up to £7,788,500. This means that the net direct expenditure that the department is in control of is £43,999,600. Table 11 below sets out how controllable expenditure is budgeted across the various directorates within the department showing that the greatest share of net general fund expenditure is on Children and Young People’s Services, £27.988,000 (64%) of net controllable expenditure.

Table 11 – Children’s Services 2022-23 controllable budget

Directorate	2022-23 Expenditure £'s	2022-23 Income £'s	Total Net £'s	% share
Children's Commissioning	5,619,500	-1,478,500	4,141,000	9%
Education	109,472,000	-99,063,400	10,408,600	24%
Children and Young People's Services	37,954,000	-9,966,000	27,988,000	64%
CHS Departmental Budgets	640,000	-761,400	-121,400	0%
Children's Performance & Improvement	2,099,600	-516,200	1,583,400	4%
Total	155,785,100	-111,785,500	43,999,600	100%

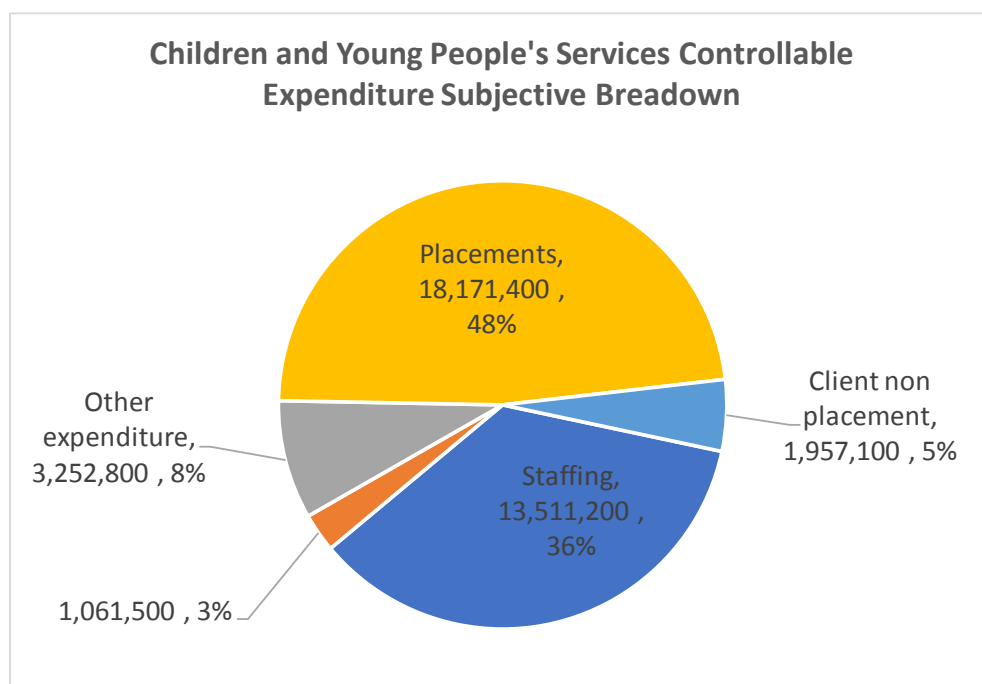


38. Savings totalling £533,000 have been identified for 2022/23 and are set out in Appendix 1.
39. The savings proposals for Children’s Services will seek not only to protect frontline services and to continue to offer a service appropriate to local need, but to improve our offer to residents facing difficult circumstances such as poverty and higher levels of need. The proposals will seek cost reductions through reduced spending on costly external placements by enhancing or expanding inhouse and local provision.
40. At the core of all savings proposals will be services that strengthen families and support parents to care for their children whilst steadfastly remaining vigilant with regards to our duty to safeguard vulnerable children and young people taking decisive action to protect those that need it.
41. Appendix 1 also details £534,000 growth in 2022/23 for Children’s Services. Growth is targeted at activity driven budget pressures and rising demand experienced in 2021/22 for Travel Care and Support services.

Children and Young People's Services

42. Children and Young People's Services spend is primarily made up of staffing and placement costs. The service has put in effective mitigation to reduce costs through effective move on arrangements and better value provision such as semi-independent block contract arrangements. In addition, the service has focused on supporting more young people to remain safely at home where possible and in stable and secure caring placements where this is not possible; reducing reliance on expensive placements and sourcing high quality local placements; reviewing the effectiveness and outcomes of interventions and improving support through Family Assist and the clinical team to enable children and young people to remain in their family.
43. The Resource Panel was reviewed with new terms of reference and renewed membership to ensure representation from the range of services and skills within the service. This has enabled creative and effective care planning to support children to remain at home safely and avoid family breakdown. When children do need to be protected by living in an alternative home outside of their family, we are able to ensure that we develop effective needs led plans to match them with the right care and support to ensure their safety and wellbeing. By focusing on the needs of the child and the quality of the services they need to meet those needs, we have also been able to ensure payments to providers are regularised and that the cost matches the level of support they are providing with clear plans to step down support when appropriate.
44. This has reduced the anticipated upward trajectory reported in 2019/20 and 2020/21. The 2022/23 budget setting process has targeted £341,000 of savings against the placements budget and will attempt to reduce cost and at the same time have a positive impact on service users. Recent additional caseload around newly looked after Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) with significant age assessment challenge which has impacted on service capacity.
45. In 2022/23, growth has been requested to manage activity and demand led pressures in frontline service provision within the shared fostering and regional adoption services. Increased local provision will benefit young people in Hammersmith & Fulham to be placed in quality foster carers and more locally. With respect to adoption, this will enable us to recruit an increased and diverse pool of skilled adopters to meet the varied needs of children. This will enable us to improve the quality and timeliness of permanence arrangements for young people.

Table 12 – Children and Young People's Services controllable budget expenditure types



Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Performance & Improvement

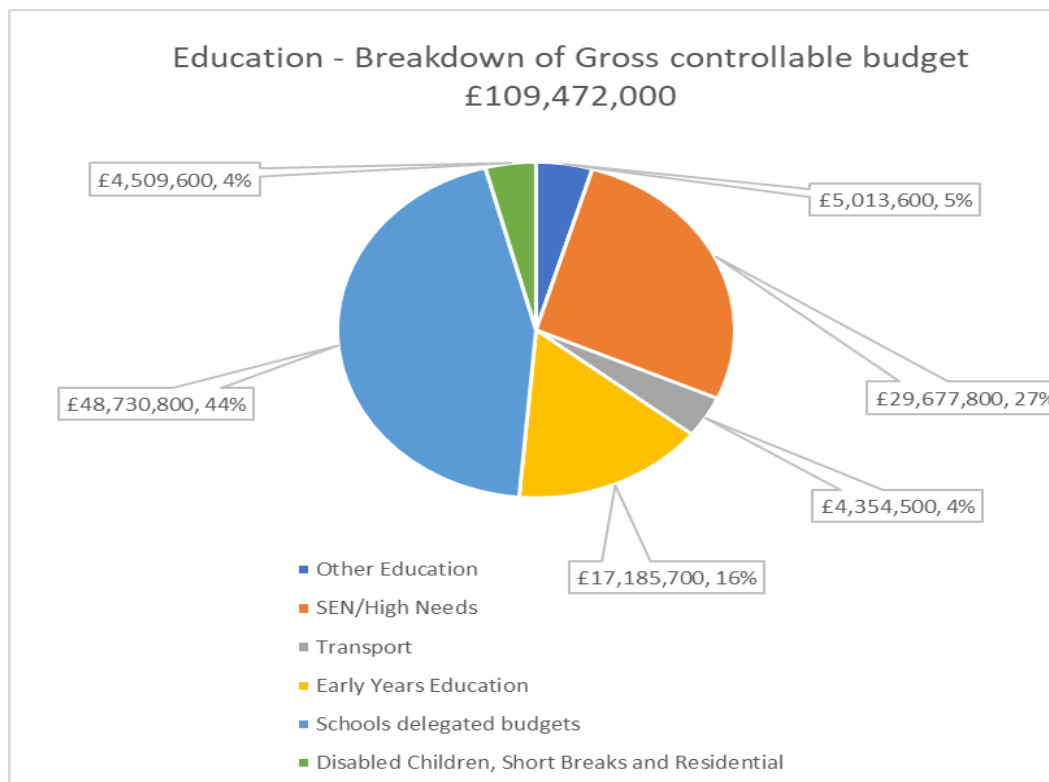
46. The Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Performance & Improvement budget totals £1,583,400 with £1,266,600 of this for Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance.
47. The Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Performance and Improvement budget is primarily made up of staffing the statutory requirements of the child protection and children looked after systems and a small proportion funding independent quality assurance activity.

Education

48. The Education and SEND Service is now fully integrated and delivering better outcomes for children and young people. Throughout the ongoing pandemic we have continued to foster good relationships with our wider schools' community and developed a number of key workstreams to coproduce better services in light of common issues.
49. The Education and Schools services have delivered targeted support to our most vulnerable children and families, including bridging the digital divide and access to enrichment through the holiday's activity programme. Schools have continued to develop their flexibility in delivering online learning and face to face teaching. Schools have robust plans in place to enable children to catch up on any lost learning and this will continue to be a priority for the remainder of the academic year. Ofsted have restarted their inspections from September 2021.

50. The SEND directorate provides services for 0-25-year olds with special educational needs or disabilities. A number of its services are fully, or part funded by the DSG. There are a number of SEND reform workstreams across all phases of education that are delivering better outcomes for young people. This includes the implementation of the Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund and a significant investment in early intervention services. The team are working in partnership with schools around the delivering the programme outlined in the Safety Valve Agreement with the DfE and an in-principle agreement to £20m of funding to address historic High Needs Block funding deficit.
51. The net general fund budget of £10,408,600 in the Education service includes £4,249,500 on SEN travel care and support. Short breaks and resources including care packages for disabled children, the Stephen Wiltshire Centre and the Haven account for £3,732,100 of the budget.
52. Education Assets, Operations and Planning is responsible for ensuring we have a sufficient number of school places across the borough, tackling the challenge of modernising and improving the school estate through major regeneration programmes as well as coordinating projects across the department. A significant programme of capital investment in the school's estate and education provision has started with further planned expenditure of £7.2m in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Table 13 – Education Service budget



Children's Commissioning

53. The team is responsible for a range of commissioning, transformation and service improvement activity supporting the department to shape provision using innovative approaches to ensure quality and cost effectiveness.
54. The net controllable budget for the directorate's Commissioning function totals £4,161,000. Within this total £1,270,700 is allocated to contract costs including early help, children's centres and youth services and £294,300 is for four Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services contracts. The Commissioning team is responsible for around 70 contracts totalling circa £60m with budgets for these contracts sitting within the respective operational areas. Contracts are split into four key areas – Education and SEND, Children's Social Care, Travel/Food and Health/Joint Commissioning.
55. Commissioning is an enabler to managing cost pressures more broadly across Children's Services with direct contribution to savings through recommissioning and supporting practice changes through transformation activity.
56. The team has been working across Children's Services to develop and deliver transformation programmes to meet budget challenge objectives to reduce pressures across the department, notably the High Needs Block programme in the redesign of early intervention pathways, Early Help contract savings, Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs pathways and accountability review, and the establishment of a sovereign Placements Team.
57. Over the last year the team have also actively driven programmes of work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic whilst maintaining business as usual activities. During the pandemic the team mobilised provision of food to residents, led resilience and business continuity planning for Children's Services, PPE distribution and mobilisation of school holiday programmes.
58. During 2021/22 the team have also onboarded the Business Support function into the Commissioning structure as part of a reorganisation that seeks to centralise business support activity across the department to support driving process efficiencies.
59. Staffing costs account for £2,862,300. Of this, £1,333,000 relates to the Business Support structure and nearly all of the change since last year's commissioning staffing budget. This year the core Commissioning team was restructured to bring staffing costs within budget and to align the structure to the wider Children's Services priorities. In doing so we have been able to fully recruit, enabling us to move away from agency staffing.
60. Over the 2022/23 financial year, Commissioning will continue to support and drive forward the key transformation programmes including Early Help, SEND Transformation, Health partnerships and placement sufficiency.

Equality Implications

61. A draft Equality Impact Analysis (EIA), which assesses the impacts on equality of the main items in the budget proposals relevant to this PAC, is attached as Appendix 3. A final EIA will be reported to Budget Council.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Savings and investment proposals

Appendix 2 – Risks

Appendix 3 – Draft Equality Impact Assessment

Children's Services and Education

Change and Savings Proposals				Budget Change			
Ref Nos	Service	Title & Theme	Summary	2022-23 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2023-24 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2024-25 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2025-26 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)
1	Children's & Young People	Placement Sufficiency	Continuation of improved processes for Semi Independent Living through clear pathways and improved use of in borough provision	(341)	(341)	(341)	(341)
2	Children's Services All	Social, Emotional and Mental Health Review	Reviewed joint funding arrangements with Health partners for Looked After Children CAMHS - without any reduction in the service	(92)	(92)	(92)	(92)
3	Children's & Young People	Client and placement related expenditure review	Improvement of processes to enable more effective and targeted interventions to support young people	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Total Change and Savings Proposals				(533)	(533)	(533)	(533)

Investment and Covid Recovery				Budget Change			
Ref Nos	Service	Title & Theme	Summary	2022-23 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2023-24 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2024-25 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2025-26 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)
1	Children's & Young People	Shared Adoption Service	West London Regional Adoption demand led pressure	110	110	110	110
2	Children's & Young People	Shared Fostering Service	Fostering activity based pressure	235	235	235	235
3	Education	Travel care demand	Travel Care demand growth in education and health care plans	169	169	169	169
4	Education	Impact of academisation	Impact of School academisation on income	20	20	20	20
Total Investment and Covid Recovery				534	534	534	534

Children's Services Department Risks

Department & Division	Short Description of Risk	Risk				Mitigation
		2022/23 Value (£000s)	2023/24 Value (£000s)	2024/25 Value (£000s)	2025/26 Value (£000s)	
Children and Young Peoples Services	Increased demand as a result of the service being needs led	To be kept under review and closely monitored.				Targeting of earlier intervention through use of family group conferences, involvement of Family Assist services and monitoring of trends
Children and Young Peoples Services	Greater demand on services as more families experience prolonged duress and the impact of economic downturn due to the pandemic	To be kept under review and closely monitored				Undertaking risk assessments and monitoring.
Education	Travel Care is determined by the needs of children with SEND and the extent to school placements are made out of borough and at a considerable distance from the child's home. Demand for Travel Care continues to rise.	To be kept under review and closely monitored				The SEN Sufficiency Review commissioned for early 2022/23 will identify further opportunities for local SEN educational provision and inform how local provision can be developed in order to increase the number of children with SEN being able to access both local mainstream and special school places, thus reducing the both the demand for travel care, and the length of journeys to reduce costs.
All Children's and Education Services	Contractual and Statutory inflation more than budgeted	To be kept under review and closely monitored				Seek to minimise inflationary uplifts as far as possible, noting these are often legally enforceable contract clauses. Set aside corporate inflationary contingency
Total						

Draft Equalities Impact Assessment 2022/2023

Children's Services Savings Proposals

1. Placement sufficiency, continuation of improved processes for Semi-Independent Living through clear pathways and improved use of in borough provision - £0.341m

A. Care Leavers' Accommodation – Semi-independent Living procurement

The Care Leaver Accommodation project aim is to increase the supply of local semi-independent living accommodation for young people leaving care. The key objectives of the project are to reduce expenditure pressures within Children's Services, where placements for young people through framework or spot purchasing are significantly higher than locally commissioned provision, whilst simultaneously improving outcomes for young people through quality semi-independent living provision and closer links to family and community support networks.

It is believed that this proposal has a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- The strategy is to recommission, by way of a competitive procurement exercise, all semi-independent living (SIL) services for young people at risk of becoming homeless, at risk of entering the care system and care leavers across Hammersmith & Fulham. A tendering process will commence which will enable the Council to ensure it is receiving best value and competitive rates for this provision.
- This decision significantly contributes towards the Council's placement sufficiency program which will enable more of our vulnerable young people to be placed locally with greater access to family and local support networks including health and education services.
- The procurement will deliver efficiencies through increasing capacity of in borough placements and therefore reduce the need to place in higher cost out of borough spot purchase placements.
- The newly commissioned services will both improve the quality of services and offer a person-centered approach leading to positive outcomes for our children and young people.

B. Careplace maximisation

This proposal relates to improved use of the Commissioning Alliance dynamic purchasing procurement systems for residential, independent fostering agency and semi-independent living placements by searching and placing through the online Careplace system where greater competition and more competitive placement rates are offered.

It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- The proposals relate to improved use of the Careplace Placement system which is hosted by Ealing Council on behalf of the Commissioning Alliance and its membership boroughs. The system offers a range of benefits over spot purchasing or framework placements. Each placement category listed on the Careplace system are part of a dynamic purchasing procurement system which allows providers to leave or join at any point throughout the system's lifetime. The placement categories are: independent fostering agencies, residential children's homes, special education needs and residential school placements.
- There is a wider selection of providers on these systems and more competitive rates. Improved use of this system will provide reassurance to wider department that providers being commissioned to look after our children have undergone a series of safeguarding and compliance checks. This will reduce the need to place with spot purchase and sometime unknown organisations.

2. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Review - joint funding arrangements with Health partners for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for Looked After Children (LAC) - £0.092m

This relates to a proposed contribution from the Health Service with respect to the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for Looked After Children.

It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- There is no proposal to change the overall funding envelope for the service. The saving will be achieved by increasing the contribution paid by NHS organisations, while decreasing the relative portion paid for by the Local Authority.
- Overall, the service will not be negatively financially impacted, and there will not be any loss of delivery.

The service continues to have a positive impact on looked after children, and in particular those with mental health conditions.

3. Client and Placement Related Support - Improvement of processes to enable more effective and targeted interventions to support young people - £0.1m

Cost related to sections 17 and 23 support for children and families:

- Section 17 expenditure relates to supporting children and families to remain safely living together in the community. It includes support for subsistence, essential items, living costs, family support workers etc. to support children's

wellbeing, keep them safe and reduce escalation of need and likely entry into care.

- Section 23 expenditure relates to supporting children looked after. This includes transport to school and appointments, contact escorts, setting up home allowances, subsistence payments etc. Transport related cost constitute the biggest spend.

It is believed that this proposal has a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following outlined above and below:

- The proposals are in line with the business-as-usual functions of the department to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the area who are in need; and to promote their upbringing by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.
- The proposals will ensure that the financial or cost related support given to children and families are purposeful and meet an identified need.

An assessment will determine the need for the support identified as essential to meet the needs of the child and/or prevent the child from suffering significant harm. The assessment will consider any protected characteristics of a child and/or family to ensure that they are not negatively affected, and an allocated worker will usually be involved with the family to ensure that the support is based on assessed need and its effectiveness is reviewed. It will also ensure that families make use of community provision e.g. food banks, free nursery places to meet that need where appropriate and will ensure support and guidance regarding benefits support and accessing work.

Children's Services Investment Proposals

4. Investment in Fostering and Adoption Services - £0.345m

- Shared Services Fostering Recharge – Investment following activity-based review within the Shared Service
- West London Regional Adoption – Investment following activity-based review within the agreement

It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- In 2022/23 growth has been requested to manage activity and demand led pressures in front line service provision within the shared fostering and regional adoption services. This budget growth is to manage activity led workloads and not as a result of any proposed service change.
- Increased local provision will benefit young people in Hammersmith & Fulham to be placed in quality foster carers and more locally.

- With respect to adoption, this will enable us to recruit an increased and diverse pool of skilled adopters to meet the varied needs of children. This will also enable us to improve the quality and timeliness of permanence arrangements for young people.

5. Investment in Travel Care & Support - £0.169m

Budget growth is requested to reflect the increased demand of children and young people accessing travel assistance services.

Officers have assessed that the proposed budget growth will have a positive impact on protected groups, allowing the Council to respond to growing demands and meet its obligations under published travel care policies.

Report to: Children & Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 31/01/2022

Subject: Adopt London West – Assurance Report

Report author: Debbie Gabriel, Head of Service, Adopt London West

Responsible Director: Jacqui McShannon, Director of Children’s Service

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide a briefing to the Council’s Policy and Accountability Committee in relation to:

- The progress and activity of Adopt London West.
- Adoption performance data for 2020/21, including Q3 data for 2021/22
- How good outcomes are being achieved for children.

Cabinet previously gave approval for Hammersmith & Fulham Council to:

- a) join the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) *Adopt London West* consisting of the London boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith and Fulham, hosted by Ealing for the provision of Adoption services and Special Guardianship Support; and
- b) delegate authority to the Director of Children’s Service in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Education to agree and enter into a Partnership Agreement with participating boroughs.

Adopt London West has been a “live” Regional Adoption Agency since October 2019, all Local Authority Adoption Agencies were required by Government to become part of a regional arrangement by April 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is requested to review, comment on, and question the contents of this report. This is to provide evidence that the management of the adoption service is being monitored and challenged to promote good outcomes for children. This is in line with standard 25.6 of the Adoption National Minimum Standards (2014).

Background – Adopt London West

Adopt London West (ALW) Regional Adoption Agency became operational on 1st September 2019 with a formal launch in October 2019.

A comprehensive partnership agreement forms the basis of the ongoing partnership arrangements. The partnership board on which the Director of Children’s Service, Hammersmith and Fulham sits will continue to provide the necessary oversight to ensure that the shared service is appropriately scrutinised and supported to deliver improved outcomes for children and adopters.

As part of the national Regional Adoption Agency (hereafter referred to as RAA) implementation and development programme a network of RAA leaders has been established and Strategic Lead appointed to oversee the implementation of the National Adoption Strategy, published in July 2021. There are currently 31 operational RAA’s across the country. Monthly meetings are facilitated by the Department for Education (DfE) delivery partner Deloitte. Meetings are attended by senior DfE officials and provide an opportunity to agree shared priorities and progress wider sector collaboration and influence practice improvement.

Responsibilities

1. As delegated in the partnership agreement between Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham and Hounslow, Ealing (as the host Local Authority for ALW) is responsible for ensuring that children whose permanence plan is adoption in all four partner Local Authorities are matched in a timely way with adopters who best meet the needs of those children. This involves featuring children in various profiling events, via national linking websites, supporting them in adoption activity days and networking events with other Regional Adoption Agencies in London and nationally.
2. ALW is also responsible for the preparation and assessment of prospective adopters, supporting adopters with family finding following approval and the on-going post placement support to adopters and special guardians. Further, ALW is responsible for the provision of services to special guardians, adopted adults and all those affected by adoption and special guardianship arrangements who request a specific service or an assessment of need.
3. ALW also provides a service to Hammersmith & Fulham residents who wish to make a private application to adopt their partner’s child, often referred to as “step-parent” adoption, or special guardians who may wish to adopt the child in their care. The team is involved in completing adoption reports for children who may have travelled from and been adopted abroad; there is a legal requirement for these adoptions to be made lawful in the UK

Adopter Recruitment

4. The recruitment of adopters is now shared activity across the Adopt London partnership of the 4 RAA's, a marketing and communications strategy provides the framework for all public facing recruitment efforts. A strapline "the heart of adoption in London" encapsulates the partnership and communicates our vision of being the regional adoption agencies of choice for London residents, putting London children at the heart of everything we do.
5. We are committed to recruiting adopters who understand the needs of our children, our preparation and training of adopters encourages them to parent therapeutically. There is a particular focus on targeting prospective adopters who can meet the racial, religious, and cultural needs of our black children.



Targeted work

- Black History Month – link to Black Adoption Project
- Downing street visit round table discussion with Adopt London Adopters
- Readiness tool launch & Our Children film
- Social media forward plan
- Adopt London Choir

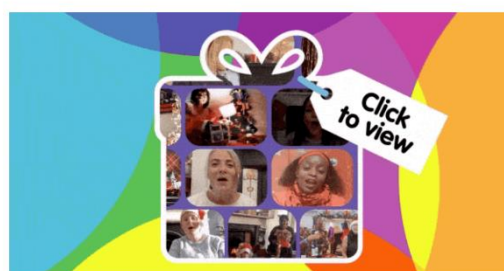


6. Our key messages represent our focus on children, the strength of the Adopt London partnership, the scope of our service provision and the inclusivity of our brand. These are incorporated in all our marketing activity, on our website, and printed materials, a comprehensive social media strategy ensures that content is posted each week that reflects the messages below.
 - Children are at the heart of what we do
 - Experts in adoption
 - Supporting you throughout your adoption journey
 - Everybody is welcome
 - Celebrating London's diverse adoption community.
7. The COVID pandemic has changed the way we recruit new adopters and support our approved adopters. The pandemic meant fewer opportunities for us to meet adopters in person, so we had to focus on how we could consistently reach adopters in new and innovative ways by pivoting to a digital approach.

8. Additional Adoption Support Fund (ASF) funding was made available to each RAA through the Covid Emergency ASF funds. Most of this funding for London was pooled and a range of additional support services were commissioned quickly and successfully, including an animated film “Closer and Stronger” highlighting the support available to adopters and special guardians.
9. We also started an [Adopt London virtual Choir](#) as a means of families keeping in touch and having some fun, this was initially a Covid response initiative but has been so successful in becoming a peer support community and we continue to fund the project.
10. Our understanding of using a digital approach and the “soft advertising” potential of promoting the Adopt London brand has been considerable, increasing traffic to the website, a growth in social media followers, and extending the content reach to our target audience enables us to reach more prospective adopters.
11. Using appropriate hashtags that target specific groups and using diverse images in content we post and publish, reflecting key adoption dates, national holidays and religious and cultural festivals ensures that our content is relevant, varied, and interesting.
12. We will continue to build on experience to deliver a marketing and communications approach that supports London’s diverse communities accessing the publicity and advertising via different marketing channels and to establish a strong reputation as a leading provider within the adoption services marketplace.

Season's Greetings

from everyone at Adopt London



Follow us

On [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)
 @adoptlondonuk for the latest news and updates

www.adoptlondon.org.uk

“We chose ALW as we attended a range of Information Sessions earlier this year and felt most comfortable with ALW, who were, friendly, knowledgeable, and approachable.

The social workers were enthusiastic and knowledgeable. ALW’s was a great session – it was well organised, the presenters came across well, and they even went to the effort of having a previous adopter join the call.” Feedback received following the information session.

13. ALW approved 13 Adopter households in the period 1st April 2021 – 31st December 2021, a total of 20 households were approved in the full reporting year 2020/21. This year's performance will see an increase in approval numbers. Whilst this is positive, we are ambitious and this is not yet to the target level of 30 approvals, as a result of assessment capacity pressures. Therefore, the Partnership Board has agreed some additional temporary posts including a Practice Manager to provide additional oversight to recruitment activity, performance is expected to improve as a result.
14. 40% of families approved in 2020/21 were from Black or mixed ethnicity households and 25% identify as LGBTQ. Of the families recruited this year, the figures are 23% and 31% respectively.
15. There are currently 38 ALW approved adopters, 16 of whom already have a child placed with them, 10 are still in the active family finding stage, and five families are linked or matched to children. Seven families are on hold due to their personal circumstances, three of which are likely to resign as Adopters and withdraw from the process.

The adoption assessment process comprises 2 stages.

16. **Stage 1** assessments should take place within 2 months - this stage is described as "adopter led", where adopters work through exercises and complete various tasks that contribute to a full and thorough assessment of their suitability.
17. The National Adoption & Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) publishes national data on Adoption performance, data below provides comparative data with Adopt London partners, assessment timescales are outside of the expected timeframes but reflect national delays and are favourable compared to our Adopt London partners.

2020/21 – Stage 1 Assessment	Target – 60 days
England	112
Adopt London North (ALN)	153
Adopt London South (ALS)	53
Adopt London East (ALE)	194
Adopt London West (ALW)	134

18. Stage 1 performance for the families approved so far in 2021/22 has improved to an average of 99.7 days although no comparative data is yet available.
19. **Stage 2** should take a maximum of 4 months and is a detailed assessment that is both reflective and analytical. In total, the comprehensive assessment process should be completed within 6 months.

2020/21 Stage 2 Assessment	Target – 121 days
England	141
ALN	220
ALS	141
ALE	221
ALW	134

20. Stage 2 performance for the families approved so far this year has fallen to an average of 149 days. This is due to a combination of factors including the personal circumstances of applicants, needing to travel abroad to visit relatives and delays in medicals, both factors are pandemic related and to another family needing urgent and extensive building works.
21. There are currently 21 families in the formal stages of assessment, 9 in Stage 1 and 12 in Stage 2. It is expected that a total of 22 families will be approved by the end of March 2022.

Children

22. Nationally the number of children adopted continues to fall, there has been an 18% decrease in Adoption Orders granted between March 2019 – March 2021, the percentage difference in London is higher with a decrease of 31% in the same period.

		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	%
Adoption Orders	London	276	243	190	-31%
Placement Orders	London	264	242	195	-26%
Placements	London	266	198	207	-22%

Hammersmith and Fulham Adoption Performance

23. Achieving early permanence through Adoption is extremely important for the small number of children who cannot safely live with their birth parents or connected people.
24. National Adoption Scorecard Indicators are a reference point when reviewing timeliness to permanence for these children. However, we need to be mindful to look beyond timescale indicators and consider the following factors as well; that Adoption is the right care plan for the child and that the adoptive match made is strong. The Adoption Scorecard is data published by the government which shows the length of time taken to place children in need of adoption. The two indicators referred to specifically are:

- **A1 Indicator** – date entered care to moving in with Adoptive family¹ = 426 days
- **A2 Indicator** – Placement order to match² = 121 days

Adoption Scorecard Performance 2020/21

25. During the year 2020/21 less than five children were placed for Adoption, and at the end of April 2021 less than five per cent of Hammersmith and Fulham Children Looked After were subject to Placement Orders (where the Court had granted permission to place these children with adopters).
26. Given this reflects a very small group of children, further detail about the circumstances of these children is not provided in this report in order to protect confidentiality. However, progress against their individual care plans is very carefully monitored and this includes thorough case work supervision, independent scrutiny from their Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), as well as Senior Leadership oversight through our internal tracking and escalation processes and forums. The relevant Senior Managers from ALW and the Local Authority social work teams meet monthly and review performance at an operational level and consider any strategic learning.
27. In 2020/21 the A1 indicator (as described in paragraph 24) was met for over half of the children placed and the A2 indicator (also described in paragraph 24) was exceeded for over half. The very small numbers in this cohort affect the statistical significance and therefore, the conclusions that can be drawn about practice. However, individual case reviews have been undertaken for each of these children and we have a good understanding about the factors impacting upon progress against their care plans.
28. We are reassured that there have been positive outcomes for all these children; strong matches and been made and they are all thriving in the care of their adopters. Any thematic learning arising from our tracking, monitoring and case reviews is shared across ALW, social work teams, Senior Leadership and relevant Local Authority partners including Health and the Family Courts.
29. Adoption will have a life changing impact for a child and so it is important that care planning is thoughtful and well informed. Regular reviews are undertaken of all the children currently subject to Placement Orders to look at timeliness of planning and decision making including whether any delay has purposeful in order to properly pursue opportunity for the children concerns to remain living in their own family. Recent reviews have reassured us that for the majority of children there has been timely decision making that Adoption is the right plan for those children. However, we have also seen the impact of Covid-19 on the duration of Care Proceedings in the Court arena and the Local

¹ Measuring the entire process

² A Placement Order is a specific order the Court can grant at the end of care proceedings when it is satisfied that all opportunities for this child to remain within their own family network have been exhausted. It gives the Local Authority permission to place the child with an adoptive family.

Authority has been escalating any concerns with the judiciary and utilise relationships within the Court Users group and with our link Judge.

30. A key element of the partnership between H&F and ALW is the shared commitment to practice improvement, preparing and moving children on to their adoption placements is a sensitive, complex process and practice is evolving in this area. ALW and partners have implemented the University of East Anglia (UEA) Moving to Adoption Transition Model developed by Professor Beth Neill.

31. A practice learning event took place in December facilitated by Dr Mel Jarvis, Clinical Psychologist and ALW's Team Manager and attended by practitioners from all 4 partner Local Authorities, this approach compliments and is supported by the systemic practice by clinicians and social workers in H&F

32. We also recognise the complex and difficult decisions that need to be made when planning for brothers and sisters together for adoption or making the difficult decision to separate the children if their individual needs require this. Specialist training was commissioned, "Siblings Together or Apart" and attended by social workers from across the partnership.

33. Our Learning and Interventions to improve timeliness of family finding

- Those who have waited the longest have identified complex needs or developmental uncertainty. We are working with our Health colleagues regarding timeliness of health appointments and interventions for children and the medical advice provided to prospective adopters
- We have strengthened strategic oversight and challenge between Hammersmith and Fulham social work teams and ALW and this includes monthly Head of Service sessions to facilitate constructive
- A further strengthening of focussed Permanence Planning Meetings where timeframes for children are clearly set out and reviewed against progress-
- Additional ALW panels added, moves to frequency of 3 weekly from June 21 to ensure matches are not delayed and exceed A2 indicator
- ALW ensure that all appropriate steps are taken to identify families and continue the search for an adoptive family, this includes regional and national profiling events, facilitating virtual play activities, inviting potential adopters to observe the child joining in activities with an entertainer (with the child's foster carer present).

34. It is a strength that Hammersmith and Fulham remain committed to identifying a family for those children who have waited the longest continues despite the delay. As part of a new Adopt London, Black Adoption Project, further data analysis of the ASGLB data has shown that Black children in London are 12 times more likely to have their plan of Adoption changed due to Adopters not being identified.

Adoption and Special Guardianship Support

35. A range of services are offered to families who require additional support to care for their children, a social worker may be allocated to provide targeted specific support to families. In addition, a comprehensive training offer is

available to families, through a partnership with We are Family (WAF) an adopter peer support organisation a webinar training programme has been developed offering adoptive families a minimum of 2 training webinars per month, a podcast series has also recently been added. A termly, education support group is offered that is co-facilitated by an Educational Psychologist.

36. ALW also offer a 6-week training course, Foundations for Attachment. The course provides parents and carers with additional insight into caring for children who have suffered developmental trauma. Some participants have described the course as transformational in their parenting approach. The course is offered 3 times per year for both adopters and special guardians
37. ALW remains the only Adopt London region that has Special Guardianship support as part of the core offer. The Special Guardianship Support group in ALW is now co-facilitated with a Brent Special Guardian, who has already taken proactive steps to reach out to the community of Special Guardians in Brent and across the West London partnership to increase engagement and membership of the group. In addition, this person has been invited to join a national working group convened by the Chair of the national ASGLB who is also determined to improve the equality in terms of services offered to Special Guardians across the country.
38. Some families require more specialist therapeutic support, in these cases applications can be made to the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) to provide an individual therapeutic service.
39. In 2020/21 45 applications were made to the fund on behalf of H&F families and £99,632 was claimed for therapy services, to date in 2021/22, 33 applications have been made and £66,953 claimed.

Casework

40. There are currently 151 H&F cases open to ALW:
 - family finding – 21
 - social work support – 14
 - reviews of ASF therapy – 27
 - letterbox contact arrangements – 61
 - direct contact arrangements – 21
 - access to records – 6
 - non-agency/inter-country adoption – 1
41. ALW continues to experience challenges in the allocation of workers to complete non-agency (private) adoption applications, there is currently a waiting list of 15 families of which three are H&F families. Families are offered advice and kept informed in relation to delays, cases are prioritised based on urgency. A voluntary adoption agency has been commissioned as a pilot arrangement to undertake some of the assessments.
42. A comprehensive action plan is in place for all areas of practice development in ALW.

Adopt London

1. ALW is one of 4 Regional Adoption Agencies that make up “Adopt London” a wider partnership and collaboration of 23 boroughs that form Adopt London:
 - **Adopt London North (ALN):** a partnership between Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, and Islington, hosted by Islington.
 - **Adopt London South (ALS):** a partnership between, Achieving for Children (Richmond and Kingston) Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Wandsworth, Southwark, and Sutton, hosted by Southwark.
 - **Adopt London East (ALE):** a partnership between Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham, and Tower Hamlets, hosted by Havering; and
 - **Adopt London West (ALW):** a partnership between Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham and Hounslow, hosted by Ealing.

To ensure the best possible services for children and families across London, Adopt London West collaborates closely with the other 3 Adopt London regions. A key priority for Adopt London will continue to be to maximize the opportunities and efficiencies across shared priority areas.

43. Some of the current priorities for the Adopt London partnership are:
44. **Development of adoption readiness tool** - potential adopters will be able to complete an online guided tool to help them decide if Adoption is right for them. Adoption is an extremely sensitive and private consideration, enabling families to decide if they are ready to proceed with an enquiry privately will support families to be better prepared once they start the formal process.
45. **Continued improvement of website resources and social media campaign** - Adopt London’s website www.adoptlondon.org.uk provides, information and resources for people interested in and affected by adoption, an animated film has been developed to help potential adopters understand the needs of children who require an adoption placement. A comprehensive social media plan to promote blogs and engage with a more contemporary audience using popular platforms ensures the Adopt London brand remains current and influence prospective adopters to choose one of the Adopt London regions. A shared marketing and communications strategy sets out the objectives for this work.



46. Adopt London, Black Adoption Project

a long standing and persistent gap exists between the number of black adopters and the number of black children for whom an adoption plan is agreed. Adopt London recognises this inequality and will make every effort to remove obstacles and provide support to both adopters and children. A steering group will provide governance to the project and will be chaired by one of the Adopt London partner LA’s DCS. Understanding the experience of black adopters on their recruitment and assessment journey will inform and shape the work with Adopt London staff group, marketing strategy and will help us to genuinely understand the complex factors that impact on adopters’

progression or withdrawal from the process. Safe space sessions for black staff within the Adopt London partnership is another key element of the wider project objectives.

47. ALW in partnership with Hammersmith & Fulham will continue to work collaboratively to improve services to all those affected by Adoption and Special Guardianship arrangements. For children who require adoption, for their birth parents, adoptive parents and their sisters and brothers who may have a different care plan. The opportunities for innovation and development come from within the strong partnerships with each individual partner Local Authority and from the wider partnership of the 23 LA's who are part of the wider Adopt London partnership.

Agenda Item 7

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 31/01/22

Subject: Educational Outcomes Update

Report author: Matthew Coulbeck, Secondary Advisor and Development

Responsible Director: Jan Parnell, Director of Education

SUMMARY

This report covers educational outcomes for key stage 4/5 for 2021 with extra information on destinations and young people 'not in education, employment, or training' (NEETs). The report shows improved outcomes based on 2020 results and outcomes above the national average when using 2019 data. The report also shows high levels of progression to higher education and a continued low level of NEETs when compared to national data.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	<i>Preparing young people with outcomes to support future employment</i>
Creating a compassionate council	<i>Supporting the educational outcomes of young people including those from vulnerable groups.</i>
Doing things with local residents, not to them	<i>Ensuring high quality educational outcomes by working with pupils and parents</i>

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

Explore Education Statistics on Gov.UK website
Internal Results analysis by H&F data team
ALPS report for Hammersmith and Fulham Report

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Introduction

This report focuses on the GCSE and A level outcomes in H&F secondary schools for 2021. All secondary schools are academies except for William Morris Sixth Form. The report is based on the following:

- Analysis based on A level results from 7 H&F schools
- Analysis based on KS5 2117 entries in 2021 and 1918 entries in 2020 compared to 2040 entries in 2019.
- Analysis based on KS4 1177 entries in 2021 compared to 1323 in 2019.
- Analysis based on GCSE results from 12 schools including 8 mainstream, 2 AP and 1 special school. There was no data registered from Sacred Heart school or Phoenix Academy.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM												
GCSE results 2021 (provisional)												
				standard	strong	standard	strong	standard	strong	standard	strong	
2021	Cohort	Progress 8	Attainment 8	9-4 EBACC	9-5 EBACC	9-4 in English & maths	9-5 in English & maths	9-4 English	9-5 English	9-4 maths	9-5 maths	Jan 2021 roll (Y11)
Ark Burlington Danes Academy	174	0.47	51.0	41%	25%	70%	10%	80%	59%	75%	53%	174
Cambridge School												20
Fulham Cross Academy	65	-0.01	44.4	17%	15%	57%	31%	63%	39%	74%	51%	75
Fulham Cross Girls School	117	0.86	57.9	33%	24%	78%	62%	78%	79%	79%	63%	121
Hammersmith Academy	136	0.32	59.26	88%	71%	90%	73%	95%	86%	91%	75%	136
Hurlingham Academy	102	n/a	58.6	59%	48%	82%	70%	91%	83%	84%	70%	102
Jack Tizard School												4
Lady Margaret	117	n/a	65.4	69%	46%	97%	78%	98%	95%	94%	79%	117
London Oratory	178	0.97	68.4	82%	62%	95%	85%	98%	90%	97%	89%	178
Phoenix Academy												89
Queensmill School												17
Sacred Heart High												193
The Bridge AP	21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	33%	5%	33%	29%	38%	5%	24
The Fulham Boys School	102	0.6	60.0	n/a	n/a	81%	65%	96%	77%	83%	68%	102
West London Free School	129	n/a	6.5	70%	59%	92%	78%	96%	88%	92%	79%	129
Westside Academy (AP)	16	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25%	13%	38%	25%	25%	13%	15
Woodlane High School	19	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	11%	16%	5%	20
Hammersmith & Fulham	1176	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	56%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
NATIONAL	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

1. Due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic, the summer series was replaced with teacher assessments in 2021. Pupils scheduled to sit GCSE and A/AS level exams in 2021 were awarded a teacher assessed grade based on internal school-based assessments.
2. The exam boards provided optional internal assessment exam papers to support teachers, but the final assessment decisions were left with the teachers monitored by their school leaders. Ofqual monitored the system nationally by sampling one subject per school. Due to the variety of disruptions experienced by pupils across the country the government has decided not to produce results data for either 2020 or 2021. It is therefore difficult and unfair to compare performance against national benchmarks.
3. Nationally the adoption of teacher assessed grades has led to questions regarding teacher workload which inevitably increased and to the fairness of

the system. New data from the Department for Education has revealed that the 2021 GCSE results - when teacher-assessed grades (TAGs) were awarded - saw a **wider attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers** than when centre-assessed grades (CAGs) were used the year before.

4. The cancellation of exams and the new methods of awarding grades has led to a set of pupil attainment statistics that are unlike previous years. As a result, the DfE suggests that the 2020/21 data should not be directly compared to attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring changes in pupil performance. The grade improvements that occurred in 2020 and in 2021 should be welcomed but treated with caution.
5. For most schools the percentage of candidates achieving Maths or English GCSE at 9-4 rose with only one school reporting a significant drop in English (Fulham Cross Girls School) which was due to an extremely high percentage pass rate in 2020. The percentage of candidates achieving grade 4 or above at Maths GCSE in 2021 was above the 2019 national average of 65% in all H&F mainstream schools reporting results. The percentage of candidates achieving grade 4-9 in English GCSE was above the 2019 national average of 71% in all mainstream schools (except Fulham Cross Academy).
6. It was pleasing that at **The Bridge Academy** with a small cohort of challenging pupils nearly 33% achieved grade 4 or more in Maths and English. Given the disrupted education of these young people, this was a considerable achievement.
7. **Woodlane High school**, a community special school supporting pupils with a wide range of barriers to learning were able to ensure 19 from 20 pupils received a GCSE grade in English and Maths with 20% at 4 or above.
8. The **2021 cohort have generally experienced better GCSE outcomes** than those in 2020 and 2019. However, the grade inflation witnessed in 2020 has slowed in 2021 with smaller increases of about 6% in most schools although at Hammersmith Academy there was significant grade inflation in 2021.
9. Pupils achieving EBACC (9-4) increased for 7 schools between 2020 and 2021 and decreased for one school (Lady Margaret). Hammersmith Academy increased from 50% to 88% with 71% achieving a strong pass. 8 schools are now above the 2019 national average whilst only one school remains below the 2019 national average (29.8%). The English Baccalaureate is a measure based on a combination of English, mathematics, science, a language and a humanities subject.
10. **Attainment 8** (a score based on points for eight main subjects) has improved again across H&F schools. In 2019 the borough was placed 8th nationally and first in Inner London and in 2020 the average score for H&F schools was 56% well above the national score of 50%. Of the eight reporting schools in 2021, six schools scored above last year's 56.1% and seven out of eight reporting schools scored above the national average.

11. **Progress 8** is a score standardized to a national average of zero, based on the GCSE points that would be expected, given prior attainment at KS2. The DFE again decided that it was not appropriate to publish progress 8 measures for 2021 due to the use of teacher assessed grades. Progress 8 is normally calculated by comparing a pupil's actual results to a set of expected results produced by a model based on national averages. Of the six schools that calculated their own progress 8 score, five achieved scores well above the H&F average score of 0.27 in 2019.

Post 16 Outcomes (Key Stage 5)

HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM														
Final A Level YR 13 results, 2021														
	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total	A*	A*-A	A*-B	A*-C	A*-D	A*-E
Burlington Danes	21	35	40	23	13	4	2	138	15%	41%	70%	86%	96%	99%
Lady Margaret	54	69	68	38	6	7	1	243	22%	51%	79%	94%	97%	100%
London Oratory	172	164	128	59	20	2	1	546	32%	62%	85%	96%	99%	99%
Sacred Heart	52	73	37	18	4	1	0	185	28%	68%	88%	97%	99%	100%
West London Free School	75	123	88	55	19	3	0	363	21%	55%	79%	94%	99%	100%
William Morris	32	62	102	121	43	16	3	379	8%	25%	52%	84%	95%	99%
Hammersmith Academy	33	38	83	67	30	12	0	263	13%	27%	59%	84%	95%	100%
H&F - no	407	502	444	260	92	29	4	2117	407	909	1353	1613	1705	1734
H&F - %	19%	24%	21%	12%	4%	1%	0%	82%	23.4%	52.3%	77.8%	92.8%	98.1%	99.8%
National (PROVISIONAL)	9%	30%	28%	22%	9%	3%	0%	100%	8.9%	38.6%	66.1%	87.9%	97.0%	99.7%

12. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the summer exam series was replaced by a system of teacher grading based on internal assessments. Teacher decisions were checked by school leadership teams to ensure procedures were followed.
13. The cancellation of summer exams in 2020 and 2021 along with the new methods of awarding grades has led to a set of pupil attainment statistics that are unlike previous years. As a result, the DfE suggests that the grades achieved should not be directly compared to attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring changes in school performance.
14. The change in grade calculation has led to grade inflation nationally when compared to previous years at A level and GCSE. The results data published by JCQ show for example that, for learners in England, outcomes have increased significantly for both AS and A level across the grade range compared to 2019. There was a 14% increase in the number of 'B' grades and a 12% increase in 'A' grades awarded.
15. Entries between 2019 and 2020 slightly decreased but then increased in 2021 resulting in over 2100 entries from 980 candidates. The 2021 grades achieved are a significant improvement on 2020 and 2019. The impact of the pandemic and the changes to assessment procedures have resulted in higher grade outcomes.

16. **A*-C Grade outcomes improved** compared to 2020 for all reporting schools by more than 10% except one school (Lady Margaret) where grades fell by 2% from a previous very high level. 6 schools recorded A*-C outcomes above 80%.
17. **A*-A grade outcomes increased significantly** in reporting schools with increases of between 9% - 22%. There was only a small reduction in the percentage of candidates achieving A grades in one school (Lady Margaret).
18. The percentage of A level entries achieving **A*-C grades in 2021 is over 90%** and above the national average whereas in 2020 74% achieved A-C grades. In 2019 H&F were at the national average at 75%. Compared to the national picture, H&F schools were more cautious with their grading in 2020 however in 2021 this was reversed.
19. With a teacher assessed system, pupils are more likely to meet or exceed their target grades because the grading is based over a series of assessments over time rather than the 'all or nothing' external exams.
20. The **A level performance report (ALPs)** measures the grade achieved at A level by comparing it to the pupils GCSE performance and using this to calculate a value-added score for each provider. ALPs grades are from 1-9 with 1 being the best performance. Six schools in borough use this system and the November 2021 report shows all schools achieving a grade 1 or 2. The ALPS analysis shows significant improvement in Science, Maths and English A levels. There has also been an increase in the number of entries in these subjects.
21. The most popular subjects are biology, chemistry, physics, economics, history, mathematics, psychology, sociology and English literature.
22. **Vocational qualifications at L3 (BTEC)** provide an alternative to A level for a significant number of young people studying in H&F. William Morris Sixth Form, Hammersmith Academy and Burlington Danes Academy currently provide a range of vocational courses including media, business, health and social care, sport, ICT, science and art & design. Fulham Cross Sixth Form are also now also providing BTEC courses in engineering, art, business, health and social care and sport.
23. In 2021 over 200 students received vocational grades at L3. The ALPs report from November 2021 measured the value added by students on the BTECs reporting a drop from grade 5 to grade 6 (on a scale from 1-9). This indicates students are making progress at the national average and there has not been the same level of grade inflation as witnessed at A level.
24. BTECs have provided for middle to low prior attainers at GCSE a credible and challenging alternative to A levels and an alternative route to university. With A level grades generally improving while BTEC grades remain unchanged there is a clear danger of greater unfairness emerging regarding access to university.

Virtual School – Looked After Children Outcomes

25. The outcomes for looked after children being supported by the Virtual School for 2021 were extremely encouraging. From a cohort of 21 33% achieved Mathematics and English along with 3 other GCSEs at grade 5 or above. 67% achieved Mathematics and English at grade 4 or above. In 2019 there were very few looked after children achieving grade 4 at GCSE (5%) so this shows a very positive improvement. In addition, two unaccompanied asylum-seeking children achieved ESOL accreditation and eight children with EHCP plans made good progress on alternative pathways.
26. At Key Stage 1 and 2 despite the huge disruption to learning caused by the lockdowns eight looked after children make excellent progress in line with their individual targets and continue to receive a high level of support.
27. Attendance figures for looked after children in schools has fallen to 85% from 92% but this is due to the expectation that vulnerable children were to attend school during the lockdowns. More positively the number of fixed term exclusions has fallen to 5 in 2021 from 21 in 2019.
28. Of the 177 care leavers (between the ages of 19-21) 93 are sustaining either education, employment or training. This represents 55% and is a similar figure to 2020. 77 care leavers continue to be monitored and provided with support but face a range of complex difficulties.
29. Currently 27 care leavers are attending university making up 10% of our care leaver population above the national 6% level. In 2021 six students graduated gaining degrees in social care, economics, zoology and sociology.

Additional Commentary:

- In terms of results/outcomes young people gained higher grades in general than pre pandemic 2019.
- Increased attainment levels mainly due to shift from exams to teacher assessment.
- Gaps in knowledge were caused by the lockdowns but had a reduced impact on outcomes due to teacher assessment and adjustments to content requirements
- Pupils taking exams in future will be disadvantaged if gaps in knowledge and skill development due to the pandemic persist.
- Schools have reported concerns regarding communication, social skills and oracy of pupils which have been negatively affected by the lockdowns and the pandemic.
- Missed schooling adversely affected wellbeing, social skills and skill development rather than grade outcomes.
- Future attainment outcomes will be impacted negatively as exams return unless school catch up sessions address the missed learning for younger age groups.

Destinations and NEETs

30. Data published on the gov.uk website at explore education statistics regarding destinations covers all students who were deemed to have reached the end of 16 to 18 study in 2019 and analyses their sustainable destinations following the completion of their study. The data reports 74% of students who reached the end of 16 to 18 study in schools and colleges in Hammersmith and Fulham in 2019 had a sustained education, apprenticeship, or employment destination in 2019. This is below the national figure of 81%. Within that group 57% continued in education, 14% had sustained employment and 2% sustained an apprenticeship. This gives a snapshot for the 2019 cohort.
31. The first lockdown would have impacted negatively on the sustained employment levels that fell by about 5% from 2018. More generally disadvantaged students in H&F had progression rates above the national average with 60% staying in education following their period of 16-18 study.
32. Regarding Higher Education, 76% of students completing a level 3 course in 2019 progressed to a sustainable degree course with 22% of these studying at Russell Group institutions. This was well above the national average of 66% taking degrees and 16% at Russell Group universities in England. Within H&F, William Morris Sixth Form achieved a progress score of 17 with 76% progressing to degree courses which was graded as well above average given the entry grades.
33. 79% of Students from disadvantaged backgrounds (as measured by Free school meals and pupil premium) completing a level 3 course progressed to a sustainable degree course with 29% studying at Russell Group institutions. Both these measures are well above the national average and show disadvantaged students progressing at a similar or higher rate than all students.
34. In Hammersmith & Fulham the trajectory over the last three years continues to show that the borough has a low level of NEETS (Young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training) and H&F is within the top three London Boroughs. 2021 data from West London Partnership shows that 25-30 16/17 year-olds in the first four months of the year (excluding young offenders) were NEET which is 0.9% of the 16/17-year-old population. This compares well to other boroughs where the average is 1.6% and nationally this figure is 2.2% of 16–18 year-olds who are NEET.
35. The number of 'not known' destinations has increased due to a decline in reporting of destinations by schools. This delays interventions to support NEET young people who can become lost in the unknown group. All schools will be asked to report intended destinations earlier and more consistently moving forward.
36. Regarding support for NEET young people, the network of supportive organisations continues to grow so that career leads in schools have more options for referrals. These for example include Action West London, SPEAR, START and Catch 22. The 'Let's Go EET' event in October 2021 enabled

young people to meet with a range of groups on an in-person basis. Founders for schools has been key in delivering online events promoting green careers, STEM careers and apprenticeships for H&F schools.

37. The excellent work in schools providing high quality advice and guidance has helped to ensure the number of young people leaving school without a meaningful destination is low. The Careers Leaders network enables the sharing of good practice, links schools to other groups and supports schools to meet Gatsby benchmarks improving employability of young people.
38. Education have worked proactively with schools to ensure continuity of educational provision throughout the pandemic. This has included the following activities:
 - Provided regular communication and meetings for headteachers and senior leaders to offer advice on the frequently changing Covid guidance to schools.
 - Reviewed and offered advice to schools on their Covid risk assessments and contingency plans.
 - Conducted outbreak management meetings with schools to reduce levels of virus transmission and minimise disruption to pupils' education.
 - Collated and reported on Covid cases and pupil attendance to monitor and manage the impact of Covid on schools.
 - Worked with schools in developing materials to support the recovery curriculum, pupil wellbeing, outdoor learning and climate change.
 - Offered support to headteachers in managing the impact of Covid on staff and pupils.
 - Promoted access to outdoor spaces and local facilities.
 - Provided regular feedback to the Department of Education on behalf of schools regarding educational provision and Covid management.
 - Developed and rolled out a school self-evaluation system to assess the current position of schools and support their recovery post-pandemic.
 - Supported digital access for pupils by distributing additional laptops to schools.
 - Supported the Holidays Activities programme ensuring children and young people had access to purposeful and educational activities over the key holidays period.

Afghan Families

Welcoming new Cohorts from Solihull and Camden

Arrival of Afghan refugees at a hotel in the borough in August 2021 – 120 new residents in H&F who have arrived from Afghanistan, including 68 children. **22 arrived on the 25th November and a third group of 47 were relocated from a bridging hotel in Camden on 1st of December. There are now total of 190 residents – 48 households – 101 adults and 89 children – 35 (0-5) 18 (6-10), 23 (11-15), 13 (16-18).**

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CHS Support Offer

- 75 children are enrolled at school, nursery or college. A further 30 children from RBKC have been enrolled at secondary school in H&F
- Extra-curricular activities over Christmas and after school organised by the third sector
- Families have accessed Children Centre sessions and engaged in ESOL and Family Learning
- Development of an education offer for 16+, including finding appropriate courses for 3 university level students
- All families have undergone DWP assessment
- Educational Psychologist providing wrap around and Network support to schools for individual pupils and staff
- Continued Children's services presence at the hotel has enabled us to maintain stability. CHS representation on strategic board meetings.
- Any emerging safeguarding concerns have been appropriately managed in a timely way within the department



YP participate in extra-curricular sports run by a local VCS organisation



Walking bus for Mums with young children to get to Children's Centre sessions

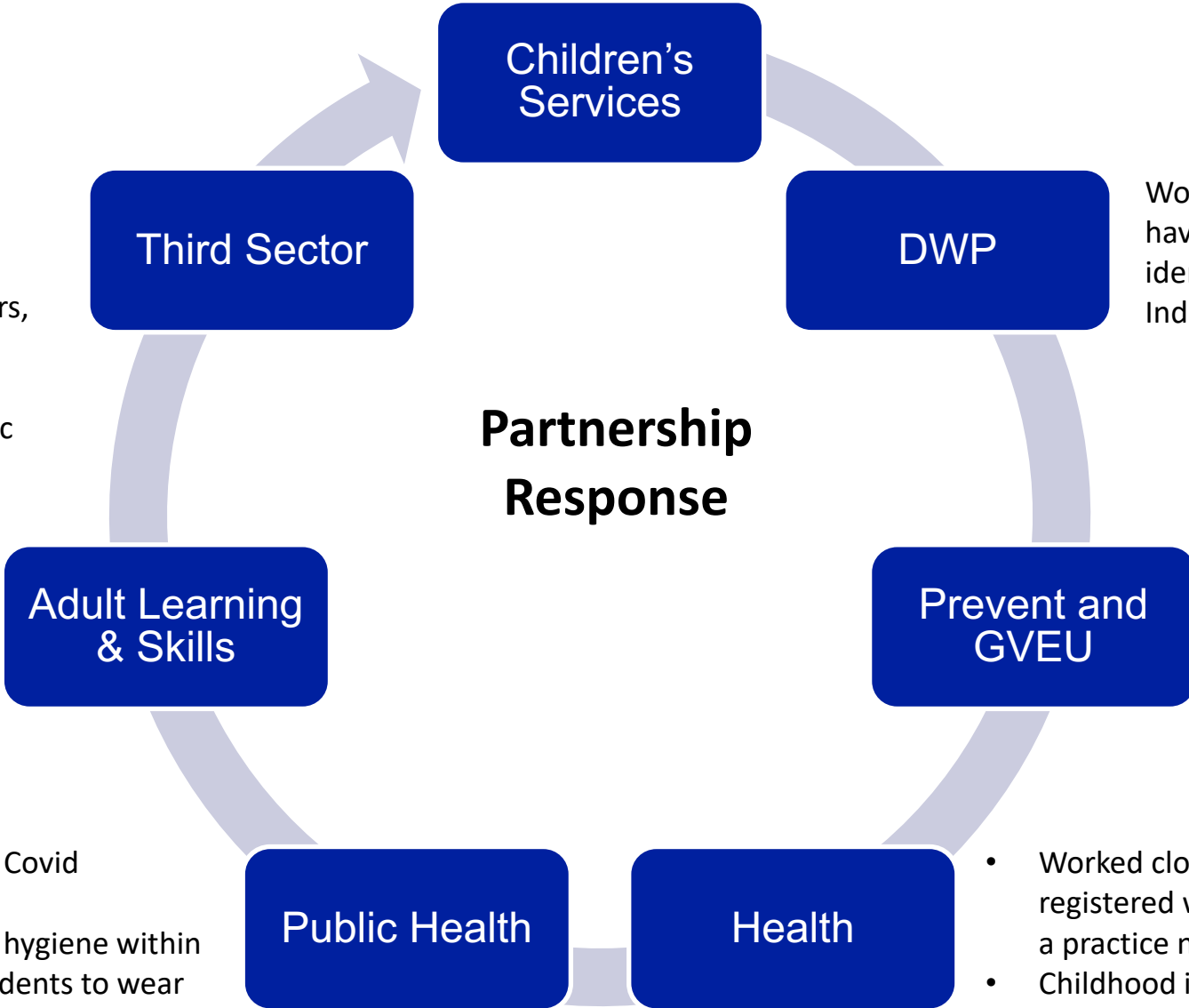


YP receive a boxing coaching session run by one of our youth providers.

- Extra-curricular programme
 - Women’s cooking groups
 - Men’s football
 - Circus skills
 - Sessions for young men
 - Sports
 - Harrow Club
- Contacted mosques, majids, churches and worked with community groups to collect donations – clothing, pushchairs, toys etc
- Donations received from local football clubs – kits, trainers etc

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Adult Learning & Skills and the Shaw Trust have assisted evacuees into training and employment



Worked with DWP to ensure residents have access to cash and benefits, identifying eligibility for Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

- Regularly visit hotel to engage with teenagers and parents.
- A community and youth engagement officer has been assigned and comes regularly to meet with the young people at the hotel

- Encourage residents to get Covid vaccinations and boosters
- Continue to promote good hygiene within the hotel, encouraging residents to wear masks, wash hands

- Worked closely with NWL to ensure all families registered with GPs. Working together to establish a practice nurse at the hotel
- Childhood immunisations provided
- Local dentists provided free dental check ups to residents in December

New dedicated staff team

Since December, we have started recruiting a dedicated team to provide wraparound support at the bridging hotel. Team are mostly in place pending secondment arrangements locally

Team Leader Afghan Bridging Hotel

Liaison Support
Officer

Liaison Support
Officer

Liaison Support
Officer

Liaison Support
Officer

Home Office update

- H&F committed to resettle six Afghan families in the borough.
 - Four families have already moved in
- Home Office have confirmed resettlement support and funding for all families in the hotel, allocations will be known at the end of January.
- Offers of accommodation have started but likely families will remain for another 6 months

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“In Kabul we lived in a big house. But now it doesn’t matter if we have a big house or a small house. For the first time since the Taliban took over Afghanistan I felt safe and slept well when we arrived in the UK. Here we can start again.”

Afghanistan

The Afghan judge working to free her sisters left behind

Fawzia escaped from Afghanistan. Now in London, she’s trying to secure a safe exit for women still stranded

Diane Taylor



Winter 2021 Holiday Support for children

Winter Holiday Activity

With coordinators LMP Action - we worked with 12 providers to offer food and fun holiday activities for children during the 2 week festive period.

Working with local community providers helps us to widen our reach in the community, and offer a variety of provisions for young people and children.



Shepherds Bush Families Project & Children's Centre



KULAN FOUNDATION

Together Stronger



LMP ACTION
COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY



Mother and Child
Welfare Organisation
CREATING A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

Winter Holiday Activity

The 12 providers developed a variety of activities suitable for all ages to ensure that the children they engaged with had fun.

Some of the activities we ran throughout the Christmas period are below.

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Multi Sports



Christmas Ornaments



Wreath Making



Family Cookery Classes



Making Bubble Tea



Pillowcase Design



Making Bath Bombs



Football



Cricket



Meeting Santa



Making Hampers



Winter Holiday Activity: The Impact



1,072 unique children
(69% on FSM)



2,500+ engagements



2,500 meals served (*hot and cold*)



4 One-Off Events
delivered to engage communities



744 children on FSM (*primary & secondary*)



280 hours of activity delivered



“It makes all the difference that we can now keep planning to provide for our families over the holidays. The parents are so happy with the projects and the events that we are putting on.”

WINTER FESTIVE FUN: ACTIVITY BAGS

In addition to the holiday activity we also provided 1000 Winter Festive Fun activity bags to distribute to children and young people.

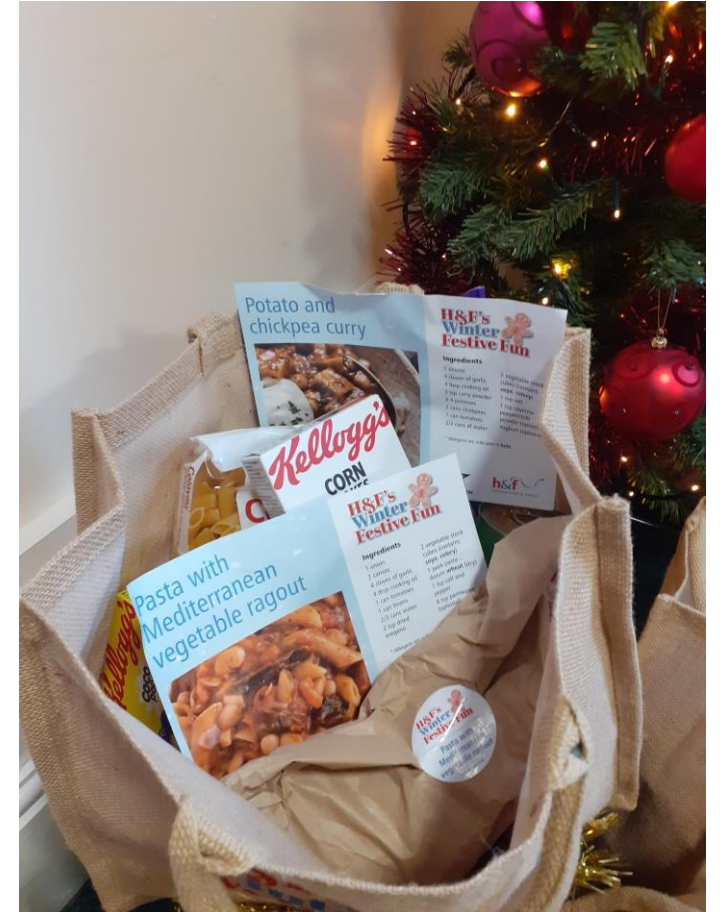


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Each contained:

- two recipe cards
- ingredients to make 2 hot meals. Each meal would feed a family of four
- other store cupboard foods and Festive treats
- age-appropriate activity packs

“The winter fun bags were great. It gave my daughter activities to do, which she really enjoyed. Plus - the recipes were tasty and easy enough to follow.”



WINTER FESTIVE FUN: ACTIVITY BAGS

The activity bags were produced and distributed to partner organisations to give to children and young people who could benefit from additional support:

- Children attending our holiday provision
- Young people living in Semi-Independent Living accommodation through Centrepoint
- Families from the Stephen Wiltshire Centre.



“It was a real joy to see the faces of parents when they received their Winter Festive Fun Bags. One parent became quite emotional as she said she wasn’t sure what the family was going to have over Christmas.”



Additional Support offered this winter

- Through our schools - we provided grocery vouchers to over 6000 children on Free School Meals and other vulnerable children over the Christmas holiday
- Care leaving teams brought gifts as they visited young people over Christmas
- Grocery and £10 Shopping vouchers given to Care Leavers
- £30 festivity payment for children that are looked after
- New partnership with Fuel Bank Foundation to support households on pre-payment meters facing Fuel Poverty
- Continuing to provide grants to our local voluntary organisations to support households with food and essentials over the winter period in partnership with UNITED in Hammersmith & Fulham.

