

**Committee:** Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Wards: All wards

**Subject:** Departmental Update Report November 2018

Lead officer: Rachael Wardell, Director of Children, Schools and Families Department

Lead member: Cllr Kelly Braund, Cabinet Member for Children Services  
Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Cabinet Member for Education

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

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**Recommendations:**

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

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## **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 2018. It focusses on those aspects of particular relevance to the department and those where the Panel expressed an interest in receiving regular updates.

## **2 DETAILS**

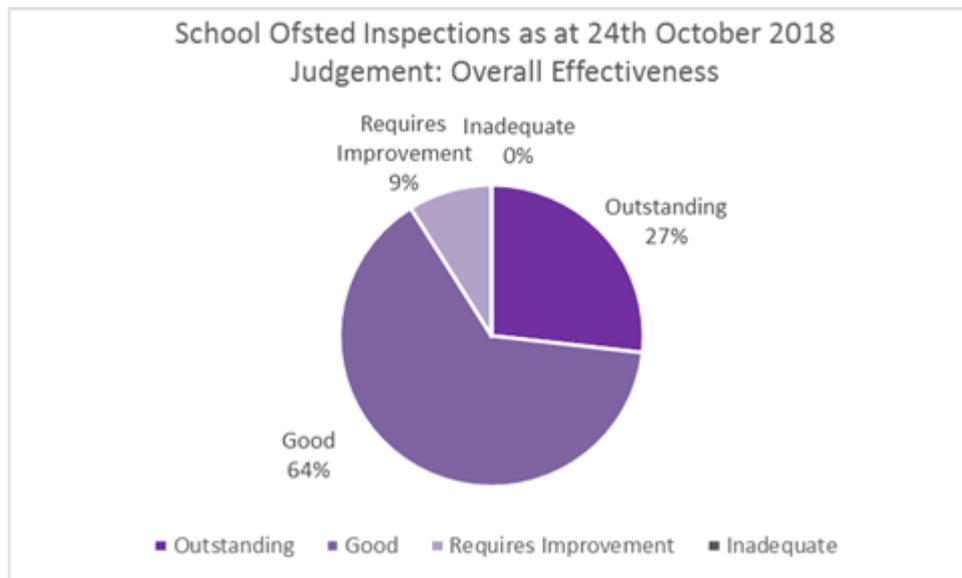
2.1 **Harris Academy Wimbledon** – The school opened as planned in Whatley Avenue SW20 in September 2018 and is fully subscribed. The building is suitable for two years before the permanent site in South Wimbledon will be required. The planning application for the permanent site is now expected to be considered at the planning applications committee on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The delay by a month was due to the need to for an additional representation period to reflect the fact that Education and Skill's Funding Agency's design consultant modified the drawings slightly. The project is still on target for the permanent school to be completed for September 2020.

2.2 **Cricket Green School** – Construction works have now commenced for this school expansion to provide much needed additional SEN places. Planning permission has been received and Cabinet has agreed to commence works to expand the school, with works expected to be completed September 2019 to enable the much needed extra SEN places to be provided for the start of the school year.

2.3 **School Ofsted Inspections** – The following inspection reports have been published during October: Wimbledon Park moving from "Outstanding" to "Requires Improvement" and Morden Primary which has retained its "Good" rating. This means that our results for our schools are:

- 100% of secondary schools being rated as "Good" or "Outstanding"

- 91% of all schools now rated as “Good” or better; and
- 94% of our pupils are educated in schools rated as “Good” or better.



- 2.4 **Children’s Centres** – Increasing the take up of 2 year places continues to remain a priority, and this is a key area of focus in the newly established and shared Early Years Hub across Merton and Wandsworth. The Wandle Early Years Hub is funded by the Greater London Authority and aims to provide opportunities for early years settings, local authorities and other partners to work together to improve outcomes for children by: increasing take up of free early education for 2-year-olds; improving the quality of early years provision; and promoting early years as a career choice. Included in the work of the Hub, Merton’s Open College Network Early Years College has successfully achieved level 3 accreditation for the writing of a “Working with Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)” training programme. This comprises of 4 units aimed at Early Year practitioners to improve their knowledge, skill and understanding of working with children aged 0-5 with a range of SEND. The first cohort of learners will start in November, and by developing the confidence and skills of staff working in settings it is anticipated more children with SEND will take up their 2 year old funded place. External evaluation of the Hub activity is being carried out, and feedback will be shared once published.
- 2.5 On 17<sup>th</sup> October the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, along with the Leader of the Council Steven Alambritis and Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Kelly Braund, visited the Acacia Pre-School and the Acacia Children’s Centre to launch the Mayor’s Health Inequalities Strategy and the Healthy Early Years London (HEYL) programme. Both the Preschool and the Children’s Centre have achieved the First Steps Award of the HEYL programme and are on their way to completing their Bronze Award submission. All Ofsted registered early years settings in London can sign up to the programme and are supported to achieve their awards through their council’s Early Years’ service in partnership with Public Health. To date Merton has a total of 20 settings signed up, all of whom are working to improve the health and welling outcomes of young children across the borough. HEYL helps to reduce health inequalities by supporting a healthy start to life across themes that include healthy eating, oral and physical health and early cognitive development, and compliments the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 2.6 By the end of the second quarter, 533 families had taken up one of the Early Learning Together Programmes, Supporting Children’s Social and Communication Programme or a Parenting Programme. Feedback from service users remains positive and of the families who completed the programmes, reported outcomes remain high.

- 2.7 Work to support the early years' education and childcare sector has included the production of an online business management cost tool (funded by a grant from the DFE), delivery of training programmes, on site advisory visits and the roll out of the new "Practice in Action Programmes". Feedback from these new courses is positive, including: "I really enjoyed this course it was fun and I'm sure the children will think so too"; "Excellent course, would highly recommend"; and "Came away a lot more confident in implementing the activities with children in my setting". The recent survey to the early year's sector shows a continued high rating of the service, and on an ongoing requirement to continue to provide good quality training and CPD opportunities across the sector.
- 2.8 **Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB)** – The MSCB is continuing work on designing the new partnership arrangements. The MSCB is in discussion with Statutory Partners (the Local Authority, the CCG and the Police) and relevant agencies regarding the future partnership and the partnership agreement, which is a statutory requirement. The MSCB is also working on establishing an improved multi-agency dataset to ensure effective management of the partnership and contributions from the key agencies involved. These should be ready to be implemented from April 2019. A full update on MSCB progress and the annual report is included as a separate item for this meeting.
- 2.9 **Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC)** – Current progress demonstrates that there are 33 open cases with 59 parents and 62 children, of which 16 children are aged 0-6 months and a high proportion of young people are aged 16yrs. These children and young people are predominantly white British. There have been 8 pre-proceedings cases, and as a result, the service will produce a protocol on the process for pre-proceedings cases. As of October 6 cases have been completed of which 4 have concluded with children returning home. This is a very good outcome at this early stage of the service.
- 2.10 **Social Impact Bond (SIB)** – The launch event took place on 20th September with many potential boroughs attending. Paul Angeli gave a presentation on the impact of the Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) services on social care, noting that Merton have reached their referral numbers for this year. This led to many boroughs wanting to learn from the best practice models in Merton. The current Panel is working well and will soon migrate to an 'edge of care' panel ensuring all services are discussed to identify a holistic approach to meeting the needs of our most vulnerable families. In Merton some cases have now completed their interventions and the young people have successfully stayed out of care. This has led to outcome payments being generated in line with the SIB 'payment by results' model.
- 2.11 **Inspection Update** – Preparations for upcoming inspections are in hand including for the Youth Offending and SEND inspections for which continued progress is being made. Main developments since the last meeting are summarised below:
- **Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS)** – following the Annual Engagement Meeting with the lead inspector it has been proposed that the topic for the focussed visit is the 'Front Door' (MASH and First Response).

### 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 None

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None