

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **1 December 2020**

Due to government guidance on social-distancing and COVID-19 virus the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 December 2020 will be held virtually online. Arrangements have been made for the press and public to watch the meeting live via the Council's online webcast channel at www.thurrock.gov.uk/webcast

Membership:

Councillors Alex Anderson (Chair), Jennifer Smith (Vice-Chair), Abbie Akinbohun, Sara Muldowney, Bukky Okunade and Elizabeth Rigby

Lynda Pritchard, Church of England Representative
Kim James, Chief Operating Officer, HealthWatch Thurrock
Nicola Cranch, Parent Governor Representative
Sally Khawaja, Parent Governor Representative

Substitutes:

Councillors Daniel Chukwu, Garry Hague, Steve Liddiard and Joycelyn Redsell

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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1 Apologies for Absence

Exclusion of the Public and Press

Members are asked to consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of

Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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|-----------|--|----------------|
| 2 | Minutes | 5 - 22 |
| | To approve as a correct record the minutes of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 October 2020 and the Extraordinary Exempt Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 October 2020. | |
| 3 | Items of Urgent Business | |
| | To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. | |
| 4 | Declaration of Interests | |
| 5 | Youth Cabinet Update (verbal) | |
| 6 | Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (verbal) | |
| 7 | SEND Inspection Outcome - Written Statement of Action Update | 23 - 64 |
| 8 | Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2021/22 | 65 - 78 |
| 9 | Children's Social Care Performance | 79 - 92 |
| 10 | LSCP Independent Peer Review | |
| | Report to follow | |
| 11 | Work Programme | 93 - 96 |

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **23 November 2020**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 October 2020 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Alex Anderson (Chair), Jennifer Smith (Vice-Chair), Abbie Akinbohun, Sara Muldowney, Bukky Okunade and Elizabeth Rigby

Lynda Pritchard, Church of England Representative
Nicola Cranch, Parent Governor Representative
Sally Khawaja, Parent Governor Representative

In attendance: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Michele Lucas, Assistant Director of Education and Skills
Joseph Tynan, Interim Assistant Director of Children's Services
Lee Henley, Strategic Lead, Information Management
Malcolm Taylor, Strategic Lead for Specialist Provision and Principal Education Psychologist
Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being live streamed and recorded, with the video recording to be made available on the Council's Youtube channel.

14. Minutes

The minutes of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 July 2020 were approved as a true and correct record.

15. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

16. Declaration of Interests

Lynda Pritchard declared that she worked for Thurrock SEND services.

17. Youth Cabinet Verbal Update

The Youth Cabinet Representatives gave an update:

- The 'Make Your Mark' youth consultation (run by the British Youth Council) would now be run online. The focus was to encourage more young people to speak and vote on issues important to them. The Youth Cabinet had debated 41 motions for the youth ballot which would be revealed in November.
- The Youth Cabinet had been working on the 'Curriculum For Life' project and reviving the 'Modular Learning Programme' which were sets of small five minute modules covering a short topic. This

programme would be introduced to schools who could pick the modules they wanted to teach.

Michele Lucas questioned whether there were discussions regarding the impact of COVID-19 on young people. Alicia Jones answered that there had been three top motions that had been put forward. These revolved around young people being part of the COVID-19 recovery plan, the impact of COVID-19 in education and job security for young people. Most of the motions revolved around topics involving the impact or outcome of COVID-19 on young people.

18. Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and Adult Social Care Verbal Update

Councillor Halden said that Officers and Members were working hard to balance the budget and expected that there would be difficult days ahead due to the current recession. It was expected that there would be an increase in people accessing the care services or entering care so expenses could increase. The Economic Vulnerability Task Force had been working to help frontline services such as Inspire, the early offer of help through the Children's Centres and Youth Offending Service that continued to tackle gang violence and had just appointed a new gang lead in the service.

On top of the £350,000 increase provided to the fostering service back in July, there was also the proposal of a council tax exemption for foster carers. This would highlight the Council's commitment to Thurrock's foster carers and reduce the Council's reliance on external agency workers which would help the budget. The World of Work funding had been restored and the service had been consulting on the Economic Recovery Strategy which considered care leavers and those with learning disabilities so it was not a generic employment strategy. Councillor Halden highlighted the need for Members to work together to direct finances to frontline services and for the vulnerable. The focus on services for children was intensified in these times and not decreased.

The Chair thanked Councillor Halden for providing an update and was pleased to hear the continued commitment to tackling gang violence.

Councillor Muldowney commented that September 2020 government figures had highlighted that more young people had been furloughed as they had been working in sectors most effected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of unemployed young people was likely to rise significantly by Christmas 2020 and Thurrock's unemployment rate was currently at 12%. An external report had stated that Thurrock was one of the most effected by the pandemic as most of Thurrock's jobs were in the most impacted sectors so Thurrock was highlighted as an area that did not recover as rapidly as other areas. She did not feel the Economic Vulnerability Task Force was doing enough and questioned the steps that were being taken to tackle youth unemployment in Thurrock.

Councillor Halden said that detailed briefings were provided in the Economic Vulnerability Task Force and other Members were invited to join. He stated that Thurrock's youth unemployment figure was not 12% and Thurrock's young people 'Not in Employment, Education, Training' (NEET) percentage was around 1.5%, better than the national average. He went on to say that the service had met with the Department for Work and Pensions to discuss the budget process and continued to support the Inspire service despite other Councils decreasing their careers advice service. Inspire provided more than just career advice as it also provided housing advice and mental health advice. He said that new job opportunities would be created through the Local Plan which would be brought forward soon.

Councillor Muldowney agreed that the NEET figure was low but pointed out that 12% of those were claiming benefits which was on the Government's website and that the overall unemployment rate for Thurrock was above the national average. Councillor Halden reiterated that more people would be accessing social care services and urged Members to respond to the Economic Development Strategy Consultation which looked at more than just new job opportunities as it also ensured that young people leaving further education would be supported.

Referring to the Council Tax Exemption scheme, Councillor Okunade sought clarification on whether the scheme had already been agreed. She also questioned how the effectiveness of the scheme would be measured and if it would be a permanent scheme. Councillor Halden confirmed that the Council Tax Exemption scheme had not been agreed yet and would be considered at Cabinet next week. He had announced it in the press as he was the Portfolio Holder and wanted to highlight that it was a big tax exemption for foster carers which very few boroughs in the country did. There would be more details given when the report would be heard later on that evening.

19. Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - Serious Case Reviews

Sheila Murphy presented the report on behalf of Jane Foster-Taylor (Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership). The report, which can be found on pages 17 – 56, was not a report of the Council's but was a report from the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership.

The Chair was pleased to see the learning outcomes from the serious case review. He queried whether a review process was in place to check that the actions and meetings for information sharing were productive. Referring to appendix 2 of the report, Sheila Murphy said that a lead was assigned to each action point and through the LSCP, there was a Learning and Practice Review Group that met regularly with all the agencies and action points were reviewed and reported back to the Management Executive Board of the LSCP which looked at delivery of the action points. There was also the strategic group of the LSCP and if there were issues with delivery, it would be picked up there.

Referring to page 50, paragraph 118, the Chair queried what the service was doing to ensure children's voices were heard. Sheila Murphy answered that children were heard individually through their social workers and for children known to the service, there were Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and Child Protection Officers (CPOs) who met with the children to hear their views. There were also separate services that looked into engagement and participations with children and the Council had a good team that were very active in listening to the children and feeding back to the service. The inspection from Ofsted last year had commented that the service was strong in listening to children and young people and taking action on these.

Councillor Okunade felt sad to hear of the unfortunate death of a child. She noted certain points of interventions within the review and questioned whether the service needed to review their thresholds and interventions at different thresholds. Sheila Murphy said that the case highlighted practice from 6 years ago and Kyle had been subjected to interim care orders when he was born which was one of the highest levels of interventions in the service's thresholds as well as to child protection, children in need and the early help offer. Families usually moved through the thresholds and it was a question of when more serious action was needed where children would be removed from their families. In this case, each involved agency had felt at different times that the family had been improving so had moved through thresholds. Before the death of Sam, the family had been referred back to the statutory intervention of Children's Social Care services where an assessment had begun.

Councillor Okunade queried what influence the Children's Social Care had over GP surgeries and information sharing between them. Sheila Murphy said that the Council worked well with their partner agencies on care plans and there was a process of review in place with IROs and Independent CPOs. Through the LSCP and Brighter Futures Partnership, the agencies had meetings to review the services they had in place and working together. There were clear procedures and policies in place and there was a strong partnership in Thurrock. To ensure services were effective, this was measured through feedback from children and young people and their families to identify any other services that they wished to see.

Councillor Muldowney noted that the action plan had picked up on the learning outcomes from the agencies working together and asked to see the process for the action plan and other updates to be brought back to Committee at a later date to which the Chair agreed. Referring to page 49, paragraph 117, she felt this highlighted the sadness of the situation and questioned what actions would be in place to ensure a similar situation did not occur again where there had been three critical points to intervene to get the provision right but did not happen for different reasons. Sheila Murphy answered that the paragraph highlighted the reason for serious case reviews and that the practice referred to was back in 2015/16. The report highlighted the improvements made to the service since then which had improved the issues that had been raised. These included Signs of Safety which had a graded care profile that also included neglect concerns in families and training was provided for this. The Prevention and Support Service had been

remodelled since 2016 and the service had ensured more social work qualified managers to check on thresholds. Ofsted had noted the remodelling of the past service and was positive about it. An independent regulator had looked at the services in 2019 and seen evidence of improvements including the additional resources that had been implemented into the service between 2017 and 2019.

Councillor Muldowney sought more details on the recommendation that the Thurrock LSCP had considered the audit of the prevention and support service programme. Joe Tynan explained that the audit group was running independent audits in the Thurrock LSCP and the service was also undertaking quality assurance sampling regularly to test the practice. The feedback from these had been positive and showed consistency and these audits would continue.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendations of the Serious Case Review and the resulting Action Plan.

20. 2019/20 Annual Complaints and Representations Report - Children's Social Care

The report, which can be found on pages 57 – 72, was presented by Lee Henley.

The Chair sought clarification on the percentage figures on timeliness on page 62 which showed a 40% drop between 2018/19 and 2019/20. He also asked whether there were any improvements in place. Lee Henley explained there had been a reduction in performance which was based on 7 from 15 complaints that were responded to within the time frame that equated to 47%. This would be an area the service would aim to improve and respond to complaints within the time frame. Reports were provided to management teams to try to improve figures as well.

Councillor Okunade felt the report did not provide information on the nature of the complaints and showed only statistics. She commended the service on the compliments and noted the number of complaints had reduced from the previous year. She noted the savings of £3,600 made through using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) but questioned the cost of using ADR. Lee Henley answered that the report highlighted areas of complaints on page 65 and that additional details on complaints could be provided in future. Regarding ADR, it required mediation between the Complaints Team, the service area and the complainant to prevent the complaint from escalating which was not a high cost as it normally involved 1 or 2 hours of Officer time.

Referring to page 65, Councillor Rigby queried the increase in 2020 for the Children Looked After Team 1 and also the difference between the teams. Lee Henley explained that the three complaints for that team had been upheld

and learning for this team was highlighted on page 63. Joe Tynan said that there were no differences between the teams, only that they were separated to ensure a manageable caseload in each team to ensure a good standard of practice. The complaints also helped to identify the learning needed which was followed through with the teams.

RESOLVED:

That scrutiny committee considered and noted the report.

21. SEND Inspection Outcome - Written Statement of Action Update

The report, which can be found on pages 73 – 116, was presented by Michele Lucas.

The Chair said it was positive to see the difference in caseloads which had been mentioned at Committee back in February 2020 where there had 250 – 300 caseloads. Regarding agencies working together, he questioned how effective the information sharing and working together across partnerships had been and if this would continue to be effective. Michele Lucas answered that Thurrock had a strong partnership ethos and had a strong partnership with schools, including academies, on SEND improvement. There were a wide range of partners that included schools and health representatives that worked together on the SEND improvements.

Councillor Akinbohun asked how the service were engaging with parents during the pandemic. Michele Lucas answered that engagement had been via virtual meeting platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. There were also phone calls particularly for parents who did not have access to technology but some schools did make this available. There were a range of mediums in place including an Engagement Officer.

Councillor Muldowney commented that progress had slowed in the SEND action plan because of the dissolution of the CaPa Group and queried the reason for the dissolution. Michele Lucas answered that CaPa's Chair had done an amazing job but her son had reached the upper age range so may have felt that she could no longer stay in CaPa. The group may have felt there was no natural successor as Chair so had made the decision to disband. Other LAs had experienced similar situations with their parent carer forums but there would now be support from the national infrastructure to develop a new parent carer forum.

Councillor Muldowney also had a letter from CaPa which highlighted the reason for disbanding as they had worked hard to encourage participation in Thurrock and there had been a lack of feedback from the Council particularly since the SEND Ofsted inspection. CaPa had not been able to feedback on the Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) at consultation stage and had not been given additional time to work remotely together with the Council. Councillor Muldowney mentioned Thurrock's ethos of partnership working and questioned the service's response to CaPa's letter. She also felt that the

Council's lack of engagement with CaPa had led to the dissolution and that without CaPa, there would be a delay to the SEND priorities and strategy. She had received feedback from a few families with concerns of engagement and queried the length of time it would take to re-establish a parent participation group.

Michele Lucas answered that CaPa could not continue in the same way without the Chair who had been integral to the group so had disbanded. Referring to the EHCP, she said that a range of partners had been consulted including CaPa who unfortunately were unable to feedback but had not asked for more time on the consultation. Adding to this, Councillor Halden said that the service was grateful for groups such as CaPa and that the Council was obligated to consult other partners to ensure a diversity of engagement. Sheila Murphy explained that the service worked hard to engage with families in the SEND service and that the dissolution of CaPa was sad but the service had a number of ways to engage with families. The service had dedicated resources for engagement and the service would be happy to meet with groups of parents who were not satisfied with the service and highlighted the importance of engagement as it helped the service to develop and improve.

Referring to page 98, Councillor Muldowney sought clarification on why actions B and C were not coded red. She also asked if the areas with an October 2020 deadline were achievable. Michele Lucas answered that actions B and C was amber as there had been some stakeholder consultation on the indicators in the dashboard and was awaiting to engage with a group of parents. Actions were being undertaken which the service was aiming to complete within the time frames. There was an overarching strategy on engagement that included a range of action plans within it. Adding to this, Sheila Murphy said that operational and strategic groups reviewed the actions to identify potential issues which would be managed with multi agency groups.

Referring to the Area of Concern 1, Councillor Muldowney asked for an example of what the discernible difference would be for SEND families. Michele Lucas answered that the realignment of the Senior Management Team had given a greater oversight to the service and ensured that the EHCP process time frames were met. The service was above national and regional figures on the completion of the EHCP process and the service ensured that they knew their specialist provision through engagement as highlighted from Ofsted.

Referring to the SEND Data Integration Project on page 95, Councillor Okunade commented that the online EHCP would help to speed up the process of developing EHCP especially in the current pandemic and questioned the process of the online EHCP. Michele Lucas explained that the project was in three stages and that the first stage involved integrating SEND and education data together which was now live so it enabled a single view for teams across education and skills in the Council. The second stage was the development of the portal in which would have a longer time frame due to the complex integration work to be done. The service was finalising the time scale to get the portal live and progress to the third stage.

Councillor Okunade questioned how parents would be trained to use the portal. Michele Lucas answered that groups of parents and young people would be brought in to work with the service on the EHCP portal who were an important part of the system.

Referring to EHCP applications from parents, Sally Khawaja mentioned that the service's refusal letter did not detail how a parent could appeal the decision and felt that parents had a right to appeal. There was no link provided so made the process more complicated. She also questioned if the service would contact those parents who had received the refusal letters and outline the steps to a tribunal. Sheila Murphy answered that this would be investigated including the paperwork from those parents with refusal letters and an outcome would be provided to Committee. Lynda Pritchard commented that the letter should guide parents on what to do as every parent had a right to a tribunal although mediation was the best way forward to ensure a better working partnership.

RESOLVED:

O&S to scrutinise the work that has been undertaken during this period and offer challenge and support.

22. Thurrock School Wellbeing Service

The report on pages 117 – 126 was presented by Malcolm Taylor.

The Chair was pleased that a telephone service had been set up for the School Wellbeing Service (SWS) and questioned whether there had been feedback on it. Malcolm Taylor answered that the telephone service had started off slow but have had schools and parents directed to this to have longer conversations and discussion of other issues. Some of these calls had led to virtual meetings that involved the school's Educational Psychologist. The telephone service had enabled school staff members to also use the wellbeing service for more supervision and support.

Councillor Akinbohun queried what support children had been receiving since they had been at home. She also questioned if there had been an increase in referrals to the SWS this year and if the service had the capacity to meet a high level of demand. Malcolm Taylor explained that schools were the first point of contact for raising and identifying concerns which was referred to the school's psychologist or the school's wellbeing service and for further support, the SWS would be contacted. Children at home were supported and some children found it easier to discuss issues through a digital medium as they felt more in control and did not have the social complications in a face-to-face meeting. The service continued to talk with schools on children at home who needed additional support and ensuring that those children had access to services whilst at home including the online services that were already established and linked into schools.

Malcolm Taylor explained that research had shown an increase in the number of referrals for wellbeing services and counselling services on a national and regional level. There was a national programme on training, support and recovery for schools and the service was engaging with schools where there were issues identified. The service was working on resilience building within school systems so teachers were able to identify children with particular difficulties and prioritising those with longer term difficulties. He went on to say that there had been an increase in referral rates and there was a significant level of demand but the SWS was well-established so had that additional level of support. The service was looking at capacity levels to that support and had also worked with schools to develop additional services for 16 – 18 year olds who were at higher risk of anxieties and difficulties.

Councillor Muldowney welcomed the SWS and was pleased to see a programme on resilience building within schools. Referring to the Brighter Futures Survey on page 121, she questioned if the process had started up again. Malcolm Taylor answered that the survey was being undertaken with schools again and that before lockdown, an initial evaluation through a comparative study had been the plan but would not be suitable now due to the impact of COVID-19 and the timescales. The service was now moving forward with all schools to have interventions in place and the team working on the Brighter Futures Survey aimed to complete it this term but was proving to be difficult because of access to IT suites. Support would continue to be offered but the service was mindful to offer the right level of support based on current needs and there had been significant changes to the structure of the evaluation to ensure the better outcomes and focus on delivery. Councillor Muldowney felt it was good to have flexibility and praised the staff and teachers in school on their good work despite being under a lot of pressure and stress due to their immense workload.

Councillor Rigby queried whether there was data showing the number of parents or children referring themselves to the wellbeing service compared to the schools or professional bodies referring children. Malcolm Taylor explained that it would be difficult to extract that data but in schools, children were referred where concerns were identified. For self-referrals, these were from parents rather than children themselves but children were able to access other services. Where concerns were referred to SWS, a risk assessment on the child's wellbeing was also undertaken.

Referring to page 119, Councillor Okunade noted that 80% of schools had completed a Mental Health Action Plan and although 20% was a small number, there could be children in that number that really needed the SWS. She questioned how the service was going to ensure 100% on that target to ensure no child missed out on accessing the SWS. Malcolm Taylor said the work had been impacted by the pandemic and the service intended to reach 100%. Schools also had their own plans in place and the support of the other services they used. The service would be contacting schools that had not shown a completed plan to the Council which may have been due to staffing issues at the time but there were no concerns on the plans identified in any schools. There were also regular discussions between Sheila Murphy and

Chief Executives of Thurrock's Academies where issues were picked up and to ensure schools were thinking about the children's welfare.

In regards to recommendation 1.1, the Chair asked that a member of the School Wellbeing Service provide an update to the Committee on a quarterly basis.

1.1 Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny to identify how they would like the new team to report back – to provide an update on a quarterly basis.

1.2 Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny to note the work that has taken place.

The Committee agreed to suspend standing orders at 9.17pm to allow all the items on the Agenda to be heard.

23. Council Tax Exemption for Foster Carers

The report on pages 127 – 134 was presented by Joe Tynan.

The Chair welcomed the scheme as foster carers would be saving money and noted that very few Councils had this scheme.

Councillor Muldowney had no objections to supporting foster carers but had concerns about fairness and that it would not be a means-tested benefit as some people had higher levels of income. She sought reassurance that the scheme would not affect the Council's ability to give discounts to families in dire financial need. Joe Tynan explained that some foster carers already received a certain level of benefits and the scheme would add to that but it would be dependent on the foster carer's council tax entitlement. Sheila Murphy highlighted that the proposal focused on foster carers only and would not affect anyone else's entitlement to or ability to claim benefits or any other benefits. It was hoped that the scheme would recruit more Thurrock foster carers for Thurrock's children. The recruitment process was rigorous and could take between four to six months which also ensured people were not just taking advantage of the discounted council tax scheme. The Council's current foster carers were thrilled to be recognised through the scheme and it showed the commitment of the Council to people who opened their homes to Thurrock's children who needed it.

Councillor Rigby felt that the scheme was excellent and would save foster carers in the long term. It would also be good if the scheme attracted more foster carers within the Borough.

Councillor Okunade pointed out that some children were cared for out of the Borough and questioned whether those foster carers out of the Borough would benefit from the scheme and how. Joe Tynan clarified that in-house foster carers would qualify for the council tax exemption regardless of where they lived. When future foster carers were recruited, there would be clear

guidelines and boundaries on who would qualify for the scheme. He explained that foster carers out of the Borough would be paid an allowance that would be capped at £1,600.

Councillor Okunade questioned how the service planned to promote the scheme to attract local foster carers if out of borough foster carers were also entitled to the scheme as an allowance. Joe Tynan explained that the current in-house foster carers that lived outside the Borough would qualify for the scheme as an allowance. If any new out of borough foster carers joined, they would not qualify for the scheme. Councillor Halden added that page 131 highlighted that exceptional circumstances could be made at the discretion of Senior Officers where they felt it was necessary.

Councillor Akinbohun questioned how the scheme would benefit someone who already received a council tax exemption. Joe Tynan answered that a person who already had 100% council tax discount would not benefit from the scheme but others who were on 50% exemption would. Cases would be assessed according to personal circumstances. He went on to say that the Council's foster carer pay rates were competitive and with the council tax exemption, if approved, it would put Thurrock ahead of the competition with this unique selling point.

RESOLVED:

For Members to recommend that the introduction of a Council Tax exemption scheme starting in April 2021 (2021/2022 financial year) as outlined in section 3 in this report is considered by Cabinet.

24. Work Programme

The following items were added to the work programme:

- Update on the action plan from the serious case review.

The meeting finished at 9.36 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Extraordinary Exempt Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 October 2020 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Alex Anderson (Chair), Jennifer Smith (Vice-Chair),
Abbie Akinbohun, Sara Muldowney, Bukky Okunade and
Elizabeth Rigby

Lynda Pritchard, Church of England Representative
Nicola Cranch, Parent Governor Representative
Sally Khawaja, Parent Governor Representative

In attendance:

Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Joseph Tynan, Interim Assistant Director of Children's Services
Naintara Khosla, Strategic Lead, Looked After Children
Janet Simon, Strategic Lead, Child Protection and Child in Need
Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being livestream, with the video recording to be made available on the Council's website. The Chair stated that item 4 of the Agenda was an exempt item under Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the report was restricted and would be held in exempt session so would not be live streamed.

25. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

26. Declaration of Interests

Lynda Pritchard declared that she worked for SEND services.

27. Review of High Risk Notifications

Under Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the report was restricted and discussions on the report were held in exempt session.

The meeting finished at 7.55 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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1 December 2020		ITEM: 7
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
SEND Inspection Outcome - Written Statement of Action Update		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	
Report of: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director, Education and Skills		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director, Education and Skills		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report outlines the progress on the work identified within the Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Written Statement of Action, which was agreed by Ofsted in October 2019. It includes an update against the key areas identified in Appendix One.

The reporting period for this report is 1st October to Mid November 2020

Whilst the report will focus on the WSoA, partners will support with a wider system approach. Improvement is being undertaken to ensure that we are listening and co-producing with parents/carers and young people in the delivery of SEND services.

Outlined below are the Ofsted WSoA recommendations:

- Action 1: Inaccurate and incomplete records and ineffective oversight mean that leaders did not know the whereabouts of some children and young people and what provision they have.
- Action 2: Quality assurance is not rigorous enough to ensure effective governance and oversight across the provision and services for 0 to 25-year-olds with SEND. Leaders are reliant on working relationships rather than processes. Leaders are over reliant on the limited information given to them by educational providers about the quality of the provision they purchase.

- Action 3, is about the quality of Education and Health Care (EHC) plans and Annual Reviews and is broken down into the following strands:
 - Strand 1: EHC plans and the annual review process are of poor quality. The local authority has no system in place to make sure that relevant professionals and services are notified when EHC plans need reviewing or updating.
 - Strand 2: Professionals are not routinely informed of requests to submit written information within specified timescales.
 - Strand 3: Too often, EHC plans are out of date and do not accurately reflect the needs or views of children and young people, or the views of the families.
 - Strand 4: The information from EHC plans and annual reviews is not used to inform the commissioning of services, particularly, but not exclusively, for young people between the ages of 19 and 25 years.

1. Recommendation

1.1 O&S to scrutinise the work that has been undertaken during the period outlined in the report and offer support and challenge.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report builds on the work that has been presented to O&S in previous committee meetings. Detailed progress against the WSoA's action plan is provided in Appendix One.
- 2.2 The SEND Improvement Board, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Education, is overseeing both the WSoA and the wider issues identified within the inspection outcome letter. The SEND Improvement Board is a multi-agency partnership recognising that this change programme includes both health and social care. The SEND Operational Group provides regular updates to the SEND Improvement Board, which in turn reports back to Children's Overview & Scrutiny. Feedback provided by both O&S and the SEND Improvement Board is actioned within appendix One. A number of actions in the WSoA were impacted by COVID-19 and a revised timeline plan, with revised dates, was taken to SEND Improvement board by the SEND Operational Group. The revised dates were agreed by the SEND Improvement Board and are reported on in the WSoA plan in Appendix One.
- 2.3 Ofsted have begun a limited SEND inspection programme between September 2020 and March 2021. These short inspections are focussed on safeguarding and work during COVID in SEND and do not include the full inspection framework. It is not known when we will receive a SEND Inspection visit to assess the progress we have made against the WSoA. We will ensure that we keep O&S updated when Ofsted restart the full inspection programme.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to support children and young people with additional needs and as such we are working with a range of partners including health, social care and schools/colleges to ensure we use a whole system approach to ensure smooth transition pathways.
- 3.2 Appendix One gives an update around the key objectives within the WSoA, including the impact of the work and progress against those actions. These have been RAG rated to clearly show our improvement journey.
- 3.3 This report builds on the previous report and identifies areas that have been challenging during COVID 19, revised timescales have been agreed with SEND Improvement Board to mitigate the delays in implementation.
- 3.4 We recognise that the work around participation remains a challenge. As reported at the last O&S meeting we have secured some additional capacity to support with this work has been identified from National infrastructure organisation - Contact. The Service have continued to work with parents/carers and the Associate has undertaken a number of engagement events to invite parents to join a newly formed parent/carer forum.
- The ADES and the Portfolio Holder have taken the opportunity to meet with parents – a recent meeting provided positive feedback around the support from the school and the SEND service. However, the parents did discuss the lack of awareness around the Local Offer. We have addressed this by asking the Principal to resend the link to the local offer to all parents within the school.
- 3.5 The Annual Review Process – this still remains a risk as we are dealing with historical backlogs in the system. As reported at the October O & S additional capacity has been recruited with support reducing historical backlogs relating to annual reviews.
- 3.6 The quality of EHC plan is an area that we are working hard to address. It is worth noting to the committee that plans have many professionals contributing to them e.g. SENCOs in schools, health and social care and we have been undertaking multi agency training to ensure that we have a consistent approach to the writing and agreeing of plans.
- 3.7 The new online portal that is in development will support with this work going forward and we are working on the engagement meetings to ensure multi agency staff are informed in the design of the system.

4. Reason for Recommendation

- 4.1 Children's Overview and Scrutiny have a clear and accountable governance and responsibility around supporting children with additional needs – the standing agenda item will enable committee members to be reassured of the

progress and provide scrutiny in ensuring we are meeting the objectives outlined in the WSOA. We would ask committee member to consider how they would like us report back on progress.

5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

6.1 This report contributes to the following corporate priorities:

Create a great place for learning and opportunity

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance

Additional resources have been identified to ensure that we implement the change programme that is being developed to support children and young people with SEND. This will be monitored alongside the written statement of action to ensure that they have been targeted in the appropriate place to see improved outcomes for children and young people.

In addition, the Dedicated Schools Grant has prioritised resources to support the improvement plan and respond to the increase demand in EHC plans.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**
Interim Deputy Head of Legal (Social Care and Education)

The Council is subject to various duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 in relation to children with special educational needs. These duties are set out in more detail in The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 SI 2014/1530. The regulations set out various timescales for particular steps such as decisions to make and review EHC plans.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**

Team Manager – Community Development and Equalities

Supporting our children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities is a key strategic priority for Thurrock Council. The service continues to promote practice to achieve equality, inclusion and diversity, and will carry out its duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and related Codes of Practice and Anti-discriminatory policy. We have recently redesigned our work around how we engage with children young people and parents/carers who require additional support. To support with this work we have recruited an Inclusion Support Officer who will be working with local stakeholders to enable us to gain feedback on service delivery and how we can ensure it is linked to service transformation.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

None

8. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix 1 - Written Statement of Action – progress update – 1st October – mid November

Report Author:

Michele Lucas

Assistant Director, Education and Skills

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Appendix One – October to mid November 2020

SEND LOCAL AREA

Written Statement of Action

Author: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Education and Skills

September 2019

Version 10

SEND Strategy Priorities 2019-22

<p>Ensure that children and families are at the heart of an effective send system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental engagement and co-production in all areas of SEND. • The role of the Parent/ Carer Forum in putting forward parent voice though CaPa • Parent, child and young person engagement in service commissioning, Planning and delivery • Co-production of individual Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) • Pupil voice and targeted engagement work • Feedback via surveys and group work
<p>Ensure every child and young person is making good progress and attends a good place to learn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive range of high quality SEND services available in mainstream and special early years settings, schools and colleges for children and young people at SEN support and EHC Plan • Measures of individual outcomes progress through EHC Plan and SEN support and beyond academic attainment • Appropriate range of specialist places in place • SEND progress measures in schools and bases for EHC Plan and SEN support • Targeted monitoring and support for all vulnerable groups including SEN support, EHC Plan, LAC, CIN and Young Offenders
<p>Ensure children and families are well supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality comprehensive information on all SEND services through the Local Offer • High quality support services in all provision to enable parents, children and young people to achieve identified outcomes • High quality advisory and support services through Information, Advice and Guidance services (IAGS) • Clear and comprehensive routes of access to Co-ordinated Health & Social Care support including SEN support, CAF, Health Pathways including Emotional, Health & Mental Wellbeing and EHC Plan
<p>Ensure an effective and responsive approach to assessing and meeting the needs of children and their families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality and efficient SEN assessment, delivery, monitoring and administration at early years settings, schools and college provision with effective Local Authority, Health and Social Care contributions • Comprehensive support for children and young people in place leading to enhanced outcomes for all children and young people
<p>Ensure the identification of early support for children with send</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive early identification and support systems including Early Support, Portage, Outreach services and co-ordinated support in Early Years settings incorporating Health, Social Care and Education systems under a single co-ordinated system • Clear systems of support and advice to early years settings to ensure identification of needs and support including support from the Area SENCO
<p>Ensure young people are well prepared for adulthood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and timely Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) Planning ensuring young people have a wide range of opportunities and achieve across all six areas of PFA • Clear and effective systems enabling young people to transition to adult education, Employment, Health and Social Care services based on their individual needs

Introduction

This document outlines the commitment of Thurrock Council and Thurrock's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to address the areas of concern, which were identified in Thurrock's Local Area SEND Inspection, which took place 4th-8th March 2019.

The document highlighted three key areas:

- **Area of Concern 1:** Inaccurate and incomplete records and ineffective oversight meant that leaders did not know the whereabouts of some children and young people and what provision they have.
- **Area of Concern 2:** Quality assurance is not rigorous enough to ensure effective governance and oversight across the provision and services for 0 to 25-year-olds with SEND. Leaders are reliant on working relationships rather than processes. Leaders are over reliant on the limited information given to them by educational providers about the quality of the provision they purchase.
- **Area of Concern 3:** Education Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) and the annual review process are of poor quality. The local authority has no system in place to make sure that relevant professionals and services are notified when EHC Plans need reviewing or updating. Professionals are not routinely informed of requests to submit written information within specified timescales. Too often EHC Plans are out of date and do not accurately reflect the needs or views of children and young people, or the views of the families. The information from EHC Plans and annual reviews is not used to inform the commissioning of services, particularly, but not exclusively, for young people between the ages of 19 and 25 years.

Our Written Statement of Action has been produced in partnership with the Thurrock Council, CCG and Public Health to ensure that all key partners are working together to address the weaknesses identified in the recent inspection. In addition, we have shared the document with our Children's Overview and Scrutiny board, young people, our parent groups, and a focus group of parents and carers recognising the importance of shared ownership and commitment to children and young people with SEND.

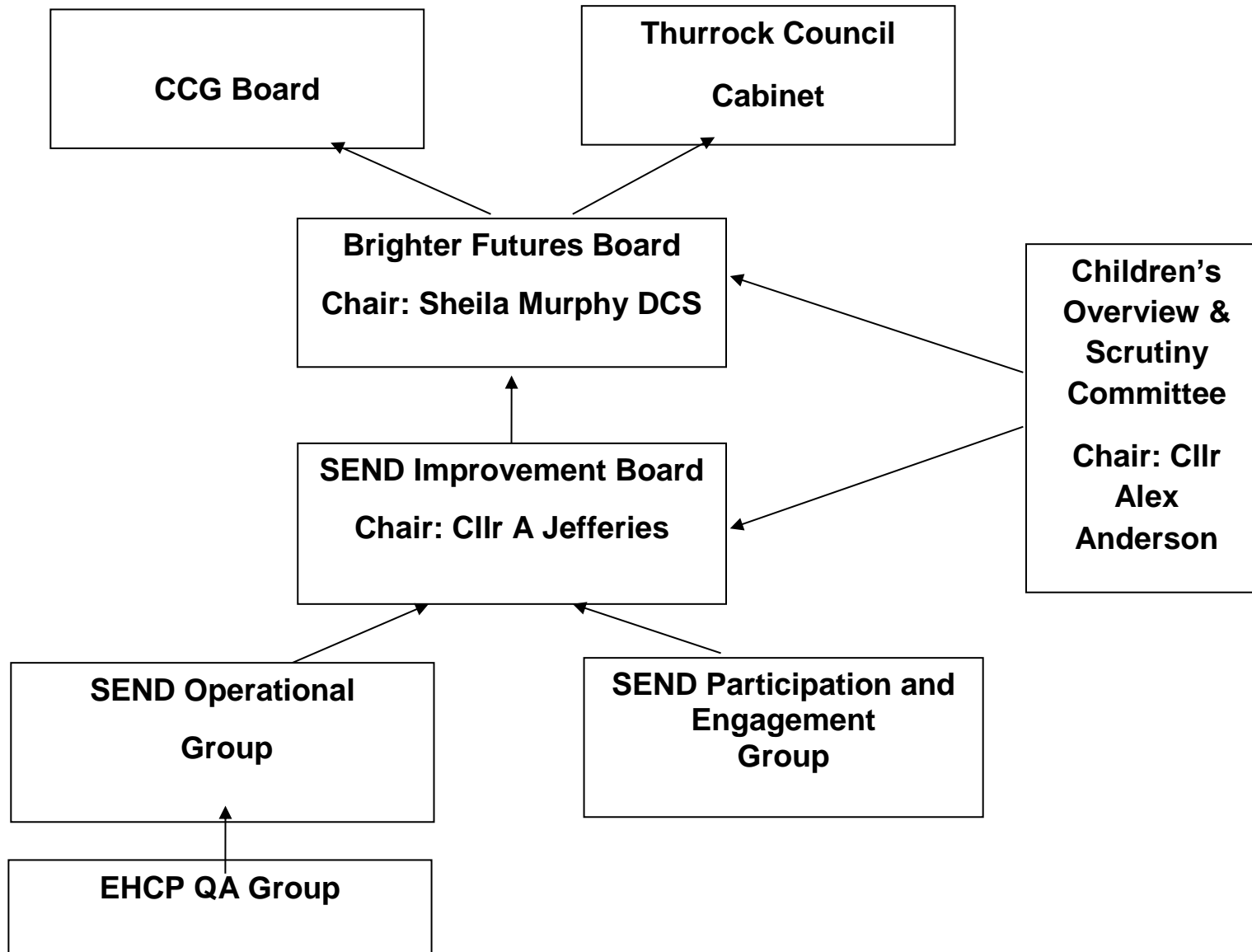
The monitoring of this statement of action will take place on a quarterly basis with the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England, and implementation will be monitored and scrutinised through the Thurrock SEND Improvement Board, which is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health. Our Operational SEND Group will oversee our work Plans and monitor internal performance measures to ensure we have a robust system of quality assurance in place.

Thurrock has a long standing commitment to an inclusive system of education health care and support that actively enables access and full participation to all aspects of community life. This is in compliance with the Salamanca Statement and Framework for action on Special Needs (1994), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is embedded in the Equality Act 2010.

Key responsible people

Portfolio Holder for Education & Health (PFH)	Cllr Andrew Jefferies	CEO Thurrock Council	Lyn Carpenter
Leader of the Council	Cllr Rob Gledhill	Portfolio Holder Children & Adult Social Care	Cllr James Halden
Chair Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Alex Anderson	Corporate Director (CD)	Sheila Murphy
Assistant Director, & Consultant in Public Health	Teresa Salami-Oru	Assistant Director Education & Skills (ADES)	Michele Lucas
Assistant Director Children's Social Care	Joe Tynan	Strategic Lead Specialist Provision / Principal Educational Psychologist (SLSPPEP)	Malcolm Taylor
Strategic Lead School Effectiveness and SEND (SLSESEND)	Andrea Winstone	Strategic Lead Employability and Skills (SLES) previously P16SM	Kate Kozlova-Boran
Strategic Lead Business Intelligence (SLBI)	Mandy Moore	Assistant Director for Integrated Commissioning for Children, Young People & Maternity	Helen Farmer
Chief Nurse, CCG	Jane Foster-Taylor	Strategic Lead for Children Services Commissioning (SLCSC)	Sue Green
Designated Clinical Officer (DCO)	Louise Warren		

SEND Governance Structure



Governance Structure

Thurrock Council working in partnership with Thurrock CCG and Parent Carer Forum has undertaken a review of its Governance of the SEND work across the Local Area.

Children's Overview and Scrutiny will monitor the impacts associated with this plan on bi-monthly basis.

Brighter Futures – Children's Partnership provides the overarching governance arrangements for SEND, work to address the issues within the written statement of action and the wider SEND strategy will be reported to the Brighter Futures – Children's Partnership on a six monthly basis.

SEND Improvement Board meets six weekly and is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health. The membership is made up of senior management from across the Partnership including the CCG and Public Health and the Parent Carer Forum.

SEND Operational Group meets six weekly to ensure the work programme set out in the written statement of action and the wider SEND improvement priorities are on track ensuring effective action. This group reports to the SEND Improvement Board. Membership of this Group is cross partnership and includes operational leads from the LA, CCG, Public Health and Parent Carer representation.

The SEND Participation and Engagement group meets quarterly co-chaired with the Parent Carer Forum to enable a wide range of co-production including Health Education and Social Care across all areas of SEND improvement.

EHCP Quality Assurance Group – this group meets monthly and will oversee the QA process of EHCP's it will report into the operational group and quarterly reports will be provided to the SEND Improvement Board.

RAG RATING KEY

RED	The action has not yet started or there is significant delay in implementation. The action must be prioritised to bring it back on track to deliver.
AMBER	The action has been started but there is some delay in implementation. The action must be monitored to ensure the required improvement is delivered.
GREEN	The action is on track to be completed by the agreed date. Evidence is required to show that the improvement has been embedded and sustained.
BLUE	The action has been completed and is now fully embedded.

Written Statement of Action

Area of concern 1: Inaccurate and incomplete records and ineffective oversight meant that leaders did not know the whereabouts of some children and young people and what provision they have.

Aim of this programme of work:

To ensure that the Local Authority knows where all children and young people are placed and what provision they are accessing. To develop processes to confirm the quality of provision and the welfare of children and young people placed in different settings particularly those placed out of the authority.

We will undertake a review of SEND, EHC Plan records and ensure that they are updated by the SEN team. This will be audited monthly by members of the senior manager team and reported through our performance management framework to Directors Board and the SEND Improvement Board.

KPIs / Targets for assessing overall success of the programme

- All EHC Plans are reviewed and quality assured to meet statutory assessment timelines

- The system at any time can produce this information readily.

- An accurate list of all C&YP with EHC Plans:-

- Where they are placed
- Date the EHC Plan was reviewed and when next review is due
- For those placed in residential /out of authority or home educated dates of the last monitoring visits to check welfare
- Up to date information around children/young people who are “awaiting specialist provision”
- Clear processes in place to ensure we are tracking those that may be missing education

Area of Concern 1: Inaccurate and incomplete records and ineffective oversight meant that leaders did not know the whereabouts of some children and young people and what provision they have

Aims: To ensure that the Local Authority knows where all children and young people are placed and what provision they are accessing. To develop processes to confirm the quality of provision and the welfare of children and young people placed in different settings particularly those out of the authority.

Actions	Action completed by	Responsible Officer	Outcomes and measures																
<p>A1. Management oversight- Realignment of Education and Skills leadership so that there is an enhanced focus on quality and performance monitoring of provision</p> <p>a) Complete re-alignment documentation</p> <p>b) Consultation with management team members re the new structure.</p> <p>c) Realign duties to Strategic Leads and Post 16 Lead and amend job descriptions</p> <p>Strategic Leads and Post 16 Leads line managed by ADES</p> <p>e) Rigorous monitoring of the SEND services to ensure that outcomes and measures are met</p> <p>RAG rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="114 1034 752 1283"> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>April 2020</td> <td>July 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021							<p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>ADES</p> <p>ADES</p> <p>ADES</p> <p>ADES</p> <p>ADES</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Distributed leadership of service – service realigned into three areas Specialist provision, Operations and Post 16</p> <p>Service leads closely monitor and performance manage the SEND operational teams</p> <p>Service leads attend case management decision making panel</p> <p>Service leads visit each out of borough placement to QA</p> <p>There are clear lines of responsibility and reporting</p> <p>Rigorous monitoring improves performance of SEND team measured by timescales, feedback from parents and education establishments, % of plans audited that comply with the QA framework, % of annual reviews completed on time (see section 3)</p> <p>Quarterly report on performance to the SEND Board starting in October 2019</p> <p>And as a result:</p> <p>Local Authority (ADES) has effective oversight of where all children and young people with SEND are placed and the provision they are accessing thus ensuring they are achieving their outcomes</p> <p>Increased management capacity which will lead to closer scrutiny of all cases ensuring all children and young people are placed in appropriate provision</p>
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020																
Oct 2020	Jan 2021																		

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Progress will be governed by SEND Improvement Board

A1 progress update – October to November 2020:

Actions **a) - d)** around the management realignment have been completed. Action **e)** remains ongoing with evidence of current progress outlined below.

1. EHC Plans completed within 20 week timeframe for October was 70%. There is a total of 18 EHC plans that will be reported as Valid Exceptions. Valid Exceptions are granted when an EHC Plan is finalised after 20 weeks due to exceptional circumstances (schools closed for more than four weeks/ parents requesting a delay/ halt in the process/ delays due to Covid-19).
2. COVID action plan developed around delays to some actions – this has been reviewed and timelines and have amended with approval from SEND Board. This is reported back via the SEND Operational Group and then onto the SEND Improvement Board. An ongoing risk remains around the current position due to COVID 19 and the potential for further disruption with schools having to self-isolate specific year groups as a result of the pandemic. This was reviewed at the October SEND Improvement Board. The Board recognised that engagement remains a key risk and as such an update of further work will be presented to the December SEND Board.
3. Clear management oversight relating to specialist provision – QA of all provision has been undertaken and recommendations have been implemented around the plans – further report was provided to the board which outlined the schedule of visits over the coming academic year. This will identify and action any feedback around the educational offer provided keeping the clear focus on the outcomes for the child

22. Records and oversight of all Post 16 provision for CYP with SEND to be reviewed to ensure accuracy of placement for the young person in line with Ofsted Written Statement of Action

- a) Identify additional funding stream for additional capacity through a business case to Director's Board
- b) Recruit 3 additional post 16 officers with careers advice and guidance qualifications and 1 tracking officer
- c) Create a quality assurance framework for post 16 provision using regional guidance to be developed further with Children , Young People, Parents /Carers and Partners

April 2020

P16SM

July 2019

P16SM

Feb 2020

P16SM

Outcomes

Increased capacity in Post 16 team to address areas of identified concern in the Ofsted Inspection.

New learning pathways and courses are developed locally for Preparing for Adulthood(PfA) building on current provision for young people

All CYP from year 9+ will have an annual PfA advisor attend their annual review will deliver CEIAG (Career education, information and guidance) to SEND YP in Year 9,10,11, 12, 13 and 14 to identify needs early on, consistently work on SMART career targets using the Careers Action Plan as the golden thread throughout the YP's journey. Reporting on destinations of YP is robust.

<p>d) Commission post 16 provision using the framework developed – action date</p> <p>e) Agree KPIs with all post 16 providers to enable the officers to measure impact of provision</p> <p>f) In collaboration with South Essex College, USP and Thurrock Adult Community College improve the post 16 offer locally, ensuring information from PFA meetings/ annual reviews taken into account</p> <p>g) The Action Plans for Young People undergoing transition with EHC Plans are collated by the Preparing for Adulthood Officer on a termly basis to inform the future provision</p> <p>h) Embed seamless pathways between Children’s and Adult Social Services through PfA monthly meetings</p> <p>Create new career action plans appropriate to different year groups</p> <p>RAG rating</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>April 2020</td> <td>July 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;"></td> <td style="background-color: #92d050;"></td> <td style="background-color: #ffc107;"></td> <td style="background-color: #ffc107;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021							<p>August 2020 August 2021</p> <p>Feb 2020 Oct 2020</p> <p>April 2020 Oct 2020</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Nov 2019</p> <p>Sept 2019</p>	<p>P16SM</p> <p>P16SM</p> <p>P16SM</p> <p>P16SM</p> <p>P16SM</p> <p>P16SM</p>	<p>And as a result:</p> <p>CYP welfare and quality of education is regularly assessed and monitored</p> <p>Post 16 provision is commissioned based on intelligence from PfA sections of reviews of EHCPs</p> <p>Evidenced by:</p> <p>Development of new bespoke programmes to ensure learner needs are met.</p> <p>Improvement to the curriculum; internship opportunities; careers advice and access to employment and apprenticeships for young people.</p> <p>Additions to the post 16 curriculum for young people with SEND (both with EHCPs and at SEND support) for the academic year 2020/21 compared with 2019/19.</p> <p>Increase in supported internship from baseline in the SEN2 return 2019 of 24.</p> <p>Increase in apprentices with EHCPs for the baseline in the SEN2 return 2019 of 19.</p> <p>Changes in the levels of YP aged 16-19 with EHCPs NEET from 2019 baseline. Changes in the overall level of YP who are NEET from 2019 baseline.</p> <p>Leaders know the whereabouts of all children and young people and what provision they have evidenced by records produced from the database/IT system.</p> <p>Young people meet their potential and have fulfilling lives and careers as evidenced by :-</p>
	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020															
	Oct 2020	Jan 2021																	

			<p>Young people have access to new bespoke programmes to meet learner needs.</p> <p>Improved access to the curriculum; internship opportunities; positive transitions from children to adult health services; careers advice and access to employment and apprenticeships; positive transitions from children's to adult's social care, access to housing and support for independent living.</p>
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A2 Progress update: - October to November 2020 :

A number of actions [(a) (b) (g) (h) (i)] have been completed. However, we have had some issues around timescales due to COVID restrictions for actions [(c) (d) (e) (f)]. These revised timescales have been approved by the SEND improvement board in summer 2020 and below is an overview of the activity which has taken place including information around support for young people during the period of school closure.

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1. Post 16 providers have established focus groups in their institutions to further imbed the voice of the YP. The development of further KPI's for post 16 providers will be within the recently reviewed partnership agreement. Information from the partnership agreements will inform practice from January 2021.
2. Current work is progressing to ensure we are able to support young people with the newly established internship opportunities that will be generated for January 2021 – which are addressing the issues around post 16 opportunities. The People's Board have approved the apprenticeship and supported internship programme which will commence in January 2021 – this will link into Kick Start programme which will offer 6 months paid work placements for young people.
3. A video has been produced around our post-16 Innovative programme delivered at Grangewaters, which incorporates team building, H&S, First Aid - programmes enhancing YP's employability skills – this is to build confidence in the programme and attract more SEND learners going forward. This will be linked to our local offer and other digital platforms.
4. The current % of SEND 16-25 year olds NEET is 9.8%, which is an increase from last year's performance of 4.8%, and higher than the statistical neighbours but the average % is 7.4%) and higher than England figure (8.4%). Although our NEET figure is high our unknowns are significantly lower than East of England and England.

SEND 16-24	NEET/Unknown
Thurrock	17.9%
East of England	55%
England	63.4%

The NEET is high but ceasing Plans have taken place which will dramatically improve the NEET figure. A total of 17 plans are currently in the ceasing process with a further 15 identified. The Young People will have support but most do not want to enter back into education and are in employment or under social care or ill.

5. **16-25** year old SEND learners Not in Education Employment and Training is currently at 7.5% - national data is difficult to source however Thurrock has a strong tracking team which enables us to have a clear data set around where our young people are. This figure relates to a wider cohort than the 16-18 year olds.

<p>A3: Governance of SEND Service will be reviewed to ensure, there is effective oversight all children and young people.</p> <p>SEND Improvement Board and SEND Operational Board to be established</p> <p>Agree terms of reference for the boards and arrangements for communicating decisions and reporting lines</p> <p>c) Board to be Chaired by Portfolio Holder, and DCO, ADES, ADCS, CD attend board meetings</p> <p>d) Embed the operational aspects of governance structures, working groups and forums established by WSoA and already in existence in order to ensure aligned and effective implementation of WSoA.</p>	<p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>Jan 2020</p>	<p>ADES</p> <p>DCO</p> <p>ADCS</p> <p>CD</p>	<p>Outcomes and measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased senior management oversight Challenging but realistic targets are set Clear lines of accountability Poor performance is challenged and addressed <p>And as a result:</p> <p>Membership agreed. The chair of the board is the PFH for Education and Health and OFSTED Regional Lead is also a member</p> <p>New board meeting on 14th June to oversee the development of the Written Statement of Action</p> <p>Board have met and signed off the re-submitted WSOA.</p> <p>The performance framework will demonstrate a system wide approach to children and young people with SEND</p>
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<p>e) The board will hold performance of SEND department to account through monthly performance data monitoring</p> <p>RAG rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="107 347 752 596"> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>April 2020</td> <td>July 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;"></td> <td style="background-color: #6495ed;"></td> <td style="background-color: #6495ed;"></td> <td style="background-color: #6495ed;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #00b0f0;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021							<p>Jan 2020</p>	<p>CD</p>	<p>Performance of department will improve and children and young people's experience of support arrangements for SEND will improve</p>
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020																
Oct 2020	Jan 2021																		

A3 Progress update October to November 2020:

All action points [(a) – (e)] have been completed. Governance has been strengthened with the development of the SEND operational group and the SEND Improvement Board as well as Children Overview & Scrutiny and the Health & Wellbeing Board holding the SEND Partnership to account.

- Operational Group meetings on a monthly basis with the SEND Improvement Board meeting every 4 weeks providing support and challenge. The Board have moved to monthly meetings to ensure they are tracking progress. These groups are made up of a health, social care and schools to ensure we have a whole systems approach to monitoring progress.
- Overview and Scrutiny are provided with regular reports and have informed changed in practice – an example of this relates to a question from O&S around one of the letters that the SEND team produce and the inclusion of a website – this has been actioned.

Impact

- Monthly data returns demonstrate that the % EHCPs finalised within the 20 weeks timescales has remained above the published data for England (60%). 70% of EHC Plans were completed within the 20 week timescale in October, bringing the year to date total of 76% of EHC plans finalised within 20 weeks. Between 1 January 2020 and 31 October 2020 the SEN Service finalised 170 EHC Plans in total.

<p>A4: Improve the accuracy and quality of record keeping</p>			<p>Outcomes</p>
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<p>a) Update all data currently held on the Synergy SEN Data base system to ensure annual review dates, placements/ schools/ year groups and other information is correct.</p> <p>b) Bi-weekly training programme in place for all SEND team in the processes for annual reviews/ case work/ recording/ customer service/ practice standards</p> <p>c) Train SEND caseworkers to use all the modules on the Synergy SEND system</p> <p>d) Embed SEND Children Missing Education (CME) processes and recording through CME monthly monitoring of cases.</p> <p>e) Distribute CME reporting and recording processes to SEND/ EWS/ Admissions/ Social Care/ schools</p> <p>RAG</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="107 1018 768 1267"> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>April 2020</td> <td>July 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;"></td> <td style="background-color: #66b3ff;"></td> <td style="background-color: #66b3ff;"></td> <td style="background-color: #66b3ff;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #00a0e3;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021							<p>Sep 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>Feb 2020</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Nov 2019</p>	<p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p>	<p>The system at any time can produce this information readily to support Children and Young People's outcomes.</p> <p>100% Records are accurate and up to date</p> <p>Staff training has commenced and is undertaken by all staff on a Bi-weekly basis</p> <p>An accurate list of all C&YP with EHC Plans:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where they are placed - Date the EHC Plan was reviewed and when next review is due - For those placed in residential /out of authority or home educated dates of the last monitoring visits to check welfare - Up to date information around children/young people who are "awaiting specialist provision" <p>And as a result:</p> <p>All current data on Synergy is complete and accurate.</p> <p>CME processes are clear and understood by all</p> <p>All partner agencies have copies of the revised CME process and have undertaken training or awareness raising on the new process</p> <p>Clear processes in place to ensure we are tracking those that may be missing</p> <p>20 week timescale for completing EHCPs is met in line with the SEND code of practice 2015</p> <p>All members of the SEND team will have completed a training programme to understand the current SEN team requirements for</p>
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020																
Oct 2020	Jan 2021																		

			<p>data recording and to understand how to input this data into Synergy</p> <p>The Synergy system can produce all required information, accurately and in a timely manner</p> <p>CYP have timely annual reviews of the EHC Plans</p>
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A4 Progress update – October to November 2020:

All actions **[(a) – (e)]** have been completed. Please see below for an overview of the systems work that has been undertaken

1. Strategic Lead has reviewed approximately 400 casefiles on Synergy – EHCP/ Children Missing Education, Elected Home Educated and Post 20. The reviews have highlighted some actions that caseworkers need to undertake – these have been followed up and actioned.
2. Data cleansing activities are ongoing- review of anomalies ongoing and system being updated – to ensure that the data is accurate and current thus addressing some of the Ofsted concerns around data collection.
3. Staff have undertaken training (28/10/20) from PATT- on EHCP outcomes and provision – Improvement Manager delivered EHCP 20 week process and updated letters that the workflows produce automatically. SEND Lead has delivered Making Sense of Autism (14/10/20) Autism Education Trust Person Centred Planning module to caseworkers (4/11/20)

Impact:

4. Casefiles and data is more accurate
5. Staff have a better understanding of some of the difficulties faced by some of the children they represent. Staff have a clear understanding of the revised processes/ letters automatically generated by the system. Fewer letters are needed. More person centred approach via agreed phone calls at each step of the process and letters are more person centred for families.

A5: SEND data integration project.			Outcomes
a) Identify resources to Progress the Synergy Health Check work	July 2019	SLBI	A fully integrated system that supports the work of the SEND service and provide better outcomes for young people.
b) Recruit additional capacity for Synergy system	Oct 2019	SLBI	And as a result
c) Identify the current shortcomings in the current system	Sep 2019	SLBI	System is being used to full capacity
d) Create an options appraisal for systems integration	Sep 2019	SLBI	Records are up to date and accurate
			Workflows in place to remind caseworkers and managers of tasks

e) Identify appropriate system providers f) Review and update data management system g) Research the introduction of Synergy or other line EHC PLAN system h) Introduce an online EHC Plan system that is user friendly for parents/ CYP/ stakeholders-ensuring training is in place for all from system provider RAG		Oct 2109	SLBI	The team performance improves																
		Oct 2019	SLBI	The system to include views and wishes of parents/carers/ CYP is on line and user friendly and enables all to give feedback to inform service development																
		Dec 2019	SLBI																	
		March 2020	SLBI																	
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Oct 2019</th> <th>Jan 2020</th> <th>April 2020</th> <th>July 2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021										
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A5 Progress update – October to November 2020

Actions **[(a) – (g)]** have been completed. The systems integration project will be completed in two phases.

- Whilst this was originally indicated red against the original timescale of March 2020 the SEN data merge is now complete and the second phase (Portals) is a new IT project in its own right. Business Analysis workshops are being arranged with the service between December 20 and February 21; this will collate the business process requirements, which will be required to inform the portal configuration. The deadline date of March 21 has therefore been applied for completion of portal implementation plan with informed portal project dates to be confirmed to the board once the business analysis workshops are complete. This has therefore been changed to ‘amber’ and will be amended to ‘green’ once the workshops are physically confirmed.

Area of Concern 2: Quality assurance is not rigorous enough to ensure effective governance and oversight across the provision and services for 0 to 25-year-olds with SEND. Leaders are reliant on working relationships rather than processes. Leaders are over reliant on the limited information given to them by educational providers about the quality of the provision they purchase.

Aim of this programme of work:-

- (i) **Ensure relevant governing bodies (e.g. SEND Improvement Board and Health and Wellbeing Board) have access to a range of indicators relating to outcomes, service quality and performance to assess how well the local area is meeting the needs of C&YP with SEND**
- (ii) **Ensure the development and application of the performance framework engages children and young people with SEND and their parents**
- (iii) **Ensure there is a robust quality assurance framework for those children and young people with EHCPs placed outside Thurrock that ensures they make progress, promotes their independence and ensures their wellbeing and safety.**
- (iv) **Strengthen the quality assurance arrangements for the provision of post 16 education for students with SEND and specialist school provision**
- (v) **Ensure key services for C&YP operate within a high quality QA framework that embeds co-production – particularly with regard to the drafting and review of EHCPs (section 3 below, post 16 provision, provision for children and young people placed out of borough. This will be compliant with the SEND Code of Practice (2015).**

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KPI's/Targets for assessing overall success of the programme:-

- a) Developing a strategic data dashboard covering education, health and social care provision which includes outcomes and indicators of service quality and performance for use by strategic managers and governing bodies responsible for overseeing the provision of services of C&YP with SEND and taking policy/commissioning decisions (see area concern 1)
- b) Developing a QA framework for key aspects of service delivery with a range of partners with priority being given to the following:
 - EHC Plans include the views, wishes and feelings of children, young people, their families and carers
 - EHC Plans are clear, concise, understandable and accessible
 - EHC Plans set out how partners will co-ordinate and work together to support the child, young person, parent and carers
 - EHC Plans clearly identify need and include specific outcomes

The framework will also be inclusive of those placed in independent/non maintained/residential settings and special circumstances.

- c) Reviewing post 16 local offer and how it links into the adult social care transitional pathway.

Area of Concern 2: Quality assurance is not rigorous enough to ensure effective governance and oversight across the provision and services for 0 to 25-year-olds with SEND. Leaders are reliant on working relationships rather than processes. Leaders are over reliant on the limited information given to them by educational providers about the quality of the provision they purchase.

Aims: Ensure relevant governing bodies (e.g. SEND Improvement Board and Health and Wellbeing Board) have access to a range of indicators relating to outcomes, service quality and performance to assess how well the local area is meeting the needs of C&YP with SEND and key services for C&YP operate within a newly refreshed QA framework.

Ensure the development and application of the performance framework engages children and young people with SEND and their parents.

Ensure there is a robust quality assurance framework for those children and young people with EHCPs placed outside Thurrock that ensures they make progress, promotes their independence and ensures their wellbeing and safety.

Strengthen the quality assurance arrangements for the provision of post 16 education for students with SEND and specialist school provision.

Actions	Action Completed by	Responsible Officer	Outcomes and measures								
<p>B1: Develop a strategic performance monitoring dashboard engaging parents/carers in its development and review</p> <p>Review possible indicators and their availability</p> <p>Consult with stakeholders and the key indicators for inclusion in dashboard including engaging parent carers to ensure a strong ethos around co production</p> <p>c) Use an interim dashboard of key indicators and revise and finalise following consultation</p> <p>RAG</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p>	<p>SLSP</p> <p>SLSP</p> <p>SLSP</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>A framework that will:</p> <p>Enable the governing bodies (and the public) to know how well the local area is discharging its duties in meeting the needs of C & YP with SEND across education, health and social care.</p> <p>Identify priority areas for improvement.</p> <p>Evidenced by:</p> <p>The notes of the SEND Participation and Engagement Group, and other governing bodies that the indicators are regularly reviewed and any implications are discussed and used to guide service improvements</p>								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>April 2020</td> <td>July 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> </tr> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020							
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020								

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Oct 2020	Jan 2021			

B1 Progress update – October to November 2020:

Action **(a)** has been completed. Actions **(b)** and **(c)** have been delayed due to COVID 19. We are working with partners including parents and carers to review the data sets. Outlined below is an overview of the work that has been undertaken to date.

1. The enhanced data set will be presented to the Participation and Engagement Group, SEND Operational Group and SEND Improvement Board in November. This will enable the capture of more data to inform the ongoing development of practice and included health and social care data.

<p>B2: Enable the voice of Parents/Carers to ensure the quality assurance of all areas of support for Children and young people with SEND</p> <p>48</p> <p>a) Write, publish and complete the strategy and action plans of the Engagement and Communication Strategy informed by a range of partners.</p> <p>b) In line with the Integrated Commissioning Framework for SEND, ensure all commissioning is co-designed with children, young people and parents</p> <p>c) New SEND Inclusion Support officer recruited whose role is to use the feedback from parents/carers children and young people to embed our quality assurance framework</p> <p>d) Support the development of the Parent Carer Forum (CAPA) to increase its scope and reach</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Oct 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>Dec 2020</p>	<p>SLSPPEP</p> <p>SLCSC</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Engagement & participation Plan in place with the action plans evidencing partnership with parents/carers and young people. Established links in place with key partners identifying priorities to inform the new engagement strategy. Strategy will enable the engagement & participation with parents/carers and young people</p> <p>There is a clear offer in place for all children and young people focussed on achieving meaningful outcomes, which has been developed through joint commissioning and co-production with CYP and their parents/carers.</p> <p>Feedback from quality assurance activities with parents/carers children and young people leads to identified areas of improvement in SEND provision.</p> <p>Increase in the engagement from parents/carers of CYP attending mainstream provision as well as Special Schools. Evidenced by membership numbers of the parent carer forum from January 2019 baseline.</p> <p>The leadership/governing bodies in Thurrock are assured they are considering performance indicators that reflect aspects of service</p>
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<p>to children and young people attending mainstream as well as special schools.</p> <p>e) Ensure parent/carers are involved in the development and review of the multi-agency performance dashboard to ensure it reports on areas they feel are most important to their children.</p> <p>RAG rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="107 507 768 758"> <thead> <tr> <th>Oct 2019</th> <th>Jan 2020</th> <th>April 2020</th> <th>July 2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021							<p>April 2020</p> <p>Dec2020</p>	<p>SLBI</p>	<p>quality that are important for parent/carers and children with SEND Improved pathways and outcomes for CYP with SEND and meaningful training and employment opportunities are accessed</p> <p>And as a result.</p> <p>There will be clear evidence of improved outcomes achieved across all aspect of the SEND system</p> <p>Services will have improvements identified and acted on based on Parent/Carer, CYP feedback.</p> <p>Post 16 bespoke programmes are designed to create innovative pathways for young adults which will lead to a greater level of independence</p>
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020																
Oct 2020	Jan 2021																		

2022 Progress update – October to November 2020:

Action (c) has been completed. However, actions [(a) (b) (d) and (e)] are significantly delayed due to the recent closure of CaPa the parent carer forum. More detail of this is outlined in the O&S report. Below is an outline of the work that has been completed with parents and carers.

- The September feedback from the telephone and portal consultations evidence the following. This is based on 10 respondents who all received a final EHCP in August 2020.
 - 100% of parent carers or guardians either agree or strongly agree that they were fully involved in the process
 - 100% of parent carers or guardians either agree or strongly agree that communication throughout the process was satisfactory
 - 100% of parent carers or guardians either agree or strongly agree that their child or young persons EHCP accurately reflects their needs
 - 90% of parent carers or guardians either agree or strongly agree that the provision in their child or young persons EHCP would meet their needs
- Parent Carer Forum

The work with Contact the national DfE funded organisation that supports Parent Carer Forums through the regional and national network is in place. The Associate has been appointed and has worked closely with the administrator from CaPa in closing the remaining CaPa work and transferring to a holding Facebook contact supported by Contact to develop a new Parent Carer Forum. Contact has consulted with local parent organisations including PATT the advice and support service to plan the next steps in developing a new Parent Carer Forum.

Consultation activities have taken place during November. Four virtual events have taken place and we are using this as a platform for the development of the new Parent/Carer forum. The key focus of this work has been on the Local Offer.

Post 16 programme for Autism is developed and commissioned annually and is based on the outcomes of identified needs for post 16 children and YP in Thurrock. This run with support from adult social care, health and parents/carers and young people

The Preparing for Adulthood Strategy has been reviewed with groups of parents and carers and a new plan for its development and implementation has been developed.

Page 50	B3: Engagement with children/young people				Outcomes
	a) New Pupil/Student Engagement Strategy and Implementation Plan to be written and published.	March 2020	SLSPPEP		Strategy, Engagement Plan will be co-produced by young people will be in place and demonstrate the impact of children/young people's views on services.
	b) Collect the views of parents/carers/ CYP with SEND through the new engagement portal as a baseline and continue to measure throughout the service transformation	December 2020 Nov 2019	SLSPPEP		This will include workshops with the Youth Cabinet, training and implementation of peer ambassadors and pupil workshops. Governed by SEND Improvement Board & Thurrock's Youth Cabinet
	c) PFH and ADES will host a minimum of four engagement events a year for parents/carers/ CYP to gain feedback in relation to service development.	August 2020 Dec 2020	ADES		To gain greater clarity on how engagement with schools can be improved And as a result:
d) Participatory Joint Strategic Needs Assessment refresh looking at the lived experience of children and young people and their families	April 2021	ADPH/ SLSPPEP		CYP's voice will inform service transformation and be central to their EHC Plan Co-production will work at: a) Strategic level e.g. JSNA, Joint Commissioning strategy, Capital Programme b) Service level e.g. reviews and redesign of the Health , Education or care services delivery c) Individual Level e.g. plans will be based on individual needs identified from a person-centred approach.	
RAG rating					
	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020	

Oct 2020	Jan 2021			

B3 Progress update – October to November 2020:

Action **(b)** has been completed and action **(d)** is on track to be completed. On the other hand, actions **(a)** and **(c)** have been delayed due to COVID 19. The SEND Participation Officer has hosted a number of sessions to gather the voice of our children and young people which are outlined below.

1. Online portal and parent phone call consultation is in operation and is providing ongoing feedback on the SEND processes. The monthly report and feedback from the portal is fed into SEND casework training meetings.
2. Parent engagement meetings carried out focussing on the development of Preparing for Adulthood leading to enhanced priorities for PfA work
3. The work on pupil engagement has been developed so that it is linked to the broader engagement work that takes place across children’s services. Work is underway with the Youth Services to support this work through further development of the existing participation and engagement strategy for children to ensure there is a renewed focus on children with SEND. A new action plan is in development from this.
4. A new SEND Young Inspectors Programme with a small group of learners is in development with an initial focus on reviewing the Local Offer. This programme has been implemented from mid-November

<p>B4: Quality of provision – Non-Maintained Special Schools and Independent Special Schools. Process of out of borough visits and quality assurance of placements to be reviewed and strengthened via rigorous QA visits and QA framework</p> <p>a) Commissioning activity for individual placements include the voice of the child/young person within each specification</p> <p>b) Ensure there is an up to date record of placements containing a planning schedule to ensure all placements are monitored annually including quality assurance process.</p> <p>c) Introduce new KPI monitoring framework for all independent schools through a commissioning framework.</p>	<p style="background-color: green; color: black; text-align: center;">Aug 2020</p> <p style="background-color: cyan; color: black; text-align: center;">Jan 2020</p> <p style="background-color: yellow; color: black; text-align: center;">Aug 2020</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SLSPPEP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SLPPEP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SLCSC</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>100% of all out of borough provisions are visited utilising the quality assurance framework developed by Health, Social Care and Education.</p> <p>Planning schedule of monitoring visits in place, updated on a monthly basis</p> <p>All out of borough placements will be visited once a year ensuring that all provision is meeting the needs of the children and young people attending. More frequent visits will be undertaken where there is a need</p> <p>KPI’s developed linking with national best practice</p> <p>As a result:</p>
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RAG rating				Provision is identified as meeting the KPI and appropriate actions taken with providers to address any identified underperformance as evidenced by notes of visit and records of follow up actions All CYP with SEND attend a good or better educational provision – no RI and inadequate providers will be used as new placements as evidenced by department records on placement.
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020	
Oct 2020	Jan 2021			

B4 Progress update – October to November 2020:

Action **(b)** has been completed. Actions **(a)** and **(c)** remain ongoing with some delay due to COVID 19. An outline of the work undertaken is below.

1. Full review of out of borough placements and updated information on Synergy completed ensuring that we are clear where our children and young people are.
2. New Quality Assurance Framework for individual placements has been implemented and includes specific consultation with young people to ensure the voice of the child/young person is an integral part of this process. Feedback is being fed back into the service via training events Information from pupils where visits took place as part of the QA framework visits, led to discussions with providers where appropriate to ensure the needs of individuals were being met and any general issues for the provider are being addressed. Any key points arising from QA visits are discussed with senior management.
3. Full QA process completed on all Independent and Non-Maintained special schools completed August 2020. All issues identified in Audit actioned with providers. Examples would include ensuring provider websites include all necessary information and amendments to policies where appropriate.
4. Further work has been completed in October on the overview of all Independent School Places including Ofsted updates and pupil placement checks linked to annual review priorities.
5. New QA virtual visits are in place for prioritised schools for November and December to ensure ongoing progress in schools where Ofsted previously identified concerns

B5: Commissioning of provision			Outcomes
a) Produce and sign off with Providers new Service Level Partnership Agreements for local	April 2020 July 2020	SLSPPEP	KPIs informs information re quality of provision and service delivery therefore is evidenced as meeting the needs of the CYP attending.

<p>provision - ensuring all are updated with appropriate KPI's in place.</p> <p>b) Implement the Integrated Commissioning Framework for SEND, which will ensure there is a fully planned and consistent approach to the commissioning of all special school placements.</p> <p>c) Audit of provision to be reported to SEND Improvement Board</p> <p>RAG rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="107 603 770 855"> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>April 2020</td> <td>July 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020					Oct 2020	Jan 2021							<p>Aug 2020</p> <p>Oct 2020</p> <p>Aug 2020</p>	<p>SLCSC</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p>	<p>Governed by SEND Operational Group & SEND Improvement Board</p> <p>As a result:</p> <p>QA of provision has senior management oversight and the children and young people are accessing appropriate quality provision monitoring reviews and feedback from children, young people, carers and parents</p>
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020																
Oct 2020	Jan 2021																		

B5 Progress update – October to November 2020:

All actions have started but we have experienced some delay due to COVID 19. Outlined below is work that has been undertaken with regards to these actions.

1. All commissioning visits for in borough resource bases have been completed with agreements on the numbers of pupil places to be commissioned from September 2021 for 2021/2022. Increase in potential numbers of pupil places agreed for two bases, which will be allocated, based on emerging demand and funded directly in the first instance.
2. Budget allocation for commissioned places agreed with all Mainstream Resource Bases, Special Schools and Alternative Provision including an inflation increase for 2021/2022. Agreed DSG spend on commissioned places will be presented to School Forum on 19/11/20.

3. New Service Partnership Agreement structure has been agreed with schools and reported to School's Forum. General Key Performance Indicators have been agreed.
4. Interim arrangements for additional places at Treetops School prior to opening of Treetops Free School in place using new accommodation to be available from January 2020. Planning Permission in place and building project on going.

Area of Concern 3: EHC Plans and the annual review process are of poor quality. The local authority has no system in place to make sure that relevant professionals and services are notified when EHC Plans need reviewing or updating. Professionals are not routinely informed of requests to submit written information within specified timescales. Too often EHC Plans are out of date and do not accurately reflect the needs or views of children and young people, or the views of the families. The information from EHC Plans and annual reviews is not used to inform the commissioning of services, particularly, but not exclusively, for young people between the ages of 19 and 25 years.

Aim of this programme of work

To ensure that the Local Authority and other partners produce a Plan that clearly articulate the needs of the child/young person having taking into consideration the voice of children/young people developed in partnership with Education, Health and Social Care. Annual review to be completed within timeframes and clearly reflect the views of children/young people, parents/carers and educational providers.

KPI's / Targets for assessing overall success of the programme

EHC PLANS:

- Improved staffing capacity to meet statutory requirements
- Strengthening management oversight to ensure that we are clearly sited on EHC PLAN progress
- Developing or revising the QA framework (to include practice standards and parent feedback and feedback from children and young people)
- Skills audit and training Plan being developed this will include Leadership Skills.
- Training of staff to include:
 - (i) caseworkers in the SEND team on how to successfully bring out the key point from specialist and other assessments to ensure this information is an integral part of the Plan as well as being included in the appendices)
 - (ii) social care staff
 - (iii) health staff
 - (iv) SENCOs

Increase in EHC Plans completed within 20 weeks from the 2018 baseline to be at least at the national average

Increase in new EHC Plans that meet standards established in the new QA framework (baseline date January 2020) when the QA framework will be operational

% of parents/carers who report on the feedback form that:

- They felt fully involved in the process
- They felt the communication was good
- They felt the EHC Plan accurately reflected their child's and young person's needs

- They felt the outcomes were good
- They felt the provision would meet their child's and young person's needs
- Baseline established autumn 2019

Feedback from education establishments:

% who felt the EHC Plan accurately reflected needs

% who felt the outcomes were clear

% who felt the EHC Plan would improve access to teaching and learning and improve progress

Baseline established December 2019

Review of EHC PLANS

% of EHC Plans that were reviewed within required timescales (baseline = % for secondary transfers, % of post 16 transfers, % others)

% of EHC Plans finalised within 12 weeks of the AR meeting where the decision taken was to amend the Plan

% of parents/carers who reported that:

- They were fully involved in the review
- They were satisfied with the outcome
- They were fully involved in the preparing for adulthood transition
- Baseline established

Area of Concern 3: EHC Plans and the annual review process are of poor quality. The local authority has no system in place to make sure that relevant professionals and services are notified when EHC Plans need reviewing or updating. Professionals are not routinely informed of requests to submit written information within specified timescales. Too often EHC Plans are out of date and do not accurately reflect the needs or views of children and young people, or the views of the families. The information from EHC Plans and annual reviews is not used to inform the commissioning of services, particularly, but not exclusively, for young people between the ages of 19 and 25 years.

Aims: To ensure that the Local Authority and other partners produce a Plan that clearly articulate the needs of the child/young person having taking into consideration the voice of children/young people developed in partnership with Education, Health and Social Care. Annual review to be completed within timeframes and clearly reflect the views of children/young people, parents/carers and educational providers

Actions	Action Completed by	Responsible Officer	Outcomes and measures
<p>C1: Quality of EHC Plans to ensure they meet the needs of children and young person and enable them to meet their identified outcomes.</p> <p>a) Examine current EHC Plan and Annual Review processes within the Council and identify where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in processes can be introduced • Improvements in communication can be introduced • Improvements in timescales can be introduced <p>b) Identify where additional capacity is required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what is an appropriate case load for a SEND caseworkers <p>c) Identify training needs of each individual caseworker/manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All caseworkers to complete SEND Caseworker L3 and L4 courses 	<p>Dec 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>Oct 2019</p> <p>Sep 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Sep 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>July 2020</p>	<p>SLSPPEP</p> <p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSESEND</p>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <p>EHC plans are fit for purpose</p> <p>The area delivers its statutory duties to CYP with SEND in a timely, transparent and person centred way.</p> <p>Information gathered through EHC assessments and annual reviews is shared consistently and transparently with CYP with SEND and their families</p> <p>Children and young people and their families confirm that their views and aspirations are shared across services within the area to ensure that they only have to tell it once</p> <p>Person centred outcomes are identified by key professionals working with the child or young person</p> <p>Leaders are aware of the training and development needs of the staff and put in place appropriate and timely interventions to support their development</p> <p>Key SEND transition points are Planned in a timely manner and meet the needs of the CYP/ learner</p> <p>Baseline data captured in Autumn 2019.</p>

RAG rating

Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020
Oct 2020	Jan 2021		

- Through bi-weekly training ensure all SEND team are aware of non-negotiables and appropriate training is delivered and commissioned including SEN law
 - Introduce minimum practice standards to operational team based on customer service practice standards
- d) Complete audit of SEN output/ team and write business case for increasing the number of caseworkers in order that caseworkers have a manageable case load
- Undertake Customer service quality framework assessment and produce and action plan with clear deliverable outcomes.

Jan 2020

Oct 2019

Sept 2019

July 2020

SLSESEND

And as a result:

The number of complaints received by the service will be reduced from previous year

The number of complaints upheld will be reduced from previous year

The local authority has fewer appeals and tribunals upheld in comparison to previous years baseline for 2018

Increase in EHC Plans completed within 20 weeks from the 2018 baseline

Increase in new EHC Plans that meet standards established in the new QA framework (baseline date January 2020) when the QA framework will be operational

Survey data evidences that there is an increase from autumn 2019 baseline in percentage of parents/carers who report on the feedback form that:

- They felt fully involved in the process
- They felt the communication was good
- They felt the EHC Plan accurately reflected their child's and young person's needs
- They felt the outcomes were good
- They felt the provision would meet their child's and young person's needs

Feedback from education establishments: from autumn 2019 baseline

Increase in % who felt the EHC Plan accurately reflected needs

Increase in % who felt the outcomes were clear

			Increase in % who felt the EHC Plan would improve access to teaching and learning and improve progress
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C1 Progress update – October to November 2020 :

All actions have been completed, except for one aspect of action (c). This has been impacted due to COVID 19 and the lack of level 3 and 4 training nationally. The quality of EHCP's was an area that Ofsted outlined in the WSoA – to address this the following work has been undertaken to ensure that the quality of EHCP plans improves.

1. All new caseworkers have enrolled on the NASEN Casework Award. Depending on the caseworker's existing level of knowledge and skills, and they can achieve a BTEC award at level 3 or 4. This is a national qualification accredited by Edexcel/Pearson.
The course content is:
 - Four one-day workshops over the course of the year when key knowledge and skills will be covered and assessed;
 - Technical and legal aspects of SEND assessment;
 - Review and co-ordination process, with particular reference to the Code of Practice (2015);
 - Interpersonal, communication and self-management skills required by staff for effective and excellent professional practice.
 - Most candidates take between 9 and 12 months to complete the award, with the majority of the programme being completed through daily working practices. On average, candidates estimate that they need about half a day every 4 weeks, including the workshops. Assessment for the award is by a portfolio of evidence which can be collected and annotated from their usual caseload or work priorities. These portfolios are then assessed by their award assessor, the Caseworker Supervisors.
2. SEN Staff have undertaken training (28/10/20) from Parent Advisory Team Thurrock- on EHCP outcomes and provision.
3. The SEND Improvement Manager delivered further training to SEN staff on the EHCP 20 week process and updated letters that the workflows produce automatically.
4. SEN Monitoring and Support Officer has delivered Making Sense of Autism (14/10/20) Autism Education Trust Person Centred Planning module to caseworkers and post 16 SEN team. (4/11/20)
5. The Strategic Lead has met with the Treetops Early Years SEN Service who are commissioned to hold the EHC Needs Assessment meetings on behalf of the Council. It has been agreed that in future all Early Years EHCPs will be written by Caseworkers overseen by the Supervisors. This will result in improved timescales and quality of EHCPs

<p>C2: Revise and Review the Annual Review Process to ensure that EHC Plans are appropriately updated.</p> <p>a) Refresh and co-produce the annual review process for CYP with EHC Plans to ensure it gathers information on progress towards outcomes and informs joint commissioning decisions and that annual reviews take place within timescales and where necessary Plans are amended</p> <p>b) Agree joint area approach to statutory decision making- initiation and case management panels – agree and publish new terms of reference and membership</p> <p>c) Revise existing templates, process and guidance for completing multi-agency contributions to EHC needs assessment</p> <p>Recruit to Vacant appeals and Tribunals post</p> <p>Establish EHC Plan quality assurance process, schedules for quality assurance of EHC Plan, which allows the area to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of EHC Plans (new and amended) quarterly quality assurance of EHC Plan to be undertaken by SEND Operational Board</p> <p>f) Put in place protocols that ensure prompt and appropriate contributions are received when drafting EHC Plans from Education, Health and Care. This will include compliance and escalation to relevant service managers and senior leads.</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p> <p>Sept 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>Nov 2019</p> <p>Jan 2020</p> <p>Feb 2020</p>	<p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p> <p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSPPEP</p> <p>SLSESEND</p> <p>SLSESEND</p>	<p>Review of EHC PLANS</p> <p><i>Increase in % of EHC Plans that were reviewed within required timescales (baseline = % for secondary transfers, % of post 16 transfers, % others) from Autumn 2019 baseline</i></p> <p><i>Increase in % of EHC Plans finalised within 12 weeks of the AR meeting where the decision taken was to amend the Plan</i></p> <p><i>Increase in % of parents/carers who reported that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>They were fully involved in the review</i> - <i>They were satisfied with the outcome</i> - <i>They were fully involved in the preparing for adulthood transition</i> - <i>Baseline established</i>
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g) Key issues report to be used by to SL SE SEND to inform staff development needs h) Using Enhance training materials to implement guidance for completion of sections of EHC Plans i) Using engagement portal survey parents/carers/ CYP on their experience of the EHC Plan/ annual review process- gather a baseline in Autumn 19 and then repeat quarterly to evidence improvements/ direction of travel RAG rating		Oct 2019- July 2020	SLSESEND																	
		Oct 2019	SLSPPEP																	
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Oct 2019</th> <th>Jan 2020</th> <th>April 2020</th> <th>July 2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Page 61</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2020</td> <td>Jan 2021</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020	Page 61				Oct 2020	Jan 2021									
Oct 2019	Jan 2020	April 2020	July 2020																	
Page 61																				
Oct 2020	Jan 2021																			

C2 Progress update October – November 2020:

Whilst a number of these actions **[(a) – (i)]** have been completed we are still dealing with historical delays in relation to the annual review process as a result this remains amber until we can evidence progress against the backlog of AR's but further evidence is needed to ensure the work has been fully embedded. The timeframes for annual reviews continues to be a challenge. Outlined below is work that has been undertaken to address this with a view to the backlog being cleared by Jan 2022.

1. Strategic Lead and Case Work Supervisors have begun to review every case file to ensure there is a clear understanding by management of priorities and caseworkers can be held to account
2. EHCP QA process continues and QA overarching framework developed
3. Strategic Lead's met with Enhance EHCP writing company used by Thurrock – as a result Enhance will contribute to/ participate in monthly QA meetings so that feedback is direct and timely and improvements can be made where necessary

4. Strategic Lead met with Treetops EY team who were writing EY EHCPs. Due to the increase in numbers and quality of plans it was agreed all EY plans would be written by SEN Service case workers with oversight from supervisors/ experienced EHCP writers – this will result in much improved Early Years EHCPs

This Written Statement of Action has been written in consultation with:

Children's Overview and Scrutiny

Parent Carer Forum - CaPa

Director's Board

Clinical Commissioning Group

Head teachers and College Principals

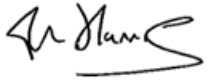
SEND Improvement Board

SEND Operational Group

SEND Engagement and Participation Group

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Roger Harris
Corporate Director

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Mandy Ansell
Chief Officer, Thurrock Clinical Commissioni...

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1 December 2020		ITEM: 8
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2021/22		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Kelly Mcmillan, Business Development Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Education and Skills		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report specifically sets out the charges in relation to services within the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Charges will take effect from the 1 April 2021 unless otherwise stated.

In preparing the proposed fees and charges, Directorates have worked within the charging framework and commercial principles set out Section Three of the report. We have also taken into account the effect that Covid-19 has and will continue to have on services, residents and the local economy.

Further Director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees and Charges to be varied within financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.

The full list of proposed charges is detailed in Appendix 1, and the proposed deletion of current fees and charges are detailed in Appendix 2 to this report (*if applicable*)

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 **That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the revised fees and charges proposals including those no longer applicable**
- 1.2 **That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee note that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to commercial requirements**

2 Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The paper describes the fees and charges approach for the services within the

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee remit for 2021/22 and will set a framework for certain pricing principles moving forward into future financial years.

2.2 The paper provides narrative for the following areas:

- Placement Support- Oaktree
- Summer Playscheme for Disabled Children
- Admissions & Welfare
- Early Years Education and Childcare
- Learning & Skills – Grangewaters
- Music services
- Thurrock Adult Community College

3 Thurrock Charging Policy

3.1 The strategic ambition for Thurrock is to adopt a policy on fees and a charge that is aligned to the wider commercial strategy and ensures that all discretionary services are operated within a framework of cost recovery.

3.2 Furthermore, for future years, while reviewing charges, services will also consider the level of demand for the service, the market dynamics and how the charging policy helps to meet other service objectives. A full market analysis is undertaken on a yearly basis to ensure that we are still competitive in the wider market.

3.3 When considering the pricing strategy for 2021/22 some key questions were considered.

- Where can we apply a tiered/premium pricing structure
- How sensitive are customers to price (are there areas where a price freeze is relevant)
- Consideration with regards to COVID 19 and the impact on fees & charges locally & nationally.
- What new charges might we want to introduce for this financial year
- How do our charges compare with neighbouring boroughs
- How do our charges compare to neighbouring boroughs and private sector competitors (particularly in those instances where customers have choice)
- How can we influence channel shift
- Can we set charges to recover costs
- What do our competitors charges
- How sensitive is demand to price
- Statutory services may have discretionary elements that we can influence
- Do we take deposits, charge cancellation fees, charge an admin fee for duplicate services (e.g. lost certificates.)
- Can we offer a discount for early booking or repeat customers.

3.4 For Children's Services charges are tiered depending on the service area:

- **Grangewaters** – have tiered charges based on the number of activities, length of stay, accommodation, catering, and the number/age of people taking part in the activities.
- **Nurseries** – charges are tiered around the ages of the children, and the times the children are in attendance.
- **Adult Community College** – have tiered charges based on the community engagement and learner abilities to pay the full cost for the programmes.

3.5 The following key changes occurred for 2021/22 fees and charges:

- Certain nursery place charges have been scaled for 2021-22 to give a better reflection of the different offers we have available, most charges have been increased to take account of the actual costs of service delivery, which are dependent on the age's involved and corresponding staffing ratios and which option the parents wish to choose. These will be in line with central government grant funding.
- We have removed some nursery charges relating to 3, 4 and 5 year olds as this is no longer required due to the introduction of the 30 hours Government funded early education and childcare places.
- 2021-2022 we have introduced a new holiday club opportunity to provide more opportunities for children to access services.
- Scaling charges have been introduced to give more flexibility to parents around the different offers.
- Grangewaters charges have increased between 2%-3%.(ranging from 60p for school visits to £289 for private hire of the site for the angling club)
- Thurrock Adult Community College were integrated into the Council's fees and charges process as of last year. Small increases have been made which is still significantly below market rates recognizing the community engagement within the college and the potential challenges arising from Covid 19.
- Cabinet approved the update of the Home to School Travel and Transport policy in July 2020. The update included the implementation of a charging system whereby some post 16 SEND students will pay for their transport in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance around post 16 SEND transport. The charging system is projected to commence in September 2021.

4 Proposals and Issues

4.1 The fees and charges for each service area have been considered and the main considerations are set out below.

4.2 To allow the Council services to better respond to changes in the commercial environment for fees and charges; delegated authority will be sought through Cabinet to permit the Director of the Service Area jointly with the Director of Finance to vary service charges within financial year due to commercial

considerations.

- This will allow service areas, providing services on a traded basis to vary their fees and charges to reflect commercial and operational considerations that impact the cost recoverability calculations.
- Any changes to Fees and Charges due to commercial considerations will require the consultation with, and agreement of, the relevant Portfolio Holder.

4.3 Summer Playscheme for Disabled Children

The Short Break and Outreach Service has been operating a Summer Playscheme for Disabled Children for many years. The service provides activities for children that cannot access mainstream holiday clubs due their complex and special needs. The service runs for 4 days per week for 4 weeks of the summer holidays and accommodates 50 children every day. Parents are charged a fee to assist with the high cost of the scheme, which is used to fund towards the high level/ ratio of staff needed to provide a safe service. The parent contributions do not cover the overall cost of the service and the deficit is covered by the Directorate. Sponsorship of the service is being considered to cover the shortfall for 2021/2022 as recommended by the recent Children's Service reviews.

4.4 Adult College

Is funded from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and this funding is attached to individual learners and runs on an academic calendar year basis. It is a requirement of the funding source that any excess income generated must be used to subsidise courses for residents, which meet and contribute too, the Thurrock Council priorities for vulnerable groups. Small increases have been made which is still significantly below market rates. Covid 19 has had a direct effect on the commercial lettings due to the restrictions in place, these have been increased slightly to cover staffing costs. Central government have also indicated there intention to provide further free education for higher level skills which will result in reduced income for the college when this takes place, this may be mitigated by an increase in funding but it is not yet known at this time.

4.5 Music Service

These remain unchanged for 2021/22

4.6 Early Years Education and Childcare

Providing early years opportunities is a key strategic driver within the local authority and we remain committed to ensuring early years provision is available within local communities.

The nursery service has a significant cost overhead, with staff making up 80% of service costs and at rates which are not competitive to those paid in the private sector i.e. Council is paying higher basic salary levels.

Therefore, to develop the service the area will need to fully analyse the following options:

- Operational hours will need to be reviewed around core 30 hours; which will allow the service to charge parents for periods normally used by commuters and working parents
- Consultation with major local employers to align working hours and provide greater flexibility around access to childcare.
- Developing a tiered service model, linked to above
- Changing some staff patterns to accommodate a wider operational model to meet the changing ways in which companies operate.
- Increase use of apprentices and trainee staff as vacancies arise thus supporting the need for more local apprenticeship opportunities.
- Development/Expansion of 0 year to 2 year childcare services as potential income stream (in progress and planned for Spring opening)
- Charges have increased between 2%-3% for 2021/22

4.7 Learning & Skills – Grangewaters

Charges have increased where possible between 2%-3%

Due to Covid 19 Grangewaters was closed for part of the year, we will be working towards promoting the use of Grangewaters and increasing marketing to encourage the use of the site in 2021/22. The re-opening of Grangewaters has given both schools and local residents the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities. We have seen a significant increase in bookings over the summer from both schools and residents – bookings for October half term are strong and we have a number of schools who have booked until the end of the financial year 20/21

5 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The setting of appropriate fees and charges will enable the Council to generate essential income for the funding of Council services. The approval of reviewed fees and charges will also ensure that the Council is competitive with other service providers and neighbouring councils. The ability to vary charges within financial year will enable services to more flexibly adapt to changing economic conditions.

5.2 The granting of delegated authority to vary these charges within financial year will allow the Council to better respond to the needs of the communities, legal requirements, regulatory changes and commercial challenges.

6 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

6.1 Consultations will be progressed where there is specific need. However, with regard all other items, the proposals in this report do not affect any specific parts of the borough. Fees and charges are known to customers before they make use of the services they are buying

7 Impact on Children’s Services policies, priorities, performance and community impact

7.1 The changes in these fees and charges may impact the community; however it must be taken into consideration that these price rises include inflation and no profit will be made on the running of these discretionary services.

8 Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Joanne Freeman**
Finance Manager

The effect of any changes to fees and charges on individual income targets will be determined as part of the 2021-22 budget setting process in which Corporate Finance and service areas will review anticipated level of demand, fee increases, previous performance and potential associated costs. Covid-19 has significantly impacted the Authority’s ability to achieve current income targets and this will be taken into consideration when setting future targets.

The Council wide draft budget report will set out the 2021-22 targets across all directorates

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Fees and charges generally fall into three categories – Statutory, Regulatory and Discretionary. Statutory charges are set in statute and cannot be altered by law since the charges have been determined by Central government and all authorities will be applying the same charge.

Regulatory charges relate to services where, if the Council provides the service, it is obliged to set a fee which the Council can determine itself in accordance with a regulatory framework. Charges have to be reasonable and must be applied across the borough.

Discretionary charges relate to services which the Council can provide if they choose to do so. This is a local policy decision. The Local Government Act 2003 gives the Council power to charge for discretionary services, with some limited exceptions. This may include charges for new and innovative services utilising the Council’s general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The income from charges, taking one financial year with another, must not exceed the cost of provision. A clear and justifiable framework of principles should be followed in terms of deciding when to charge and how much, and the process for reviewing charges.

A service may wish to consider whether they may utilise this power to provide a service that may benefit residents, businesses and other service users,

meet the Council priorities and generate income.

Decisions on setting charges and fees are subject to the Council's decision making structures. Most charging decisions are the responsibility of Cabinet, where there are key decisions. Some fees are set by full Council.

8.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**

Team Manager - Community Development

The Council is responsible for promoting equality of opportunity in the provision of services and employment as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. Decisions on setting charges and fees are subject to Community Equality Impact Assessment process and the Council's wider decision making structures to determine impact on protected groups and related concessions that may be available.

8.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)**

None

9 **Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

None.

10 **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Schedule of Proposed Fees and Charges for 2021/22
- Appendix 2 – Schedule of Fees and Charges no longer applicable

Report Author:

Kelly Mcmillan

Business Development Project Manager

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Name of fee or Charge	Directorate	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Owner	Statutory/Discretionary Charge	VAT Status 20/21	Charge excl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Amount 2020/21	Charge incl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Status 21/22	Charge excl. VAT 2021/22	VAT Amount 2021/22	Charge incl. VAT 2021/22	Change from last year (incl. VAT)	Change from last year (% incl. VAT)	New, Removed, Unchanged	
Qualification Courses for 19+	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-	-	
Adult learners not in full time education elsewhere standard rate course	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 5.10	£ -	£ 5.10		£ 5.25	£ -	£ 5.25	£ 0.15	+2.94%	INCREASED	
as above - weighted rate course eg hairdressing floristry, courses requiring hired external venues or where courses do not target priority learners	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 6.80	£ -	£ 6.80		£ 7.00	£ -	£ 7.00	£ 0.20	+2.94%	INCREASED	
Adult learners in receipt of JSA ESA Universal Credit	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		Free of Charge	£ -	Free of Charge		Free of Charge	£ -	Free of Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
Adult learners in receipt of other state benefits who earn less than £330 per month	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		Free of Charge	£ -	Free of Charge		Free of Charge	£ -	Free of Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
Adult learners 24+ joining courses Level 3 & above	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		Variable Charge	£ -	Variable Charge		Variable Charge	£ -	Variable Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
Adult Learners 19+ in full time education elsewhere or who do not meet residency eligibility	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 13.25	£ -	£ 13.25		£ 13.60	£ -	£ 13.60	£ 0.35	+2.64%	INCREASED	
Community Learning for learners 19+	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-		
Tuition fee standard rate (universal Offer)	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 5.10	£ -	£ 5.10		£ 5.25	£ -	£ 5.25	£ 0.15	+2.94%	INCREASED	
Concessionary rate (adults in receipt of state benefit and over 65	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 3.40	£ -	£ 3.40		£ 3.50	£ -	£ 3.50	£ 0.10	+2.94%	INCREASED	
Weighted courses / or where courses do not target priority learners	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 6.80	£ -	£ 6.80		£ 7.00	£ -	£ 7.00	£ 0.20	+2.94%	INCREASED	
Concessionary rate (adults in receipt of state benefit and over 65	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 4.20	£ -	£ 4.20		£ 4.30	£ -	£ 4.30	£ 0.10	+2.38%	INCREASED	
Tuition fee for supported learning course	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 4.20	£ -	£ 4.20		£ 4.30	£ -	£ 4.30	£ 0.10	+2.38%	INCREASED	
Family Learning English Maths & Language	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
Family Learning wider FL per session	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
Tuition Fee taster courses per session	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 15.75	£ -	£ 15.75		£ 16.20	£ -	£ 16.20	£ 0.45	+2.86%	INCREASED	
Community Led learning targeted provision, community engagement upto 12 hours	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
non eligible learners	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 13.25	£ -	£ 13.25		£ 13.60	£ -	£ 13.60	£ 0.35	+2.64%	INCREASED	
LETTINGS/SOCIAL MEMBERSHIP	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-		
Commercial Rate charge per hour	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-		
Hall	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 78.75	£ -	£ 78.75		£ 81.00	£ -	£ 81.00	£ 2.25	+2.86%	INCREASED	
Large Room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 42.00	£ -	£ 42.00		£ 43.00	£ -	£ 43.00	£ 1.00	+2.38%	INCREASED	
small room/meeting room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 31.50	£ -	£ 31.50		£ 32.25	£ -	£ 32.25	£ 0.75	+2.38%	INCREASED	
IT Room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 63.00	£ -	£ 63.00		£ 64.75	£ -	£ 64.75	£ 1.75	+2.78%	INCREASED	
Thurrock Council/Charitable Organisations	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-		
Hall	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 59.10	£ -	£ 59.10		£ 60.50	£ -	£ 60.50	£ 1.40	+2.37%	INCREASED	
Large Room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 31.50	£ -	£ 31.50		£ 32.25	£ -	£ 32.25	£ 0.75	+2.38%	INCREASED	
small room/meeting room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 23.65	£ -	£ 23.65		£ 24.25	£ -	£ 24.25	£ 0.60	+2.54%	INCREASED	
IT Room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 47.25	£ -	£ 47.25		£ 48.50	£ -	£ 48.50	£ 1.25	+2.65%	INCREASED	
Hall or Room - outside opening hours (Monday & Friday evening)	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 82.75	£ -	£ 82.75		£ 85.00	£ -	£ 85.00	£ 2.25	+2.72%	INCREASED	
Saturday only	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 105.00	£ -	£ 105.00		£ 108.00	£ -	£ 108.00	£ 3.00	+2.86%	INCREASED	
Social Membership Groups during opening hours (term time).	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-		
Hall	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 10.80	£ -	£ 10.80		£ 11.10	£ -	£ 11.10	£ 0.30	+2.78%	INCREASED	
Room	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 8.40	£ -	£ 8.40		£ 8.60	£ -	£ 8.60	£ 0.20	+2.38%	INCREASED	
Hall or room - Outside of opening hours	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 34.15	£ -	£ 34.15		£ 35.00	£ -	£ 35.00	£ 0.85	+2.49%	INCREASED	
Social Area	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge		FREE	£ -	Free of Charge	£ -	-	UNCHANGED	
Pre School Fees	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-		
2-3 year olds charge is per session (3hours)	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 19.00	£ -	£ 19.00		£ 19.40	£ -	£ 19.40	£ 0.40	+2.11%	INCREASED	
3-5 year olds	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 17.85	£ -	£ 17.85		£ 18.30	£ -	£ 18.30	£ 0.45	+2.52%	INCREASED	
Lunch club	Adults, housing and Health	Children's	Michele Lucus/Jaki Bradley	D		£ 3.60	£ -	£ 3.60		£ 3.70	£ -	£ 3.70	£ 0.10	+2.78%	INCREASED	
Children's Care and Targeted Outcomes - Children with disabilities - Summer Play Scheme - Per day, per child (if funding is secured then the charge will reduce)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	O	£ 18.00	£ -	£ 18.00	O	£ 18.50	£ -	£ 18.50	£ 0.50	+2.78%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Celebration Groups (Up to 10 participants) - 14-18 years old (3 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 153.40	£ -	£ 153.40	E	£ 155.00	£ -	£ 155.00	£ 1.60	+1.04%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Celebration Groups (Up to 10 participants) - 14-18 years old (3 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 284.00	£ -	£ 284.00	E	£ 290.00	£ -	£ 290.00	£ 6.00	+2.11%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Celebration Groups (Up to 10 participants) - Under 14 years old (1.5 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 155.50	£ -	£ 155.50	E	£ 160.00	£ -	£ 160.00	£ 4.50	+2.89%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Celebration Groups (Up to 10 participants) - Under 14 years old (3 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 284.00	£ -	£ 284.00	E	£ 290.00	£ -	£ 290.00	£ 6.00	+2.11%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Club Use of Site - Grangewaters Angling Club	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 6,982.50	£ -	£ 6,982.50	E	£ 7,200.00	£ -	£ 7,200.00	£ 217.50	+3.11%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Club Use of Site - Grangewaters Working Newfoundlands (Per dog, per visit)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 5.50	£ -	£ 5.50	E	£ 5.65	£ -	£ 5.65	£ 0.15	+2.73%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Club Use of Site - Leonberger Dog Training Club (Per dog, per visit)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 5.50	£ -	£ 5.50	E	£ 5.65	£ -	£ 5.65	£ 0.15	+2.73%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Club Use of Site - Thurrock Angling Club	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 10,211.00	£ -	£ 10,211.00	E	£ 10,500.00	£ -	£ 10,500.00	£ 289.00	+2.83%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Club Use of Site - Thurrock Motorboat & Waterski Club (Per visit)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 215.25	£ -	£ 215.25	E	£ 220.00	£ -	£ 220.00	£ 4.75	+2.21%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Corporate Groups - Activity duration (1.5 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 57.68	£ -	£ 57.68	E	£ 59.00	£ -	£ 59.00	£ 1.32	+2.29%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Corporate Groups - Activity duration (3 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 99.90	£ -	£ 99.90	E	£ 102.50	£ -	£ 102.50	£ 2.60	+2.60%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Corporate Groups - Activity duration (4.5 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 139.00	£ -	£ 139.00	E	£ 142.00	£ -	£ 142.00	£ 3.00	+2.16%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Corporate Groups - Activity duration (6 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 173.00	£ -	£ 173.00	E	£ 178.00	£ -	£ 178.00	£ 5.00	+2.89%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Day visits (Groups aged 19 and over, excluding corporate bookings) - Up to 10 people (Full day, 4 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 430.00	£ -	£ 430.00	E	£ 440.00	£ -	£ 440.00	£ 10.00	+2.33%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Day visits (Groups aged 19 and over, excluding corporate bookings) - Up to 10 people (Half day, 2 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 233.00	£ -	£ 233.00	E	£ 240.00	£ -	£ 240.00	£ 7.00	+3.00%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Day visits (Groups aged 19 and over, excluding corporate bookings) - Up to 10 people (Single session)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 127.70	£ -	£ 127.70	E	£ 131.00	£ -	£ 131.00	£ 3.30	+2.58%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Day visits (Groups up to and including 18 years) - Up to 10 people (Single session)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 127.70	£ -	£ 127.70	E	£ 131.00	£ -	£ 131.00	£ 3.30	+2.58%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Day visits (Groups up to and including 18 years) - Up to 10 people (Full day, 4 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 430.00	£ -	£ 430.00	E	£ 440.00	£ -	£ 440.00	£ 10.00	+2.33%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Day visits (Groups up to and including 18 years) - Up to 10 people (Half day, 2 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 233.00	£ -	£ 233.00	E	£ 240.00	£ -	£ 240.00	£ 7.00	+3.00%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition packages (per person per day)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 41.20	£ -	£ 41.20	E	£ 42.00	£ -	£ 42.00	£ 0.80	+1.94%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Family Groups - Up to 2 adults and 2 children (Full day, 4 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 323.40	£ -	£ 323.40	E	£ 330.00	£ -	£ 330.00	£ 6.60	+2.04%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Family Groups - Up to 2 adults and 2 children (Half day, 2 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 183.30	£ -	£ 183.30	E	£ 188.00	£ -	£ 188.00	£ 4.70	+2.56%	INCREASED	
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Family Groups - Up to 2 adults and 2 children (Single session)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 99.90	£ -	£ 99.90	E	£ 102.00	£ -	£ 102.00	£ 2.10	+2.10%	INCREASED	

Name of fee or Charge	Directorate	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Owner	Statutory/Discretionary Charge	VAT Status 20/21	Charge excl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Amount 2020/21	Charge incl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Status 21/22	Charge excl. VAT 2021/22	VAT Amount 2021/22	Charge incl. VAT 2021/22	Change from last year (incl. VAT)	Change from last year (% incl. VAT)	New, Removed, Unchanged
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Family Groups - Up to 2 adults and 4 children (Full day, 4 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 333.70	£ -	£ 333.70	E	£ 342.00	£ -	£ 342.00	£ 8.30	+2.49%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Family Groups - Up to 2 adults and 4 children (Half day, 2 sessions)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 199.80	£ -	£ 199.80	E	£ 205.00	£ -	£ 205.00	£ 5.20	+2.60%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - Family Groups - Up to 2 adults and 4 children (Single session)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 113.30	£ -	£ 113.30	E	£ 116.00	£ -	£ 116.00	£ 2.70	+2.38%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters - School Holiday Periods Only - Activity Sessions (per session per person charge)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 8.25	£ -	£ 8.25	E	£ 8.50	£ -	£ 8.50	£ 0.25	+3.03%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Accommodation only (per person per night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 17.50	£ -	£ 17.50	E	£ 18.00	£ -	£ 18.00	£ 0.50	+2.86%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Full Board (2 days, 1 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 145.20	£ -	£ 145.20	E	£ 149.00	£ -	£ 149.00	£ 3.80	+2.62%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Full Board (3 days, 2 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 223.50	£ -	£ 223.50	E	£ 230.00	£ -	£ 230.00	£ 6.50	+2.91%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Full Board (4 days, 3 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 305.90	£ -	£ 305.90	E	£ 315.00	£ -	£ 315.00	£ 9.10	+2.97%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Full Board (5 days, 4 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 383.10	£ -	£ 383.10	E	£ 394.00	£ -	£ 394.00	£ 10.90	+2.85%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Self catering (2 days, 1 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 100.40	£ -	£ 100.40	E	£ 103.00	£ -	£ 103.00	£ 2.60	+2.59%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Self catering (3 days, 2 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 155.50	£ -	£ 155.50	E	£ 160.00	£ -	£ 160.00	£ 4.50	+2.89%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Self catering (4 days, 3 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 218.30	£ -	£ 218.30	E	£ 224.00	£ -	£ 224.00	£ 5.70	+2.61%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 18 years old) - Self catering (5 days, 4 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 271.90	£ -	£ 271.90	E	£ 280.00	£ -	£ 280.00	£ 8.10	+2.98%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Camping - Per person per night	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 6.20	£ -	£ 6.20	E	£ 6.50	£ -	£ 6.50	£ 0.30	+4.84%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Full Board (2 days, 1 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 145.20	£ -	£ 145.20	E	£ 149.00	£ -	£ 149.00	£ 3.80	+2.62%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Full Board (3 days, 2 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 223.50	£ -	£ 223.50	E	£ 230.00	£ -	£ 230.00	£ 6.50	+2.91%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Full Board (4 days, 3 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 305.90	£ -	£ 305.90	E	£ 315.00	£ -	£ 315.00	£ 9.10	+2.97%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Full Board (5 days, 4 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 383.10	£ -	£ 383.10	E	£ 394.00	£ -	£ 394.00	£ 10.90	+2.85%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Self catering (2 days, 1 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 100.40	£ -	£ 100.40	E	£ 103.00	£ -	£ 103.00	£ 2.60	+2.59%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Self catering (3 days, 2 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 155.50	£ -	£ 155.50	E	£ 160.00	£ -	£ 160.00	£ 4.50	+2.89%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Self catering (4 days, 3 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 218.30	£ -	£ 218.30	E	£ 224.00	£ -	£ 224.00	£ 5.70	+2.61%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Residential Visits (Up to and including 19 years old) - Self catering (5 days, 4 night)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 271.90	£ -	£ 271.90	E	£ 271.90	£ -	£ 271.90	£ -	-	UNCHANGED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Catering Package (Breakfast, Lunch and Evening Meal) - Minimum 10 Persons - Charge is per person per day	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 21.60	£ -	£ 21.60	E	£ 22.20	£ -	£ 22.20	£ 0.60	+2.78%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Training Lodge / Dining Cabins - Full Day Charge	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 67.00	£ -	£ 67.00	E	£ 69.00	£ -	£ 69.00	£ 2.00	+2.99%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Training Lodge / Dining Cabins - Half Day Charge	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 38.10	£ -	£ 38.10	E	£ 39.00	£ -	£ 39.00	£ 0.90	+2.36%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Training Lodge / Dining Cabins - Hourly Charge (minimum 2 hours)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 14.40	£ -	£ 14.40	E	£ 14.80	£ -	£ 14.80	£ 0.40	+2.78%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Celebration Groups up to 10 people - Single Activity	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 153.30	£ -	£ 153.30	E	£ 157.00	£ -	£ 157.00	£ 3.70	+2.41%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Celebration Groups up to 10 people - Double Activity	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 271.90	£ -	£ 271.90	E	£ 280.00	£ -	£ 280.00	£ 8.10	+2.98%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Hourly rate 3 - 5 year olds	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 5.90	£ -	£ 5.90	E	£ 6.50	£ -	£ 6.50	£ 0.60	+10.17%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Hourly rate 2 year olds	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 6.20	£ -	£ 6.20	E	£ 6.50	£ -	£ 6.50	£ 0.30	+4.84%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Babies - Half day: am/pm - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 33.50	£ -	£ 33.50	E	£35-£39	£ -	£35-£39	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Babies - half day -weekly booking - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 167.40	£ -	£ 167.40	E	£170-£185	£ -	£170-£185	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Babies - Full Day - with without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 67.00	£ -	£ 67.00	E	£70-£85	£ -	£70-£85	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Babies - Full Day - weekly booking - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 310.00	£ -	£ 310.00	E	£290-£350	£ -	£290-£350	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 2-3- year- Half day: am/pm - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 31.00	£ -	£ 31.00	E	£29-32	£ -	£29-32	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 2-3- year-olds - Half Day - weekly booking - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 149.30	£ -	£ 149.30	E	£140-£155	£ -	£140-155	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 2-3 year-olds Full Day - Weekly Booking - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 288.00	£ -	£ 288.00	E	£250-£290	£ -	£250-£290	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 2-3 year-olds Full day - with/without meals/consumables	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 56.65	£ -	£ 56.65	E	£55-59	£ -	£55-59	£ -	-	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - cooked lunch each (Outside provider)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 3.35	£ -	£ 3.35	E	£ 3.45	£ -	£ 3.45	£ 0.10	+2.99%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Hourly rate babies 0-2 year olds	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 6.70	£ -	£ 6.70	E	£ 7.00	£ -	£ 7.00	£ 0.30	+4.48%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - Holiday Club (per day)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ -	£ -	£ -	E	£ 20.00	£ -	£ 20.00	£ -	-	NEW
Music Services - Loan of Musical Instruments for pupils studying through the Music Hub (Ranged fee dependent on instrument)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£13 - £26	£ -	£13 - £26	E	£13 - £26	£ -	£13 - £26	£ -	-	UNCHANGED
Music Services - Loan of Musical Instruments for external hirers (Ranged fee dependent on instrument)	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£20.60 - £103	£ -	£20.60 - £103	E	£20.60 - £103	£ -	£20.60 - £103	£ -	-	UNCHANGED
Individual and small group tuition (fee pro-rata dependent on duration and numbers) - per hour charge	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£33.70 (Variable Pro-rata)	£ -	£33.70 (Variable Pro-rata)	E	£33.70 (Variable Pro-rata)	£ -	£33.70 (Variable Pro-rata)	£ -	-	UNCHANGED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Private Tuition - First Person - 1.5 Hour Session	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 50.50	£ -	£ 50.50	E	£ 52.00	£ -	£ 52.00	£ 1.50	+2.97%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Private Tuition - First Person - 3 Hour Session	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 86.50	£ -	£ 86.50	E	£ 89.00	£ -	£ 89.00	£ 2.50	+2.89%	INCREASED

Name of fee or Charge	Directorate	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Owner	Statutory/Discretionary Charge	VAT Status 20/21	Charge excl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Amount 2020/21	Charge incl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Status 21/22	Charge excl. VAT 2021/22	VAT Amount 2021/22	Charge incl. VAT 2021/22	Change from last year (incl. VAT)	Change from last year (% incl. VAT)	New, Removed, Unchanged
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Private Tuition - First Person - 4.5 Hour Session	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 113.30	£ -	£ 113.30	E	£ 116.00	£ -	£ 116.00	£ 2.70	+2.38%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Private Tuition - Additional Person - 1.5 Hour Session	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 27.80	£ -	£ 27.80	E	£ 28.50	£ -	£ 28.50	£ 0.70	+2.52%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Private Tuition - Additional Person - 3 Hour Session	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 45.30	£ -	£ 45.30	E	£ 46.50	£ -	£ 46.50	£ 1.20	+2.65%	INCREASED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre - Private Tuition - Additional Person - 4.5 Hour Session	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 61.80	£ -	£ 61.80	E	£ 63.50	£ -	£ 63.50	£ 1.70	+2.75%	INCREASED

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APPENDIX 2

Name of fee or Charge	Directorate	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Owner	Statutory/Discretionary Charge	VAT Status 20/21	Charge excl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Amount 2020/21	Charge incl. VAT 2020/21	VAT Status 21/22	Charge excl. VAT 2021/22	VAT Amount 2021/22	Charge incl. VAT 2021/22	Change from last year (incl. VAT)	Change from last year (% incl. VAT)	New, Removed, Unchanged
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 3-5 year-olds 8am - 1pm or 1pm -6pm -per day	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 29.35	£ -	£ 29.35	E	removed	£ -	removed	£ -	-	REMOVED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 3-5 year-olds 8am - 1pm or 1pm -6pm -per week	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 146.80	£ -	£ 146.80	E	removed	£ -	removed	£ -	-	REMOVED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 3-5 year-olds Full placement costs per week	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 288.40	£ -	£ 288.40	E	removed	£ -	removed	£ -	-	REMOVED
Learning and Universal Outcomes - Nursery Places - 3-5 year-olds Full placement costs per day	Children's	Children's	Michelle Lucas	D	E	£ 63.90	£ -	£ 63.90	E	removed	£ -	removed	£ -	-	REMOVED

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1 December 2020	ITEM: 9
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Children’s Social Care Performance	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Anna Watkins, Business Intelligence Analyst	
Accountable Assistant Director: Joe Tynan, Assistant Director Children’s Social Care and Early Help	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report needs to be read in the context of the global pandemic Covid-19 and the impact this has had on the work carried out by Children’s Social Care since the initial lockdown at the end of March 2020.

This report shows that:

- There has been an impact on the number of referrals and contacts received by Children’s Social Care following Covid-19 and the initial lockdown in late March 2020. Agencies including schools from whom a majority of our referrals come, were not having consistent direct contact with a large number of children and their families until September 2020.
- In Q1 2020, the number of contacts received was 1,034 compared to 1,602 in the same quarter last year. This represents a 35.5% drop in the number of quarterly contacts received as a direct result of Covid-19 and the national lockdown.
- In Q1 2020, the number of referrals was 443 compared to 610 in the same quarter last year. This represents a 27.4% drop in the number of referrals received. This is in line with the reduction in contacts but indicates a slightly higher percentage of contacts being treated as a referral.

- In Q1 2020, 97.3% of the children and families assessments were completed in timescale compared to 95.2% in Q1 2019, an improvement in performance.
- At the end of Q1 2020-21, the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 159 compared to 173 at the end of Q4 and 134 in Q1 2019-20. Since Q4, we have seen the number of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan steadily reduce by 8.1%. Q1 has shown a decrease of children subject to a Child Protection Plan. Children subject to a Child Protection plan are carefully reviewed and does fluctuate each quarter, therefore this decrease does not present any concern.
- Since Q1 2019, we have seen an increase in the number of cases being stepped down to Early Help. As at end of June 2020, 39 cases were stepped down compared to 23 in 2019. This is an increase of 70% in 2020. There has been a concerted effort to ensure that children and families receive the correct support and advice following statutory involvement by Children's Social Care, where there remains a need for a lower level of support.
- The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) continues to support a shared understanding and management of threshold decisions. Children and families receive the right help at the right time and the response to family difficulties is proportionate to risk.
- All data continues to be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that decision-making within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) remains robust and ensures families are supported by the most appropriate service.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That members review the areas of improvement in Children's Social Care and work undertaken to date to manage demand for statutory social care services.**

2. Introduction and Background

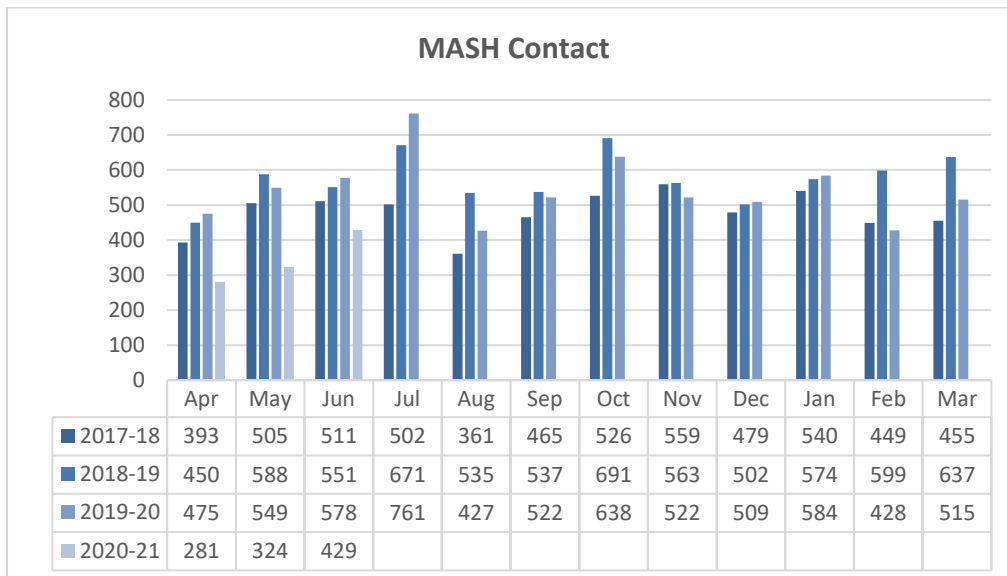
- 2.1** This report provides a summary of Children's Social Care performance for Quarter 1 2020-21 (April to June 2020). It highlights key demand indicators such as number of contacts, benchmarking data and key performance indicators.
- 2.2** Thurrock produces a number of data sets and performance reports to meet its internal and external reporting requirements. The data in this report is from the 'At A Glance' monthly performance report, regional benchmarking data and national data sets.

- 2.3 This data has been presented and discussed with the Children & Families Performance Group.
- 2.4 This report is presented a quarter in arrears to allow for the production and ratification of the performance data and preparation of the report with input from practice leads and the Assistant Director for Children's Services; as well as the governance arrangements of ensuring the final report is presented at the Directorate Management Team meeting and Directors Board prior to Overview & Scrutiny Board.

3. THURROCK DATA

3.1 Contacts

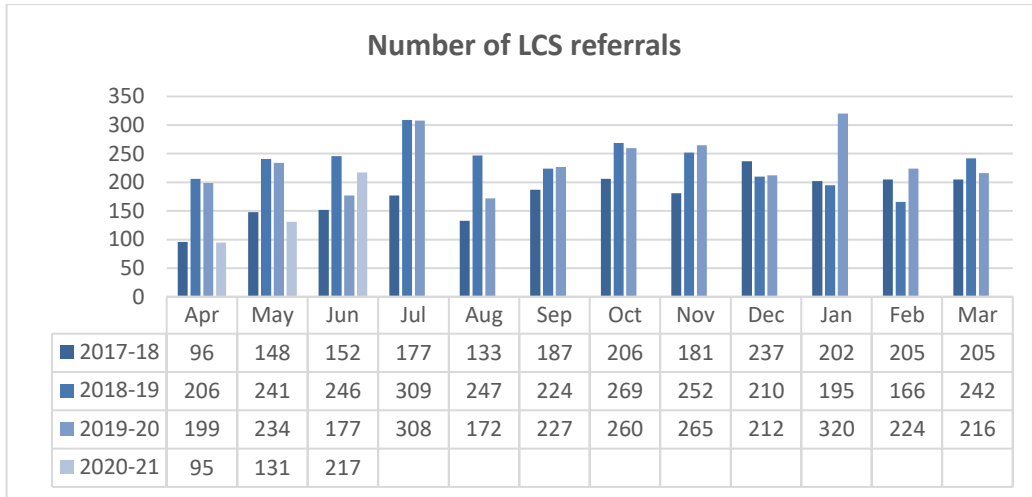
The number of contacts have reduced by 32.3% since Q4. Comparing to the same quarter of 2019-20, the number of contacts have reduced by 35.5% in Q1 2020-21. It appears this is directly in relation to the emergence of Covid-19 and the subsequent national lockdown.



3.2 Referrals

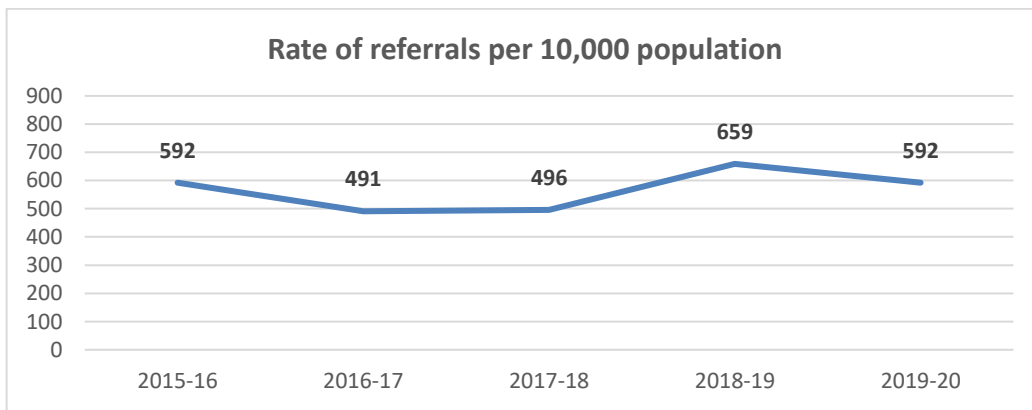
Since Q4 2019-20, the number of referrals have fallen by 41.7% from 760 to 443 in Q1. Compared to Q1 last year, the number of referrals have dropped by 27.4% in Q1 2020-21.

Of the total 443 the majority of referrals received in Q1 this year, 37% were received from the Police. This is due to the disruption of face-to-face schooling for most local children, as a result of the national lockdown, thus reducing the number of referrals usually made by schools.



3.3 Rate of referrals

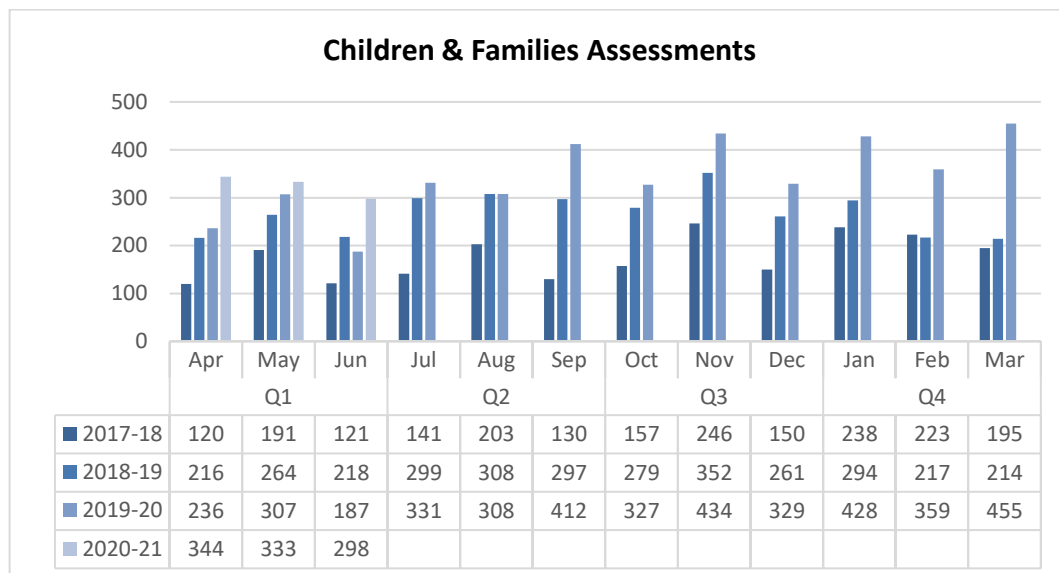
The 2019-20 year end position for rate of referrals per 10,000 was 592 compared to 659 in 2018-19. It is not currently possible to make a comparison across the referral rates of regional, national and statistical neighbours, as this information has not yet been published. There are a number of possible reasons for this increase in referral rates, however we have noted greater complexity within the contacts into the service, and while the number of contacts has reduced, the conversion from contacts into referrals, has increased.



	Thurrock	Statistical Neighbours	England Average	East England
2015-16	592	590	532	425
2016-17	491	620	548	374
2017-18	496	610	553	362
2018-19	659	663	545	364
2019-20	592	Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published

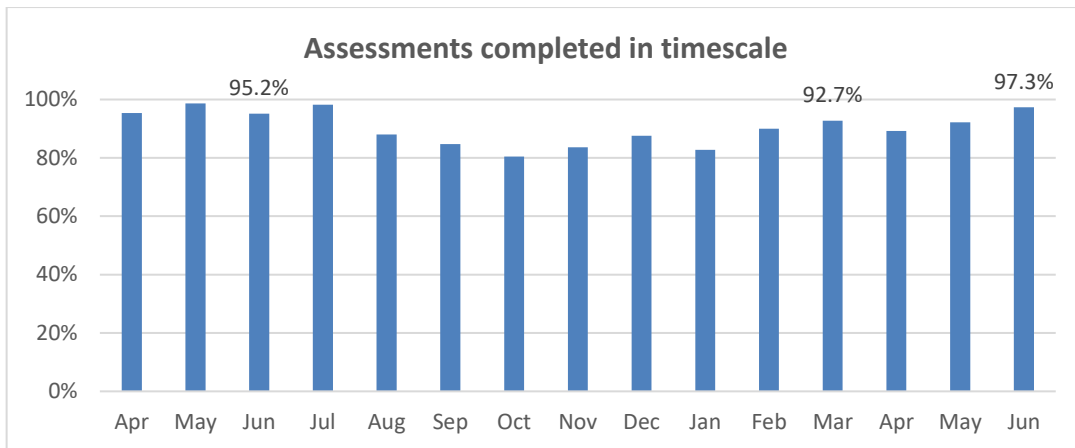
3.4 Children & Families Assessments

The latest position shows that there were 975 assessments completed in Q1 2020-21 compared to 1,242 in Q4. When compared to Q1 2019-20, the number of assessments have increased by 33.6% in Q1 2020-21.



3.5 Children & Families Assessments completed in timescale

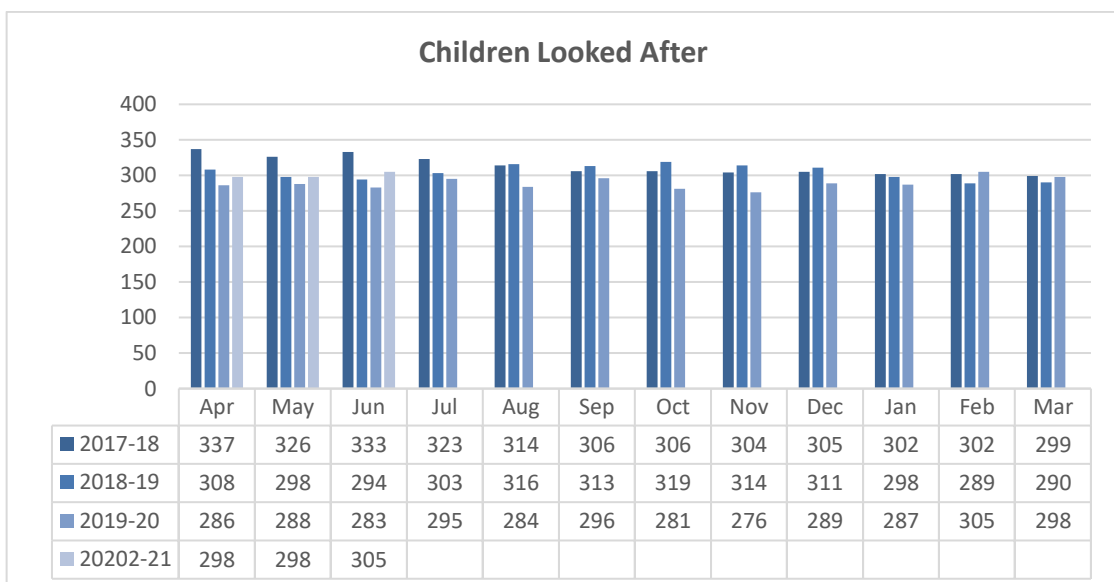
The number of assessments completed in timescale continues to show good performance at 97.3% at the end of Q1 2020-21. This is up by 4.6% since Q4 2019-20 and 2.1% higher than in Q1 2019-20.



3.6 Children Looked After

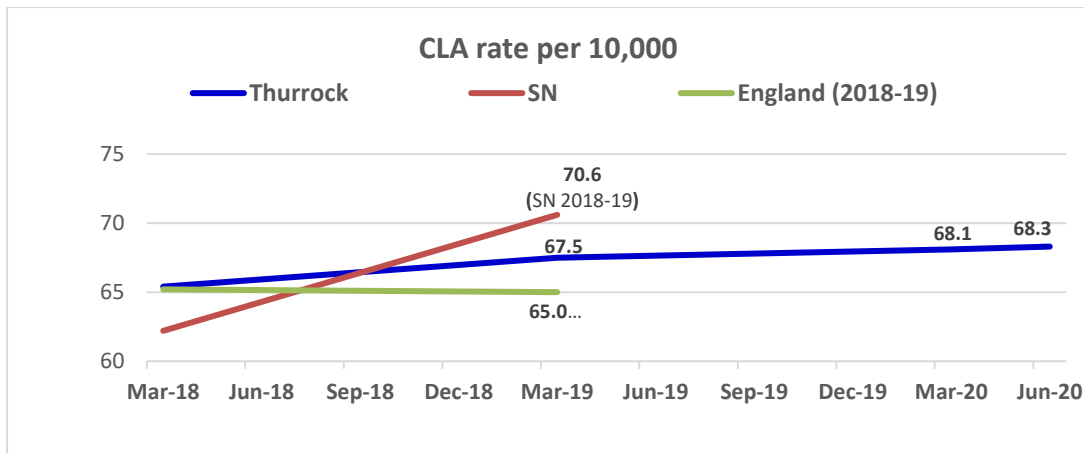
The number of Children Looked After as at Q1 2020-21 stands at 305 compared to 298 at the end of Q4.

Between 2019 and 2020, the number of Children Looked After has increased by 2.8%. According to year end SSDA903 data published by DfE, between 2018 and 2019, the average increase in local authorities across England was 4.0%. Data for this reporting year 2019-20 has not been published as yet.



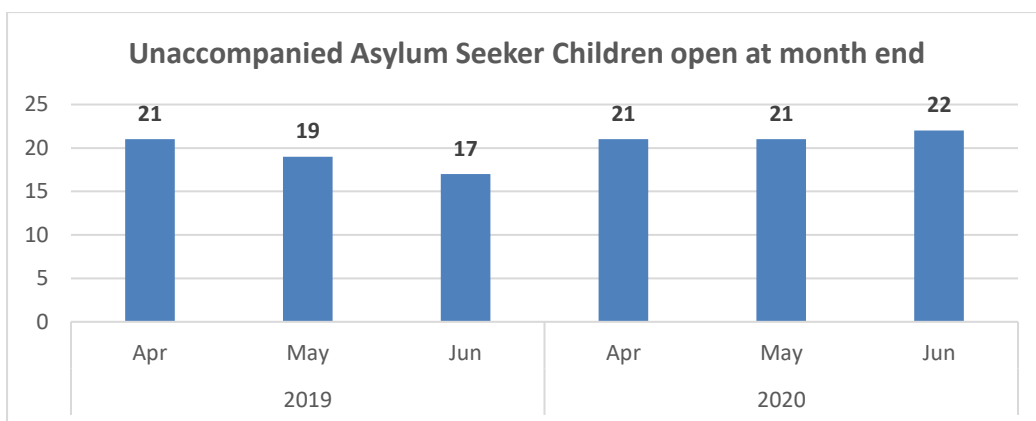
3.7 Children Looked After rate per 10,000

The rate per 10,000 was 68.3 in Q1 2020-21 compared to 68.1 at the end of Q4 which is lower than our statistical neighbor average of 70.6 and slightly higher than England average of 65.0 in 2018-19.



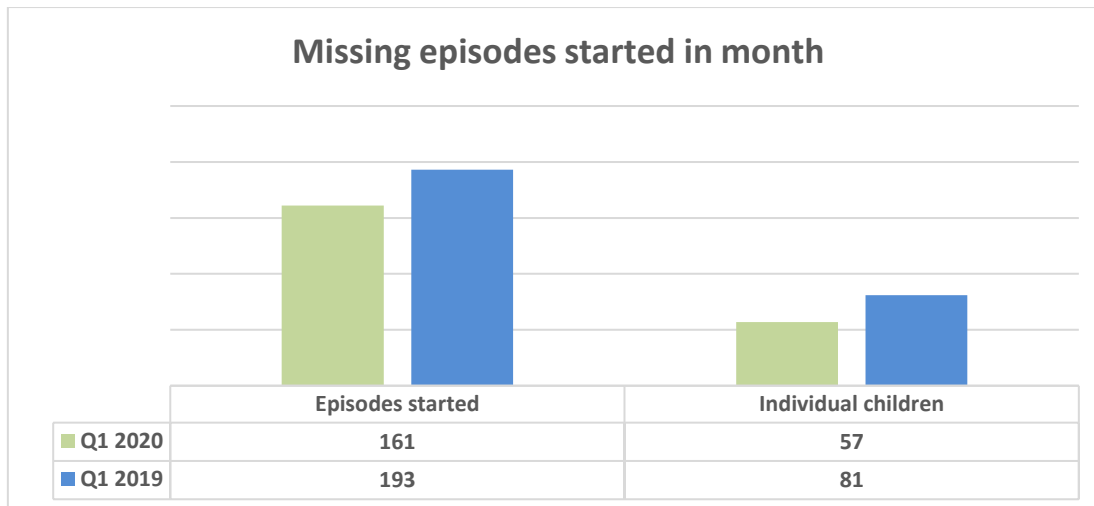
3.8 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children

At the end of Q1 2020-21, the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children was 22 representing an increase of 1 child since Q1 2019-20 and Q4 2019-20. Number of UASC in Thurrock is below statistical neighbours of 26.



4. Missing episodes of Children Looked After

4.1 In Q1 2020-21, the number of missing episodes started was 161 compared to 193 in Q1 2019-20. The episodes were made up by 57 individual children compared to 81 in Q1 2019-20.



4.2 All children are offered an independent return home interview within 72 hours of returning after they have been missing, with the aim to identify and to address the reasons. From April 1st 2020 Inspire Youth Hub have been commissioned to undertake these interviews with the aim of improving performance and reducing missing episodes. The missing reasons vary from “not being settled in placement” to the “draw of friends”. Key workers from placements, foster carers and social workers discuss missing incidents with children and there is ongoing work to try to reduce incidents and increase engagement of children at the return interviews.

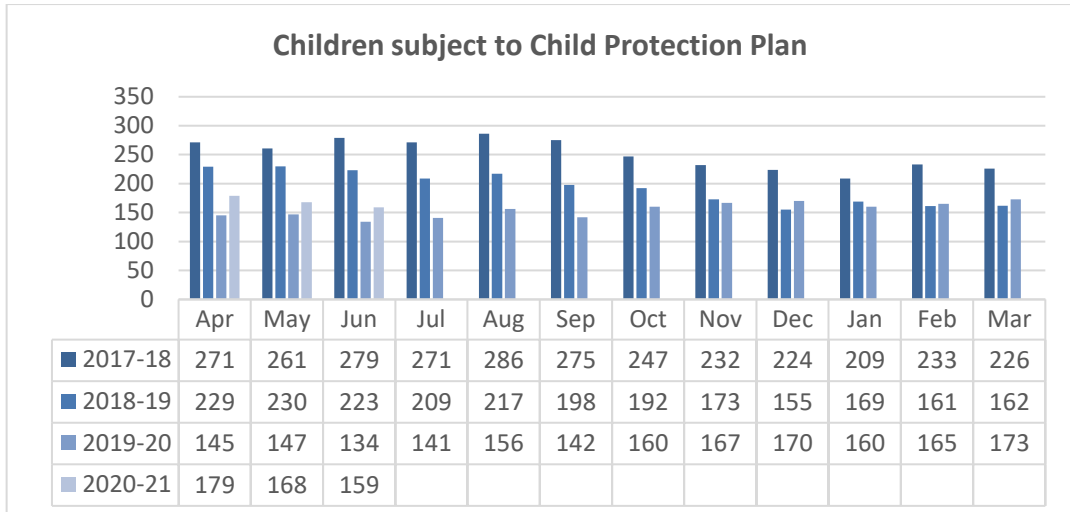
5. Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan

5.1 Number of Children

At the end of Q1 2020-21, the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 159 compared to 173 at the end of Q4 and 134 in Q1 2019-20. Since Q4, we have seen the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan steadily reduce by 8.1%.

The rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 36.3 (per 10,000) at the end of Q1 2020-21 compared to 39.5 at the end of Q4 which is below statistical neighbour of 50.3 and England average of 43.7 based on the latest data in 2018-19.

The introduction and embedding of the Signs of Safety practice model and the development of a more strengths based approach to working with families and a focus on timely decision making for children has helped to reduce the number of children with a plan.

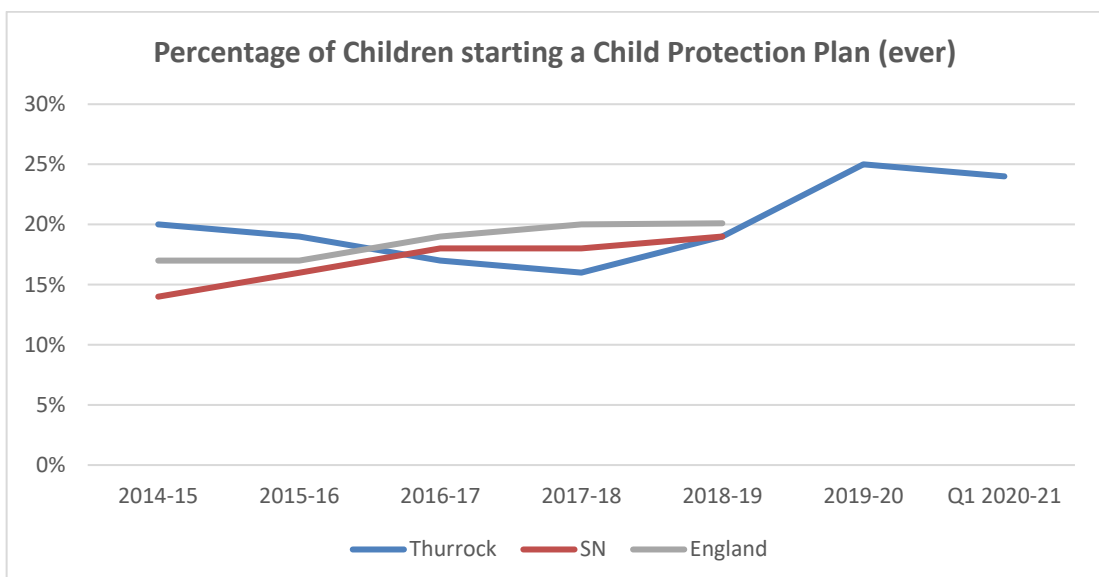


5.2 Child Protection reviews

Child Protection plans reviewed on time continues to show a good performance at 100% at the end of Q1 compared to 75.8% at the end of Q4, representing 24.2% increase.

5.3 Repeat Child Protection Plan

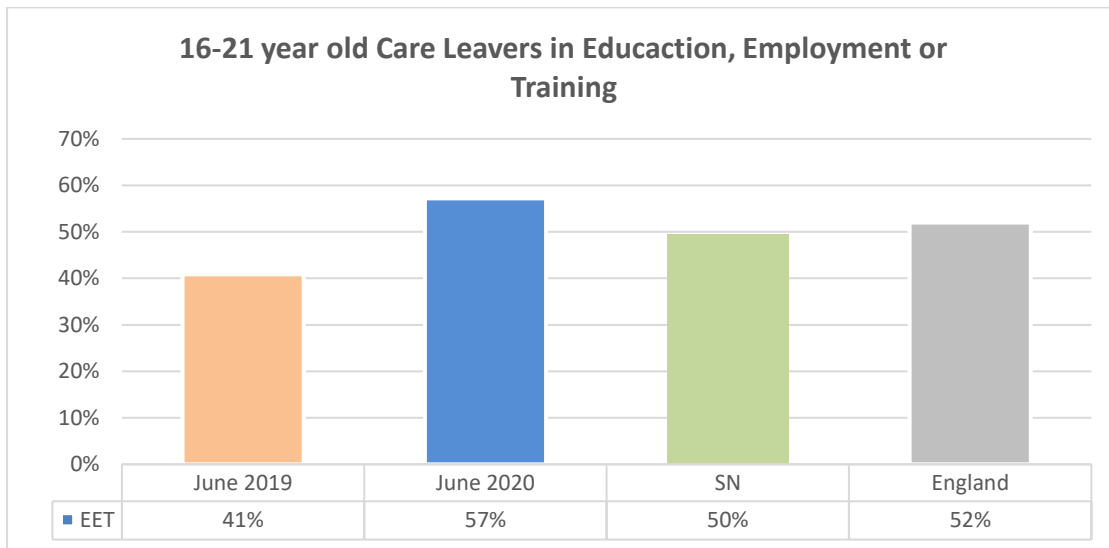
In June 2020, the percentage of children subject to repeat Child Protection Plan (at any point previously) was 23.7% which equates to 54 children and represents 1.2% drop since Q4. Based on the latest benchmarking data available in 2017-18, Thurrock is marginally higher than our statistical neighbour of 19.5% and England average of 20.0%.



6. Care leavers

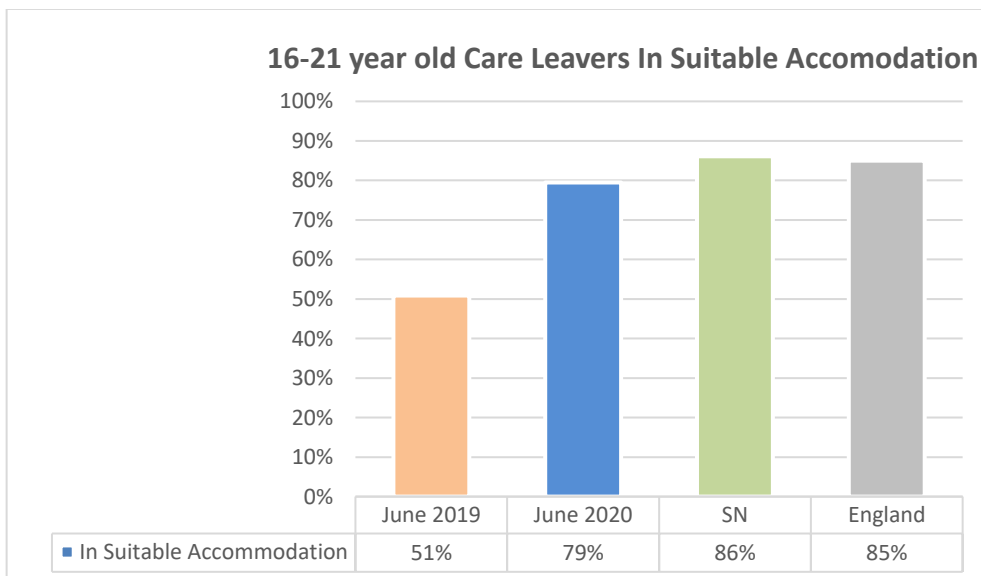
6.1 Education, Employment or Training

At the end of Q1 2020-21, 57% of 16-21 year old Care Leavers were in Education, Employment or Training compared to 41% in Q1 2019 representing 16% increase in 2020 and performing above our statistical neighbours and England average.



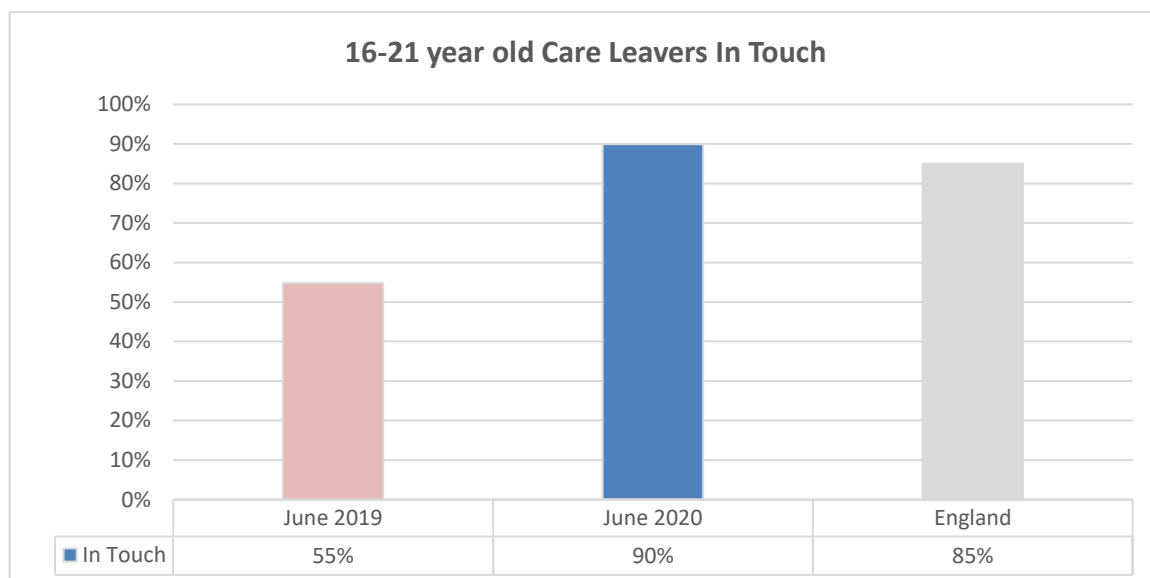
6.2 In suitable accommodation

79% of 16-21 year old care leavers were reported to be in suitable accommodation equating to 182 care leavers compared to 117 in the same quarter 2019. Since 2019, this represents a 28% increase in the number of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation.



6.3 In touch

At the end of Q1 2020-21, Care Leavers in touch was 90% which represents 35% increase when compared to the same quarter in 2019. Thurrock is performing above the national average of 85%.



7. Adoption

7.1 In Q1 2020, one child was adopted compared to 4 in Q1 2019. This reflects the timing of children placed, the number of Placement Orders and the impact of Covid-19 on the Court process. The adoption service has worked effectively to place children for adoption safely and we anticipate 12 children being placed for adoption by the end of Q2 2020-21.

7.2 We therefore anticipate a greater number of adoption orders in the second half of the financial year.

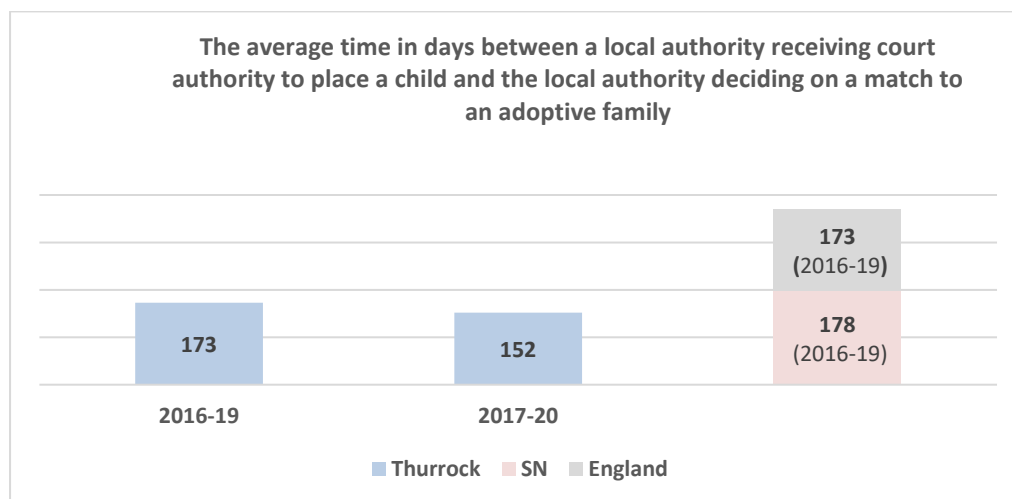
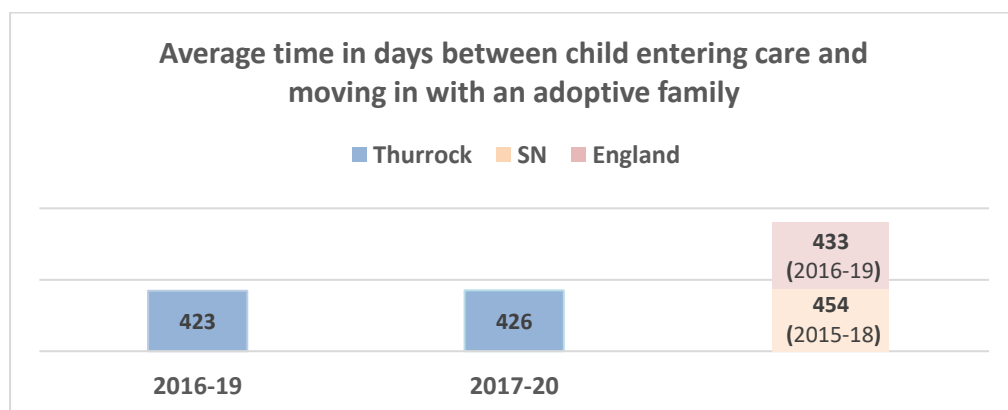
Year	Number of children adopted
2014-15	11
2015-16	19
2016-17	11
2017-18	7
2018-19	13
2019-20	15
2020-21 (Q1)	1

7.3 Further to the improved performance in 2019-20 (15 children adopted), we expect this performance to continue during the latter quarters of the reporting year.

7.4 As at the end of Q1 2020-21, our position was as follows:-

With date of decision that the child should be placed for adoption	20
Placement Orders	12
Matched	12
Placed (the same children are Placement Order, Matched and placed)	12

7.5 Thurrock is performing on target in relation to the 3 year average time for a child to be adopted. Our 2020-21 target is set at 426 days and the Q1 position is 426 days. Comparing our Statistical Neighbours and England averages below, Thurrock's performance is good.



8. Fostering

8.1 Most of our Children Looked After are placed with foster carers. We recruit and support our own foster carers but also have to use independent agency foster carers to get the right match for a child.

8.2 We have increased capacity in the recruitment team. As a result the rate of enquiries and resulting foster carers has increased. In 2019-20, we met our target of a net gain of 15 carers.

8.3 Table below shows our position from April 20 to end of Q1:

Number of new carers approved	19
Number of mainstream fostering applications currently in progress	10
Number of children currently placed in Thurrock fostering households	113

9. Reasons for Recommendation

9.1 Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to comment on the current performance position.

10. Consultation

N/A

11. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

N/A

12. Implications

12.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

No financial implications.

12.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**
Interim Deputy Head of Legal Social Care and Education

No legal implications.

12.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**

Team Manager – Community Development and Equalities

Whilst there are no direct E&D implications arising from this report, the service collects and utilises data to consider issues of equality and to ensure that performance considers the impact on children with protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

12.4 Other implications

N/A

13. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

N/A

14. Appendices to report

N/A

Report Author:

Anna Watkins

Business Intelligence Analyst

**Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2020/21**

Dates of Meetings: 7 July 2020, 6 October 2020, 19 October 2020 (EXEMPT session), 12 November 2020 (Extraordinary meeting), 1 December 2020 and 2 February 2021

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
7 July 2020		
Portfolio Holder Update (Verbal)	Cllr James Halden	Members
Safeguarding Children During COVID-19	Joseph Tynan	Officer
Education during COVID-19 Update (Verbal)	Michele Lucas	Chair
Youth Cabinet Verbal Update	Roberta Fontaine	Standing Item
Update on Thurrock Children's Services Continuous Development Plan	Joseph Tynan	Members
Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, 2019/20: Serious Youth Violence and Vulnerability	Ian Wake	Officer
Thurrock Council Home to School Travel and Transport Policy - Update	Temi Fawehinmi	Officer
SEND Inspection Outcome - Written Statement of Action Update	Michele Lucas	Members

Update on the Free School Programme	Michele Lucas/Sarah Williams	Members
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item
6 October 2020		
Youth Cabinet Verbal Update	Roberta Fontaine	Standing Item
PFH Update	Cllr Halden	Members
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board – Serious Case Review	Jane Foster-Taylor (Thurrock CCG)	Standing Item
2019/20 Annual Complaints and Representations Report – Children’s Social Care	Lee Henley	Officer
SEND Inspection Outcome - Written Statement of Action Update	Michele Lucas	Members
Thurrock School Wellbeing Service	Gemma Fitzgerald	Standing item
Council Tax Exemption for Foster Carers	Joe Tynan	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item
19 October 2020 (EXEMPT MEETING)		
Review of High Risk Notifications (EXEMPT)		Officer
12 November 2020 – Extraordinary meeting		
Pupil Place Plan Update (2020-2024)	Sarah Williams	Officer
School Capital Programme Update 2020/21	Sarah Williams	Officer

Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment 2020	Sharon Bushnell	Officer
Inspire 2019/2020 Report	Michele Lucas	Members
1 December 2020		
Youth Cabinet Verbal Update	Roberta Fontaine	Standing Item
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item/Members
SEND Inspection Outcome - WSOA Update	Michele Lucas	Standing item
Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2021/22	Kelly McMillan	Officer
Children's Social Care Performance	Joe Tynan	Officer
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item
2 February 2021		
Youth Cabinet Verbal Update	Roberta Fontaine	Standing Item
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board - Update on the Action Plan within the last SCR	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item
WSOA Update	Michele Lucas	Standing item
Thurrock School Wellbeing Service Update	Malcolm Taylor	Members
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item
To be confirmed		

Children Looked After Needs Assessment	Teresa Salami-Oru	Officer
Pupil Place Plan Annual Report	Sarah Williams	Members
Update on Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency	Andrea Winstone	Members
Head Start Housing Annual Review	Michele Williams	Officer
Update on the Progress of the Recommendations in the Annual Public Health Report of Serious Youth Violence and Vulnerability – <i>To be added for next municipal year</i>	Ian Wake	Members