

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 8th November 2017

Wards: All wards

Subject: Children and Young People's Plan Update (Quarter 2 - 2017/18)

Lead officer: Yvette Stanley, Director of Children, Schools and Families Department

Lead member: Cllr Katy Neep, Cabinet Member for Children Services
Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Cabinet Member for Education

Contact officer: Mark Gwynne, Interim Head of Policy, Planning and Performance

Recommendations:

A. Members of the panel to discuss and comment on the contents of the report.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The report provides members of the panel with information on key developments not covered elsewhere on the agenda and affecting the Children, Schools and Families Department since the panel's last meeting in October 2017.

2 DETAILS

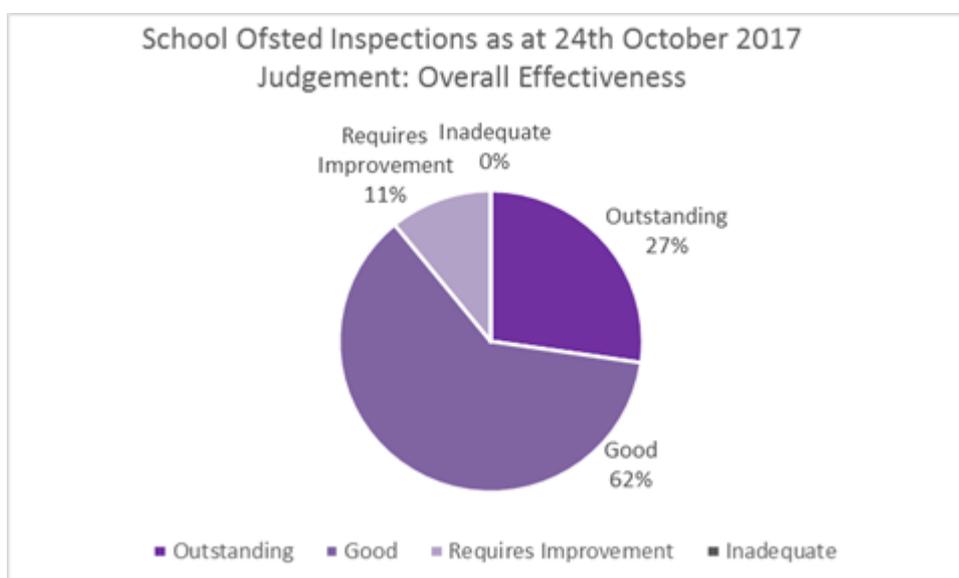
2.1 **Provisional GCSE Exam Results** – In 2017, pupils sat reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and mathematics for the first time, graded on a 9-1 scale. New GCSEs in other subjects are being phased in for first teaching over 3 years, 2016-2018.

2.2 When comparing 2017 headline measures to the equivalent provisional data from 2016, it is important to note the changes in methodology underpinning the 2017 data.

- Merton has the highest Average Progress 8 score in the country +0.51 (joint with Brent). This equates to Merton pupils achieving an average, half a grade better, per subject than other pupils with the same prior attainment.
- Merton is above national in all headline attainment outcome indicators:
 - Average Attainment 8 score per pupil 50.0 (national: 44.2);
 - percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-5 pass English and maths GCSEs 48.9 (national: 39.1);
 - percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-4 pass English and maths GCSEs 69.1 (national: 58.5);
 - English Baccalaureate (9-5 pass in English and maths) 27.2 (national: 19.5);
 - English Baccalaureate (9-4 pass in English and maths) 30.3 (national: 21.7).
- Merton is above London in attainment 8 and English and maths attainment outcome indicators:

- Average Attainment 8 score per pupil 50.0 (London: 48.6);
- percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-5 pass English and maths GCSEs 48.9 (national: 47.7);
- percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-4 pass English and maths GCSEs 69.1 (national: 67.3).
- In comparison to 2016, the average Attainment 8 score per pupil has decreased by 2.4 points for Merton schools to 50.0 in 2017. The national decrease is 4.3 points. These decreases are as expected following changes to the point scores assigned to grades because of the introduction of 9-1 GCSEs in performance tables 2017. Merton's decrease from 2016 is one of the lowest nationally (joint 11th of 151 LA's).

2.3 **School Ofsted Inspections** – Members are aware that Park Community School was inspected in June and has been judged as “Good”. Over a quarter of Merton’s schools are now judged to be outstanding. At the end of the Summer term, Harris Primary Academy was inspected and have been judged to be “Outstanding”. Our Pre-school at the Abbey Children Centre has been inspected and the report is still awaited: when last inspected in 2011 it was rated as “Satisfactory”. A verbal update will be given at the meeting if this report is received in time.



2.4 **Harris Wimbledon Academy** – The school is advertised to open in in September 2018, and be located in the former Adult Education Building at Whatley Avenue, SW20 for two years before the new building at High Path is ready. An open evening was held on 3 October 2017. Merton primary schools have circa 250 additional Year 6 pupils on roll compared to last year so it is essential for the new school to open in September 2018 to ensure the council provides sufficient places. A detailed report on this is included elsewhere on the agenda.

2.5 **SEN School Expansion** – There continues to be a significant increase in demand for special school places, especially for ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and MLD (Moderate Learning Difficulties) children, which continues to place pressure on budgets. The council is working on projects to increase provision in our special schools. Construction of the expansion of Perseid School is underway to ensure that the capacity of the upper school matches the previously expanded lower school, and detailed design is underway to expand Cricket Green School.

- 2.6 **School Funding** – The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funds a variety of educational establishments and services. This includes mainstream and special schools, early years, alternative and other high need provision such as Pupil Referral Units.
- 2.7 While it remains the government’s intention that a school’s budget should be set on the basis of a single national formula in 2018/19 and 2019/20, local authorities will continue to determine final funding allocations for schools through a local formula. In 2018/19 and 2019/20, the national funding formula will set notional allocations for each school, which will be aggregated and used to calculate the total schools block received by each local authority.
- 2.8 There are a number of significant changes to the funding system this year:
- The central school services block (CSSB) has been created. Local authorities will be allocated funding for central school services through the new CSSB. This will comprise funding for ongoing responsibilities and a cash sum for historic commitments. The DSG therefore now comprises four blocks: schools, high needs, early years and the new central school services block.
 - Each of the four blocks of the DSG will be determined by a separate national funding formula. National funding formulae will determine local authorities’ schools, high needs and central school services blocks for the first time in 2018/19. Funding for early years has been allocated through a national funding formula since 2017/18.
- 2.9 **30 hours** – Following on from the work of the summer term, early years providers, including schools, continue to engage with families and the local authority to facilitate implementation of the policy for 30 hours of free early education which came into effect in September 2017. The success of this will not be known until after the headcount returns have been completed.
- 2.10 **Ofsted Inspection Action Plan** – Following the inspection, our action plan has been drafted and will be submitted to Ofsted by the start of December. This action plan delivers on the four recommendations received and is summarised as Appendix 1.
- 2.11 **Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB)** – has extended key development priorities for 2016/17 through to 2019. These priorities are:
- **Think family:** A Think Family Coordinator has been appointed. The current focus is on adult mental health and embedding Think Family across adults and children. The Board is also review its Young Carers’ Strategy and a Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy; it is expected that this strategy will address DVA between adults; teenage relationship abuse and elder abuse. The aim is for these strategies to be delivered and launched at the MSCB Joint Annual Conference;
 - **Supporting Vulnerable Adolescents:** The Self-harm protocol has been approved, along with Harmful sexual behaviour and Online Strategies, the focus is on contextual safeguarding – addressing adolescent risk outside of the home; review CSE Protocol and strategy;
 - **Early Help:** The Merton Child, Young Person and Family Well-Being Model has been approved. We are updating tools and looking at implementing the Social Work Practice Model (including Signs of Safety) across the system.

- 2.12 These also link with the MSCB business as usual activities (e.g. CSE, Missing, PREVENT, FGM, etc.) undertaken by the Board and its sub groups. The Board continues to seek to improve its links to practitioners and their managers as part of our quality assurance processes to inform service improvement and development as well as maintaining our strong focus on the Voice of the Child / Young person.
- 2.13 Addressing the incidence and impact of neglect, is a cross-cutting theme that runs across the work of the Board and each of the priorities. A plan is being finalised for the piloting of a Neglect Tool to be used across the system and an audit of neglect cases is being conducted alongside this. The tool will be piloted in Merton from January to March 2018.
- 2.14 **Transforming Families** – The inspection with DCLG has taken place and on the back of this we are considering the option of gaining “earned autonomy” enabling us to further develop our Transforming Families approach.
- 2.15 **Children Returning From Syria** – The government has issues advice on responding to children returning from Syria. The local authority is given the lead role for this, but there are no more resources provided. We are currently reviewing the guidance issued to determine the implications with it estimated that around 800 children will be returning.
- 2.16 **Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC)** – Working together with Croydon County Court, West London Family Court and the Inner London Family Court, the partnership will offer an alternative form of care proceedings for parents and children in those cases where substance misuse is a key factor in the decision to bring proceedings: known as the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC). Referrals will be made by children’s social care and will be agreed internally to ensure referrals meet the criteria for FDAC services. Work is at an advanced stage in development of this new service, which Merton is leading, across ten boroughs. The contract was awarded to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust who have now met with the Cross Borough Operational Group and the FDAC Board. Detailed Project Plans have been developed and all boroughs are in the process of mobilisations. Contracts and Terms & Conditions are being finalised to ensure that the new service is up and running from January 2018.
- 2.17 **County Lines** – Merton participated in a Local Assessment Process completed by the Institute for Community Safety from which a report with recommendations in regard to County Lines, Exploitation and Violence was completed. These have been discussed by senior management in CSC & YI and an Action Plan has been drafted. This will formulate part of the revised Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation Protocol with activities occurring across the partnership in regard to defining roles and responsibilities, identifying prevention opportunities, undertaking reviews and involving community partners, families and young people in the development of a local response. A full update on this will be discussed at the next Merton Partnership Executive Board meeting.
- 2.18 **Contextual Safeguarding** – Merton is committed to the Contextual Safeguarding Framework, which will involve a system-wide application and implementation. Following the initial period of implementation in regard to governance and action plan, the first stage is underway in collecting and analysing protocols, procedures and Terms of Reference relevant to Peer-on-Peer abuse. The recruitment of a project support administrator has commenced with advertisement expected imminently. The audit process will also compliment other pieces of work in regard to the Adolescent panel review and Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol launch.

2.19 **Social Impact Bond (SIB)** – Merton Council is part of the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership - with Tower Hamlets, Bexley, Newham and Sutton councils - which was formed to deliver Multi-Systemic and Functional Family Therapy services for councils within the partnership, leveraging in financial resources using a (SIB). The aim of the programme is to keep vulnerable families together and prevent children from being taken into care.

2.20 The partnership has commissioned Positive Families Partnership to deliver the infrastructure of the SIB and to deliver the services. A SIB is a way of financing a 'Payment by Results' contract, which means Positive Families Partnership will be paid only if it succeeds in meeting certain milestones related to keeping the young person with their family. This contract has recently been awarded and mobilisation meetings are underway to ensure that the new service is up and running from January 2018. The Positive Families Partnership ("PFP") brings together five organisations, with considerable individual strengths and a commitment to working together to deliver this contract. These partners are: Bridges Fund Management; Social Finance; Family Psychology Mutual; South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust; and Family Action.

3. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 No specific implications from this report.

4. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 No specific implications from this report.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No specific implications from this report

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No specific implications from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No specific implications from this report.

8. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Ofsted Action Plan

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None

Draft Ofsted Action Plan

No.	Issue	Outcome	Action	Responsible AD / Head of Service	By when	Reported to
1	Ensure that all plans, including child in need, child protection, care plans for children looked after and pathway plans, consistently contain specific actions, achievable timescales and clear, measurable outcomes.	All children and young people are supported to achieve the best outcomes for them through the development and delivery of clear and focussed plans.	Undertake an external challenge of plans and SMART actions to develop a more robust approach to inform training, review and auditing of plans	Assistant Director	Jan-18	MSCB QA Sub Group
2	Improve the use of return home interviews for each episode of missing for children missing from home or care and ensure that risks are understood and reduced for individual children.	Reasons for young people going missing are understood through timely and effective return home interviews.	Strengthen processes to ensure consistent and effective oversight of young people placed at a distance following and addressing instances of going missing	Head of MASH & Child Protection	Feb-18	Corporate Parenting Board
		Risks for young people are understood and effectively managed, drawing on repeat data, learning from return home interviews and the analysis of threats.	Improve mechanisms for instances of repeat missing to ensure risks to young people are fully understood and effectively managed	Head of MASH & Child Protection	Nov-17	Corporate Parenting Board
3	Ensure that 'staying put' is made available to all care leavers who would benefit from this.	Young people are able to enjoy a smooth and supported transition into adulthood remaining with their foster carers where they choose to	New Staying Put Policy approved and launched	Head of Access to Resources & CWD	Dec-17	Corporate Parenting Board
4	Ensure that all former relevant care leavers receive information on their health histories.	Young people leaving care are able to make appropriate decisions based on full knowledge of their health histories	Review process for age 18 Leavers Health Summary	Head of Permanency, LAC & Care Leavers	Nov-17	Corporate Parenting Board

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