



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

SCHOOLS FORUM

October 2024

Q2 Update: High Needs Block 2024/25

Open

Classification - For Scrutiny Review & Comment

Key Decision: No

Wards Affected: (All Wards): All

Accountable Director: Jacqui McShannon, Executive Director of People’s Services

Report Authors:

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Purpose of the report

This report provides an update on the High Needs Block programmes of work and performance against the Department for Education Safety Valve Agreement at Q1.

Recommendations:

1. Schools Forum to note the current position and progress of the transformation programme across the High Needs Block (HNB).

Q1 2024/25 - Programme Update

Work programme	Assurance Level		
	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
Increase early intervention activity and development of a more robust Local Offer	Green	Green	RAG
<p>Significant progress has been made in relation to these areas. The Council’s Ordinarily Available Guidance is continuing to be embedded in practice across the Local Area. Improvements to the pathway for accessing SEN Support Service have been made to streamline access and to ensure a coordinated and triaged approach via our Local Area SENDCO post. This post is providing the capacity to support settings in mapping their SEND Support offer to the Ordinarily Available Guidance and ensuring a consistent approach across settings.</p> <p>Our increased early intervention offers are also now well embedded. The Joint Communication Team has delivered training to over 140 early years and school employees during the summer term. Children and young people are screened pre-intervention, and their scores are RAG rated across key speech, language and</p>			

communication domains. The following table shows the progress from initial screening assessment, followed by two terms of targeted interventions delivered by school staff following training by the JCT, and then reassessment.

RAG	Initial Assessment	Post Intervention
RED	8%	2%
AMBER	61%	37%
GREEN	31%	61%

The small specialist SEND Support caseload also continue to see significant progress made with an average 9 steps of progress recorded against a 10-point scale with 23 children seen for therapy input.

The Autism Education Trust programme is also well embedded. To date 97% of Primary Schools have engaged and 84% of secondary schools. 55.8% of PVI's and 50% of maintained nurseries have also engaged. There has been a total of 965 attendees since the programme began. The overall AET compliance score rating is 4.8. Evaluations indicate that 91.8% of those attending strongly agree that the training will have a positive impact on practice and their ability to support autistic children and young people. Demand for the training continues to be high. Census data shows the rate of growth where ASD is the primary need in 2023/24 is 8% in H&F, compared to 14% across England which is demonstrating the impact of the positive early intervention approach.

Work programme	Assurance Level		
Review of Alternative Provision model	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Green	Green	RAG

Progress Update:
This workstream is complete.

Work programme	Assurance Level		
SEND Sufficiency Review and School Organisation Plan	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Amber	Amber	RAG

Progress Update:

- Phase 1 bidding process completed resulting in complete list of 6 prospective candidate schools.
- Initial planning meetings candidate schools.
- Provision mapping for proposed SEN Units/ARPs.
- Planning meeting with existing special schools and SEN Units.

Next steps:

- Resource management review for special schools, SEN Units and proposed provision.
- Financial due diligence and medium-term planning for proposed SEN Units/ARPs.
- Finalise implementation plan for proposed SEN Units/ARPs.
- Develop KPIs and QA model for specialist providers.

Work programme	Assurance Level		
Review and reform of outreach services	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Amber	Green	RAG

Progress Update:

As per our Quarter 1 report, we have identified emerging complex behaviour needs in the early year's cohort. These relate particularly to acute behaviour presentation in the reception age cohort and Key Stage 1. These complex behaviours are requiring high levels of outreach intervention to enable the child to achieve their outcomes and remain in their mainstream setting. These needs are above what we would expect to be ordinarily provided by a school. The absence of this offer in the context of these needs, would likely result in an escalation of need or exclusion. This saving will therefore not be realised and is reflected in our overall baseline.

Work programme	Assurance Level		
Case Management system	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Green	Green	RAG

This programme has been delivered and is complete.

Work programme	Assurance Level		
Annual Reviews	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Amber	Amber	RAG

Progress Update:

Significant effort continues to be made in relation to annual reviews. Of the 1550 young people in scope for an annual review, 73% have been completed in the last year. Of those 49% of settings have returned the report within two weeks (up 8%

from Q1), 55.5% had a decision made within 4 weeks (up 2% from Q1) and 48% of plans where there was a decision to amend were issued in 12 weeks (up 7% from Q1).

Work programme	Assurance Level		
Preparation for Adulthood	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Amber	Amber	RAG

Progress Update:

A PfA Taskforce has been established chaired by the Operational Director of Education and SEND. Corporately the Council has also brought together Children's Services and Adult Services into a single People's Directorate overseen by the previous Director of Children's Services (now Executive Director of People's Services) Jacqui McShannon. This has included the centralisation of commissioning functions in the last quarter under a single Director, to support building capacity to drive forward elements of this programme.

The taskforce has three key workstreams:

Workforce: A skilled workforce that is able to respond and support young people and their families through transition in a timely and consistent way.

- Priority has been given to creating additional capacity within Adult Social Care to meet the needs of young people through transition (those who are currently waiting and those needing support in the future), ensuring timely assessments are completed and appropriate support provided at the right time.
- Significant growth has been agreed by Cabinet, to establish a new Transitions Team which will provide a dedicated service for young people aged 14-25 years. Interim Team Manager and social workers are now in post, with further recruitment in progress to include a Senior Social Worker, Specialist Autism Social Worker, Transitions Occupational Therapist and Housing Officer. This team will address current pressures and increase capacity to meet anticipated demand.
- Currently onboarding to this team – challenges with sufficiency of social workers. Dedicated Strategic Lead capacity driving this forward.

Protocol and pathways: Clearly defined roles and responsibilities through a holistic protocol that ensures young people, and their families know what to expect and can be well-prepared for adulthood.

- A new Transitions Assessment and process has been devised in Children's Social Care. An accessible format of the assessment has been developed to support young people's engagement of this process.
- A review has been completed of EHCP Annual Review processes. This has led to an improvement in timeliness, increased attendance of professionals at review meetings and better communications between stakeholders. Improved annual reviews will better support the data

required for a strong transitions process.

- Improvement of current processes to ensure oversight and management of young people transitioning across multiple services through development of:

A fortnightly multi-agency Key Professionals Forum. The purpose of the Forum is to:

- proactively identify and forecast young people, age 14-25 years, who are likely to require going support from Adult Social Care, Health, and wider services across the local area as they move into adulthood. This includes the sharing of salient information to determine the most appropriate pathway into adulthood, leading to agreed action to be taken and to avoid unnecessary delay.
- provide assurance for the local area that transition pathways are identified for young people who will require support into adulthood in a timely way.
- address blockages/issues that are preventing a seamless transition into Adulthood and agree solutions from multi-agency point of view.

Monthly Professionals meetings to embed the PfA approach across services and support planning across the local area through collaborative, multi-agency discussions relating to processes and issues arising which may impact upon individual young people transitioning to adulthood.

Fortnightly PfA Case Review meetings within the Transitions Team for review of all current service users known to the service to ensure robust PfA planning is in place and identify any issues requiring escalation.

- Significant work progressing with social care, health, housing and employment to develop clear protocols and pathway guidance with a view to streamlining and producing new clear guidance. Dedicated capacity onboarded to drive forward.

Provision: Right support, right place, right time.

- New People's commissioning function.
- Development of needs assessment using Children's data to inform future commissioning requirements.
- The Centre for ADHD and Autism has been commissioned by NHS Northwest London to provide individual support for those over 18 years, with monthly 'Preparing for Adulthood' sessions for over 14s and evening drop-in support groups for parents/carers,
- A specialist Autism Day Opportunities provision has been commissioned to offer a range of independent living, employment opportunities and social activities, working with young people and their families, health colleagues, and providers to coproduce the service specification and business case.
- Leaders across Adult Social Care and Housing have established an Independent Living Housing sub-group which features Transitions as a

key priority. This group has recently developed an inclusive housing pathway for residents with Learning Disabilities and Autism which is to be promoted and rolled out across the partnership.

- Children’s social care (including the Council’s Occupational Therapy service), continuously update a needs assessment to forecast the future demand for housing, which will shape our housing and commissioning strategy going forward.
- Leaders hosted a Shared Lives and Accommodation co-production event, with parents/ carers and young people in September to shape the offer going forward. This has fed into development plans for commissioning increased Supported Living for learning disabilities and Autism; our Housing Strategy and inform our Shared Lives business case. Leaders commissioned the CEO of Shared Lives to facilitate part of the co-production session as to how Shared Lives could work in Hammersmith and Fulham.

Work programme	Assurance Level		
Block Transfer	Update 1 (May/June)	Update 2 (September)	Update 3 (December)
	Amber	Amber	RAG

In the absence of provisional funding allocation for 2025/26 it’s our assumption that a continued 1% block transfer will be required in order to sustain the block and continued investment in SEND Support services to identify and meet need earlier

Report ends