

Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee Agenda



To: Councillors Councillor Richard Chatterjee (Chair), Councillor Maddie Henson (Vice-Chair), Sue Bennett, Gayle Gander, Eunice O'Dame, Helen Redfern, Manju Shahul-Hameed and Catherine Wilson

Co-optee Members

Josephine Copeland (Non-voting Teacher representative), Elaine Jones (Voting Diocesan Representative (Catholic Diocese)) and Paul O'Donnell (Voting Parent Governor Representative)

Reserve Members: Adele Benson, Mike Bonello, Stuart Collins, Patsy Cummings, Sean Fitzsimons, Mark Johnson, Holly Ramsey and Luke Shortland

A meeting of the **Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Tuesday, 1 November 2022** at **6.30 pm. Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

Tom Downs
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www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
Monday, 24 October 2022

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If you require any assistance, please contact Tom Downs as detailed above.

AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for absence

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Committee.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2022 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosures of Interest

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider **in advance of each meeting** whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), another registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer **in good time before the meeting**.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPis and ORIs at the meeting.

- Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.
- Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation.
- Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation. Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, section 9 of Appendix B of the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the Member to decide whether disclosure is required.

The Chair will invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3, to be recorded in the minutes.

4. Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5. Update on Antenatal and Health Visiting Visits (Pages 15 - 28)

To receive an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting.

6. Croydon Partnership - Early Years' Strategy (Pages 29 - 134)

To review the Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy approved by the Executive Mayor at Cabinet on 21 September 2022.

The Strategy sets out Croydon's vision for Early Years, the priorities, the principles, and the outcomes to achieve for children from before they are born up to the age 5 at the end of the foundation stage, and their families.

7. Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard (Pages 135 - 138)

To receive the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard.

8. Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations (Pages 139 - 154)

The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is presented with an up-to-date list of responses from Cabinet to recommendations made by the Sub-Committee for review.

9. Work Programme 2022/23 (Pages 155 - 160)

To consider any additions, amendments or changes to the agreed work programme for the Sub-Committee in 2022/23.

10. What Difference has this Meeting made to Croydon's Children

This item is an opportunity for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee, at the conclusion of the meeting, to review the difference made to Croydon's children from the meeting.

11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed

to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

“That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.”

PART B

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 27 September 2022 at 6.30 pm in The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Councillor Richard Chatterjee (Chair), Councillor Maddie Henson (Vice-Chair), Sue Bennett, Gayle Gander, Eunice O'Dame, Helen Redfern, Manju Shahul-Hameed and Catherine Wilson

Co-optee Members

Paul O'Donnell (Voting Parent Governor Representative)

Elaine Jones (Voting Diocesan Representative (Catholic Diocese))

Also

Present: Councillor Maria Gatland (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)
Councillor Samir Dwesar

Apologies: Josephine Copeland (Non-voting Teacher representative)

PART A

1/22 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absences were received from Josephine Copeland (Non-voting Teacher representative).

2/22 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 21st June 2022 were approved as an accurate record with the amendment that Councillor Mike Bonello was in attendance.

3/22 Disclosures of Interest

Councillor Henson stated that they had previously held the role of Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and would refrain from asking questions on the Children's Centre Contract - Insourcing of the South Locality Children's Centre Delivery paper.

4/22 Urgent Business (if any)

There was none.

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 13 to 40 of the agenda, which provided the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for 2021-22. The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education introduced the item and the Independent Scrutineer, Eleanor Brazil, to the Sub-Committee. It was noted that the Independent Scrutineer would be leaving the role soon and had served Croydon in many roles over a number of years; officers and Members thanked her for her hard work.

The Independent Scrutineer explained their role in the Partnership as an external person to the key organisations delivering services to children and young people in the borough; the Independent Scrutineer's role was to support and challenge key members of the Partnership organisations to help ensure safeguarding arrangements were effective. It was highlighted that safeguarding children was challenging as it was not always possible to ensure all children were safe from harm, although this was always the aim. Safeguarding Practice Reviews were undertaken by the Partnership when children died or were seriously hurt and thankfully these cases were not high in number.

The Independent Scrutineer went through the key points of the report and explained that the Partnership tried to capture the voice of children and young people in the borough. The work of the Partnership was guided by the Executive Group made up of key members from the statutory bodies – the Council, Croydon CCG and the Police. There were a number of multi-agency groups set up by the Partnership, with specific areas of focus, which reported to the Executive Group.

The Partnership had identified a number of themes throughout the year, and these were: the importance of Fathers/Male Carers; Professional Curiosity; Information Sharing; Safeguarding Supervision; Extra-Familial Harm. These themes had been used to influence the training offer for the following year. The Sub-Committee heard that an independent review of the Partnership had been commissioned to identify any areas of learning to inform the work and priorities of the Partnership in the coming year. The following had already been identified: Safeguarding Asylum Seekers; Early Help Transformation; Partnership Communication Strategy; Domestic Abuse; Sexual Abuse (inter and extra familial abuse).

The Chair noted the absence of a police representative and expressed the disappointment of the Sub-Committee. The Independent Scrutineer and Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained the commitment of the Police to the work of the Partnership and suggested the necessary change of dates may have led to their non-attendance. The Sub-Committee queried the disparity of proactivity and funding from some partners and the Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education responded that there had been huge pressures for all partners and there had been significant work over the last 12 years to improve frontline availability and engagement on children's' safeguarding from the Police. The Police were also

responsible for chairing the Priority Vulnerable Adolescents Group and Members heard that the independent review would help to gauge the effectiveness of the Partnership; feedback so far had suggested that engagement and the willingness to act on learning was in place. On the discrepancy between the Police budget contribution and the local authorities' contribution, the Sub-Committee heard that this was historic and London-wide.

The Independent Scrutineer explained that an Extra-Familial Abuse Safeguarding Practice Review was underway, in the wake of a number of stabbings, and was looking at the circumstances of both victims and perpetrators to see what interventions had taken place and how effective these had been. The Review was being jointly chaired by Children's Social Services and the Police; the Police generally had good attendance at other Partnership groups.

Members asked how recommendations were implemented and tracked across the partners. The CSCP Quality Assurance & Development Officer explained that this responsibility sat within the Safeguarding Practice Review Group, which tracked key partners involvement and regularly looked at key themes across the reviews that came in. Key people involved in reviews often attended the Safeguarding Practice Review Group to monitor how actions were being implemented and how effective they had been. Whilst sometimes reports could take time to publish, learning from these was implemented and shared between the partners to ensure this was not delayed.

The Sub-Committee asked about the current situation in Croydon with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and any work the Partnership was carrying out in this area. The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education responded that this was a clear priority for this Partnership and the Community Safety Partnership who collaborated and shared information on this issue; often the children at risk were often also at risk for involvement with county lines and serious youth violence which meant that a multi-agency response was vital. The learning from Serious Practice Reviews and training fed into this area but there was significantly more work that needed to be done through a multi-agency approach on the ground. The Chief Nurse Croydon CCG/CHS added that there needed to be increased awareness from frontline staff and a better understanding of the risks and challenges involved with better information sharing between partners. The CSCP Quality Assurance & Development Officer explained that there was a good training offer provided to staff on child criminal and sexual exploitation; specific training had been commissioned on the disproportionality to young black men and their families to extra familial risk. The Partnership had been instrumental in developing the Violence Against Woman and Girls (VAWG) strategy and ensuring that this did not sit alone and contained strong referencing to CSE.

The Head of Social Work with Families & Children with Disabilities 0-17 Services explained the Complex Adolescent Panel, which was multi-agency, and looked at children at risk of exploitation; a risk assessment was developed between partners using the expert knowledge of practitioners and

an action plan was agreed and followed. Children would remain on the Panel's list until the members were certain that the risks were managed, and some safety was achieved for the young person. Mapping was also undertaken to identify links between cases the Panel was considering. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People commented that the complex issues faced by the Council since 2017 could lead to challenges in this sensitive area of work but that there were a team of social workers who conducted intensive work with children at risk of CSE in collaboration with the Police and the Youth Offending Team. Members heard that a close eye was being kept on this area and it was a priority for the Cabinet Member. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People explained their key concerns were around missing and looked after children.

On the level of CSE in Croydon, the Sub-Committee heard that Croydon had a similar profile to other London boroughs; the Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education highlighted the importance of early intervention for young people and that any figures that they could provide would likely be misleading. The Sub-Committee asked how well the Partnership worked with other organisations and how often these relationships were reviewed. The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained that there was very joined up working with other partners and partnerships but that there was always more work that could be done to supplement frequent on the ground communication. The independent review of the Partnership would specifically look at the links with other organisations and partnerships.

Members asked how much face-to-face working continued during COVID and the Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained that this was crucial. Throughout the pandemic, face-to-face contact had continued, and this had been supplemented by other means where necessary. The Head of Social Work with Families & Children with Disabilities 0-17 Services explained that there had been a point in lockdown when children had been prioritised due to need and those of highest priority had continued to receive full face-to-face contact with reduced levels for lower risk children in safer placements; some meetings of professionals had taken place virtually where practical.

The Sub-Committee asked about the challenges of Safeguarding Education Standards and the Director of Education responded that schools shared safeguarding audits which were reviewed to identify best practice and gaps. Where gaps were identified, or audits were not completed, schools were helped to find how to close these gaps and, where significant safeguarding concerns were identified, visits would take place and an action plan would be developed. Audits would be shared with and signed off by Governors to ensure safeguarding was a key focus for school leaderships. Serious concerns were not often identified in education provision, but should they be, they would be discussed within the Partnership and with OFSTED where necessary. Members asked how the challenge differed for the Police and Health Safeguarding Standards and the Chief Nurse Croydon CCG/CHS explained that the auditing and reviewing was similar. The Independent

Scrutineer explained that reports on auditing came to the Quality Improvement Group who provided further challenge.

Members asked about the Child Death Overview Panel, and it was explained that the report on this had not yet concluded. A report with the full details on this would be published at a later date, but the number of cases reviewed by the Panel had been falling over the last four years.

In response to questions about the effectiveness of training, the Independent Scrutineer explained that this could be hard to gauge but that learning was identified continually by the Partnership. Events were organised where all frontline practitioners from cases were invited to discuss and share their learning which was then shared with other practitioners. Members heard that the confidence of staff was often a good measurement of how effective training had been.

The Sub-Committee asked how the experience of children and young people was used to inform the practices of the Partnership. The Head of Social Work with Families & Children with Disabilities 0-17 Services explained that this information was captured through direct work with children, multi-agency meetings, family surveys, complaints and direct interactions with frontline workers and managers. Often feedback was good, and it was recognised that positive outcomes could sometimes not be as visible. There were a number of avenues used to collate this information, but it was recognised that more work needed to be done in this area and this was a part of all improvement plans across the Partnership. There would be a Practice Week in early October 2022 which would involve practitioners spending time talking to young people, children and carers to hear what they would like to see improved. Carers often attended social service meetings to discuss what was being done well and what could be done differently to allow social workers to reflect on their work.

Members asked how long after cases were closed that post case reviews were undertaken and whether there was any long term follow up to see how well interventions had worked. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance responded that the refresh of the Quality Assurance Framework looked to pick this up and to see how well things had worked for children and families and to review the longitudinal impact of interventions.

The Sub-Committee asked how effective information sharing was and how well early intervention approaches were embedded. The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained that a lot of work had been done to improve information sharing in the Partnership both on the ground and at a strategic level. Work was done to review systems to ensure this was robust through training and identifying areas of additional learning. Members heard that Early Intervention services were not statutory and were often identified as areas for savings, however, these were vital to managing pressures in a time of increased demand. Early Help and Early Years services were working closely together, and this would feed into the development of Family Hubs.

The Director of Education explained that Croydon had received funding to develop the Family Hub model which would be implemented alongside an Early Years Strategy to make sure early help was available at a 'one stop shop' for families, carers and children. Family Hub development was still in the early stages and would be with input from the views of stakeholders and families. Schools are often the first port of call for the Early Help Service due to their relationships with families and children and this needed to be incorporated into the Family Hub model alongside Children's Centres. Members asked if the Council could bid for funding on Family Hubs or whether this needed to come from external organisations and partners. The Director for Education explained that the funding was received by the Council who would work closely with partners to deliver services.

The Chair thanked officers and the Independent Scrutineer for all of their work with the Partnership and in delivering the Annual Report.

Conclusions:

The Sub-Committee were disappointed that the Police were not able to attend and hoped that they would be able to attend in future.

The Sub-Committee commended the commitment of the Partnership and the Council to Early Intervention services.

The Sub-Committee were keen to see the conclusions of the Independent Review of the partnership included as part of the Annual Report for 2022-23.

6/22 Children's Centre Contract - Insourcing of the South Locality Children's Centre Delivery

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 41 to 52 of the agenda, which provided an update on the Children's Centre Contract award for North and Central, and the insourcing of the South Locality Children's Centre Delivery. The Director of Education introduced and summarised the report.

The Sub-Committee asked why the Council was not able to find a provider for the South Locality but were able to for the North and Central Localities. The Director of Education explained that this was largely due to the funding envelope available, concern around Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE), a lack of clarity around building costs and issues with the internal capacity of the bidders. After the first round of commissioning, bidders had been asked to provide the reasons for not bidding and a warming exercise has been conducted. The provider for the North and Central Localities had not been able to take on the South Locality due to a lack of capacity.

Members asked if there were any lessons that could be learnt as a result of the failure to commission for the South Locality. The Director for Education

explained that learning had been taken into account after the first round and had led to conducting a warming exercise, but this had not been enough to result in a successful bid. Members heard that unfortunately some things could not be changed, such as the funding envelope and the services the Council needed to be provided, TUPE and lack of clarity around the maintenance costs of buildings. Members heard that there was always an attempt to develop learning after any commissioning exercise. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance added that these were small providers, and the unknown costs were bigger risks for them than a larger business.

The Sub-Committee queried the £97k budget pressure due to redundancies and asked why only families in the South Locality would experience reduced services as a result. The Director of Education responded that the risks to service delivery in the South were low, and that ways to mitigate removing this amount from the budget would be looked at to ensure that impacts would be minimal; an example of this was encouraging staff at risk of redundancy to apply for vacant posts within the Parenting Team.

Members asked about the Purley Oaks Centre and the importance for parents in building relationships with staff before they were likely to ask for help; currently the Centre was only open for two and a half hours a week and it was asked why this was so limited. The Director of Education explained that, as part of the Hub and Spoke Model, most activity would be carried out in the Hubs with reduced activities in the Spokes; because staff had just transferred in on current terms and conditions, the model was still being developed and this had been more complicated at Purley Oaks due to staffing issues. Staff at the Purley Oaks Centre were available one day a week and would be signposting where families could go for additional services at other Children's Centres.

Members asked how existing services users were being supported into the new model, with some families having to travel further which would affect families without cars. The Director of Education explained this had been looked at during the consultation and that bus routes had also been considered and made available to families. It was acknowledged that the service had been reduced but that services would be signposted to families. There had been a long consultation on this strategy, but ultimately services had needed to be reduced in line with budget reduction. The Hub and Spoke Model was not just about Children's Centres and also focuses on delivering health services and more with partners.

The Family Hub model being adopted is in a transitional phase and a delivery plan for the Early Years Strategy will look at what else was available to families with young children and making this as accessible as possible. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People praised the Early Years Strategy and explained that this would feed into Family Hubs going forward.

On the risks of the £97k budget pressure, the Director of Education explained that the biggest risk was staffing, and that staff could leave due to anxiety

about job security. Mitigations to this were staff from the education department who were spending time in the Children's Centres.

The Sub-Committee asked how performance would be measured between the North and Central Localities and the South Locality and heard that the Key Performance Indicators would be exactly the same, and that delivery in the South would receive challenge from the Improvement Board.

Members asked about families being signposted to other Centres who could not get into the Purley Oaks Centre and how this would happen if the Centre was at capacity or closed. The Director for Education explained that the Model could not account for every family in the borough, but that signposting would take place through GPs, Health Visitors and other partners. It was important to ensure communication with partners was happening effectively and that that they were aware of what services were available. The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained that the implementation plan of the Early Years strategy would be important in joining services up.

Members asked how the Children's Centres would interact with the Family Hubs and it was explained that these had not yet been implemented, but that Children's Centres would be incorporated into Family Hubs, but this was still at a very early stage. Children who would normally attend Children's Centres would receive services through Family Hubs, but further work on this was still required. Partners are still delivering services in Children's Centres through the Hub and Spoke model, and the Early Years Strategy was developed with partners.

The Chair asked if having Health Visitors in hubs would put additional pressure on these services and heard that this was unlikely as it would not require additional resource. On why the service had been insourced, the Sub-Committee heard that this had been the only option as a commissioning a provider had not been possible.

Conclusions:

The Sub-Committee were pleased to see that the Council had ensured Children's Centres were still available in the South Locality by insourcing the delivery of the Centres.

The Sub-Committee were concerned about the limited opening hours of the Purley Oaks Centre and how effectively families who would usually rely on this service would be signposted to alternative resources.

The Sub-Committee were concerned about the £97K budget pressure from insourcing the South Locality but were reassured that this would be looked at holistically to avoid a reduction in service for the South of the borough. That the Sub-Committee receive an update on Children's Centres once the Family Hub model had been fully implemented to see how this was performing.

Recommendations:

1. That the Sub-Committee be invited to visit the Children's Centres with the Cabinet Member in the North or Central areas, with a visit to a Children's Centre in the South once this has had a chance to bed in.

7/22 Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 53 to 56 of the agenda, which provided the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard.

The Sub-Committee commended the performance under indicators CYPE 20 and 21, noting the difficult environment of the last two years in which these had been delivered.

The Sub-Committee asked about CYPE 27 & 29 and heard the Director of Education responded that as CYPE 27 had increased, this had a knock-on effect to CYPE 29. The resource was being looked at as a whole to work across the whole age group as there were usually more assessments for younger children; an annual reviewing team had been brought in to look at the backlog. It was acknowledged that this indicator was stubbornly red on the RAG rating, but that more Education Health & Care Plans were issued within 20 weeks and there was month on month improvement.

The Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education explained that indicators that were static were being reviewed regularly and CYPE 27 & 29 had recently been reviewed by the internal control board. Improvements in these areas had been reflected in a 2021 inspection, but demand and work in this area were huge. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People commended the work that had been done so far but acknowledged the work still to be done; the Cabinet Member explained that their LGA mentor had complimented the work of Croydon's SEN Service.

On CYPE 24, Members asked why this was increasing. The Director of Education explained that this was looked at in conjunction with CYPE 23; the NEET team was relatively small which meant that work needed to be focussed and was often on and with individuals, but figures had improved. It was noted that CYPE 24 was high due to the time of year with many young people transitioning between different education and employment settings. There was now a strategic lead for NEET who would maintain focus in this area.

On CYPE 04 and 06, it was asked when the missing data would be available. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance explained that this had now been completed and would be included on the next report. Members requested that on any Red or Amber ratings commentary was always provided as it was missing for some indicators.

The Chair requested information on the transfers of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) to other local authority areas, and the amount of time that UASC spent in the borough before they were transferred. The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance explained that the new requirement for a mandatory National Transfer Scheme (NTS) came into place in November 2021, and the target period for transfers to take place had previously been 10 working days and was now reduced to 5 working days. This was designed to limit the impact on the child of staying too long in the area and becoming connected to the local community, starting school, etc. The Council referred to the NTS as soon as young people arrived. S April 2022, 16 children had been transferred through the NTS scheme and 73 before April 2022. It was noted that the NTS had only been made mandatory in November 2021.

Recommendations:

1. That an updated version of the report including the missing information was circulated to the Sub-Committee.
2. That all future versions of the report provide commentary for any indicators with a RAG rating of red or amber.

8/22 Work Programme 2022/23

The Sub-Committee agreed with the Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education that the Educations Strategy and Standards report be added to the Work Programme for the January 2023 meeting.

The Sub-Committee discussed supplementary visits and activities to enhance the Work Programme. It was suggested that there be a meeting with Health Visitors and Antenatal workers in advance of the next Sub-Committee. Some other suggestions noted were meetings with frontline social workers and visiting the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Sub-Committee highlighted the importance of the Police attending the next meeting in November 2022.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Signed:

Date:

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Agenda Item 5

REPORT TO:	Children & Young People Sub-Committee 1 November 2022
SUBJECT:	Antenatal and Health Visiting
LEAD OFFICER:	Chris Terrahe Deputy Director of Nursing (Croydon Health Services NHS Trust)
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item was included on the Children & Young People Sub-Committee Work Programme 2022/23, to receive an update from the report presented at the November 2021 meeting.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to review the presentation provided at Appendix 1, and given at the Sub-Committee meeting, to provide an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting services in Croydon, and to review shortfalls in the number of health visitors, and antenatal and postnatal visits.

1. Antenatal and Health Visiting

- 1.1. The Children & Young People Sub-Committee were last provided an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting services at its meeting on [2nd November 2021](#). Members were of the view that an update on the services should be provided as part of the 2022/23 Work Programme.
- 1.2. The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to receive the presentation provided at Appendix 1, and given at the Sub-Committee meeting, to provide an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting services in Croydon, and to review shortfalls in the number of health visitors, and antenatal and postnatal visits.
- 1.3. If in reviewing the data provided the Sub-Committee identifies any area of concern that it feels may require further investigation this will be reported to the Scrutiny Work Programming Group by the Chair for further consideration.

- 1.4. At the last meeting of the Sub-Committee, Members were of the view that a meeting with frontline Health Visitors would be helpful to provide insight on the experiences of those working in the service. Discussions between the Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk and Croydon Health Services are ongoing to arrange for this to take place.
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REPORT AUTHOR: Tom Downs – Democratic Services & Governance Officer

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Presentation: Croydon Health Services, PHN – HV Mandated checks and service context

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

PHN – HV Mandated checks and service context

1st November 2022

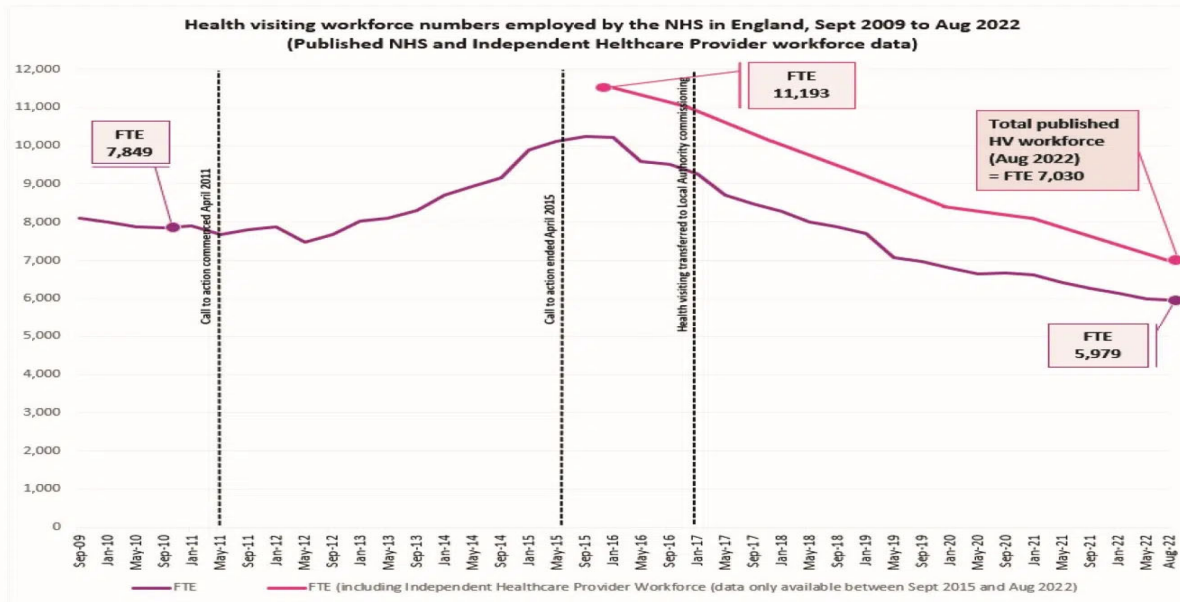


National Context of Health Visiting Services



Croydon Health Services
NHS Trust

The Indicative Health Visitor Collection (IHVC) was set up to support the government's commitment to increase the number of Health Visitors by 4,200 FTE to 12,292 FTE by March 2015, from a baseline of 8,092 FTE in 2010.



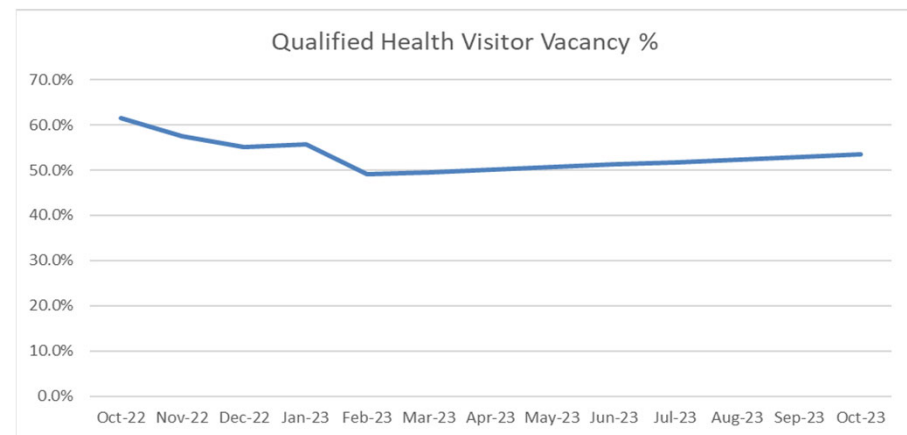
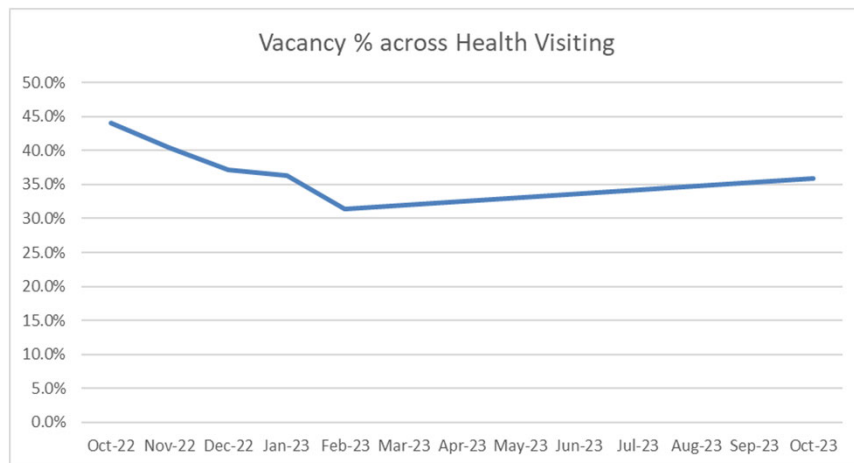
The HV workforce has decreased by 37% since 2015.

Credits: FTE information - NHS Workforce Statistics: <https://bit.ly/3dWjSnq> and Independent Healthcare Provider Workforce numbers taken from NHS Digital: <https://bit.ly/3QRTSYO>

- There is a national shortage of around 5,000 health visitors in England
- 9% of Health Visitors in England reported that they have the recommended ratio of 250 children aged 0-5, or less, per full time equivalent health visitor.
- More than 1 in 4 health visitors in England report that they are accountable for over 750 children (Institute of Health Visiting 2021)

Local Context of Health Visiting Services

- Current Croydon Health Visitor Case load is 24,287 with 934 Universal plus and 595 Universal partnership plus
- Current Croydon Caseload per 1 FTE Qualified Health Visitor 1:1000
- CHS uses Community and Nursery Nurses to support the families leading to a ratio of 1: 550



Public Health Nursing Improvement Program

Following concerns raised by both staff and commissioners into the Health Visiting and School Nursing Services, Elaine Clancy as Chief Nurse commissioned 2 independent and external reviews of both services. These reviews were carried out over December to February 2022.

The similarity of findings across both services demonstrates some key themes impacting staff and the provision of services for both Health Visiting and School Nursing.

The key themes are

- Culture and Organisational Development
- Structures
- Leadership



Public Health Nursing Improvement Programme

High Level Work Streams

Programmes	Work Streams	High Level Outcomes
Workforce	Recruitment	Reducing the vacancies
	Retention	Reducing Turnover
	Redesign	New Roles to meet the gap
	Smarter working	More efficient working
Culture	Organisational Development	Organisational Development Program
	Talent Management	Development Pathway
	Visible Leadership	Staff to feel supported
	Bridging the gap	Staff to feel part of the Trust
Part of the community	Patient Feedback	Increasing Patient feedback
	Service Visibility	Visibility Plan
	Improving Access	Increase Mandated and non mandated contacts

Public Health Nursing Improvement Programme

Delivery to date

Programmes	Delivery to date
Workforce	Recruitment and Retention Strategy
	Increased number of Nursery Nurses and Students
	Working with local Universities
	Recruitment Open Days
Culture	Organisational Development Program started
	Career Pathways Mapped
	Cake with Chris and Leadership visits to bases
	Showcasing Services at CUH Site
Part of the community	Using QR codes to gather Patient Feedback
	1 st Health Promotion at Whitgift centre 1 st October 2022
	Single point of access in place

Improved Levels of Patient Feedback

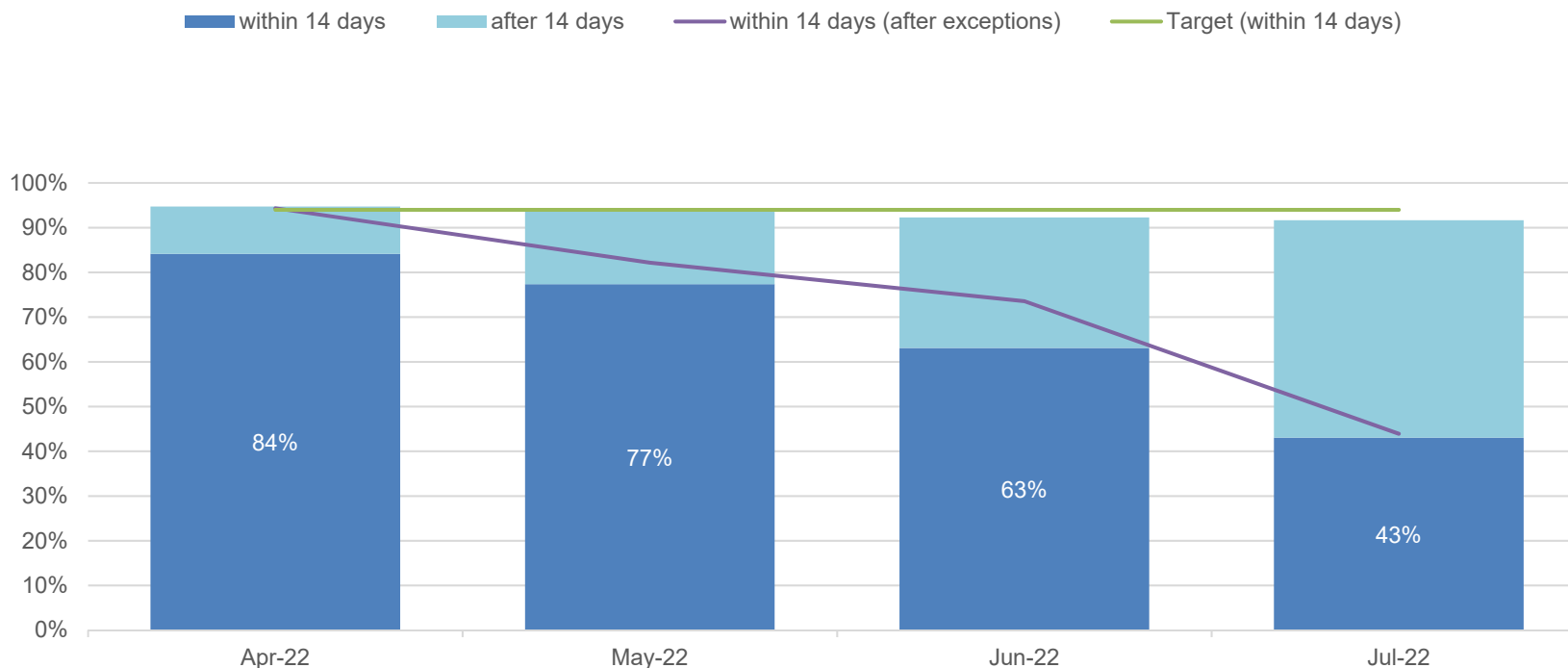
Use of QR codes to enable feedback from families

1	anonymous	My health visitor Miss Lois was so nice and friendly .
2	anonymous	Natasha helpful
3	anonymous	Being advised
4	anonymous	Janet is amazing all the time
5	anonymous	Debbie is brilliant from start to finish. She is so knowledgeable and professional with a lovely warm manner I felt so comfortable with her and I requested she see me for my 6-8 weeks check up. She kindly fitted me in before holiday,the NHS is lucky to have a staff member like Debbie
6	anonymous	Kate is incredibly supportive and knowledgeable. The kindest and most caring health professional I have ever come across.
7	anonymous	Admire & jasmine were very friendly and accommodating to our family whilst very professional. A lovely visit
8	anonymous	The health visitor (Admire) and student (Jasmine) were very efficient and friendly, they answered all questions and provided reassurance

Debbie is brilliant
 Natasha helpful
 lovely
 supportive
 caring
 efficient
 health visitor
 NHS is lucky
 kindest
 lovely visit
 Janet is amazing
 warm manner
 Admire & jasmine
friendly
 health professional
 kindly fitted
professional
knowledgeable
 staff member
 start to finish

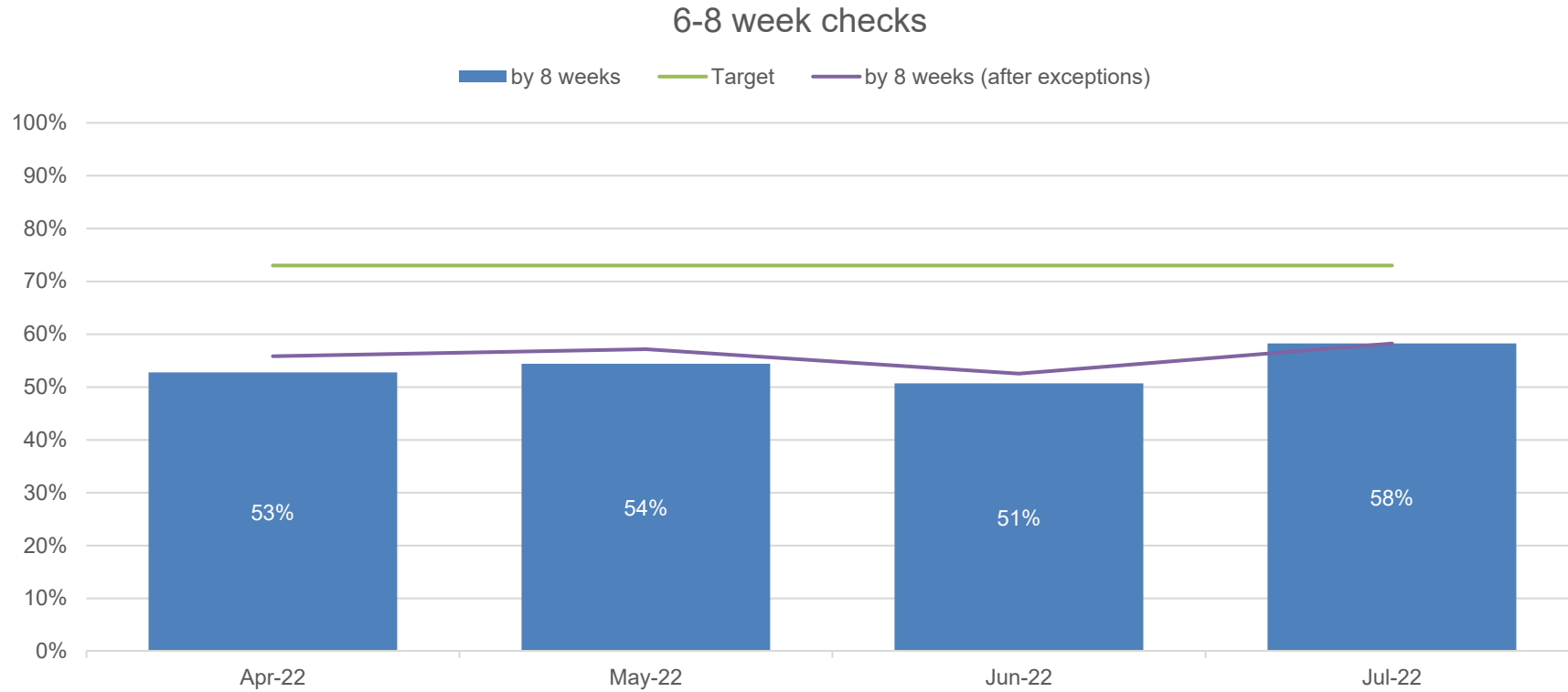
New Birth Visit

New birth visits



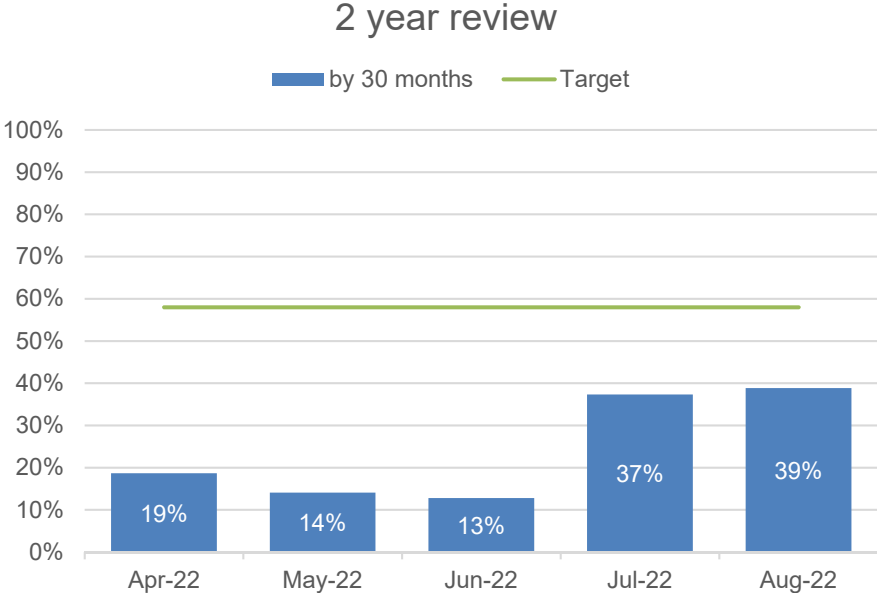
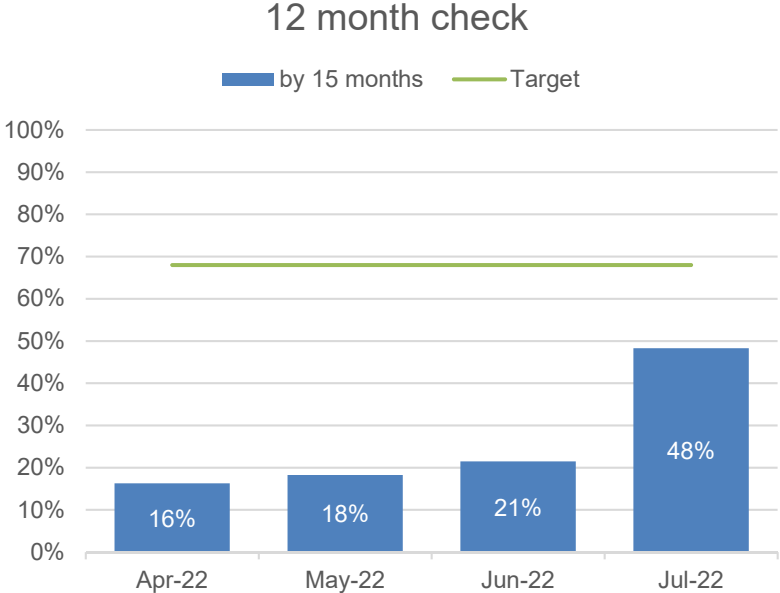
The service has seen a decline in qualified health visitors. This is due to a number of retirements and health visitors leaving to work in inner London areas. There is a national shortage of health visitors, locally the service is addressing this with 'recruit to train' qualified nurses. Improving working practices to incorporate virtual sessions will increase capacity

6-8 Week Check



Improved administration processes have seen an improvement in the completion of the 6-8 week review.

One and two year checks



Increase administration capacity, along with refined admin processes has increased the uptake of reviews.



Priorities for 2022-2023



Croydon Health Services
NHS Trust

- Improved coverage levels on 5 key mandatory checks
- Improved understanding and coverage for targeted UP and UPP
- Review of allocation of work to ensure effective service delivery and use of resources.
- Improved collaboration between maternity and safeguarding services with Public Health Nursing services
- Planning for year 2 and further quality improvements, including the Early Identification Learning Measure.
- Partnership working –

Children centres	Early Help Partnership Board	Delivery of HENRY programme
MASH delivery group	SEND Strategy	Family Hub applications
EY strategy	SWL LMNS	Croydon Health Protection Forum
Homeless health steering group	HEARD	SWL Children and Young People System Board Meeting



Croydon Health Services
NHS Trust



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Agenda Item 6

REPORT TO:	Children & Young People Sub-Committee 1 November 2022
SUBJECT:	Croydon Partnership - Early Years' Strategy
LEAD OFFICER:	Debbie Jones - Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Shelley Davies - Director of Education, Children Young People and Education Denise Bushay - Head of Service, Early Years, School Place Planning and Admission
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Maria Gatland Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Shelley Davies - Director of Education, Children Young People and Education
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item was included on the Children & Young People Sub-Committee Scrutiny Sub-Committee Work Programme for 2022/23.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee has asked to review the decision taken by the Executive Mayor at Cabinet to approve the final draft of Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy 2022 – 2025 with a view to understanding the possible risks and next steps.

1. Croydon Partnership - Early Years' Strategy

- 1.1. The Children & Young People Sub-Committee has asked to evaluate the Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy 2022 – 2025 with a view to understanding the possible risks and next steps.
- 1.2. The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is interested to find out more about the development of the Strategy's Delivery Plan and the new Early Years partnership board.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Tom Downs – Democratic Services & Governance Officer – Scrutiny

Email: Tom.Downs@croydon.gov.uk

Background Documents: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Cabinet Report – 21 September - Croydon Partnership - Early Years' Strategy (and appendices).

REPORT TO:	CABINET 14 SEPTEMBER 2022
SUBJECT:	Croydon Partnership Early Years Strategy
LEAD OFFICERS:	Debbie Jones, Interim Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Shelley Davies, Director of Education, Children Young People and Education Denise Bushay, Head of Service, Early Years, School Place Planning and Admission
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
WARDS:	All

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report presents the final draft of Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy. The draft Strategy sets out Croydon's vision for Early Years, the priorities, the principles, and the outcomes we want to achieve for children from before they are born up to the age 5 at the end of the foundation stage, and their families. This draft strategy will span a three-year timeframe from 2022 to 2025 with proposals to create a child-centred system with joined-up policies and services to support our youngest residents and their families

The draft strategy aligns with the Government's Family Hubs approach which is a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support; and Best Start for Life which is focused on the 1,001 critical days through pregnancy to the age of two. It is also in line with the Beyond Boundaries (ISOS) report which calls on local leaders within Councils, in health and the community, to prioritise the development of closer working to integrate all parts of the 'pre-birth to five system'.

The vision is that 'All children achieve the best possible development, health, wellbeing and education outcomes from before pregnancy to the end of reception and for children to feel safe, secure and loved'. This vision is underpinned by a commitment to prevention, and the earliest possible intervention to reduce inequalities that could impact children's life chances.

The draft strategy celebrates the diversity of Croydon's young children and their families which includes people from different family structures, disabilities, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual orientation different ethnic, and cultural groups, such as the traveller community, asylum seekers and refugees. We recognise that the first years of life are among the most important for a child's mental and physical development and support and services should be delivered in a way that helps children and families thrive.

The proposals in the strategy have been developed in collaboration and consultation with parents and carers, the Early Years Partnership consisting of Croydon Council,

Public Health, Croydon's Integrated Care System, early year's practitioners, schools, and wider partners.

The draft strategy provides the guiding principles for the development of Family Hubs and Early Help transformation and will advance efforts for integrated pathways across the Early Years system, with particular emphasis on involving residents and the voluntary and community sector.

The need for a Partnership Early Years Strategy has been further strengthened by the COVID pandemic which impacted the Early Years through increased poverty and anxiety, impacting on emotional wellbeing and mental health, reduced access to childcare, restricted social engagement, speech and language developmental delay, less face-to-face contact with health, social care and education professionals.

Croydon's Partnership Early Year's strategy is for: all parents, carers, and their children from before pregnancy to the end of reception (age 5 to 6); and any statutory, private, voluntary organisation - education, health, social care - involved with and supporting parents, carers, and their children in the early years.

We are seeking the Executive Mayor's approval for the final draft of Croydon Partnership Early Years Strategy, its publication, and development of the Delivery Plan.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – full draft of the Partnership Early Years Strategy.

Appendix 2 - Consultation outcomes report

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment.

Subject to approval of the draft Strategy, the next step in the process is the development of the Strategy's Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan will be an action-oriented document, co-produced with parents, carers, and partners; it will set out how we will work towards the successful delivery of the Strategy's aims and objectives. An accessible version of the delivery plan will be produced for use and reference by families, carers and partners. A directory of early years services will be developed as part of publishing Croydon's Best Start in Life offer.

Governance of the strategy will be overseen by internal strategic management groups and partnership boards to ensure effective delivery of the vision and implementation of the strategy / proposals. A new Early Years partnership board will be established for the implementation the Strategy and co-production of the Delivery plan. The draft strategy is a live 'working document', which will be reviewed and refreshed to incorporate new and relevant data as it becomes available and reflect developing policy.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2022-2026

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The recommendation to approve and publish the Partnership Early Years Strategy will not result in any additional cost to either the Council or Croydon's Integrated Care System.

Following the development of the Delivery Plan for the implementation of the strategy/proposals, any costs will be met from within existing funding streams and government grants.

Anecdotal evidence shows that prevention and early intervention represent good value for money, cost savings and cost avoidance. Future commissioning intentions, children's transformation programmes and service improvements may emerge later, allowing for reinvestment and / or innovations across the system, to improve outcomes for children in their early years and beyond.

KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO: [insert number if applicable/not a key decision]

This is a policy decision and will affect more than 2 wards.

[The notice of the decision will specify that the decision may not be implemented until after 13.00 hours on the 6th working day following the day on which the decision was taken unless referred to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. [delete text as applicable]

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive Mayor, in Cabinet, is recommended to:

1. consider and approve the final draft of Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy 2022 – 2025,
2. approve the publication of the Strategy and development of its Delivery Plan.

1. DETAIL OF YOUR REPORT**1.1 Context and Background**

It is generally agreed that services provided during pregnancy and when children are young have greater impact on outcomes. Early childhood is one of the most critical phases of human development. It begins before birth, when a baby's body and brain are being formed, continues through early infancy when key relationships are established, and developmental milestones reached and includes the preschool years and the transition into school.

- 1.2 National reviews and strategies support integrated service provision and interventions that are focused on prevention and early intervention for children and pregnant women to ensure children get a good start in life and reach their full potential. Early intervention is a public policy approach to identify and support children and their families at an early stage, to prevent problems developing later in life, such as poor physical and mental health, low educational attainment, crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.3 Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy will deliver key statutory functions, including:
- management of funded free early education including the extended entitlement
 - supporting and monitoring standards and provision across early years settings
 - the provision of early help support in partnership with Public Health
 - SEND services and support for early years provision
 - the moderation of EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) statutory assessment
 - Best Start children's centres offer services, activities and support for families with children under 5.
- 1.4 In developing Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy, as well as using feedback from partners, parents/carers and practitioners, we have taken account of the strategic context in relation to national and local priorities and relevant policy guidance. The Strategy aims to provide integrated working across all partners which is vital to the delivery of high-quality services and targeted support for vulnerable children and families. The high-level objectives of the strategy are designed to reflect all the influences on a child in the early years.

2. The Legislative Context

Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy provides a framework for service delivery within the context of statutory duties (namely but not exclusively the Childcare Act 2006 and 16, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents)

- 2.1 The responsibilities on local authorities were further defined by the Children and Families Act 2014 which seeks to improve services for vulnerable children and to support families. It underpinned wider reforms and policies to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background which is further strengthened by the Equalities Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.
- 2.2 The strategy links to other commitments made by government in various report/guidance such as:
- Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
 - Keeping children safe in education - early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision

- Healthy child programme - partner services working collaboratively with the midwife to provide continuity of care and providers equipped to design effective, family-oriented services
- The best start for life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days
- Family Hubs: a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services.

3. The Local Context

Croydon has the 4th largest population of children and young people in London: 22.2% (85,672) of the population are aged 0–15 years. The projected growth in the population of children between the ages of 0 and 6 in Croydon between now and 2030 is just under 1000 - 40,431 – 41225.

- 49% of the eligible 2-year-old population benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020.
 - 85% of 3- and 4-year-olds benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020. For both age groups, take up is below the London and England averages.
- 3.1 In 2019, 74.6% of pupils achieved a good level of development in Croydon in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in line with London and above England (71.8%).
- 3.2 The Croydon Health and Care Plan (2019 – 2025) identifies Better start in life and Maternity as a priority for parents and carers with young children and recognises that to improve their health and wellbeing services need to focus on ‘prevention and proactive care’, untapped potential in our ‘community assets and skills’ and ‘integrated services.’²¹
- 3.3 Croydon’s Prevention Framework aims to create the conditions in which prevention initiatives will flourish and to support Croydon’s aim to reduce inequalities. This is being used to inform this early year’s strategy. The aim of the prevention framework is to:
- underpin the development of our strategies and implementation plans, ensuring our strategies following the same preventative priorities and therefore have a greatest impact and
 - set out the approach for how we will embed the preventative approach in all we do.

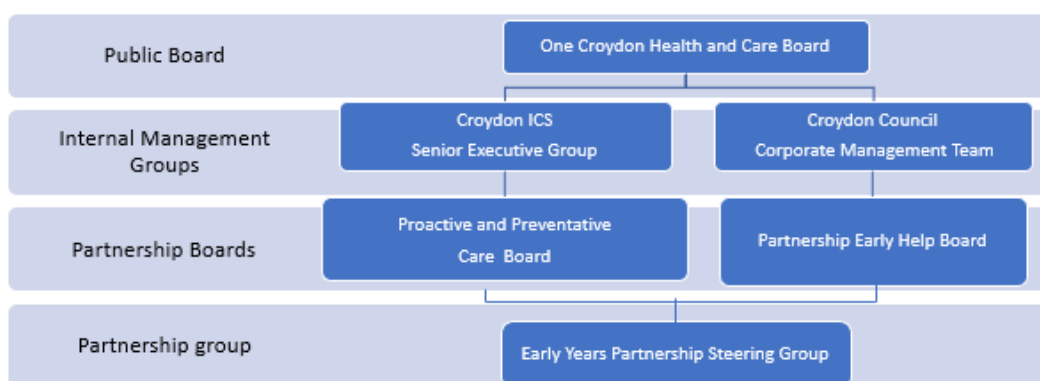
4. Implementing the Strategy

Subject to approval of the draft Strategy, a Delivery Plan will be co-produced with partners, parents/carers, and practitioners. The delivery plan will transform the strategic aims, objectives and priorities into practical, measurable and time bound actions. An accessible version of the delivery plan will be produced for use and reference by families, carers and partners. A directory of early years services will be developed as part of publishing Croydon’s Best Start in Life offer.

The delivery of the strategy will be a shared responsibility for those delivering Council services, maternity and health services, early years providers, schools and the community and voluntary sector. The Strategy is a live 'working document', which will be reviewed and refreshed to incorporate new, relevant policy developments, guidelines, and regulations.

5. Governance

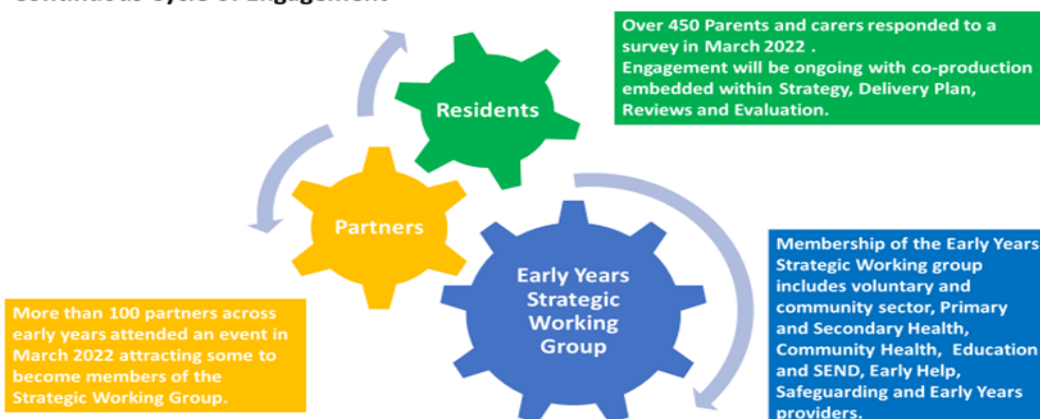
The One Croydon Health and Care Board is responsible for improving the health and wellbeing of Croydon's residents and reduce inequalities. The Early Years Strategy is aligned to the One Croydon Health and Care Plan, directly addressing the priority for a Better Start in Life and Maternity. Governance of the strategy will be overseen by internal strategic management groups and partnership boards (see chart below). An Early Years Partnership steering group will be established as part of these proposals to implement the strategy and co-produce the delivery and action plan.



6. Consultation

Consultation is an essential part of how we will deliver the Mayoral / Council's priorities. In developing this Partnership Early Years Strategy / proposals we listened to and took into consideration the diverse views of Croydon residents, providers and those that will be affected by or have an interest in the strategy. Please see continuous cycle of engagement image below:

Early Years Strategy Continuous Cycle of Engagement



6.1 Consultation with senior management groups and partnership boards have informed the strategy and proposed governance outline above. Consultation with partners – colleagues across and beyond the Council supports the strategy’s vision.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

7.1 To seek the Mayor’s approval for Croydon’s Partnership Early Years Strategy, its publication and development of its Delivery Plan.

8. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

8.1 The option to have a single Council Early Years Strategy was considered but not pursued as this was not in line with national or local policies.

9 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Revenue and Capital Consequences of Report Recommendations

None of the strategy results directly in a financial consequence. The potential cost implications for implementing any of the recommendations in the strategy plan will be subject to an option appraisal with a business case.

Other recommendations in the plan will be financed through the proposed nationally awarded Family Hubs funding and development of the Start for Life offer in Croydon.

There are likely future savings opportunities to be explored to ensure continued value for money across all the services. One of these objectives in the strategy is to look at opportunities from integrating budgets across services. The table below represents the budget position over the next few years.

Table 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

	Current Year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3-year forecast		
	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Revenue Budget Available				
Income DSG	(29.260)	(30.723)	(31,650)	(32.594)
Income General Fund	-	-	-	-
Expenditure DSG	29.260	30.723	31.650	32.594
Expenditure General Fund	8.700	8.700	8.700	8.700
Effect of decision from report				
Income (None)	-	-	-	-

Expenditure (None)	-	-	-	-
Remaining Budget	8.700	8.700	8,700	8.700

9.2 As indicated in table 1, significant share of the budget is related to Dedicated Schools Grant payable to Early Years providers. The rest of the budget which represents General Fund and Health contribution makes up approximately £8.700m. All these funds are invested in the early years strategy to improve children’s health, development and education and wellbeing outcomes, and reduce inequalities.

9.3 The Effect of the Decision

The 2006 Childcare Act requires local authorities to work with their NHS partners to improve outcomes for all children aged up to five years and to reduce inequalities by ensuring services are integrated to maximise benefits to families. If the draft strategy is not approved, the Council may fail to fully meet its statutory duties.

9.4 Risks

The main risk to the implementation of the strategy is insufficient commitment from partners to delivering workforce, organisational and service changes to deliver more integrated services for parents and carers in the Early Years. The partnership has been engaged in the development of the strategy but this will need to continue through the delivery planning and implementation phases. A significant risk is capacity particularly with health partners such as health visiting and to a lesser extent midwifery.

9.5 Options

Do nothing is not an option as this strategy is also a requirement of the Family Hubs approach which Croydon will received ringfenced funding for.

9.6 Future Savings/Efficiencies

Any potential future savings or efficiencies will be identified in the Delivery Plan stage; however this cannot be pre-empted at this stage.

9.7 Approved by Matt Davies, Interim Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer.

10 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 The Childcare Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”) imposes several duties on local authorities, including to work with partners to improve the outcomes of all children up to five years of age and reduce inequalities between them. The Council must secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to enable them to work or undertake education or training.

- 10.2 Additionally, Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on the Council to decide to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is not anticipated that the proposals outlined in this report will affect the Council's ability to meet its duties.
- 10.3 The Local Authority has already undertaken a public consultation in relation to these proposals to inform the decision making and ensure fairness. This is set out in the report under the heading-'Consultation'. The responses to the consultation must be conscientiously considered when taking the decision in respect of the proposals.
- 10.4 The Local Authority completed an Equities Impact Assessment as part of the development of the Strategy, this should be considered before deciding whether to proceed with these proposals. The decision-maker must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and to have regard to the impact of decisions on protected groups and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.5 The proposed Early Years Strategy would enable the Council to deliver on its statutory obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 relating to its general duties to improve the well-being of young children and reduce inequalities between young children in the area; and specific duty to decide to secure early childhood services in the area and such services are discharged about the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 10.6 Approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer.

11 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 11.1 There are no immediate human resources implications arising from this report for Council employees. However, workforce is a key aspect of Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy, which will have HR implications for both our partners and Council services. Where this is the case, the relevant policies and procedures will be observed, and HR advice must be sought at an early stage.
- 11.2 Approved by: Debbie Calliste, Head of HR for Children, Young People and Education on behalf of the Director of Human Resources.

12. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 12.1 Under the Public-Sector Equality Duty, due regard must be given to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Consideration must be given to the potential impact any decision may have on groups of people with protected characteristics. This means we must take particular care to ensure that we seek the views of protected equality groups who are often 'seldom heard'

- 12.2 The Early Years strategy can treat some characteristics such as disability more favourably and it will not constitute discrimination under the Equality Act. Refers to both physical and mental health needs and is extended to include parents of disabled children.
- 12.3 Due consideration should be given to gender reassignment/identity and sexual orientation. This is to ensure that parents do not feel excluded if they do not identify in the gender that they were born in or present as.
- 12.4 Due consideration should also be given to ensuring that the strategy meets the needs of both racial and religious groups and that this is explicit to parents to ensure inclusion.
- 12.5 The pandemic and the cost-of-living increase have had a profound impact on financial wellness for many parents. Many of which have been impacted by unemployment and debt. Consideration should also be given to socio economic inequalities and its impact on parents, noting that there are some wards with high levels of deprivation in particular in the north and east of the borough. It is likely that pockets of deprivation are likely to impact more on some ethnic groups such as Asian, African, African Caribbean, asylum seekers, refugees and travelling community. There are also some wards with deprivation that are comprised of largely white British parents. This along with poor housing conditions may have impacted on the mental health of many parents.
- 12.6 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) was undertaken as part of the development of the draft strategy which found no negative impact on protected groups. In terms of Equality and Diversity Monitoring, respondents to the consultation were asked to complete an equality and diversity questionnaire, looking at Gender, Age, Ethnicity and Disability. The information collected will help identify any special requirements and promote equality and diversity. The EQIA should be updated to ensure that further data is collected from parents of all characteristics including gender reassignment and identity and sexual orientation, to ensure that the needs of parents from these characteristics are also met.
- 12.7 Approved by Denise MacCausland on behalf of the Director of Equalities.

13 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 13.1 It is considered that there are no increased or decreased negative environmental sustainability impacts arising from the proposals in this report.
- 13.2 (Approved by: *[A N. Other]* on behalf of the Director of XX)

14 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 14.1 The proposed strategy seeks to improve the pathway for services for the borough's youngest residents and their families; to improve their outcomes, build resilience and community networks. The Early Years partnership will work together to support children and families exposed to sexual violence and domestic abuse.

14.2 It is considered that there are no increased impacts on children and families from these proposals.

14.3 (Approved by: *[A N. Other]* on behalf of the Director of XX)

15 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

15.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

NO

15.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

15.3 DPIAs may be required for individual projects to deliver the strategy but they are not required at this stage. If required in the future, Information Management will be consulted for advice at the earliest opportunity.

15.4 Approved by: Shelley Davies, Direction of Education

CONTACT OFFICER: Denise Bushay, Head of Service, Early Years, School Place Planning and Admissions; 07850882628

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix 1 – full draft of Croydon Partnership Early Years Strategy

Appendix 2 - Consultation outcomes report

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

[For executive decision making it is a requirement that all Part A (open) reports & Part B reports (closed) must list and provide an electronic and a printed copy of all background reference.]

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DRAFT Croydon Partnership Early Years Strategy

<i>Executive Summary</i>	2
1 Introduction	3
1.1 Vision and scope	3
1.2 The purpose of the strategy	4
1.3 Principles by which we work	6
1.4 Objectives	7
2 The importance of the Early Years, the statutory frameworks and national policy context	8
2.1 The importance of the Early Years	8
2.2 The statutory responsibilities in the Early Years	10
2.3 The Early Years national policy context	10
3 Croydon situation	12
3.1 Local strategic context	12
3.2 Current Early Years strategy and governance	13
3.3 The early years population	13
4 Local priorities and issues	14
4.1 Parent, carer and partner feedback feed back	14
4.2 Current strengths, opportunities, challenges and issues	14
	16
5 Delivering the strategy	17
5.1 Governance, finance, and communications	17
5.2 Parent and carer engagement and co-design	18
5.3 Integrated pathways and accessible evidence-based service delivery including communications	19
5.4 Maximising opportunity and reducing the risk of health wellbeing, learning and safeguarding inequalities – children and parents with SEND, children and families in temporary accommodation, asylum seekers, refugees, children and families with protected characteristics, young parents, families with domestic violence	19
5.5 Workforce development and training	20
5.6 Information systems, Outcomes, needs and data	21
6 References	22

Executive Summary

Croydon's vision for all children and young people is for them to be:

“safe, healthy and happy ’and will aspire to be the best they can be. The future is theirs’

The Early Years are the foundations on which this vision is built. Croydon's vision for its youngest residents is that:

- *'All children achieve the best possible development, health, wellbeing and education outcomes from before pregnancy to the end of reception (aged 5-6) and for children to feel safe, secure and loved'*

Croydon's Early Years include:

- all parents, fathers as well as mothers, grandparents, carers and their children from before birth to the end of reception (aged 5-6)
- any statutory, private, voluntary organisation - education, health, social care - involved with and supporting parents, carers and their children in the early years

Working in partnership with families and carers and partners across the voluntary, private and statutory sectors is crucial for implementing Croydon's vision. The vision is underpinned by a commitment to prevention, and the earliest possible intervention to reduce inequalities that could impact throughout a lifetime.

The strategy celebrates the diversity of Croydon's young children and their families which includes people from different ethnic, religious and cultural groups, such as the traveller community, asylum seekers and refugees, different nationalities, genders and sexual orientations. We recognise that support and services should be delivered so that all children and families can take part equally and thrive.

The COVID pandemic has impacted on the Early Years particularly and has added to the challenges already faced by many families and children in Croydon during the early years and beyond.

The strategy sets the strategic framework for delivering Croydon's vision for its youngest residents and their families over the next three years. It has been developed in collaboration with parents and carers, and the Early Years Partnership. The next step is the co-production of the delivery plan, which will transform the strategic aims, objectives and priorities into practical, measurable and time bound actions. An accessible version of the delivery plan will be produced for use and reference by families, carers and partners. A directory of early years services will be developed as part of publishing Croydon's Best Start in Life offer.

The high-level objectives of the strategy are designed to reflect all the influences on a child in the early years. They have been informed by engagement with parents, carers, partners and the evidence base. The objectives will each have specific actions as part of the Delivery plan workstreams.

The strategy recognises the interconnectedness with other priorities and will use opportunities to work together for example with the Early Help data task and finish group, the Strengthening Families

programme, the SEND Strategy, the Autism Partnership, the Family Hubs team, the Health and Care Board, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Integrated Care Board.

Strong partnership governance arrangements and a commitment to monitoring both delivery of the objectives and principles and the impact on health and development outcomes are core requirements for ensuring positive direction of travel.

1 Introduction

1.1 Vision and scope

Croydon's vision for all children and young people is for them to be:

'safe, healthy and happy 'and will aspire to be the best they can be. The future is theirs'

The Early Years are the foundations on which this vision is built. Croydon's vision for its youngest residents is that:

- *'All children achieve the best possible development, health, wellbeing and education outcomes from before pregnancy to the end of reception (aged 5-6) and for children to feel safe, secure and loved'*

Croydon's Early Years include:

- all parents and carers, and their children from before pregnancy to the end of reception (aged 5-6)
- any statutory, private, voluntary organisation - education, health, social care - involved with and supporting parents, carers and their children in the early years

Croydon's vision is only achievable if we work in partnership with families and carers and each other to identify and respond swiftly to emerging needs and provide integrated, targeted support.

This vision is underpinned by a commitment to prevention, and the earliest possible intervention to reduce inequalities that evidence shows could impact throughout a lifetime. (NIHR, 2022)

The strategy celebrates the diversity of Croydon's young children and their families which includes people from different ethnic, religious and cultural groups, such as the traveller community, asylum seekers and refugees, different nationalities, genders and sexual orientations. We recognise that support and services should be delivered so that all children and families can take part equally and thrive.

The COVID pandemic has impacted on Early Years children and families in many ways. The pandemic saw an increase in poverty, illness and death in families and anxiety. There was reduced access to childcare, restricted social engagement, less face-to-face contact with health, social care and education professionals resulting in speech and language development. (DFE, 2022) (EIF, 2021)

And now we are experiencing the biggest cost of living crisis in many years. These have both added to the challenges already faced by many families and children in Croydon during the early years and beyond.

An effective Early Years system is central to the new Family Hubs approach (DFE, 2021) and Early Help continuum and to the reducing inequalities workstreams. (SWLCCG, 2022) This strategy is intended to integrate with and complement these workstreams by providing a focus for the Early Years' partners. The new Best Start for Life funding received as part of the Family Hubs transformation programme will enable improved delivery of the Early Years priorities. The governance arrangements will support the integrated working across these and other workstreams for example, the Integrated Care System.

The successful implementation of this strategy will depend on the 'buy in', action and support from all partners at both strategic and operational levels. Its delivery will therefore be overseen by an Early Years steering group with senior and operational leadership from across the partnership. The Terms of Reference for this group will include the requirement that its membership reflect the diversity of the Croydon population. The steering group will report to the Partnership Early Help Board and Proactive and Preventive Care Board.

We acknowledge that the level of transformational change required will need time, energy and commitment and similarly we recognise that Early Years partners have different perspectives, ethos and working practices and a common and unifying practice framework is required e.g. Thrive (I-Thrive, 2022)

1.2 The purpose of the strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to set the framework for delivering Croydon's vision for its youngest residents and their families / carers over the next four years. It includes the principles, objectives, key priorities and governance arrangements and will be accompanied by a detailed delivery plan. The document outlines an integrated approach to delivering services and develops the locality model of working in Croydon.

This strategy has been developed in collaboration with parents and carers, the Early Years Partnership which includes: Croydon Council, voluntary sector representatives, Croydon Health Services Croydon's Public Health team, primary care, South West London Clinical Commissioning Group, the early year's sector, and wider partners.

The principles and objectives are designed to ensure that the Early Years partners consider equality, diversity and inclusion in everything they do. The strategy acknowledges the complexity of the environment for children, their families and everyone who works in the Early Years which is captured in figure 1 below

Figure 1 The complexity of the Early Years environment



The strategy has been informed by:

- The Best Start for Life policy paper (2021) (HMG, 2021)
- Family Hub framework (2021) (DFE, 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (DFE, 2018)
- NHS Long Term Plan 2019 (NHS, 2019)
- NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan (2019) (NHS, 2019)
- Healthy Child programme (2021) (OHID, 2021)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2021) (DFE, 2021)
- Education White Paper (2022) (DFE, 2022)
- Public Health Outcomes Framework (OHID, 2022)
- Education Recovery Support (DFE, 2022)
- SEND green paper (2022) (DFE, 2022)
- Women's Health Strategy (2022) (DHSC, 2022)
- Early Years Last a Lifetime- Director of Public Health Annual report 2018 (LBC, 2018)
- Beyond Boundaries: Early Years Integration (London Councils, 2022)
- Working in Partnership with People and Communities: Statutory guidance (NHS, 2022)

It should also be read alongside the following Croydon strategies, policies, and programmes:

- Croydon's Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Strategy (SEND) (LBC, 2019)
- Croydon's Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LBC, 2022)
- Early Help Strategy and Delivery Plan (LBC, 2020)
- Croydon's Health and Care Plan and prevention framework (SWL CCG)
- London Borough of Croydon Children Young People & Education Directorate Plan, 2022-24
- Croydon Mayor's plan when published autumn 2022

- Refreshed ASD pathway when published
- Community Safety Strategy (LBC, 2022)
- Revised Suicide Prevention Strategy and Delivery Plan (published autumn 2022)

The Early Year's Partnership will utilise the 'Ladder of Engagement and Participation (NHS, 2022)' approach, as a widely recognised model for understanding and incorporating participation with residents and partners.

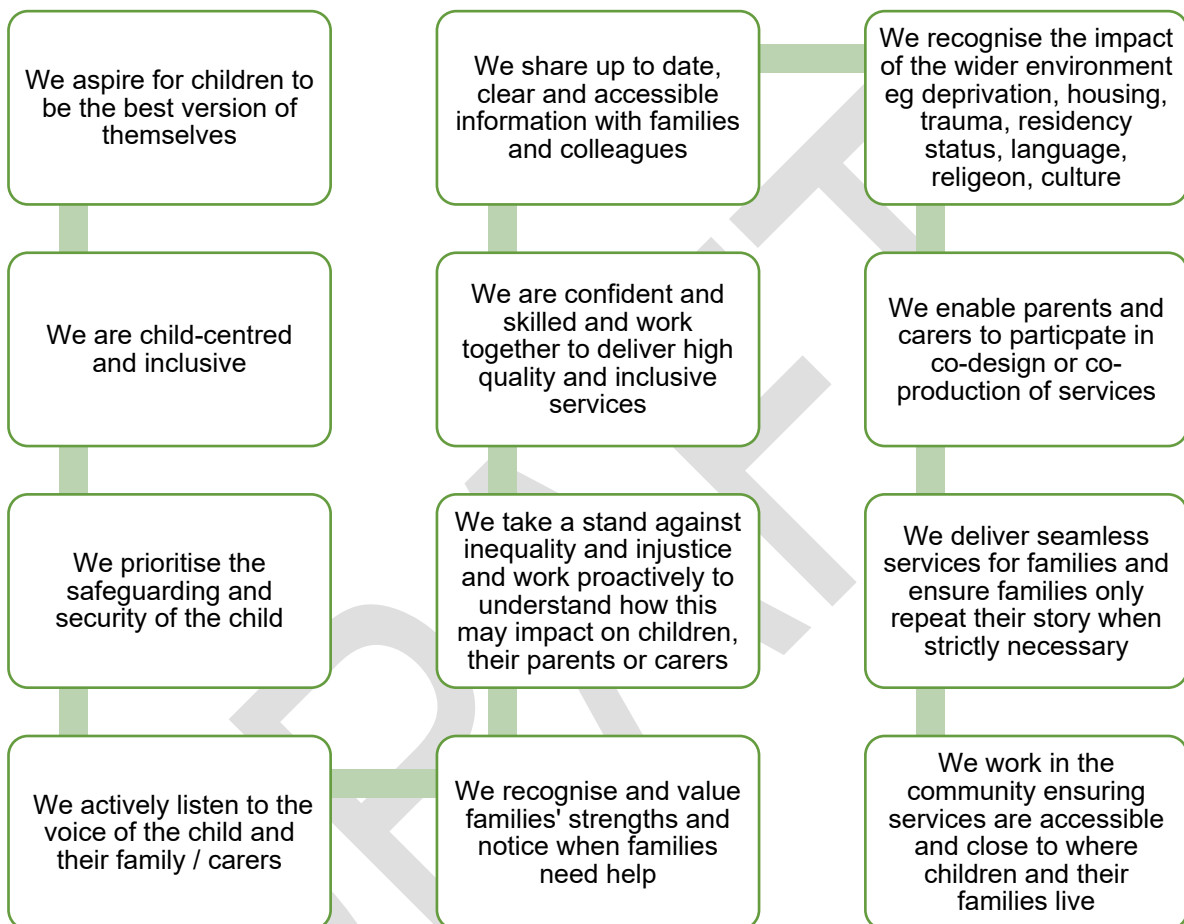
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1.3 Principles by which we work

The Early Years Partnership (EYP) is committed to working in accordance with the principles in Figure 2. Improving how we work across the Early Years system will ensure services are more joined up and provide integrated care (London Councils, 2022) for children.

The EYP will review the implementation and impact of these principles on children and families.

Figure 2: *The principles of work*



1.4 Objectives

The strategic objectives set out in this document are designed to reflect all the influences on a child in the early years. They have been informed by engagement with parents, carers, partners, and the evidence base. The objectives will each have specific actions as part of the Early Years Delivery plan.

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Figure 2 Early Years strategy objectives

1. Include the children, mothers, fathers, carers, grandparents, voice in everything we do

2. Provide healthy and safe environments for all children in Croydon to thrive, feel safe and grow into confident young people

3. Actively reduce the risk of education, health and wellbeing inequalities developing in the early years and beyond

4. Recognise and address the individual needs of children and families. For example needs deriving from poverty (food, fuel, and digital); english as an additional language; Looked After or looking after status; special educational needs and disabilities (parent or child); refugee or asylum seeker status; membership of a minority group; living in temporary or inadequate accommodation

5. Provide easy access to physical and virtual services which work together, value families' strengths and provide support at the right time and in the right place

6. Prepare parents and carers for parenthood and help them to develop and sustain a strong bond with their children

7. Enable families to access high quality childcare and all children are supported in childcare, early years and education settings

8. Support the emotional health and wellbeing of parents, carers and children

9. Support the physical wellbeing of children and reduce childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating and physical activity

10. Protect children from hidden harm and serious disease, through information sharing, screening and immunisation

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2 The importance of the Early Years, the statutory frameworks and national policy context

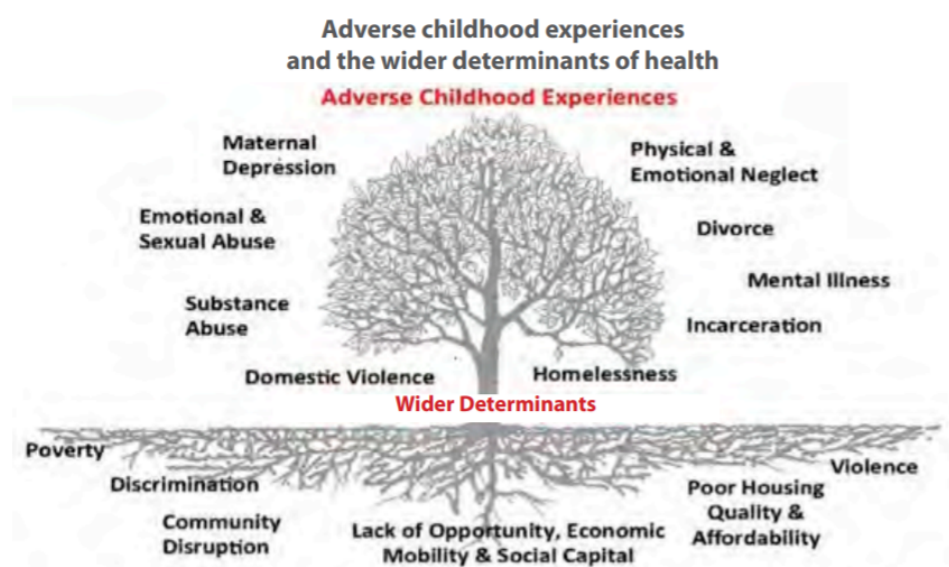
The early years evidence base, national policy and statutory obligations have been used to inform the priorities in this strategy.

2.1 The importance of the Early Years

The evidence base for the importance of the early years is substantial. Figure 2 below sets out the evidence across a range of themes.

What is clear is how interlinked every aspect is and how long lasting and wide ranging the impact of the early years is. For example, there is considerable evidence about the long-term health, social and behavioural impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) experienced in the early years. This means that all staff in the Early Years should be aware of ACEs, their causes and consequences and be trained in trauma informed practice. (NIHR, 2022) Figure (3) below sets out types of Adverse Childhood Experiences / trauma children can experience in early childhood. We also need to consider the impact of being a refugee or asylum seeker on parents and communities.

Figure 3 Adverse Childhood Experiences

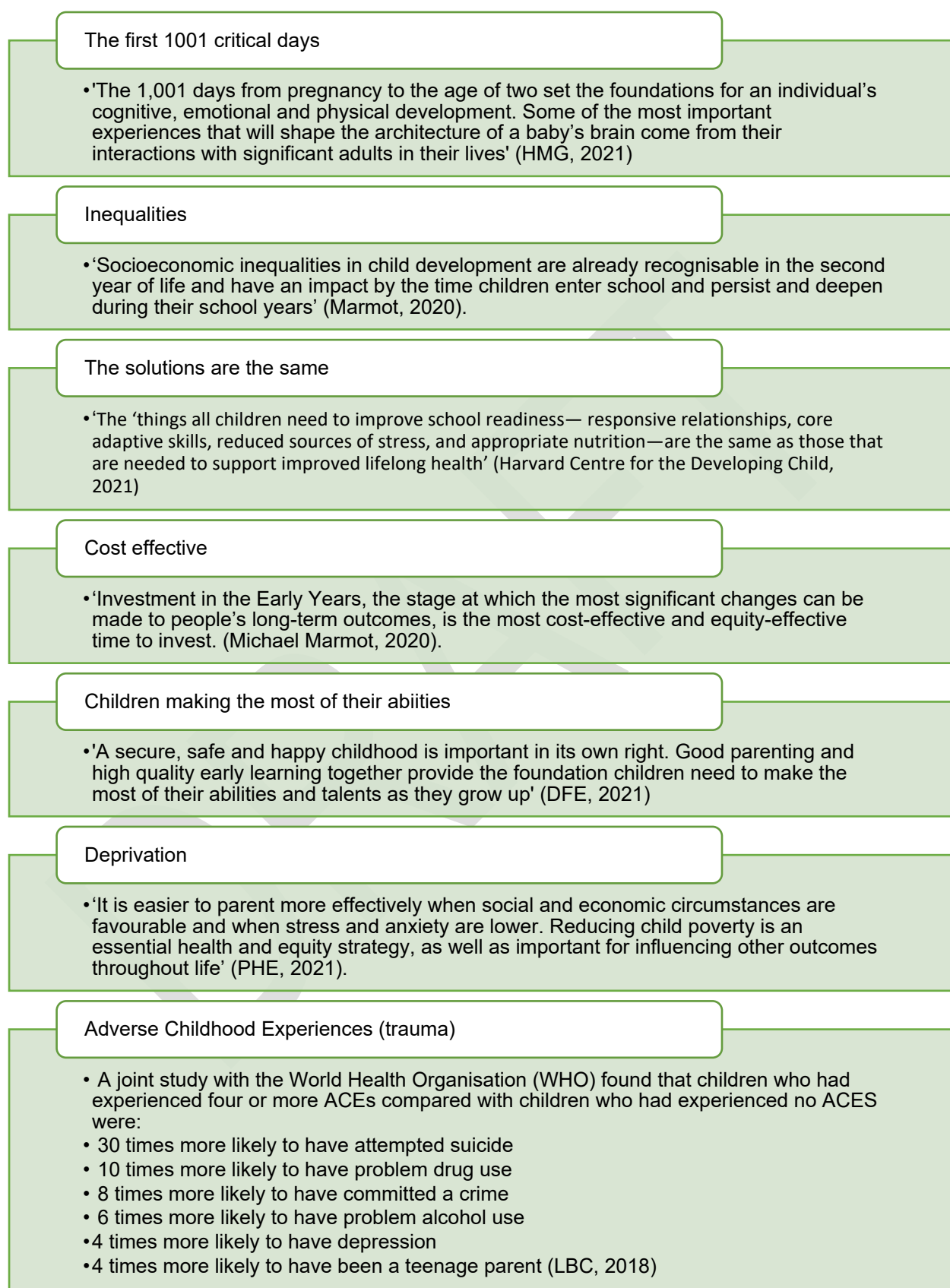


Adapted from: Ellis and Dietz, 2017²⁵

In another example, the 2018 Croydon Director of Public Health report highlights how the future of each child is inextricably linked with their family and wider environment. (LBC, 2018)

- 'The relationship between parents' and carers' social and economic circumstances, their own physical and mental health and that of their children, shows how vitally important it is for us all to understand the wider needs and circumstances of each family and their community. With this understanding, action and support can be offered, by the right people, at the right time, in the right place' (LBC, 2018)

Figure 4 The evidence base for the importance of the early years



2.2 The statutory responsibilities in the Early Years

There are statutory responsibilities which are applicable to all Early Years partners.

Fundamental to improving outcomes for children is to ensure they are kept safe and anyone working in Early Years should make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and work in accordance with:

- Childcare Act 2006: to improve the outcomes for all young children, reduce inequalities, and to ensure that there is sufficient high quality integrated early years provision and childcare for parents locally
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory framework: legislation relevant safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (DFE, 2018)

In practice this means working together to address emerging risks but also building on families' strengths, supporting them with the conditions and tools through which they can develop stability and resilience.

Other key guidance that services should be delivered in accordance with are:

- Children and Families Act 2014 (HMG, 2014)
- Statutory framework for the early years' foundation stage setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five (DFE, 2021)
- SEND Code of Practice (DFE, 2022)

Duties set out in these documents include:

- to work with partners to improve the wellbeing and outcomes of all children up to five years of age
- ensure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their families.
- to reduce inequalities between children
- to meet the needs of children with SEND.
- ensure that there is sufficient childcare to meet the needs of parents/carers who require childcare

2.3 The Early Years national policy context

Delivering a better start in life is a national priority. The NHS Long Term plan states:

'The NHS plays a crucial role in improving the health of children and young people: from pregnancy, birth and the early weeks of life; through supporting essential physical and cognitive development before starting school' (NHS, 2019)

An objective within the 2019 NHS Mental Health Implementation plan is:

'Support at least 30,000 more women each year to access evidence-based specialist mental health care during the perinatal period. This should include access to psychological therapies and the right range of specialist community or inpatient care so that comprehensive, high-quality services are in place across England' (NHS, 2019)

In March 2021 Best Start in Life report set out six key actions for the early years.

Figure 3 Best Start in Life Key actions 2021

Ensuring families have access to the services they need

1. Seamless support for families: a coherent joined up Start for Life offer available to all families.

2. A welcoming hub for families: Family Hubs as a place for families to access Start for Life services.

3. The information families need when they need it: designing digital, virtual and telephone offers around the needs of the family.

Ensuring the Start for Life system is working together to give families the support they need

4. An empowered Start for Life workforce: developing a modern skilled workforce to meet the changing needs of families.

5. Continually improving the Start for Life offer: improving data, evaluation, outcomes and proportionate inspection.

6. Leadership for change: ensuring local and national accountability and building the economic case.

This strategy has been developed in co-ordination with the development of the Family Hub approach, which aims to give families a physical and virtual offer of support from preconception to children aged 18 or 25 for those with SEND. There is a national requirement to have implemented Family Hubs by March 2025. A key principle of the Family Hubs is accessibility for all, including for example same sex parents, children and parents with disabilities, all ethnic groups and those who have English as an additional language

In July 2022 London Council's published their report and recommendations for integration in early years services. (London Councils, 2022). A statement from the report highlights that:

'Well-integrated early years services and systems can transform lives and this was a clear message from London parents we spoke to. They told us that when services are integrated effectively it helps them to access additional support that they had not realised their child needed, and find their way to specialist help more quickly. It also smoothed transitions and allowed mainstream services to better tailor responses. Conversely, when services are not joined up, this causes frustration, especially for the more vulnerable and those new to the system, including first-time parents and recent UK arrivals. Families who have high needs but are less visible to the system, and are less familiar with it, are at significant risk of falling "through the net"'

In the 2020 UKSHA report 'No Child Left Behind' (UKSHA, 2020) three priority areas for preventing children from being left behind were highlighted:

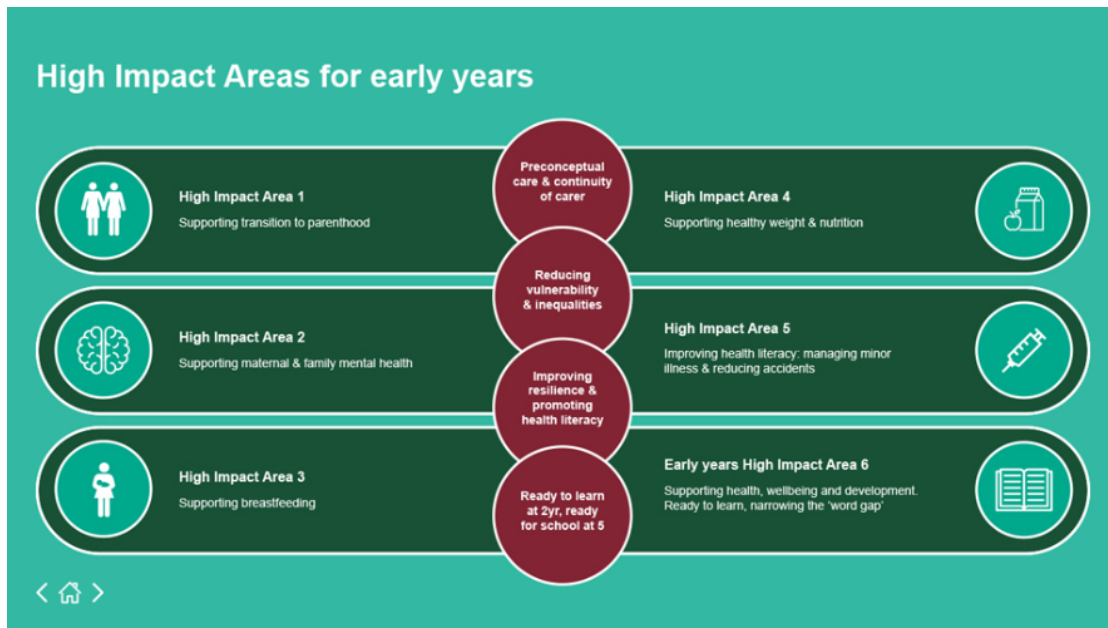
- primary prevention – interventions to address the root causes of vulnerability, tackling health inequalities and the wider determinants of health
- early intervention – interventions to support children and their families
- mitigation – ensuring services help to reduce the negative impact of circumstances and experiences and build resilience (tertiary prevention)

UKSHA advocated for the use of a systematic and holistic approach to effectively address the causes of poor outcomes for children. (UKSHA, 2020)

The government's revised Healthy Child Programme (2021) sets out the key health and wellbeing responsibilities and outcomes for the Early Years and the requirements for the mandated health visiting contacts and six high impact areas.

The six 0 to 5 High Impact Areas are applicable to all providers of services in the Early Years

Figure 4: Healthy Child Programme - 0 to 5 High Impact Areas (OHID, 2021)



3 Croydon situation

3.1 Local strategic context

The Croydon Health and Care Plan (2019 – 2025) identifies *Better start in Life and Maternity* as priority areas and recognises that to improve health and wellbeing services need to focus on:

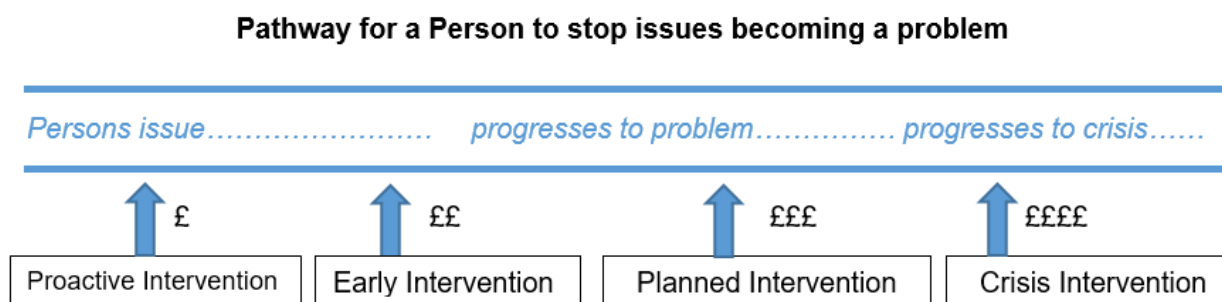
- prevention and proactive care
- untapped potential in our ‘community assets and skills’ and
- integrated services. (SWL CCG)

Croydon’s Prevention Framework aims to create the conditions in which prevention initiatives will flourish and to support Croydon’s aim to reduce inequalities. This is being used to inform this early year’s strategy. The aim of the prevention framework is to:

- underpin the development of our strategies and implementation plans, ensuring our strategies following the same preventative priorities and therefore have a **greatest impact** and
- set out the approach for how we will **embed the preventative approach** in all we do

Figure 5 below illustrates the relative costs of proactive, early and late intervention.

Figure 5 Croydon prevention framework - Pathway for a person to stop issues becoming a problem



The Maternity Transformation Programme (SWL CCG, 2022) aims to ensure high quality services for babies, children, young people and families. It includes actions to improve women's health before, during and after pregnancy, particularly for women from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. (SWL CCG, 2022) Research indicates that women from Black ethnic groups are more likely to enter pregnancy at an unhealthy weight and Black, Asian, and mixed ethnicity women are significantly more likely to die than their white counterparts.

3.2 Current Early Years strategy and governance

Croydon does not have a current Early Years Strategy or active partnership Early Years' governance arrangements. The Best Start Steering group which previously provided the leadership and governance for the Best Start services has not met since 2019. The original principles of the Best Start Services which launched in 2016 are still in place, but Croydon's Early Years services have become increasingly fragmented at both a strategic and operational level. Significant improvement to the coordination and continuity of early years support and services between health, early help, and education is required

Families and the practitioners that support them struggle to:

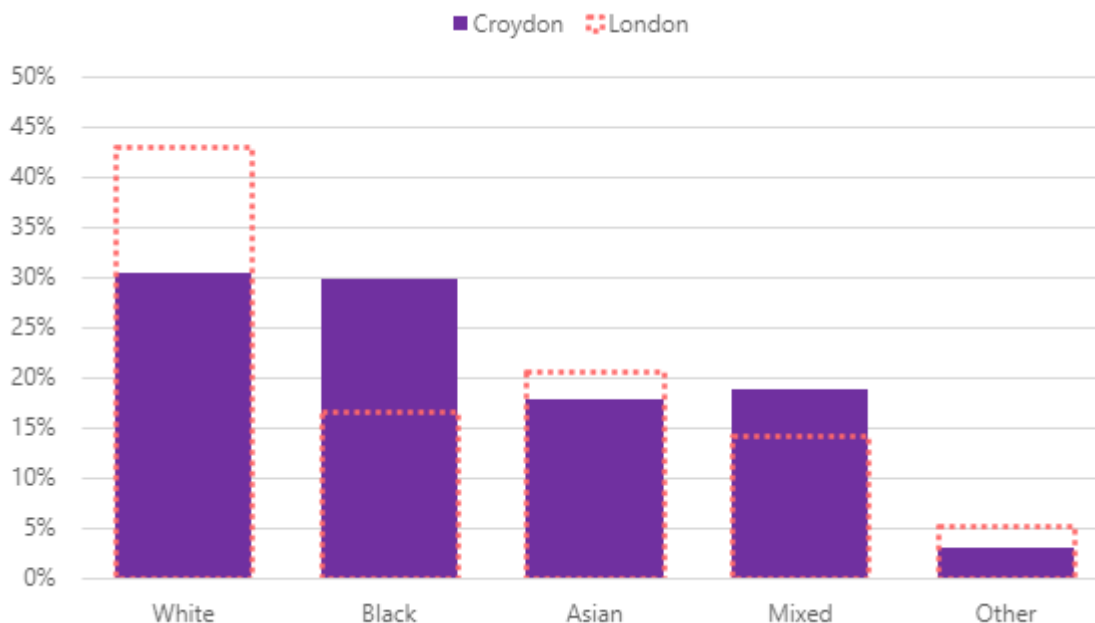
- find out what services are available and when
- access information
- navigate the system

This can discourage families from engaging with services and create delays in receiving help when needed.

3.3 The early years population

There are an estimated 32,774 children between 0 and 5 in Croydon which is the largest population of children aged 0-5 in London. The population is also very ethnically diverse with many parents with English as an additional language, and families and children from war torn countries, most recently the Ukraine. There is also considerable movement in the population across local authorities.

Figure 5 Ethnic mix of the Croydon 0 to 5 population



- 49% of the eligible 2-year-old population benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020.
- 85% of 3- and 4-year-olds benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020. For both age groups, take up is below the London and England averages.
- In 2020 74.6% of pupils achieved a good level of development in Croydon in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in line with London and above England (71.8%)

4 Local priorities and issues

4.1 Parent, carer and partner feedback feed back

The parent survey and focus groups have identified what parents see as important. 36% of respondents to the parent survey were from ethnic groups, 11% considered themselves to have a disability, and this includes:

- support for preparing after the baby is born
- support for emotional wellbeing and mental health
- support for breastfeeding,
- accessible services close to where parents live including children centres, playgrounds, GP surgeries
- good quality, affordable childcare.

Messages which came across strongly from the partner engagement events were the need for: a joined-up approach, more support for SEND, clear communication, inclusive services and promotion of Early Years as a career.

The report of the first stage of parental and partner engagement can be found in the appendices

4.2 Current strengths, opportunities, challenges and issues

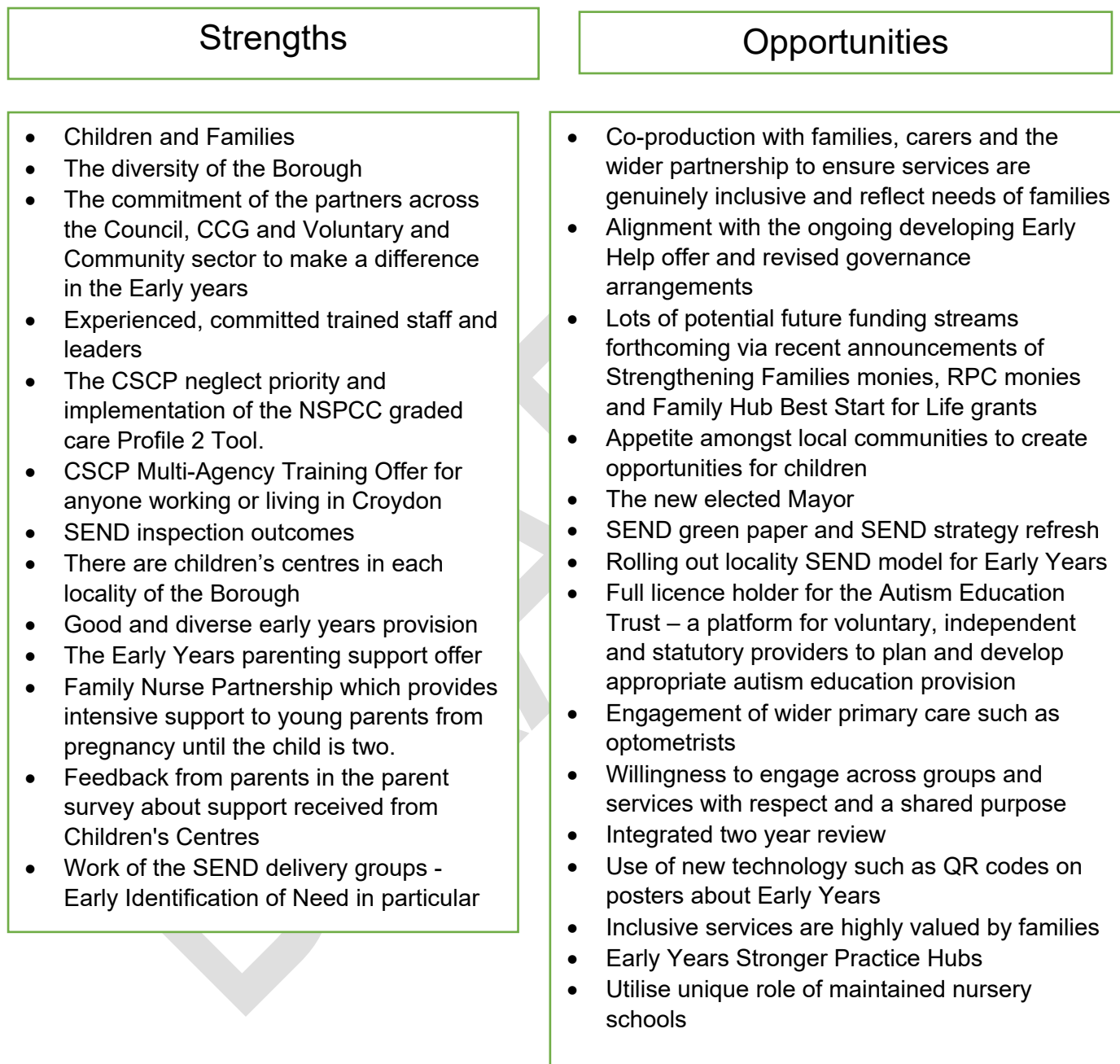
The Early Years partners and parents face a number of serious challenges including recovering from COVID, staff shortages, inadequate housing conditions and coping with the

cost-of-living crisis. Despite the number and range of issues there are also strengths and opportunities that can help mitigate the these.

Figure 6 sets out the strengths, challenges and opportunities that partners identified for the Early Years Services. These have been collected from the range of engagement activities.

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Figure 6 The strengths, opportunities, issues and challenges of the current Early Years Services



Issues and challenges

- Increased demand due to the impact of COVID on for example young children's socialisation
- Impact of COVID on early diagnosis and correct school placements
- Maintaining communication across the partnership to ensure join up of the different 'pools' of activity / Lack of communication between teams can reduce the impact of the strategy
- The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on child poverty levels and fuel poverty
- High levels of deprivation.
- Increasing numbers of 0 to 5 children with SEND
- Need for more investment in Early Years SEND provision
- Lack of consistency between the schools and voluntary sector providers with respect to children with SEND
- Conflict between inclusive practice and SEND funding
- Need to link with the outcomes of the SEND inspection
- Challenges around good inclusive practice
- Ensuring that the needs of all children from diverse backgrounds are being met within this strategy
- Information system inter-operability
- Datasets are not sufficiently mature, nor routinely collaborated on, nor do they adequately inform challenge or service design
- Reduced investment in the Children's Centres and Best Start parenting offer
- Change of staff within the Council
- Not all children have their Health Visiting universal checks and there is limited coverage of the High Impact Areas
- The uptake of the funded two-year places is not as high as similar areas across the country
- Low uptake of childhood immunisations particularly MMR2
- Families do not see enough of their health visitors
- Insufficient funding
- The numbers of times families have to tell their stories
- Recruitment, retention and quality of staff
- Nursery settings struggling with staffing also declining quality
- Services are not joined up; there is role overlap which can lead to duplication and inefficiencies
- Instability of future funding for maintained nurseries
- Information and support is inconsistent
- Playgrounds and green spaces are not accessible or looked after well enough
- Funding e.g lack of and equality of access to SENDIF funding
- Transition between Early Years and reception
- Mobility of families not known to services
- The integrated two year review is not well supported across services
- Need to align with the Supporting Families Outcome Framework

5 Delivering the strategy

The strategy will be implemented through a delivery plan organised under six workstreams. Each of the workstreams will be required to work in accordance with the objectives and principles set out above. The delivery plan will run until March 2025. An accessible version of the delivery plan will be produced for use and reference by families, carers and partners. A directory of early years services will be developed as part of publishing Croydon’s Best Start in Life offer.

The six workstreams are:

- Finance, governance and communications
- Parental engagement and co-design
- Integrated pathways and accessible evidence-based service delivery
- Maximising opportunity and reducing the risk of health wellbeing, learning and safeguarding inequalities – children and parents with SEND, children and families in temporary accommodation, asylum seekers, refugees, children and families with protected characteristics, young parents, families with domestic violence
- Workforce development and training
- Needs, data and outcomes

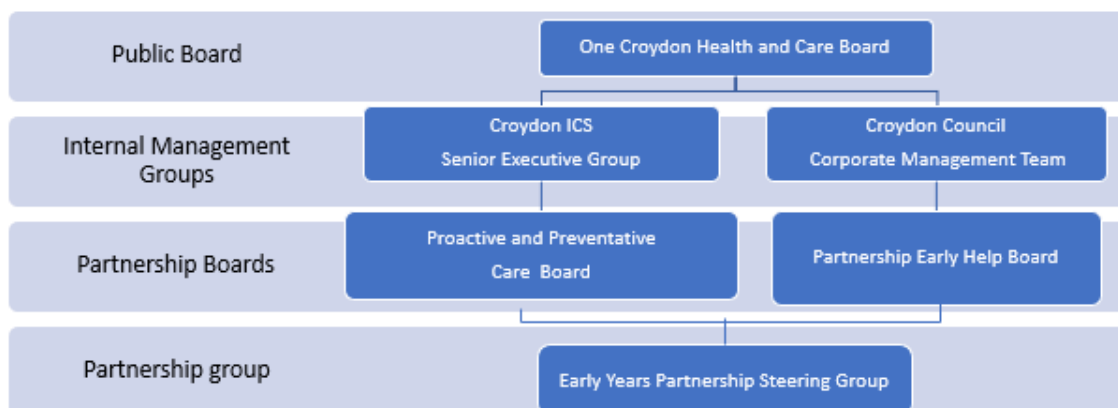
A brief outline of each of the work streams is provided below. The priorities under each of the workstreams will be transformed into a delivery plan in partnership with families, parents, carers and partners.

Each early year’s partner will be expected to align their own delivery plans to the objectives and priorities in the strategy and show how they are delivering against these.

5.1 Governance, finance, and communications

Effective governance arrangements will ensure senior oversight, strategic leadership and effective delivery of the vision and implementation of the strategy. The Early Help Partnership Board oversees the development of the strategy on an interim basis. One of key roles of this work stream will be articulating the vision of the strategy and ensuring that all members of the partnership including the voluntary and community sector are signed up to delivering it.

Through consultation with strategic management groups across Council, CCG and the partnership the proposed governance of the strategy is shown below:



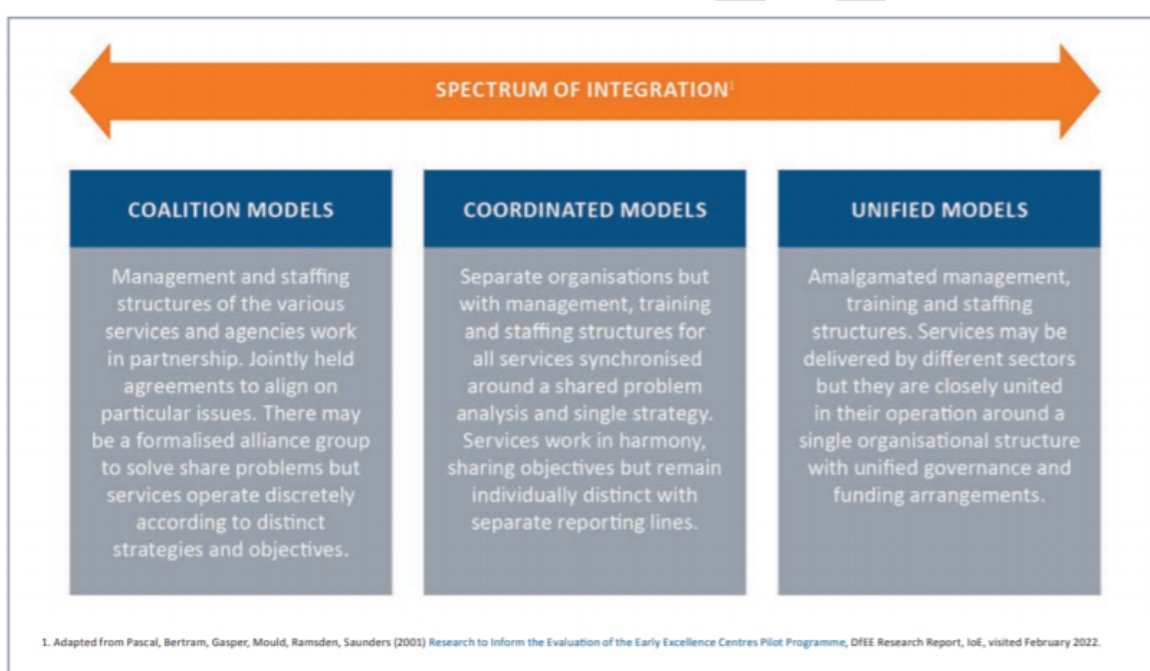
There is significant investment across the Council, Public Health, South West London CCG the Voluntary Community sector and private sectors in early years services. An understanding of the total investment is fundamental to maximising effective use of resources, and to identify and/or unlock opportunities for better targeting and integrating of resources to improve children’s outcomes

Developing joint funding protocols, integrating management, services and/or pathways will improve the child and families’ experience and make a difference to achieving outcomes for children.

Key priorities of the work stream will be to:

- define what level and type of integration is needed using the Beyond Boundaries framework (London Councils, 2022) For more information see appendices.

Figure 7 Spectrum of integration in the Early Years (London Councils, 2022)



- establish a sustainable governance structure for Early Years
- explore opportunities for shared management and budgets
- create integrated leadership/partnership teams across services
- develop a family virtual single point of access/front door
- work with the Early Help, Family Hub and other teams on the parent, child and family ‘directory’ of services
- consult on and create a communication strategy for early years

5.2 Parent and carer engagement and co-design

Parents and carers should be appropriately engaged both as part of the support and care of their child / children and in the design and delivery of services so that they meet the needs of Croydon’s diverse populations. There will be a continuous cycle of engagement (see figure 6 below) approach in developing the strategy; co-producing the delivery and action plan, and feedback from parents and carers as part of the annual review. Across the partnership the strategy will utilise service user feedback and share intelligence from across the Early Years partnership to inform continuous service improvements.

Figure 6 Continuous cycle of engagement



Key priorities of the work stream will be to:

- Develop a parent and carer engagement strategy that incorporates clear plans for engaging with seldom heard groups
- Link in with existing parent and community forums and implement the most effective ways for staff and families to work together on a system level,
- Increase engagement of parents/ carers in parenting programmes, e.g., Bookstart, Chatterbox and Best Start parent programmes
- Create parent panels which are representative of the Croydon population and people from protected characteristics
- Work with parents and carers on a review of accessible information needs
- Work with parents and carers to understand what 'inclusive' means to them.

5.3 Integrated pathways and accessible evidence-based service delivery including communications

Evidence based and accessible services and pathways between services, professionals and across ages which appear seamless for children and families are essential.

Systems and processes need to be in place to ensure continuity of high quality, accessible, early years provision and effective early years and childcare services.

Key priorities of the workstream are:

- Identify the integrated pathways that require improvement and develop actions plans with parents, carers and partners for each of them
- Work with the Family Hubs team to identify evidenced based options for use of the Best for Life offer funding
- Identify the number of times a family could be asked the same details about themselves across common pathways of care
- Develop an annual programme of service improvement for all Early years services
- Ensure that all mothers and new parents are offered appropriate breastfeeding support
- Agree and implement a plan for increasing the uptake of childhood immunisation
- Develop a clear pathway for families and staff for the Tier 2 Early Years weight management programmes

- Develop a plan for embedding the integrated 2-Year-old review across the Borough for all children
- Work with teams across the Early Years partnership and wider to ensure parents and carers received the right joined up support.



5.4 Maximising opportunity and reducing the risk of health wellbeing, learning and safeguarding inequalities – children and parents with SEND, children and families in temporary accommodation, asylum seekers, refugees, children and families with protected characteristics, young parents, families with domestic violence

Ensuring services are flexible and adaptable to children and families with enhanced needs, identifying these early and providing appropriate support is essential for reducing potential inequalities and enabling each child to be the best they can be.

Key priorities for this workstream:

- Review the systems for ensuring all services know children who are at risk at the earliest point
- Develop a service directory jointly with Early Help and other work areas
- Review the SEND provision in the early years, identify the gaps and priorities for development
- Ensure join up with the revised ASD pathway and autism strategy
- Use inequalities data to target interventions and support at individual and system level
- Developing a plan to increase the availability and take up of high-quality early years provision for children with SEND.
- Ensure good join up with the revised SEND strategy and ensure that the Early Years priorities are included in it
- Embed the 2YO integrated review to support early identification and intervention for early years children
- Work with the data from the need and outcomes group to identify the common factors of children in the Borough who are not reaching health and development milestones

5.5 Workforce development and training

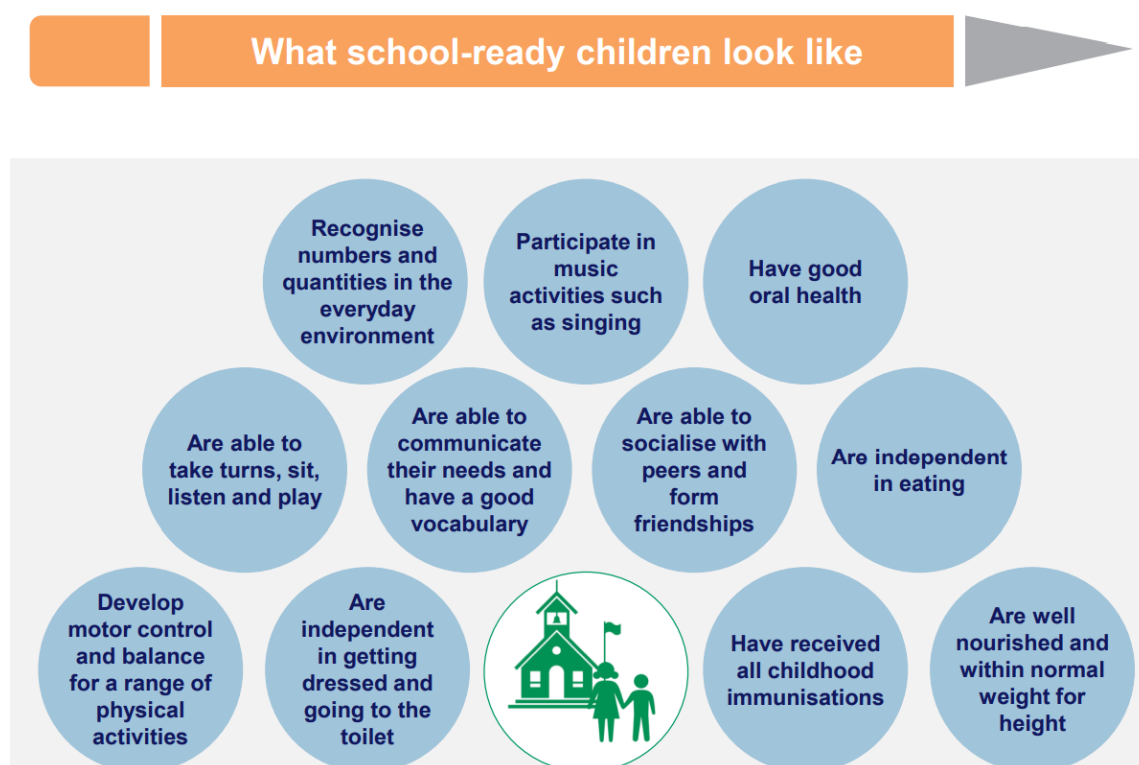
A competent and qualified Early Years workforce is essential so that they can continue to deliver high quality provision which is crucial to improving outcomes for children.

The competence of the team of practitioners, for example, midwives; health visitors; community health specialists; primary care, children's centre staff; childcare and education professionals, speech and language therapists, social workers makes the difference for effective support services for children and families, leading to better outcomes.

It is also essential that the workforce is demographically reflective of the population it serves including those with protected characteristics.

A multi-disciplinary training and development plan will be aligned to the Healthy Child Programme: Six Early Years High Impact areas, (OHID, 2021) the Early Years Foundation Stage (DFE, 2021) safeguarding, inclusive practice, strengths-based practice, trauma informed practice, to ensure the workforce is knowledgeable, and appropriately trained in child health and development, and are able to identify when key developmental milestones are not being met. (see figure 7 below).

Figure 8 What school ready children look like (OHID, 2015)



Key priorities of the workstream are:

- Create a common training framework across the Early Years workforce which is accessible to anyone working in early years
- Agree a common language and practice framework which all Early Years practitioners use e.g. IThrive or systemic practice
- Review the implications of implementing the requirements for the Early Years workforce in the school's white paper (DFE, 2022) and investigate the potential for an early years qualification pathway which encourages aspiration and continuing professional development
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities for equalities, diversity and inclusive practice and that this is implemented by all. For example, staff to have attended unconscious bias training
- Ensure everyone working with families in the early years are competent in safeguarding practice
- Ensure that all staff working in the early years have attended the Tier 1 healthy behaviours training

- Strengthen the knowledge, skills and understanding of Early Years SENCOs to further their expertise. Implement the Level 2 Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) qualifications
- Identify ways of collecting data about the partnership workforce in order to meet Equalities Act requirements

5.6 Information systems, Outcomes, needs and data

Outcome measures that will both demonstrate how well the strategy is being implemented and what impact it is having on children and families in the early years are vital

The outcomes framework for the Early Years strategy will reflect national and local policy. It will include measures to:

- Assess how well the strategy is being implemented ie progress on the priority areas
- Assess direction of travel for key indicators
- Assess the level and effectiveness of the engagement strategy

Part of this will be identifying ways to assess whether parents and families are receiving the joined up care and support that is core to this strategy.

Data is often held in different places, systems and organisations. This limits the ability to provide seamless services. Data is often not stored in a retrievable format which restricts assessment of the impact of interventions. This workstream will work jointly with the Early Help Partnership Board on the priorities listed below. The role of the workstream will be to ensure that the priorities of the Early Years and its universal components are specifically reflected in the wider work.

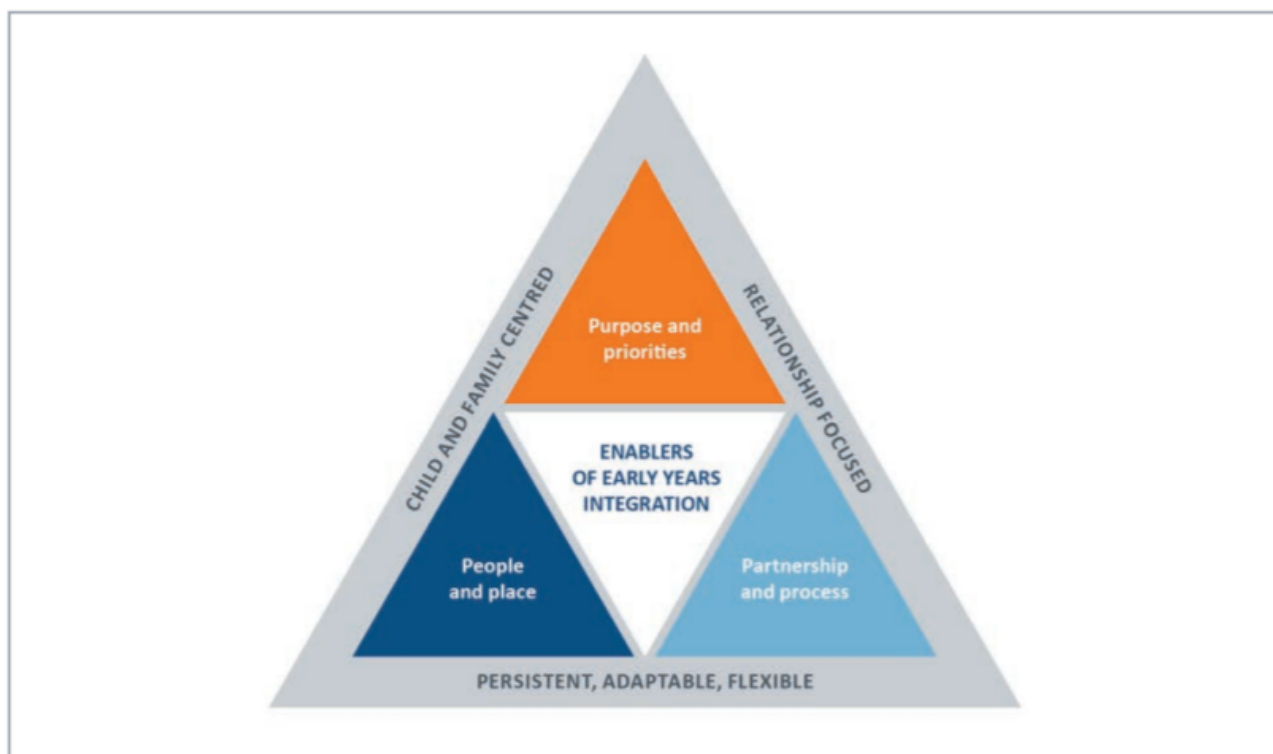
Key priorities for this workstream are:

- Develop an Early Years outcome framework
- Develop an evaluation framework
- Use population level and equalities, diversity and inclusion data to identify inequalities across health, wellbeing, and education of service users and the workforce
- Identify the data sources required to evidence progress on the priorities
- Identify gaps in outcome data availability
- Review the information sharing and consent agreements agreement between partners
- Review existing and develop new information sharing protocols
- Establish a more efficient, integrated and comprehensive information system

6 Appendices

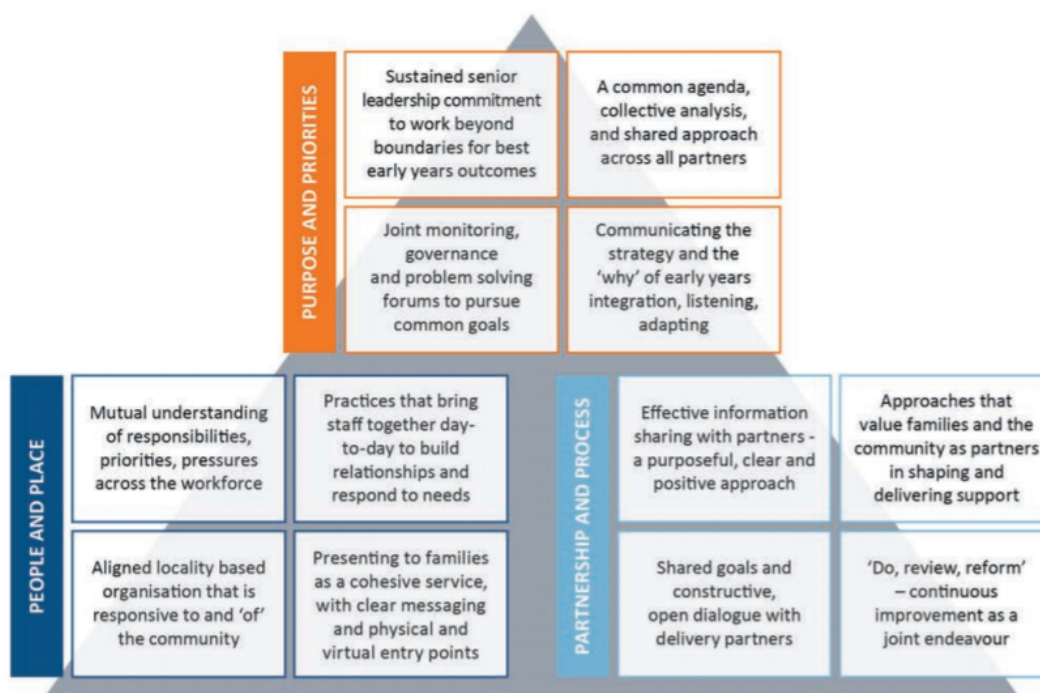
6.1 Early Years integration: Beyond Boundaries report 2022 (London Councils, 2022)

Figure 9: A conceptual framework for what matters for early years integration



DR

Figure 10: Twelve enablers of early years integration



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Report from the engagement on Croydon's draft Partnership Early Years strategy July 2022

Contents

1. Executive Summary	2
2. Scope and purpose of the engagement.....	3
3. Parent Carer survey.....	3
3.1 Survey delivery.....	3
3.2 The respondents	3
4. What was important to parents and carers?	5
4.1 What support did parents say was important during pregnancy?	5
4.2 First year of the child's life.....	6
4.3 Child health and managing minor illnesses.....	7
4.4 Learning and development and preparing for school.....	8
4.5 Where and how you receive support.....	9
4.6 Facilities and activities	9
4.7 The wider environment.....	10
4.8 The impact of COVID-19.....	11
4.9 Main themes from the comments.....	12
5. Summary of Responses – Partner feedback	13
5.1 Feedback on the scope image	13
5.2 Feedback on the vision and the objectives	15
5.3 Feedback about the principles	18
5.4 Impact of COVID	19
5.5 Integrated pathways and seamless support.....	22
5.6 Inequalities.....	25
5.7 Workforce development	27
6. Appendix - Written comments from the parent / carer survey	29

1. Executive Summary

This report includes the key messages from the engagement activities designed to inform the development of the draft Early Years Strategy and Delivery Plan. These include:

- A parent / carer survey (472 responses)
- Partner workshops (100 plus partners from across Early Years)
- Interviews with parents and meetings with key partners as part of the activities to deliver the long term engagement plan

Whilst the parent carer survey was intended to reach all parents and carers 85% of respondents were mothers, 96% identified as straight and 11% reported having a disability. According to the 2011 census 37% of the adult population is from an ethnic group and 36% of the survey respondents were from an ethnic group. There was broad geographical representation from across the Borough.

This demographic analysis will be used to drive more targeted intervention with groups and areas which are underrepresented in the engagement activities so far.

Parents and carers responding to the survey were asked to choose areas which it was important to have support with. A high proportion of respondents said support was important with:

- preparing after the baby is born
- emotional and mental health
- breastfeeding
- knowing how to manage minor illnesses

Parents and carers were also asked how important different services, locations, timings, the wider environment were. Areas which a high percentage of parents said were very or somewhat important were:

- accessible services close to where parents live including children centres, playgrounds, GP surgeries
- good quality, affordable childcare

200 parents and carers provided written comments. Key themes were the importance of:

- children's centres,
- health visiting
- playground access
- the cost of child-care
- support with breastfeeding.

The full range of comments grouped by theme can be seen in Appendix A.

Parents/carers were also asked the impact of COVID on them as a parent/carers as well as their child. Here, the areas which scored high were all related to forms of social contact and activities.

Partners were asked to feedback on the draft scope, vision, objectives, principles and the impact of COVID on families and children. They were also asked for key challenges and priorities for three themes: 1. integrated pathways and seamless care, 2. maximising opportunity and reducing inequalities and 3. workforce development and training.

Messages which came across strongly were the need for:

- join up between services, professionals, pathways
- support for SEND
- clear communication
- promotion of Early Years as a career.

The full range of comments are included later in this report.

The feedback from these engagement activities has been reflected in the draft strategy.

2. Scope and purpose of the engagement

The purpose of this stage of the engagement activities was to inform the drafting of the Early Years strategy and to ensure that issues important to parents, carers, families and partners were appropriately reflected in the document.

Further engagement activities such as focus groups with parents and carers are planned inform the development and implementation of the more detailed delivery plan.

This report provides the key messages from the parents, carers and families survey and the partner workshops

3. Parent Carer survey

3.1 Survey delivery

The survey was online and paper copies were available at Children's Centres, libraries and childcare settings. There was also a translate function on the electronic version of the survey.

3.2 The respondents

472 people completed the survey. 462 of these responded online via the Get Involved website whilst 10 people completed the survey in paper format, these were scanned and emailed in. Of the paper copies, some contributions were missing, however, data that was available was captured in the results.

The target was to receive 1000 plus responses. The reasons why this target was not reached are being reviewed, this will include reflection on the style and content of the survey.

Table 1 below shows the range of people who responded to the survey. Although the aim was to have a mix of respondents a clear majority, 85.1% were mothers and 7% were fathers. Respondents were asked about their sexual orientation and 4% of respondents identified as gay or lesbian, bisexual or other. The most common stage of the respondents (50%) was people with children between the ages of 1, followed by children between 3 and 5. 36% of the respondents were from an ethnic group or mixed white and ethnic group.

Table 1. Respondent characteristics

Status	%	Stage	%	Sex	%	Sexual orient.	%	Ethnicity	%	Age	%	Disability	%
Mother	85%	Pregnant	6%	Female	91%	Straight	96%	White	62%	19-25	4%	Visually impaired	0%
Father	7%	Babies/children in their care under 1	21%	Male	7%	Gay or lesbian	1%	Black	14%	26-34	29%	Hearing impaired	0%
Grandparent	4%	Babies/children in their care between 1 and 3	50%	Preferred not to say	1.70%	Bisexual	2%	Asian	12%	34-44	56%	Mobility disability	1%
Carer	2%	Babies/children in their care between 3 and 5	34%			Other	1%	Mixed Black white, Asian White	8%	45-54	6%	Learning disability	2%
Other	3%	Children in their care of reception age	16%					Other ethnic group	2%	55-64	3%	Communication disability	1%

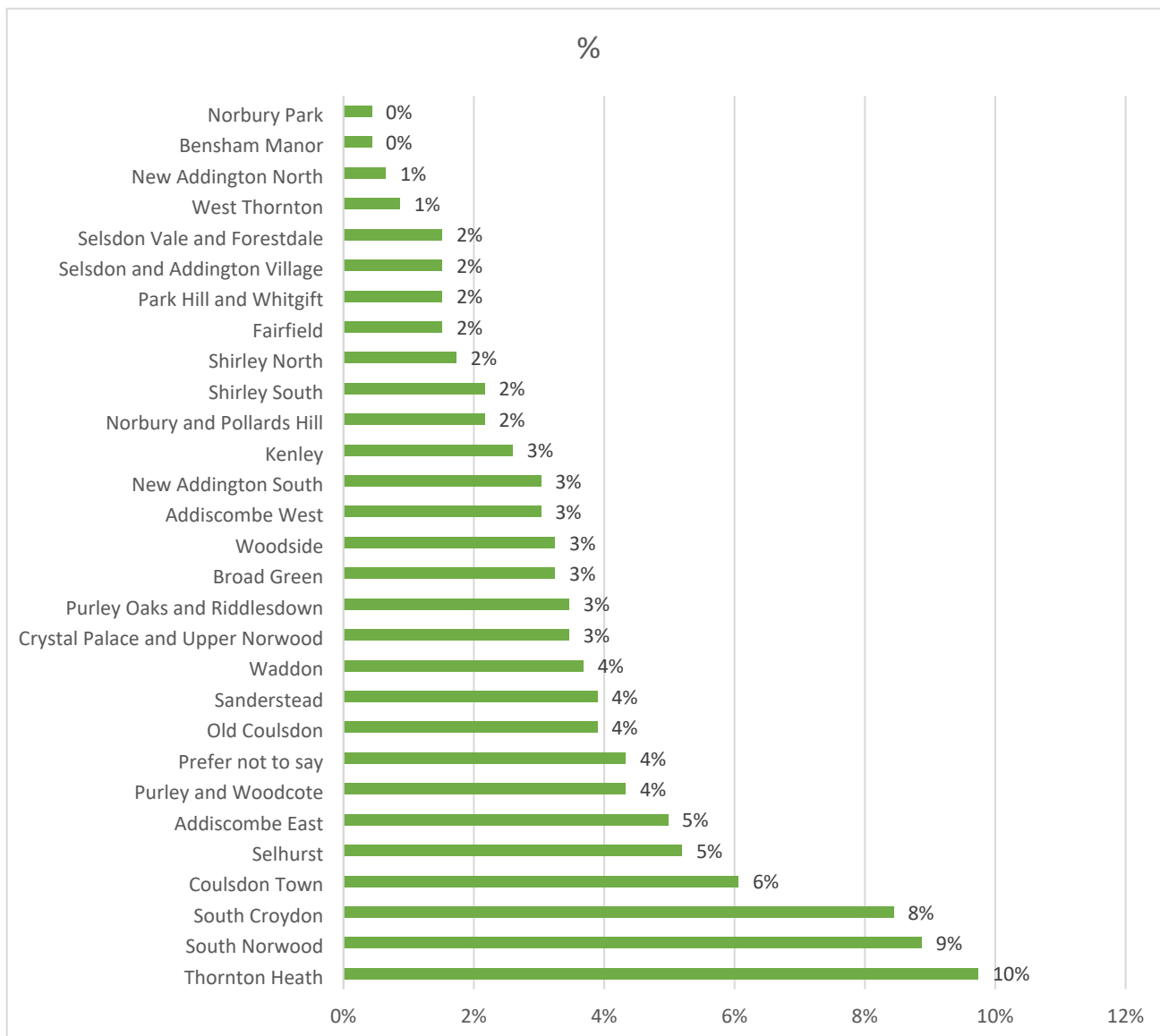
		Other	13%				65 plus	1%	Hidden disability: sickle cell, diabetes, asthma, autism, ADHD	7%
							Preferred not to say	1%	None	69%
									Other	
									Preferred not to say	12%

Table 2 shows the detailed breakdown of the respondents by ethnic group compared to the ethnic group of the general population.

Ethnic group of respondents	Number		Croydon % from 2011 census
		%	
White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	218	49%	47%
White Irish	8	2%	2%
Any other White background	61	14%	6%
White and Black Caribbean	8	2%	3%
White and Black African	5	1%	1%
White and Asian	12	3%	1%
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	13	3%	2%
Indian	24	5%	7%
Pakistani	11	2%	3%
Bangladeshi	5	1%	1%
Chinese	7	2%	1%
Any other Asian background	8	2%	5%
Black African	21	5%	8%
Black Caribbean	38	9%	9%
Any other Black background	5	1%	4%
Other ethnic origin (please specify)	8	2%	0%

Graph 1 below shows the respondents by ward. This shows an encouraging distribution across the different areas of the Borough.

Graph 1. Respondents by ward.



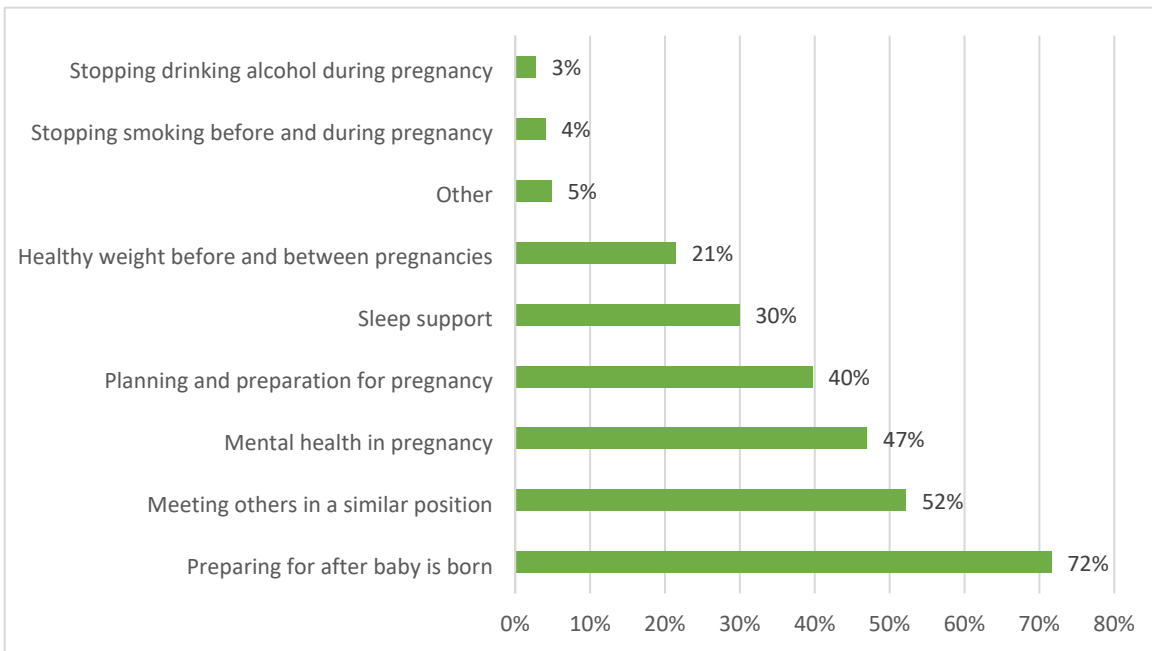
4. What was important to parents and carers?

The purpose of this survey was to learn what was important to parents, families and carers at the different stages from pregnancy to reception age. Parents also provided written comments examples of which have been included in each section. The full list of parent comments can be seen in Appendix A.

4.1 What support did parents say was important during pregnancy?

Graph 2 shows that the support which the highest percentage of parents (72%) said was important was preparing for after the baby is born. 52% said support with meeting parents in a similar position and 47% of parents identified mental health support.

Graph 2 Top three most important support areas in pregnancy



Lack of face to face support for breastfeeding, health anxiety for children and general mental health support for new mothers. It's shocking. The antenatal classes supposedly 'prepare' you for birth but do not even cover fully c sections, traumatic births and the first stage of caring for a newborn. It's actually a joke.

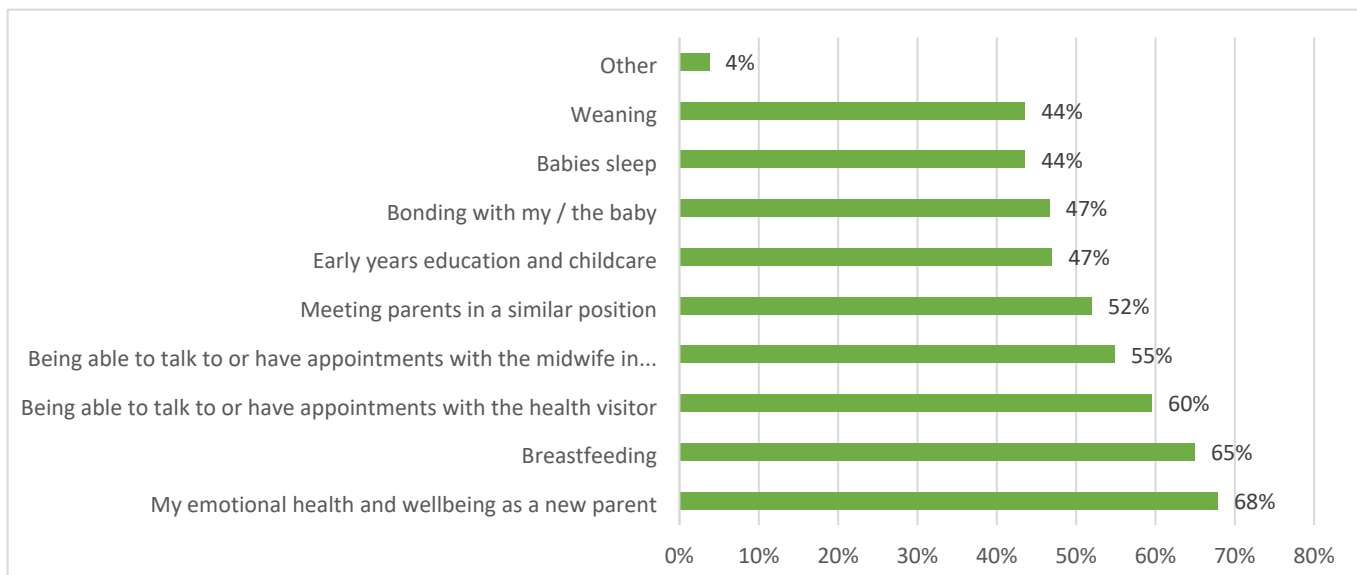
As a pregnant woman there was no access to antenatal classes and I felt completely unprepared for birth causing anxiety and stress. It seems as well now that baby is here that the local children's centre has been closed and I have to travel to a 'hub' to access support. This unfairly impacts those that are unable to travel easily and limits local social links which are vital for new mums.

4.2 First year of the child's life

Respondents were asked to choose up to six of the most important things they needed support with during the first year of their baby's life.

The two highest scoring areas were support for emotional health and wellbeing and breastfeeding with being able to talk to and have appointments with the health visitor coming third.

Graph 3 Top 6 most important support areas in the first year



'- please keep health visitor appointments for new mums

- breastfeeding support is so dependant on who Yiu know and I feel could be much better, I relied on peer support and could have done with access to something more formal

- I think womens mental health support for mothers is really important

- I feel concerned about the lack of free activities available to people, particularly with wriggle and rhyme not on at all libraries. It feels like a real divide for those on lower incomes

- support for parents to understand children's behaviour I'm concerned by the lack of appropriate information out there ans the number of parents that don't understand why children behave as they do.

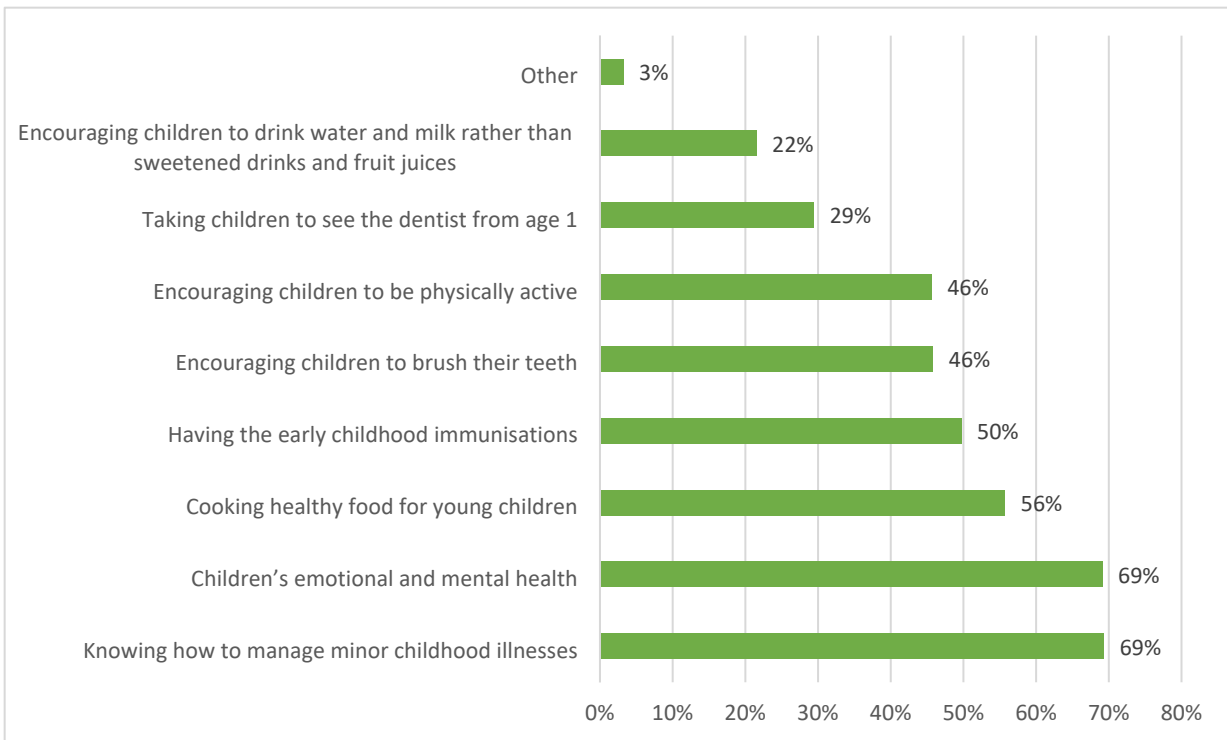
Please look at improving breastfeeding support in our area. Please improve the website so parents can find out about local classes for babies. I felt really abandoned in the first few weeks after having a baby.

4.3 Child health and managing minor illnesses

Respondents were asked to choose up to five of the most important things for them for their Child's health and managing minor illnesses

The two highest scoring areas were knowing how to manage childhood illnesses and support for children's emotional and mental health, with cooking healthy food for young children third. The lower score for taking children to the dentist may be more reflective of the general understanding of the availability of dentist appointments for children from the age of 1. This merits further exploration.

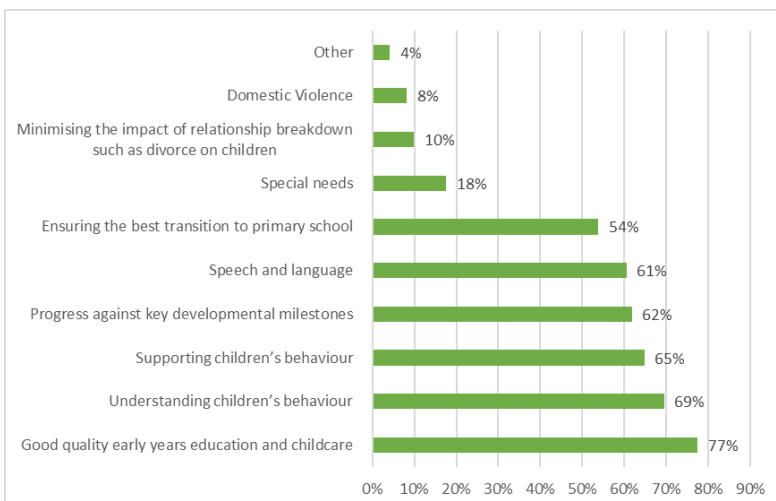
Graph 4 What support do parents and carers want for health and minor illnesses



4.4 Learning and development and preparing for school.

Parents were asked to identify the top five areas for support with learning and development and preparing for school. The highest % was for good quality early years education and childcare, with understanding and supporting children's behaviour being second and third. While support with domestic violence and minimising impact of relationship breakdown were smaller percentages, there were still 47 and 38 respondent who highlighted the need for support. Likewise, while only 18% of respondents said support for special needs this equates to 83 respondents.

Graph 5. Support needed for learning and development and preparing for school



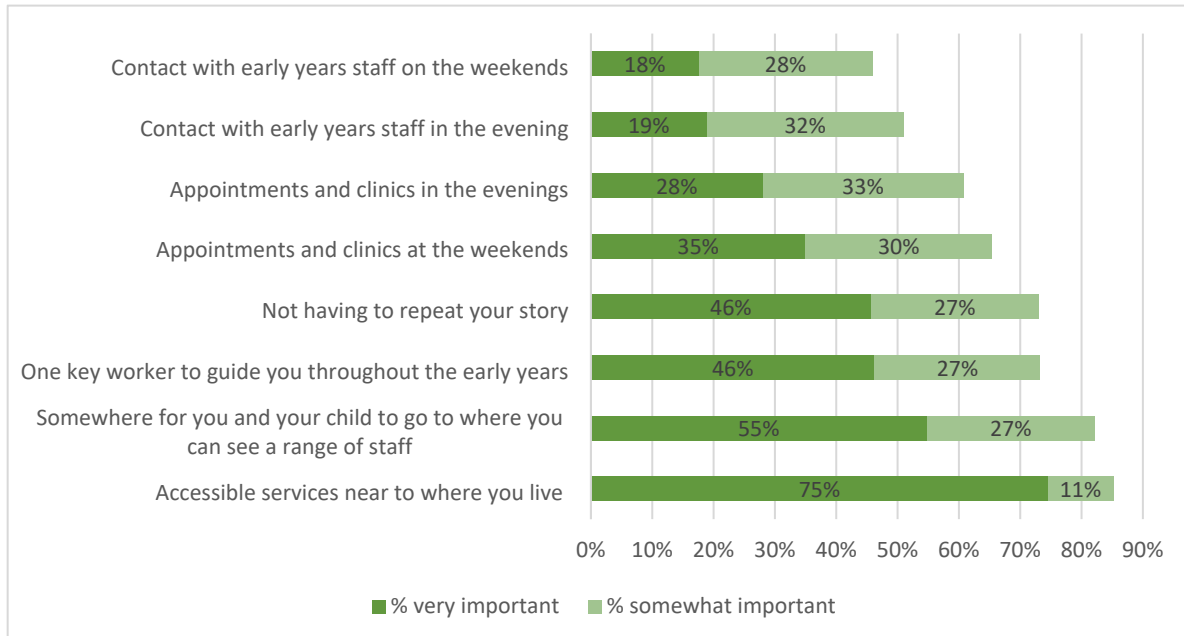
Should arrange more activities and holiday clubs for children with special educational needs.

Improved access for special needs children to local services preferably face to face

4.5 Where and how you receive support.

Graph 6 shows the importance of accessible services near to where parents and carers live. Somewhere where you can see a range of staff, one key worker throughout the early years, not having to repeat the story were also very important to parents. Over 65% of parents and carers thought having clinics and appointments at weekends was very important or somewhat important.

Graph 6 When and how parents and carers receive support

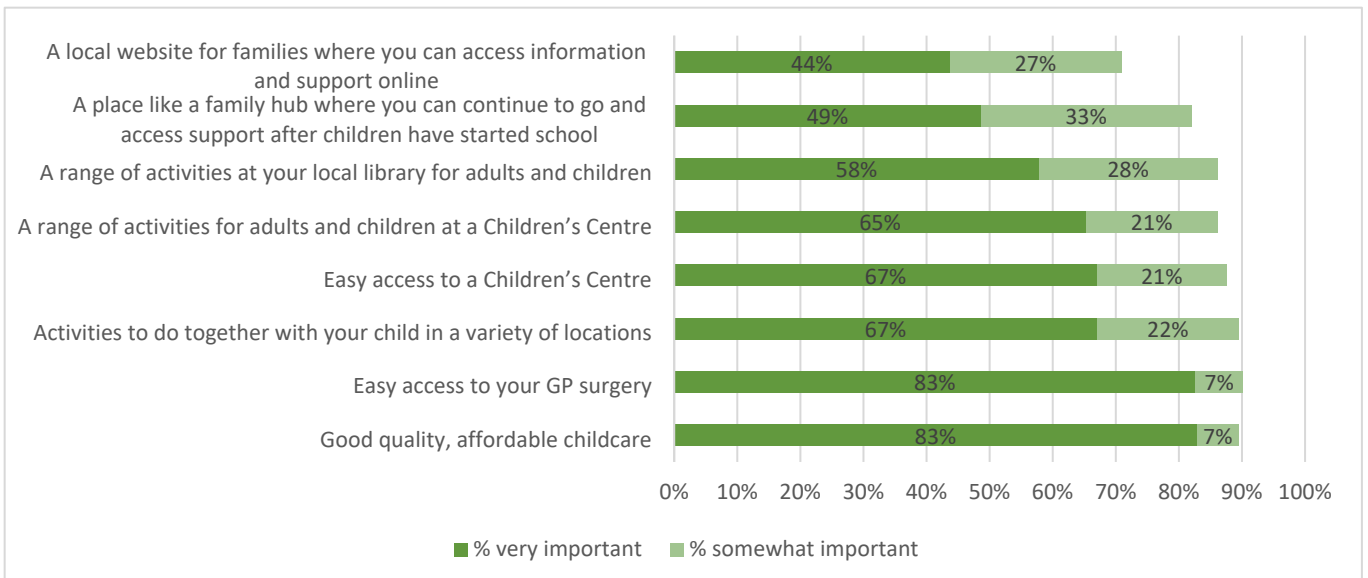


4.6 Facilities and activities

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of a range of activities and facilities.

90% said that easy access to their GP surgery was very and somewhat important. The third most selected choice was activities to with their child 89% and 88% wanted easy access to a children's centre.

Graph 7 Important activities and facilities



Croydon has just cut all early years services both in children centres and libraries so this survey feels completely pointless and pie in the sky. Without any local activities, children will suffer. By LOCAL I mean within walking distance. There is nothing walkable for me.

Nothing. There has only ever been one service in the 5 years I've tried to access them and that was a terrible afternoon stay and play at Canterbury. I took my 8 month old and was told she was too young and it would be pointless staying (it was advertised as 0-5). If you have a disability, or are struggling with physical or mental health post-pregnancy, how are you supposed to catch multiple over crowded unreliable buses just to access basic services? It's appalling.

I have really missed the full and flexible timetables that Children's Centres used to offer. Many local church playgroups have also stopped running. Stay and Plays for under 5s made such a difference for me and my first child; I have missed these and have in truth experienced loneliness and isolation with my youngest.

I think there should be support for people going up to 2 children- I think the challenges of this is overlooked in services.

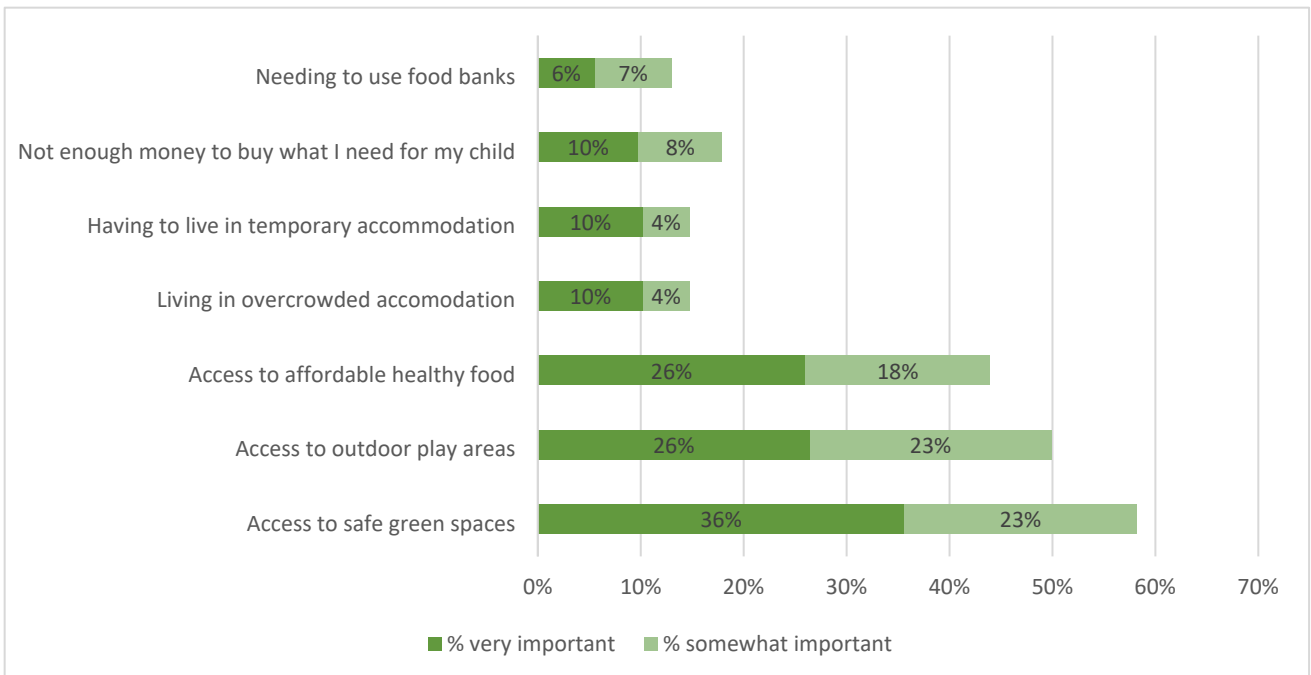
I also used to really value regular opportunities to get my first baby weighed and ask the health visitor questions about sleep, feeding and development- I definitely missed this in the pandemic with my second child.

4.7 The wider environment

The three most important areas in the wider environment questions were access to safe green spaces, access to outdoor play areas and access to affordable healthy food.

48 people said that having to live in temporary accommodation and living in overcrowded accommodation was very important and 46 said they did not have enough money to buy what they need for their child.

Graph 8 The wider environment



There should be no future flat buildings in West Thornton without consideration for developers providing full and complete indoor and outdoor play areas for kids of all ages and parking for adults. The drive to fill every available space with flats is choking the area without any compensation for existing residents. Your strategy is building ghettos not communities with kids being forced to meet in stairways and appartement corridors resulting in thousand of pounds of damage to leaseholders

*The playgrounds in Croydon need a lot of work. You mention the fact Croydon has the most young people but it also has the worst parks.
Old, unkept equipment, little wildlife all vermin!
It is quite depressing for mothers in the tightly cramped overcrowded social housing to get out and enjoy the outdoors when the parks have little to be desired.*

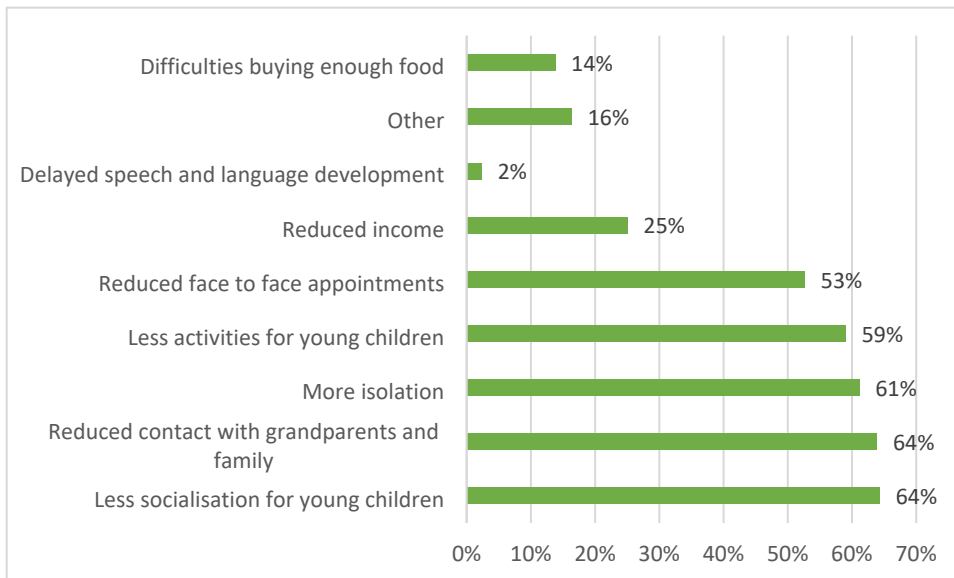
Housing is a bad problem for us. Not having space for our son to play as we are in a studio makes things really difficult.

4.8 The impact of COVID-19

Respondents were asked to what the impacts of COVID had been on them as a parent or carer of an early years child.

Respondents were asked what was the biggest impact of COVID. The areas which scored highly were all related to forms of social contact and activities.

Graph 9 The impact of COVID



The Byron childrens centre offered support during covid which was invaluable

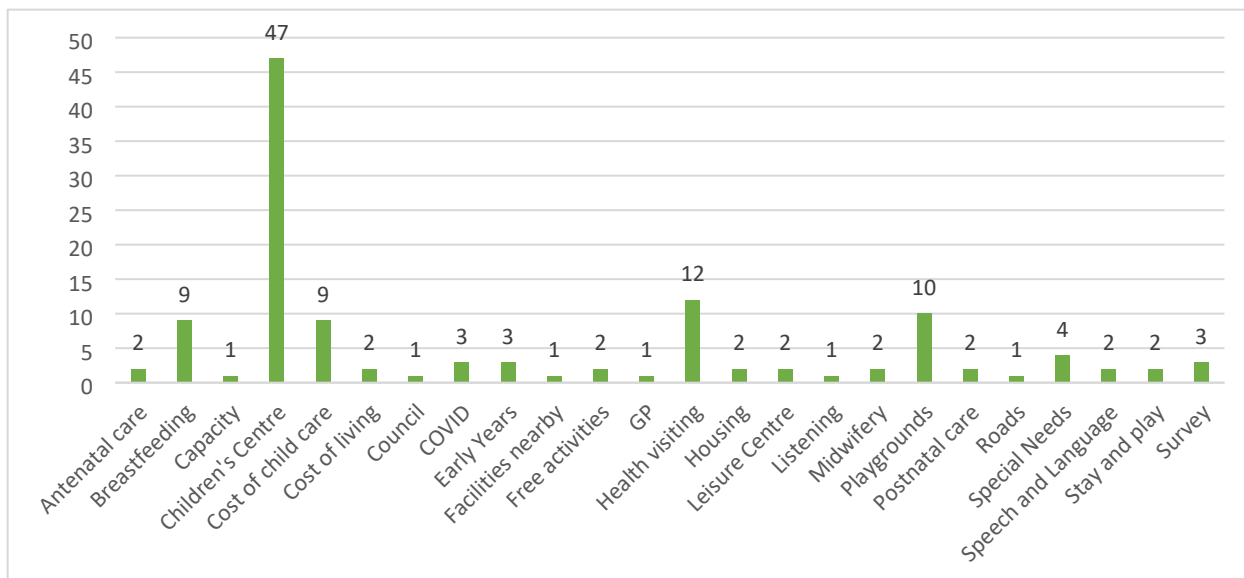
My daughter really struggled with the loss of socialisation and we worried about her mental health. I had a new baby and missed face to face health visitor appointments (when the baby was weighed) which I found vital with me first and think this was a real loss due to covid."

A lot of the facilities e.g childrens centres have shut or reduced. For example, baby clinics no longer run to get babies weighed. These should be essential. Some services have moved to phone rather than in person e.g breast feeding support, midwife

4.9 Main themes from the comments

There were a hundred general written comments. The largest group was about the Children's Centres, their value and unhappiness about the reduced services. The full range of comments can be found in appendix 1.

Graph 10 Main subjects of the written comments in the survey



5. Summary of Responses – Partner feedback

Two partner events were held with Early Years partners, on Tuesday 8th March and Saturday 12th March 2022. There were 120 attendees including from schools, childcare, maternity, children's centres, council education teams, primary care, CCG, Croydon health services, primary care, the voluntary sector.

In the first half attendees fed back on the draft scope, vision, objectives, and principles of the strategy and the impact of COVID. In the second session attendees provided their insight into the issues and priorities in relation to three themes: integrated pathways and seamless care, maximising opportunities and reducing the risk of inequalities and workforce development and training.

Following the partner events further feedback has been sought from partners via email and meetings and this has also been reflected in the draft strategy.

5.1 Feedback on the scope image

The scope image has now been renamed as a map showing the complexity of the landscape for families and carers in the early years.

The areas / services that partners have suggested incorporating in the 'scope' image were:

- Book start
- Calat
- EY Workforce development
- Calat Family Learning
- Carers families
- Charities
- Council services
- Counsellors
- CWD Team
- Early Help
- Early Years send
- Family members
- MHST
- MNS
- National Autistic Society
- Occupational health
- Outdoor Play
- Parent child intervention
- Parents
- Physiotherapy
- Police
- Portage
- Private sector nurseries
- Probation

- Friends and Neighbours
 - Grandparents
 - Grandparents
 - Healthy streets
 - Independent mobility
 - Isolation
 - Kinship carers Maintained nursery school
 - Mental health services
 - Relationship advice
 - Relationship support
 - School nursing
 - Schools
 - Social opportunities
 - Streetspace
 - Substance misuse services
 - Town Planning
-

5.2 Partner feedback on the vision and the objectives

The feedback and suggestions on the vision and objectives are shown below grouped into themes. These have been incorporated into the revised draft strategy. The biggest groups of comments were about SEND and joined up working.

We have included all the comments here because it is vital that we do not lose sight of them. The wording is included as it was provided by the respondents.

Table 2. Feedback on the vision and objectives

Theme	Detailed comment
Accountability	How will you ensure that other departments are fully signed up to the strategy at every levels so that we are all accountable
Child development	Focus on children's development as educational gaps at the age of 5 often
	Important to focus on children's development as educational gaps at the age of 5 often widen later
Child's Voice	Important that child's voice is throughout this – children need to be designing what their objectives are they need to be in all the meetings to do this
	Seek parents view and child views
	The vision is very good – voice of the child needs to be explicit
CLA / foster parents	Foster parents, children looked after
Communication	Improve communications with parents around what help/support they are entitled to i.e. many parents don't know about 2 year old funding
	Could we use the word clarity in the vision? A frequent complaint from parents and education is that the pathway for support is not clear
	Promoting good communication environments and development to reduce barriers to socialisation and education
Complex needs	Better support for children with complex needs for them to access appropriate support, specialist services and advice on specialist provision
Context	Can objective be thought of in context of other croydon offers i.e. parenting hub offer
Digital poverty	Digital skills plus access to digital equipment is a big challenge to disadvantaged families
	Free membership to croydon libraries giving families free access to book and digital resources
EAL Support	Support families with English as an additional language and ensure these families have equality of access to all specialist services
	Supporting EAL parents
	Support and guidance for parents with English as their second language – translating services
Early Years education	Make sure children/families have access to high quality early education and care through all early years education settings
Engaging families	It's a good draft – how do you engage families who don't want to be engaged?
Environments	In 1st objective would be good to include safe so healthy and safe environments

Theme	Detailed comment
	For families in one room in b and b sharing facilities with others – this may seem far removed from their experience of healthy environments for children to grow in
	How we manage Croydon's streets – streets were places children could met, play and travel independently
Evidence base	Keep theory in mind also – what do we know from evidence from systems theory, attachment theory about early brain development and does this line up in our services
Families and resilience	Important to keep the couple relationship in mind
	Parental and family resilience
Food	Encouraging health eating in young children and getting parents on board
	Some settings do provide breakfast for children so they are better able to learn and not hungry
Health visiting	Health visitor support to be extended into the first few years
	Health clinics need to be reintroduced
Joined up	Joined up support for families
	Improved integrated care services for children
	It would be great for the children centre hubs to have and offer good links to important teams like housing
	Continuity of services that are in place and working well
	GP health professionals and teachers working together with children with additional needs
	Parents / carers not having to keep repeating their story
	Think the objectives are good but need to recognise there needs to be a lot of collaborative / joined up partnership working to achieve
Outcomes	Improve outcomes workforce
Parental education	Parents education support their own ability
Poverty	Could we embed something around poverty and the impact that this has on so many aspects of family life
Pregnancy planning	Support people to have informed and planned parenting i.e. pre conception learning
	Pregnancy planning
Preparing for parenthood	Antenatal classes that educate about good parenting / relationships and bonding and not just about labour and birth – these need to be delivered before the baby arrives
	Positive experience of pregnancy and early postnatal period – this is the inception into parenthood for all first time parents
	Preparing families for parent hood – also needs to be something about supporting parents to be health mentally and physically
Racism	Tackle racism
Reducing Inequalities	Reducing inequalities
	I think the second point should be reworded to be clearer to parents – actively reduce the risk of inequalities across education, health and wellbeing

Theme	Detailed comment
	Second point needs to be reworded to be clearer to parents – actively reduce the risk of inequalities across education, health and wellbeing
Safe Houses	Safe houses
Safeguarding	Educate families with safeguarding
Seldom heard	Really reach out seldom heard
SEND	Clear and easy to navigate support and guidance for parents/ carers of young children with SEND
	There is a gap in support for children with SEND in the Early Years sector at setting support level – also need to consider the support for maintained nursery schools / also support at home for those with social communication difficulties
	Early support for SEN – support parents to identify and seek support before school
	Early support for SEN – support parents to identify and seek support before school
	Increased practitioner confidence in supporting children with SEND at setting support level
	Early Support programme for children with special needs
	Widen the offer on socialisation for SEND
	Should SEND be grouped with other protective characteristics
Speech and language	Can we highlight support for development of communication, language and literacy please?
	Focus needs to be on supporting children's communication and language development
Strength Based	Build on children's strengths – on what they can do
	Health based in its approach – strength based model rather than deficit model
Transition to school	It is important to think about the transition to primary and being ready for school
Trauma informed	What about giving an emphasis on staff being trauma informed
Two Year Check	Encourage all parents to take up the opportunity to have their two year check
	Important for all families to take up the opportunity to have their two year check and for settings to identify areas where the child might need some additional support
Wellbeing / Mental health	Maternal mental health
	Tackle isolation and loneliness
	Wellbeing is important especially after covid
	Provide mental health and wellbeing support to children in school
	Considering the impact of social and economic isolation on parents as well as children's emotional wellbeing and development
	Redressing the stress parents have enduring through covid
	Access to community spaces – physical and mental health
Wording	Help children to live healthier and happier lives in Croydon

Theme	Detailed comment
	Good emphasis on prevention and taking a proactive approach – think these are the right vision and objectives. The challenge is in the detail of how these objectives are implemented
	Wellbeing is quite an abstract term – we understand it but do our residents
	Will they be in this order
	Too Futuristic – action now, needs to be right now
	Include all before children and families in the objectives to emphasise the point in the vision that it is for all
	Wording to point and easy to understand
	It would be nice if it could make explicit reference to children simply being happy, healthy and safe – everything feels a bit corporate and might not make an immediate connection to families

5.3 Feedback about the principles

The following feedback about the principles has been incorporated into the latest version of the principles and or objectives or scope in the draft strategy

Table 3. Feedback about the draft principles

Theme	Feedback
Access	Too many services remain virtual
Culture	Create a culture where all children are included
EAL	ESOL
Environment	We support children's right to enjoy the street, as a place to meet play and travel independently
Family	A principle about recognising that family is the bedrock of a child's future
	Something about the wellbeing of the whole family
	We recognise the contribution of the VCS and the sectors ability to empower families
Fathers	Include fathers
Integrated care	Provide integrated care to children
	We work across health and social and the voluntary sector to ensure services are joined up and was seen as one team
Mental Health	Mental health
Order	Safeguarding box should be first one
	Should security and safeguarding come first

Theme	Feedback
	Agree on the safeguarding
	Maybe group principles under sub headings
Prevention	Implement preventative measures
Racism	Tackle racism
Impact of the principles	We review the effect of these principles and the day to day actions they promote
Scope	Pre and post natal care
Support for principles	I think the principles are great
	Nothing needs changing
	Nothing needs changing, you might want to think about having young people champions to help you on this 10-14 year olds
Wording	Do we want to notice families that need help or recognise families achievements and struggles
	We proactively address inequality, supported by a population health management approach
	Third yellow box could be reworded – we identify children and families that require help and intervene
	Recognise the expertise that families/carers/ parents hold on their families and being strength based in our approach
	We aspire for children to be the best versions of themselves that they can be
	We ensure information about our services and how to access them is clear and easily accessible
	Provide integrated care to children
	We offer a range of universal services to allow early identification of and support for a range of needs
	Replace meaningful by relevant
	Emotional wellbeing instead of mental health this might reduce any stigma or engagement anxiety
	Services should be effective and efficient and offer value for money – not drowning in red tape or bureaucracy
	We are confident and understand and include intersectionality in our work with families
	Need to cover all areas

5.4 Impact of COVID

The strategy and delivery plan need to reflect the longer term impact of the points raised by partners and families about COVID and its effects.

Table 4. Feedback about the impact of COVID

Theme	Comment
Attachment issues	Anxiety around leaving parents
	Attachment issues
Children Looked after	Impact on placement stability for children looked after who have been stuck at home with carers
COVID	Staff may choose to continue to work when they have COVID – they may feel they have no choice due to financial difficulties
	Children getting used to masks has pros and cons
COVID anxiety	Parents are fearful to attend appointments and/or not wanting to engage in EY's activities due to being around other people
	Some parents of reception children are still very anxious about COVID – though some of the younger parents of younger children seem more relaxed
Demand on health services	Schools preventing children attending due to coughs/ colds and increased rate of young patients present to GP / A&E for common viral illnesses
	Children missing health appointments
Development delays	Reduced socialisations opportunities impacting communication and interaction skills
	Behaviour issues with children, delayed speech
	Children in reception poor social, emotional, language and self care skills
	Children have had little socialisation before starting settings which has impacted their development
	Undeveloped language
	Less experience of sensory play and how that impacts diet, physical and language development
	I feel there has been an impact on children's speech development
	Communication and language skills have been impacted listening and attention as well as delayed speech
Domestic abuse	Increase in domestic abuse
	Domestic violence
Emotional wellbeing, mental health	Increase mental health issues
	Increased SEMH / Early Help / children disclosing
	High levels of anxiety among children and parents/ cares

Theme	Comment
	Positive impact of schools and nurseries re-opening – lots of families feedback issues with transitions and coming out of COVID restrictions e.g. children's anxiety to attend nursery, school group settings
	Rise in parental anxiety impacting on children's needs
	Emotional and mental health needs are higher
	Family relationships fractured due to stress at home – how can we support families to 'recover' from this and rebalance family dynamics
	LAC and previously LAC children presenting with increased SEMH difficulties and exacerbated by COVID – feelings of loss, uncertainty e.c.t..
	Struggle with housing due to unemployment – housing has a massive detrimental effect on children and parent's mental health, families are stuck in over crowded small spaces
Future	General anxiety about uncertainty of what comes next for parents, staff and children
Hidden impact	Covid has increased hidden ham we are now noticing families for first time who already have greater complexity
	Families reducing their accessibility using COVID/illness as the justification to avoid contact with services to support their needs
	Children have slipped through the net in terms of being safeguarding or referred to usual pathways and are arriving at schools with chronic or complex challenges often with no paperwork
	There are impacts yet to be seen
	Lack of contact with health visitors – in person progress checks – means many young children may have unidentified significant needs
Medically vulnerable	Some families with most medically vulnerable children remain understandably anxious and at times this is limiting their engagement in the community
No recourse to public funds	No recourse – more asylum families being housed in poor temporary housing such as Hayesthorpe hotel – children have no belongings, no stability and not eligible for FSM. Schools are having to feed entire families, provide clothing, shoes, computers
Oral health	I am very concerned about the state of many of the children's teeth as they have not seen a dentist
Positive impact	A positive impact is the increase in virtual meetings that has allowed engagement from parents and carers who ordinarily wouldn't be able to
Poverty	Increase in food poverty
	If poverty and deprivision before Croydon meant we were working with say 25% of Croydon families before covid – what impact has the increased poverty due to covid done to that number and how can we sustain that/lobby for more resource

Theme	Comment
Relationships with families	My class this year much more settle compared to last year – however still rebuilding parents community within our eyfs
	Building relationships with parents due to limited contact in schools
	Working with parents and families is still a real challenge
SEND	Difficult to recruit staff to support SEND pupils since pandemic close proximity to children etc
SEND	Difficulties accessing any education if SEND due to nurseries with limited capacity
Skill loss	Skills have been lost and need to be relearned
Speech and Language	Increased number of children with SALT
Staff shortages	Impact on early years provision due to staff issues
	Chronic school staff shortages due to staff absence
Waiting times	Confidence is returning but longer waiting times as services wind back up
	Increased waiting lists means children are waiting longer for support increasing harm in the meantime – some children and parents are increasingly struggling to cope
	Longer waiting lists to access e.g. CAMHS, medical support

5.5 Integrated pathways and seamless support

Partners were asked for their ideas about the issues were and suggestions for improvement for three workstreams. The first of these integrated pathways and seamless support. The responses have been grouped thematically. The need for joined up approaches, improved communication, and information and support are high priorities.

Table 5. Integrated pathways and seamless support: issues and priorities

Theme	Feedback: integrated pathways and seamless supported pathways and seamless support
Accountability	We spend too much time passing the buck and not taking responsibility
	Agencies taking the lead and responsibility not passing on to another
Outcomes and priorities	Different outcomes and priorities for different services – how can we align these?
Commissioning	Commissioning in a way that enables partnerships

Theme	Feedback: integrated pathways and seamless supported pathways and seamless support
Communication	Clear systems of communication – what is available who is who
	Better communication between services
	Referrals pathways are sometimes unknow – not know enough about what services offer
	Knowledge of local services and promoting a culture of curiosity
	More staff to have capacity to support communication and working across services
	Clear and published pathways
	Better communication between teams and partners – another service may be able to help if they knew there was work that needed to be done – for example parenting skills could be offered by CALAT, likewise workforce development training
	Different priorities – communication channels
	Not enough communication between professionals
	A network that meets regularly to share information and make connections
	Info sharing protocols between agencies that means that services are informed about issues and have the right info to support families and children
	People don't know each other across the system so communication between professional groups is poor
	Maybe creating a newsletter to keep services updated with changes
Engagement with services	Keeping engagement with services after initial identification
Family Hubs	Family hubs sound like something good to aim for to help this
Finances	Integrated funding
	Finance – when services feel themselves to be competing for too scarce resources, collaboration is hindered
	All funding – parent have to apply for different funding – should be able to make one application and get relevant funding
	Attaching funding to effective partnership working

Theme	Feedback: integrated pathways and seamless supported pathways and seamless support
	Multiple organisations and funding streams
	Funding reduction in services
Health visitors	Access to health visitors in early development
	Health visiting not available for families
	Early identification through health visitors
Information and support	All families having a new baby should have access to information and support – draw pathways from a child’s perspective
	Schools not aware of the services available e.g. some schools have free mental health support but others weren’t offered it
	Information available when baby is registered
	Have a clear pathway of where to go or all information in one place
	There’s lots of services who try to work together but the website is very poorly structured and families struggle to find information unless explicitly told by professionals
	More information for families about pathways available and how to access them – thus empowering families
	Families need to be ready to receive information as may need to be reported at different points
	One place to find an overview of services and how they interconnect with each other – directory sounds good and maybe some kind of mapping diagram as an overview would also help
	Ensuring information available in all relevant languages
Information sharing	Clearly agreed protocols for information sharing
Joined up approach	I’m hoping the formation across the ICS across SWL will bring the system partners together
	Segregation within teams around roles and responsibilities
	Linking home, school, health, social like a team
	Different services have different agendas which can unintentionally impact joint working

Theme	Feedback: integrated pathways and seamless supported pathways and seamless support
	More joined up thinking required, often services are working in isolation but don't communicate with each other to gain a whole picture
	Joined up communication for SEND children, often unknown to service before starting school
	Often I will identify a child in reception that has additional needs however the health professionals tell parents that all is fine – very confusing for parents
	Lack of consistency
	Too often support and pathways are school lead but needs to have the support before starting in education
	How can we link better with GPs
	Health being current with education e.g. Locality
	Less spot purchasing would make things more seamless
	Reintroduce regular meetings between maternity and HV – this would require reducing workloads so that relationships can be maintained across these professional groups and im not sure how this would happen
	Health professionals sometimes advice parents to ask schools to arrange an EP referral but schools may not feel it is needs or may not ave capacity to commission EP time
	EY staff to e aware of the localities SEND support so they can advice parents of how SEND works in the borough
Measuring success/failure	Measure success and address failures so they don't happen again
SEND	There are children that come to reception and hve been identified on send as they did not go to a nursery and missed the 2 year old check
	Roll out of SEND locality model
Thresholds	Difficult to find help if the threshold not met or barriers such as no recourse are involved
	Referrals may be turned down leading to drift in gaining support
	Referrals for ey children for speech and language support barrier even if known to other services
	Different services have different thresholds – we need to ensure they are understood and bridge any gaps
	Different thresholds and definitions – the difficultness of dealing with dual diagnosis – the child who doesn't quite it any one definition or who doesn't have a specific diagnosis

Theme	Feedback: integrated pathways and seamless supported pathways and seamless support
Wording	What is meant by integrated pathways
	Will you rebrand croydon best start

5.6 Inequalities

The second breakout groups looked at the issues and solutions for maximising opportunities and reducing the risk of inequalities.

Table 6. Maximising opportunities and reducing the risk of inequalities: issues and priorities

Theme	Feedback: Opportunities and reducing the risk of inequalities
Community and voluntary sector	Engage with the community and voluntary sector to embed services in communities
Data	Collect the data needed to highlight inequalities at the earliest point
	Improve screening detection of those at risk of inequality (housing, dv, income, educational level et) during pregnancy i.e. invest in training and implementation of a social screening tool in pregnancy
EAL	Barriers in my schools community are around English as an additional language – parents understanding of what is available
	Too often parents with EAL or learning needs or own poor mental health do not know the systems or are worried about asking for support
	More access to interpretation or forms translated into different languages to ensure families with EAL do not miss opportunities
Funding	More funding from the council per hour for 15/30 hours
Inclusive services	Families who find services hard to access tend to stay under the radar-parent champions for these groups
	Ensure that all settings and school are truly inclusive and are not discouraging children from attending due to the presenting SEND needs
	Settings need to be more inclusive too many SEN are not accessing provisions
	Thinking about the language we use to promote service and encourage families to access services e.g., non blaming
	Early identification working with communities making parents aware of the support earlier. Parents begin informed early of SEND needs and what this can mean for future education. Not accessible and fair for all.
	Ensure all settings are accepting of all children of all different abilities
Joined up approach	Better graduated response
Parent champions	Utilise parent champion approach across local areas, they provide friendly and accessible information

Theme	Feedback: Opportunities and reducing the risk of inequalities
Parental engagement	Get documents/adverts/overall offer reviewed by parents and carers before they are used, to ensure they are accessible and relevant Work closer with families and providers
Reach	Making sure we are reaching all families, particularly those less likely to seek services Make it someone's role to reach specific groups Deliver opportunities in community settings, targeting groups and areas that are less wealthy Additional focus on the localities with high levels of deprivation
Sharing learning	Share learning across the full geographic area of Croydon so that no particular area is excluded
Support for parents	Support for those who have been affected by adverse childhood experiences as they become parents Support for parents with mental health or learning needs themselves
Targeted support and services	Targeted support and services
Well trained staff	Recruiting well trained qualified staff Well trained staff, sharing good practices More awareness of range of needs and all staff skilled in identification

5.7 Workforce development

The third breakout room focused workforce development issues and suggestions.

Table 7. Workforce development: issues and priorities

Theme	Feedback: workforce development and training
Bureaucracy	Lots of processes and paperwork impacting on time spent with children
Calat	Talk to Calat – we offer a range of courses/ qualifications for Early Years and wider school workforce
Career progression pathways	Better pathways for progression in early years
Data	Central data hub – health, school and social care can access
Funding	Funding, particularly SEND funding SEND funding was not my comment but I think it goes more widely than personalised funding – early intervention saves costly later interventions - improved outcomes and better return on investment Budgets

Theme	Feedback: workforce development and training
	MDT working and huddles have worked well in adult services – could we do something similar for children?
	More funding to raise salaries for early years
	More money all round –but has always been this way
	Financial constraints – more need but less money
integrated management teams	Integrated management team – less silos
Online training	Use online training more so that people can do it when convenient to them, provided they're not expected to do it in their own time
Partnership working	Opportunities work in joint/ MDT clinics
	Partnership working- drawing strengths from early learning team, MNS, SEND workers to share expertise
	Share resources
	Reducing divide between PVI and maintained sector – everyone in it for the child's best development
	Agree there is a divide – MNS are expensive which is precisely why there needs to be a proper debate as to our role and impact – what value we add to the sector as a whole
	Common training programmes
Profile	Raising profile of early years
Promoting EY as career choice	Apprenticeships, schools and further education - promoting working early years as a career choice
	Providing work experience for young people in the early years sector like we had in the past
	Apprentice opportunities working with colleagues and universities to promote careers in early years
	A government drive for recruitment in early years
	Level 3 apprenticeship scheme
Recruitment and retention of staff	Staffing/recruitment
	Retention of staff due to low salaries, rising costs of inflation, lack of CPD
	Retention
	Trained staff may then leave for promotion so new staff are undertrained
	Workforce recruitment and retention is a constant challenge, so teams are always stretch 0 MDT working part of answer
	Retention of experienced staff

Theme	Feedback: workforce development and training
Sharing good practices	Sharing good practice between settings – making use of expertise and knowledge in settings
Staff wellbeing	Low morale after pandemic – feeling undervalued and overstretched
	Staff wellbeing
Staffing	Lack of experienced qualified staff
	Covid has meant many staff are off and trying to cover classes
	Support staff for absence / sickness
Training	Dedicated time in relation to training if services already compromised
	Problem of time for training when short staffed
	Ability to attend training due to being in ration
	Mentoring rather than training in isolation
	Investment in good quality childcare, well trained professionals, sharing good practice
	Training and opportunity to embed learning
Training - joint	Staff linking from different areas to have training together so that they understand each other better
Training - monitoring	More insistent on CPD where staff have not accessed training themselves for some time
Training - SEND	More training around SEND and early identification for all team and not just left to teams that are specifically in those roles – children are being missed when there is insuffice to knowledge and understanding
Training - trauma	Some services i.e., cryodon drop in offer lunch time bite size training and conversations such as trauma
	Trauma training
	Trauma informed approach in training
Understanding of legislation	As well as the service offer – it's important that we understand legislation in key service areas such as housing which governs our responsibilities, but which may be in conflict with our duties

5.8 Partner feedback received following the Stakeholder workshop has included the following points.

Early Years Strategy Steering Group May 2022
Who should we be engaging with?
Use text messaging to engage young people
SENDIAS Kids would appreciate involvement.

We have spent a lot of time talking about reaching our community - which is vital. We also need to think about how we reach out to all professionals across disciplines, so families receive the joined up vision
Are there any direct letters that the council send out to new parents etc. Or any other letters that go to residents ie council tax letters. Also the twitter and other social media groups
Use local Facebook groups and next door neighbour apps
Seeking to understand rather than tell is 'spot on'
Views on balance scorecard approach? Are there measures missing? Are the priorities for you service included?
The EIF self-assessment matrix is currently under review - is it still the most effective measure
Need measures around EHCP s in Croydon and children at school support level
Are there any appropriate emotional health and well-being measures for young children which could be included ?
A measure of the number of children engaging in nursery or pre-school provision.
What are the risks that should be included about the strategy and its implementation? This is a Partnership strategy; who else needs to feedback?
engagement with all sectors of the community
Has the SEND board been consulted?
finances may be a risk
access to services
The new Integrated Care Board/Systems
I can only think of the EH Partnership Board, which already has sight of this. I am unsure of any Community groups/boards which might be useful.
I would say the main VS groups working with very young children like Home Start, Little Village,, Peppermint Children centre, ABCD connectors
Any school governing boards ? Specifically those of Maintained Nursery Schools ?
Financial backing for the strategy
Funding cuts
Articulating the vision in a sufficiently cogent way to secure engagement at ground level
Change of staff within the Council
Lack of communication between teams can reduce the impact of any of these targets
The join up across all stakeholders is a challenge but this has been really well managed so far - it has been shared widely so far
Willingness to engage across groups and services with respect and a shared purpose
Opportunities to engage in the Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs
Children and young people
A risk could be that it is not aligned with the Supporting Families Outcome Framework.
Lack of expertise
For the implementation phase to succeed, the 'buy-in' from all partners needs to be evident at both strategic and operational levels.

Page 10

The risk is that the level of transformational change that is required will not happen within what becomes the politically acceptable timeframe.
Strategy partners represent very different perspectives , ethos and working practice - for example, PVI childcare providers have a very different outlook to maintained educational provision, voluntary organisations and health professionals
Early Years Startegy Steering Group April 2022
Feedback on the challenges facing the Early Years included in the draft Strategy
Evidenced by the survey, and by recent serious case reviews, the views of fathers are missing from the way we are shaping services.
Challenge of the impact of cost of living/ austerity on families eg gas bills food etc
The join up between the many different "pools" of work occurring across the borough.... need to find a way to maintain the communication across the partnership
Consistency between schools and voluntary sector providers with respect to children with SEND.
Increasing number of children identified with having SEND
Equality of access to SENDIF funding
Recruitment and retention in ey settings
Insufficient funding
Transition between early years and Reception
Cannot read the challenges listed in this screen
Early Help - Help Early = key must be to lok at akl activity underway.
SEND needs to be a theme.
Inclusive services are highly valued by families. Funding envelope available often does not cover costs
Challenges around good inclusive practice
Importance of involving primary care
Importance of voice and coproduction key.
Mobility of families being unknown to services
I think the challenges are reflective. I think in line with the family hub work, we could add something around the family only having to tell their story once. So more should be done to ensure there is whole family approach to the families needs
Impact of Covid in delays to diagnosis and correct school placements
SEND Green paper - needs to be reflected - local inclusion plans and dleivery supports the priority re access within communities
Funding for children with SEND mitigates against strong inclusive practice
So many nursery settings struggling with staffing and also declining quality
Instability of funding for maintained nurseries in future
Support for families where additional needs may be emerging and knowing how and where to access support.
Integrated 2 year review is not well supported across services
Feedback on the strenggths and opportunities included in the draft Strategy
Agree systemic strengths in place

Potentially the new Mayor might add some weight to this work?
Strength - Good and diverse early years provision
Experienced committed trained staff and leaders
Lots of potential future funding streams forthcoming via recent announcements of SF monies, RPC monies and FH Best Start for Life grants
Joint working across local area
Work of SEND Delivery groups - Early Identification of Need in particular but others too such as improved joint working will support
Opportunity to utilise unique role of maintained nursery schools
There are sufficient teams working on early years but there is overlap in their roles which lead to duplication and inefficiencies.
Diversity of borough is a strength
Need to link together SEND inspection outcomes
Existing provision, and how this will integrate with family hubs development and potential additional funding to enhance workforce development
Opportunity to roll out locality SEND model for early years
Quality of provision
There is some great work and appetite amongst some various local communities to pull together and create opportunities for children and young people
Feedback on the draft priorities for the governance and finance workstream
Cannot see all of them...but governance is spot on.
It would be good to include SEND in the draft priorities
There is a Multi-agency Sharing agreement already in place in Croydon - a quick win would be to use this one
Information governance is important, but can be added to a wider piece of work, and so not in isolation.
Deprived areas,
Safeguarding
Challenges of not having story twice is having the right systems with interoperability.
Need to link in with existing parent groups and reps. Also use the access through LSS - early years support development.
There needs to be a specific priority about the involvement of fathers.
Just to ensure that fathers are reached as much as possible
The section on inclusivity could be more specific with regard to protected characteristics; for example SEND,
Families know whether they feel welcomed, valued and respected - it is not always easy for them to articulate what this needs
Foster carers
What about a leaflet or QR code for any shops in Croydon that sell baby goods? Might help to reach new parents to advise of what our intentions are for all families? Do we have other language versions?
I would suggest that we invest in existing networks and forums held across the borough to ensure representation of individual areas, cohorts and groups
Parents in hotels, temporary housing, arriving in UK are scooped up and welcomed
Feedback on the draft priorities in the engagement work stream

Need to link in with existing parent groups and reps. Also use the access through LSS - early years support development.
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Parents in hotels, temporary housing, arriving in Uk are scooped up and welcomed
Feedback on the draft priorities in the integrated pathways workstream
Integrated funding
Professional respect and trust across pathways
How do parents navigate the pathways if they themselves have a special need or if they want particular support for a child who is not meeting milestones.
Pathway from midwifery through first year for all or at least more parents
Have we looked at a timeline for a child's life and sought to automatically "push" or "pull" relevant contacts to families to encourage them?
Ensure workforce development enables confident identification of, and early support for families with SEND
Feedback on the draft priorities in the minimising inequalities workstream
Clarity about how and where parents and schools can access advice and support for SEN concerns for any child up to age 5
Re SEND Early Years support and services need to be aligned to ensure equity of access and quality. Current silos need to be addressed.
Inclusion, and an offer for children with SEND should be a feature across services
I'm advocating a 0-25 approach instead of a 0-18... SEND and care leavers are our most vulnerable... why are we excluding them automatically at 18?
Bullet point 3 is critical as incidents of SEND are increasing significantly and may have been missed during the pandemic.
Children with SEND and their families - especially for access 2 year old provision
Feedback on the draft priorities in workforce workstream
Career progression; better pay
There is a national crisis in recruiting specialist doctors and nurses, it may be worth ensuring Health colleagues have inputted into this priority
Integrating all the skills that the workforce bring is essential.
Join up with what's already occurring in the Early Help Partnership work around data (Anthony Allsopp)

6. Appendix - Written comments from the parent / carer survey

Theme	Comment by respondent
Antenatal care	As a pregnant woman there was no access to antenatal classes, and I felt completely unprepared for birth causing anxiety and stress. It seems as well now that baby is here that the local children's centre has been closed and I have to travel to a 'hub' to access support. This unfairly impacts those that are unable to travel easily and limits local social links which are vital for new mums.
Breastfeeding	1. Support proper breast-feeding support face to face, not just leaflets or websites. Recruit more health visitors. 2. It's important to be able to see people face to face with a young child 3. Work with the other councils to provide joint services in Crystal Palace 4. Repair, maintain and upgrade play areas.
Breastfeeding	Lack of face-to-face support for breastfeeding, health anxiety for children and general mental health support for new mothers. It's shocking. The antenatal classes supposedly 'prepare' you for birth but do not even cover fully c sections, traumatic births and the first stage of caring for a newborn. It's actually a joke.
Breastfeeding	Please look at improving breastfeeding support in our area. Please improve the website so parents can find out about local classes for babies. I felt really abandoned in the first few weeks after having a baby.
Capacity	Sessions were full many times even when being on time. Maybe something to think of to change or to let more people in.
Children's Centre	The children's centre's that I attended pre pandemic: Malling Close in particular was fundamental in getting me out of the house and socialising with other mums and babies. The advice, friendships and activities were absolutely brilliant.
Children's Centre	Children centres reduced activities and location mean less accessible to take kid to do activities in my day off work. Need for more indoor activity provision over the winter when not easy to take to child to a park and you don't want to pay for a class that child may or may not enjoy, though would be willing to pay a few quid to help support provision or pay what you can system. More investment in parks, upgrading and maintaining equipment. Especially smaller ones like the one by Gordon crescent bus stop.
Children's Centre	Croydon has just cut all early years services both in children centres and libraries so this survey feels completely pointless and pie in the sky. Without any local activities, children will suffer. By LOCAL I mean within walking distance. There is nothing walkable for me. Nothing. There has only ever been one service in the 5 years I've tried to access them and that was a terrible afternoon stay and play at Canterbury. I took my 8 month old and was told she was too young and it would be pointless staying (it was advertised as 0-5). If you have a disability, or are struggling with physical or mental health post-pregnancy, how are you supposed to catch multiple over crowded unreliable buses just to access basic services? It's appalling.
Children's Centre	The Byron childrens centre offered support during covid which was invaluable

Children's Centre	You are not asking the right questions. Of course I will tick five things, but if you can only fund two, how do you know which ones I prefer? Or the ones I don't need but I think are nevertheless the most important? You aren't providing half the needed service in the North of the Borough (and less than you are in the more affluent areas) so I don't feel like I should use any of the services because I worry I am using the space of someone who needs it more. With my eldest we used to go from one children's centre to another, several days a week. Most of those centres don't exist anymore. My toddler hasn't been to see a health visitor or to a children's centre for more than two years. I used to advocate your services to the new immigrant mums, now I worry there isn't enough there and it will lead to a disappointment. I know money is tight but the costs will be tenfold in a few years if these services aren't provided. Surely different funding models could be explored. Plus please get a social researcher to help with question design: no option is offered for no disability, and what on earth is 'Neither not an issue nor an issue'?
Children's Centre	Do not close any more children Centers. We will go insane without them
Children's Centre	Children centre is great for parent and child and can help postnatal depression
Children's Centre	I have really missed the full and flexible timetables that Children's Centres used to offer. Many local church playgroups have also stopped running. Stay and Plays for under 5s made such a difference for me and my first child; I have missed these and have in truth experienced loneliness and isolation with my youngest. I think there should be support for people going up to 2 children- I think the challenges of this is overlooked in services. I also used to really value regular opportunities to get my first baby weighed and ask the health visitor questions about sleep, feeding and development- I definitely missed this in the pandemic with my second child.
Children's Centre	Considering the strong evidence of the importance of the early years in a child's development I have been extremely disappointed with the provision of services in Croydon to support babies, children and their families. In particular I feel the gradual decline in the number of Sure Start Children's Centres across the Borough has been woeful, I understand that finances (or lack of) have played a part in this however, I believe, Croydon's babies, children and families deserve more in order to maximise life chances.
Children's Centre	Everyone we have met in services has been amazing. Thank you children's centre, midwives. But the system is stretched and they need more capacity and money. Please support them and us
Children's Centre	Could there be potential to start or have a childcare / family centre in Grangewood park? There is a real lack of things going on for children in this part of the borough and many buildings in the park which could act as a perfect base/hub.
Children's Centre	I just want to say I have been going to the Selhurst children's centre since my daughter was 5 weeks old and I could not fault it the staff are amazing and I've had the opportunity to make friends and have since been to the Kensington avenue children's centre for the baby and us course which I would recommend to any first time parent and I've been to the aerodrome children's centre which is perfect for new activities for my daughter and it's lovely to see staff we know as they work across the centres I would be lonely and isolated without the children's centres and my daughter is such a social butterfly because we have access to these centres for free and I recommend every new mum I know to make use of their local children's centres as I have the best experience I couldn't be the mum I am without them

Children's Centre	A lot of baby clinics, children centres & libraries have closed down. Which makes it difficult to make use of a lot of services in certain areas. I had a section with my youngest & Shirley clinic was too far for me to travel to for clinics etc
Children's Centre	My local children centre do not offer regular class so have to travel further away
Children's Centre	Please don't close the spaces- malling close has such a reduced service especially stay & play, everything else locally is expensive and not suited to 2-3 year olds
Children's Centre	I think the childrens centres are wonderful, i have used them with all 3 of my kids but less so now because of lack of sessions on my days off.
Children's Centre	Thank you to the amazing children's centre staff for staying open as often as possible and for as long as possible during covid times and for their continued support and professionalism. Also for their fantastic online baby massage sessions during lockdown and for their welcoming nature at Selhurst and Kensington Avenue children's centres. I have loved every minute of it. Their online communication is also brilliant! Their drop in sessions have helped so much too!
Children's Centre	My closest 3 Childrens centres are closed. I have three childrens that miss out on these services as well as myself!! When I travel to use others I am told they are full capacity and get here on time. I can't get to them earlier as I have to travel to them. Croydon is like living in a postcode lottery. You can only get support if you live at the right address or you can afford private support. What about if you can't do either, you get left to become isolated, depressed and then it costs the NHS and social care more to support you as you were failed as a parent because you didn't live in the correct post coded area!!!!
Children's Centre	We need regular access to a Children's centre and library in Shirley, the library is only open on Monday and Tuesday and hardly any activities at Shirley children's centre anymore, I don't drive and at times difficult to get to other places with a 3 and 5 year old on the bus
Children's Centre	Please find funding for Children Centres. I have used Purley Oaks with my first one lots. It was a great place to meet other mums (as I didn't have any in my circle), and for the little ones to make their first friend. Mums are very isolated during the first year and not everyone has the courage to go find places to go to if there is nothing nearby. that often had a very bad ending. I suffer from post natal depression after my 2nd child who is now 3. It was during the Lock down we were not able to do what I did with my first one. It had a major effect on me and on my baby boy.
Children's Centre	The childrens centre are a link for many parents and were set up to support families.
Children's Centre	It is a shame that services have reduced or stopped such as dad and family time at Selhurst children centre.

Children's Centre	The Children centres are a life line for me as I would have no where to take the children and no professional support, also I can talk to others in the same boat. The variety of toys helps the development of the children in the centre.
Children's Centre	Childrens centres are a life saver and i was so angry and disappointed when they closed down. There is no where to go unless you have lots of money and can afford private classes. Parents need so much support with their new born babies and at the moment there is nothing to go to.
Children's Centre	Again I feel the lack of services or lack of promotion of services to families with young children is shocking. Even now as the children's centres have reopened the availability and timings of classes doesn't provide variety. There also needs to be more outward support for single parent, lower income and/or vulnerable households.
Children's Centre	The children centres were essential when outle child was first born and we suffered tremendously when they closed due to covid. They are very much needed.
Children's Centre	The changes to the children's centres are awful - it's a change that absolutely nobody has asked for, and those who need the services most will suffer the most
Children's Centre	Our children centres are more important than can be understood to the development of the young children growing in the area. They are a benefit to families and young children and positive for our community. Without them some mums have no place to go for support which is a disgrace.
Children's Centre	I think the new Hub/ spoke situation with Children's centres is just not good enough. The services were fantastic before and now they are infrequent, spread too widely across the borough and clearly underfunded and understaffed. Such a shame.
Children's Centre	I am really sorry to see the hours have been cut in children centres (Byron to note) meaning in my area there is reduced free activities for my child.
Children's Centre	There is no children centre in East Croydon. I really hope there is one with walkable distance. And the nearest playground at Park Hill is really needed an update. Playground facilities are so old and not enough.
Children's Centre	I don't think I could have got through the year without the kind staff and groups at castle hill children centre! Going there every week was our life line as a reason to get out of the house, meet other parents, speak to experienced staff about sleep and the range of activities they taught us. Far more supportive than any other staff we came across!! Thank you!!! The gp prescribed over the phone medication for my baby when actually baby massage at these classes helped improve my baby's stomach pains. These centres are a lifeline to so many people we also benefitted from going to the Byron children centre sessions
Children's Centre	There could also be children's centre activities / meet ups in local parks etc. If we ever have another lock down it's important services like health visiting and midwifery don't stop!! A phone call or zoom is not ideal but much better than nothing. Opportunities to meet other mums is soo important, the impact on mental health without connection is enormous. Costing more longer term.

Cost of child care	Additional Assistance paying for childcare cost / reduce the cost especially for working families from 2yo.
Cost of childcare	Ask the government when will childcare funding be increased so that every child in every part of this country get the same amount of funding. Instead what is happening is that in some areas funding could be as high as £15 per hour and other parts of the country it is less than £6 an hour. This funding should be equal to every child in every borough in the whole of the UK not as it currently is. It would appear that children in boroughs with less children are enjoying higher quality childcare because their funding is a good price. Children in Croydon Surrey, get basic minimum funding and this money is not enough to let them have a high quality of childcare because staff are not being paid enough. Where I teach at this nursery we only have funded children accessing their 15 or 30 hours and no children who attend pays, so staff are managing ion the basic minimum wage which is not fair. It is high time that the government give more funding to the larger boroughs who have too many children to share the small funding money pot with, this in effect means that each child get minimum funding per hour, while similar children in smaller boroughs get maximum funding Per hour.
Cost of childcare	Childcare is very expensive. I would like to have access to public creches and nurseries
Cost of childcare	I'm pleased some thought is going into this. Childcare in this country is a joke. It's prohibitively expensive and difficult to find. Support with healthy eating in pregnancy and for young children would have a hugely positive impact on the community.
Cost of childcare	We need more childcare options that are affordable and reliable.
Cost of childcare	I think we need to have more free sports for children and teenagers in Croydon so children can be more active and we can develop physical development. Sport can be very expensive for parents. Free childcare even if one parent can work. Housewife can be a very demanding job too more when you are going through a critical illness like cancer. Full time Education should be free from young 4 years old.
Cost of childcare	Child care is too expensive in this country. I have a well paid job and I'm university educated however I may have to give my career up in order to look after my two children. Two nursery places costs my family £3600 a month! Surely it is better I am in work and paying taxes rather than on state benefit however I am getting pushed to stay at home due to the financial strain. Fuel prices is also a consideration too now.
Cost of childcare	Child care is insanely expensive these days and the tax free amount paid to parents now covers 1 months schooling more support is needed
Cost of living	Also on top of Brexit the cost of living is getting higher and more difficult to maintain, which is worrying for the future.
Cost of living	Supporting families on low income during the pandemic.
Council	Croydon services are rubbish abolish the council
COVID	Healthcare workers are using covid as an excuse just because they can is not fair!
COVID	The day I gave birth to my baby, my husband wasn't allowed to stay in the hospital with me. I had an caesarean and an internal bleeding so I had another operation right after I gave birth. I could barely walk or look after myself, don't even mention to care for my newborn baby. I was left alone at the postnatal ward at East Surrey Hospital in huge pain and did not receive enough care and help from its staff. Horrible experience.
COVID	Forcing COVID tests on children before seeing a doctor has caused my child serious anxiety.

Early Years	My children are older but when they were babies I used local services for healthcare, breastfeeding support, weaning info, a child first aid course, library services, local playgroups and playgrounds. All of these things are a necessity not a privilege if we want to support families as a society. I would hate to think that other new mothers would have to navigate motherhood without these services. I am in a relatively privileged position with support from my husband, family etc but these services are a lifeline and NONE of them should be at risk of being cut. Helping mothers (parents) is an easy way to help create a better future society. It has to be worth the investment.
Early Years	Invest in early years reap benefits later. Should be joined up more midwife- health visitor-Children-Centre
Early Years	My baby was well cared for and had support. I feel lots of babies feel from professional view and suffered during the pandemic because professionals stopped the regular support services. This must not happen if these circumstances happen again.
Facilities nearby	Having facilities near us is essential. We live in SE19 which seems to be forgotten by Croydon council. Getting to areas where there are centres is almost impossible on public transport - with a double buggy
Free activities	Less free services and baby classes available that there used to be.
Free activities	Have not found any free activities to do with my baby
GP	Even having doctors appointments for my little one, there again were no weigh in's or checks to see how we were doing. When i asked at the doctor they said that they didn't have any scales. Surely they could buy a set of scales to weigh all the babies coming in?
Health visiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> '- please keep health visitor appointments for new mums - breastfeeding support is so dependant on who Yiu know and I feel could be much better, I relied on peer support and could have done with access to something more formal - I think womens mental health support for mothers is really important - I feel concerned about the lack of free activities available to people, particularly with wriggle and rhyme not on at all libraries. It feels like a real divide for those on lower incomes - support for parents to understand children's behaviour I'm concerned by the lack of appropriate information out there ans the number of parents that don't understand why children behave as they do.
Health visiting	<p>I have had no contact from the health visiting team in over two years. We are all well so I have not wasted my time chasing since it is always a hassle. My child is over 3 now and hasnt had any health visitor apts since 1.</p> <p>We see our gp and allergy specialist as needed so while it isn't a worry for my family it does worry me for other families who are depending on those services and do not have addition resources. We previously lived in Sutton and had amazing services. Croydon is shockingly poor. The library service cuts are also disappointing</p>
Health visiting	<p>Serious lack of face to face contact to families by HVs a real danger; sending tick lists out in the post for development checks ; asking Mothers in front of their partners about DV completely unacceptable and insensitive. All mothers in the Covid 2 years have suffered from a total lack of face to face support and minimal service. What is being done to increase HV numbers?</p> <p>For toddlers with a serious speech delay I faced the totally unsatisfactory experience of video session with a SALT who denied there were significant delays.</p> <p>I was directed to Purley Oaks Childrens centre and met Liz for the speech assistance who was absolutely marvellous.</p>

Health visiting	I have not been in touch with a health visitor since my daughter was a few weeks old in Feb 2021. I tried to call and get the 9-12 month evaluation myself, they gave me a number to call and certain hours to call in, I called when I was supposed to and it was a dead line. She's now almost 13 months and has not been evaluated.
Health visiting	I haven't been contacted about a 2 year check or wouldn't know where to start accessing help if I needed it
Health visiting	More contact post pregnancy with health visitors
Health visiting	I only had one health visitor appointment since my baby was born- I'm a first-time single parent with mental health issues and could have used much more support in the early months with feeding and sleep, and struggled to bond. I was told to ring the duty line but to be honest it's easier to just use Google. The benefit of a health visitor (from friends and relatives who live where the services are good) is that they can see your child, your environment and ask questions/offer support based on that. A duty phone line doesn't do the same thing. That's how things like abuse and domestic violence get missed.
Health Visiting	I was supposed to have a health visitor regularly come and see me as my blood pressure was very high but they said this wasn't possible. The children's centre in Selhurst was the place to support me and keep me going and help me.
Housing	I currently pay for my housing and am struggling to pay for child care for my child. As a single parent with no additional financial support I am struggling. I make a good salary but with the rise in bills it is getting harder and harder.
Housing	Housing is a bad problem for us. Not having space for our son to play as we are in a studio makes things really difficult.
Leisure Centre	Reduced facilities like closure of the Purley leisure centre has had a huge impact. Please reopen the Purley leisure centre. Reduced opening hours of the Purley Library has a big impact. Could you please have the library open on Saturdays so that working parents could have a chance to use the library facilities? Thank you.
Listening	I feel that parents should feel like they are being heard when they ask for support and not just be brushed off. During the pandemic I had to support 3 separate families during their time of stress. 1: Desperately needed financial assistance, housing help and emotional support for both them and their child so I was on the phone EVERY DAY with them. 2: Needed help because of the breakdown in their relationship and ensuing custody exchanges, which had to take place at my house to keep the peace. 3: Desperately wanted something to be done with regards to their child's tongue tie but felt fobbed off and had to struggle on by themselves. A struggling parent may only ask once for help and if they're ignored or not listened to that time then you will lose their faith in your ability to help them!
Midwifery	It would be really helpful for midwives to do the very early postnatal appointments at home. Having to travel to hospital when my baby was 5 days old was such hard work. I could barely walk. It would also be helpful for the health visitor to visit in person, especially for the early days. Overall I found the postnatal midwife experience in Croydon poor. I never saw the same person twice, and I had to travel to appointments when I hadn't yet recovered from the birth. I showed one midwife a blister on my nipple and she just told me it would get better and offered no support with breastfeeding technique to solve the problem. If I hadn't been able to access help from family members I would have stopped breastfeeding. The health visitor invited me for an appointment when my baby was just a few weeks old and I had to walk two miles to get to her, and then when I arrived she told me actually she had got the date wrong and I would have to come back in another two weeks. It didn't really feel like she cared. I called and asked to change health visitor but no one called me back.

Playgrounds	Green spaces and playground equipment needs to be maintained in good order and promptly replaced if vandalised Video cameras (even dummy cameras) are a good deterrent to vandalism - would be good to have at all playground spaces
Playgrounds	The playgrounds in Croydon need a lot of work. You mention the fact Croydon has the most young people but it also has the worst parks. Old, unkept equipment, little wildlife all vermin! It is quite depressing for mothers in the tightly cramped overcrowded social housing to get out and enjoy the outdoors when the parks have little to be desired. Also it is not clear what events the library are putting on is rhyme time still available?
Playgrounds	There should be no future flat buildings in West Thornton without consideration for developers providing full and complete indoor and outdoor play areas for kids of all ages and parking for adults. The drive to fill every available space with flats is choking the area without any compensation for existing residents. Your strategy is building ghettos not communities with kids being forced to meet in stairways and appartement corridors resulting in thousand of pounds of damage to leaseholders common areas It's miserable for everyone putting renters and leaseholders against each other . Management charges are being driven sky high with a mop up second charge being applied annually in addition to monthly payments payment s running into more than a thousand pounds.
Playgrounds	My children access playgrounds a lot which is very important for their physical and mental well-being but there is clearly an underinvestment in these spaces in Croydon relative to other London boroughs.
Playgrounds	I often get the impression that the council is not here for me/us as a family. By that I mean that most of things I see and want to do with my children is private organisations/clubs etc., rather than anything the council runs (although perhaps something like the central library will develop into one as my children grow up). We live close to some green spaces (Wandle Park/Waddon Ponds) and my absolute biggest gripe is the lack of outdoor play activities and the state of repair of the equipment. Wandle park has such a great location, but the cafe is never open and the equipment is for older children or is often vandalised. This could and should be a number 1 attraction, all year round, like Beddington Park. Waddon ponds equipment is horrendous/dangerous. All you need to do is go visit Sutton run parks (Nonsuch, The Grove and Beddington Park...the latter is outstanding) and the difference is stark! The pandemic has shown outdoor spaces to be a core service.

Playgrounds	Croydon needs more playparks and more corner shops (or even vending machine shops) - it has an opportunity to be a 15-minute walkable city rather than car-centric and polluted, but there are so many inaccessible or dangerous streets - it is stressful getting about with a toddler without the landscape being so difficult to negotiate. Plant some trees along the streets (ideally between parking spaces rather than on the pavements) to shelter parents and kids from the weather/traffic/pollution. Ban pavement parking. Improve the dropped kerbs. Police flytipping and glass-smashing on footpaths. Run school streets properly so that parents aren't just driving up to the next corner and then pretending they've walked the whole way (and ask the parents why they choose to drive). And when planning newbuilds, allow pedestrian cut-throughs so that parents don't have to walk the long way round via main roads to get to the nearest park. (For example, there ought to be pedestrian cut-throughs to the Purley Oaks Children's centre/South Croydon Rec from the north; there should be a pedestrian cut-through from the Moreton Road steps to Normanton Meadow - there is actually a path that goes next to the newbuild that's been closed off by a gate, or you could create a path via the primary school playing field. Plus the newbuild next to St Peter's Primary school should have had a playpark on the plot, as there aren't any playparks for a good half-hour's walk from there - perhaps just open up the school playpark to outsiders at the weekend?)
Postnatal care	Lack of care recovering from a c section was a shock. Limited home visits post hospital for baby and me. No guidance on how to recover from a C-section
Postnatal care	Croydon council postpartum services are the worst I've come across. You get looked after for 6 weeks then just forgotten about. It's shocking
Roads	Young children need safe streets. There is too much road danger from speeding and dangerous drivers. Croydon does very little to enforce this.
Special Needs	Improved access for special needs children to local services preferably face to face
Special Needs	The lack of important care for children with special needs
Special Needs	Should arrange more activities and holiday clubs for children with special educational needs.
Special Needs	Support for children who have SENF age 4/5-8 Reception age to year 2.
Speech and Language	The lack of service and support for speech and language is diabolical. There have been no face to face visits the online service chatterbox is absolutely useless
Speech and language	I'm disappointed that you can not have access to a speech and language therapist until your child is at school. The chatterbox group have no impact especially when the child isn't at the meetings and its hard to attend when you are a full time working parent.
Stay and play	my children and I enjoy attending the local stay and play sessions and we are so glad that they are running again.
Stay and play	A chance for mums to also meet and discuss issues with other mums, such as stay and plays open to everyone
Survey	The grammar in some of these questions/answers is really poor and does not give the impression of professionalism.

Survey	This is a very confusing and muddled survey.
Survey	This survey is written incredibly badly. It's not clear what many of the options are - some of the options are grammatically incorrect nonsense-terms e.g 'slightly no impact' and 'Neither no impact nor any impact' Therefore the answers to these sections should not be taken as scientifically valid.

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Equality Analysis Form

Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Equality Analysis

The council has an important role in creating a fair society through the services we provide, the people we employ and the money we spend. Equality is integral to everything the council does. We are committed to making Croydon a stronger, fairer borough where no community or individual is held back.

Undertaking an Equality Analysis helps to determine whether a proposed change will have a positive, negative, or no impact on groups that share a protected characteristic. Conclusions drawn from Equality Analyses helps us to better understand the needs of all our communities, enable us to target services and budgets more effectively and also helps us to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

An equality analysis must be completed as early as possible during the planning stages of any proposed change to ensure information gained from the process is incorporated in any decisions made.

In practice, the term '**proposed change**' broadly covers the following:-

- Policies, strategies and plans;
- Projects and programmes;
- Commissioning (including re-commissioning and de-commissioning);
- Service review;
- Budget allocation/analysis;

- Staff restructures (including outsourcing);
- Business transformation programmes;
- Organisational change programmes;
- Processes (for example thresholds, eligibility, entitlements, and access criteria).

2. Proposed change

Directorate	Education
Title of proposed change	Early Years Strategy 2022 - 2025
Name of Officer carrying out Equality Analysis	Denise Bushay

2.1 Purpose of proposed change (see 1.1 above for examples of proposed changes)

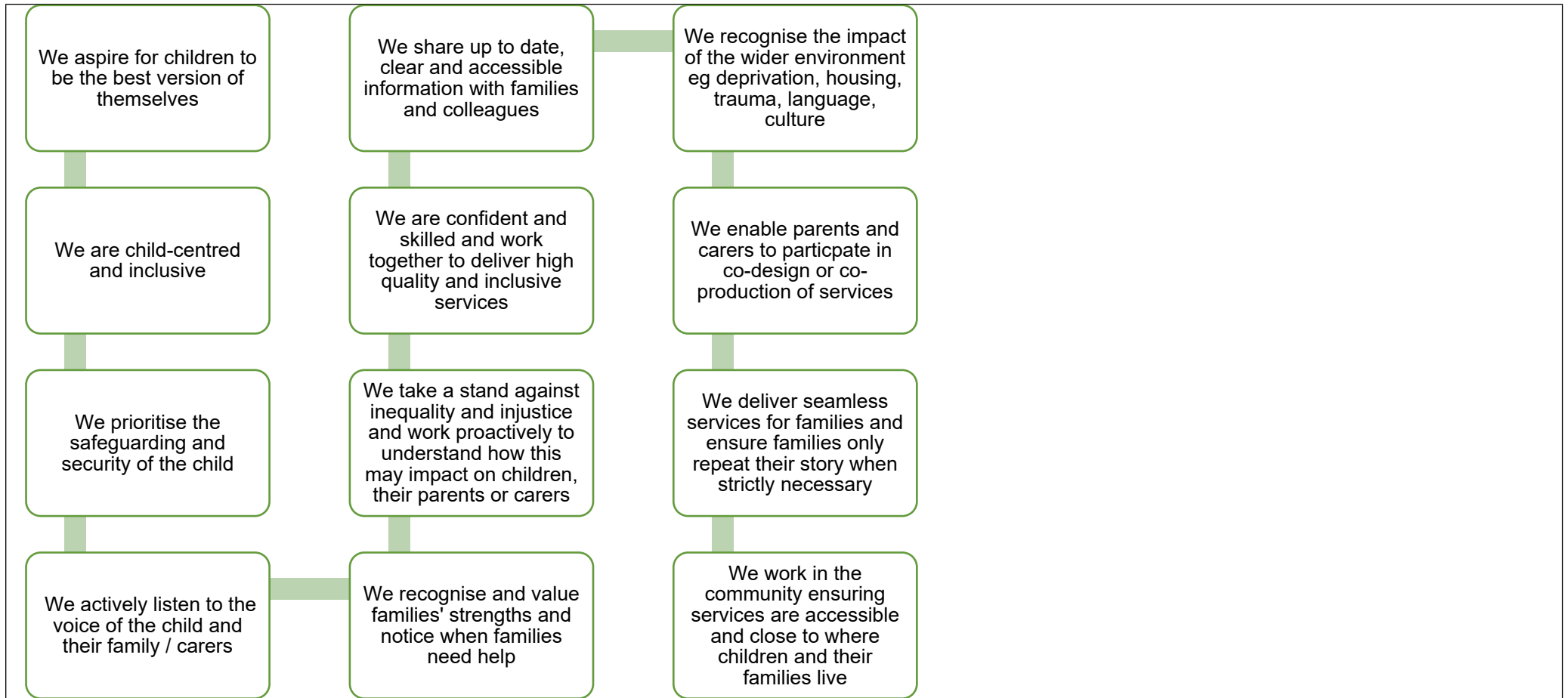
Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy is a new strategy for the services supporting Croydon's parents, carers and children in the Early Years – from just before pregnancy to the end of the reception year at school.

There are currently 27,372 children under the age of five living in our local authority.

Croydon's vision is that 'All children and young people in Croydon will be safe, healthy and happy and will aspire to be the best they can be. The future is theirs'. This vision is only achievable if we work with families and in partnership to support all families at the universal level, identify and respond swiftly to emerging needs and provide coordinated, targeted support. This vision is underpinned by a commitment to prevention and earliest possible intervention.

The purpose of the strategy is to set the strategic framework for delivering Croydon's vision for its youngest residents over the next three years. It includes the principles, aims, objectives, key priorities and governance arrangements for the services supporting Early Years parents, carers and their children.

The image below contains the principles or working



The Partnership Early Years Strategy outlines an integrated approach for delivering a range of support / services to avoid duplication, identify issues, and tailor our response to suit, thereby improving outcomes for parents, carers and their children from preconception to the transition into reception.

Internal consultation - the Early Years Strategic Group worked in partnership on the development of the Strategy. The group consist of staff from different departments across the council who provide information relating to early years.

External consultation - All those with an interest, including parents/carers has been consulted on the draft strategy using different means/mode of communication, including via online survey, and stakeholder events.

The objectives set out below which are in addition to the working principles have been created as a result of the consultation processes.

Include the child, mother, father, grandparents, carers voice in everything we do

Provide healthy and safe environments for all children in Croydon to thrive, feel safe and grow into confident young people

Actively reduce the risk of education, health and wellbeing inequalities developing in the early years and beyond

Explicitly address the needs of children and families experiencing poverty (food, fuel, and digital); with English as an additional language; who are Looked After or looking after, have special educational needs and disabilities, or are living in temporary or inadequate accommodation

Provide easy access to physical and virtual services which work together, value familie's strengths and provide support at the right time and in the right place

Prepare parents and carers for parenthood and help them to develop and sustain a strong bond with their children

Enable families to access high quality childcare and all children are supported in childcare, early years and education settings

Support the emotional health and wellbeing of parents, carers and children

Support the physical wellbeing of children and reduce childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating and physical activity

Protect children from hidden harm and serious disease, through information sharing, screening and immunisation

3. Impact of the proposed change

Important Note: It is necessary to determine how each of the protected groups could be impacted by the proposed change. Who benefits and how (and who, therefore doesn't and why?) Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts and any neutral impacts and the evidence you have taken into account to reach this conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic.

Where an impact is unknown, state so. If there is insufficient information or evidence to reach a decision you will need to gather appropriate quantitative and qualitative information from a range of sources e.g. Croydon Observatory a useful source of information such as Borough Strategies and Plans, Borough and Ward Profiles, Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessments <http://www.croydonobservatory.org/> Other sources include performance monitoring reports, complaints, survey data, audit reports, inspection reports, national research and feedback gained through engagement with service users, voluntary and community organisations and contractors.

3.1 Deciding whether the potential impact is positive or negative

Table 1 – Positive/Negative impact

For each protected characteristic group show whether the impact of the proposed change on service users and/or staff is positive or negative by briefly outlining the nature of the impact in the appropriate column. If it is decided that analysis is not relevant to some groups, this should be recorded and explained. In all circumstances you should list the source of the evidence used to make this judgement where possible.

Developing this strategy in a partnership / collaboration with parents and carers, colleagues across and beyond the council, including Early Help, Public Health, NHS, Croydon's Clinical Commissioning Group and early years sector, residents and wider stakeholders will allow universal services to better support the most vulnerable children, including those with protected characteristics, and their families.

Protected characteristic group(s)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Source of evidence
Age	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The strategy covers all pre-school and school age children up to when they start school in the Reception year and is in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).</p> <p>The strategy includes parents of any age.</p> <p>The Strategy promotes and supports diversity of age within the Early Years and Childcare workforce.</p>		<p>We know that approximately 6000 babies are born each year in Croydon.</p> <p>Data is collected on the uptake of the 2 and 3 year funded nursery places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 49% of the eligible 2-year-old population benefitted from a funded early education place in January 2020.

	<p>The strategy will ensure that support is directed to children and families which will benefit most from it. Evidence suggests this is the most effective form of early intervention for addressing inequality and promoting more equal outcomes.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85% of 3- and 4-year-olds benefited from a funded early education place in January 2020. For both age groups, take up is below the London and England averages. • In 2020 74.6% of pupils achieved a good level of development in Croydon in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in line with London and above England (71.8%)
Disability	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Early Years Partnership workforce.</p> <p>Parents / carers of young children with additional / special educational needs have been consulted. This included on-line surveys, and stakeholder events. 11% of respondents to the parents / carer survey stated that they had a disability</p> <p>An objective in the strategy is to: explicitly address the needs of children and families experiencing poverty (food, fuel, and digital); with English as an additional language; who are Looked After or looking after, have special educational needs and disabilities (child or parent), or are living in temporary or inadequate accommodation</p> <p>Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCOs) are available for children with</p>		<p>Evidence will be provided by ensuring there is representation from disabled parents and parents of disabled children through the ongoing parent engagement activities including the parent carer / panels</p> <p>Croydon population suggests there are potentially 11,219 children and young people (aged 0-25) in the borough with disabilities. The most frequent impairment type reported by children nationally is social / behavioural, with an estimated 5,024 children in Croydon potentially affected.</p>

	<p>special educational needs and disability. SENCOs are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the early years settings.</p> <p>The strategy will improve the outcomes for children with special educational needs and disability through targeted services/support.</p> <p>SEND training for staff in early years and childcare settings covers all aspects of the Equalities Act to ensure the setting meets the needs of the children and families it serves.</p> <p>All children up to the age of 5, including those who have a disability and/or special educational needs and their families are included in the Strategy.</p> <p>The council will continue to support settings to provide childcare for children with special educational needs through use of the Dedicated Schools Grant – high needs block.</p>		<p><i>Source: Department for Work and Pensions. Family Resources Survey</i></p>
Sex	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Early Years settings and workforce. This includes single parent families – male, female, other Females make up the largest percentage of the workforce (and business ownership).</p> <p>The strategy will affect all pregnant people, their families and families with children up to the age of 5 across the Borough. Fathers and carers are included as a key group.</p> <p>Improved access to childcare will mean improved services for both men, women and carers,</p>	<p>The majority of the Early Years and Childcare workforce is women. This Strategy could be seen to be less favorable towards men.</p>	<p>Children under 5 are tracked within early years settings to ensure they make a good level of development. Comparisons are made between the achievements of girls and boys.</p>

Gender Reassignment/Identity	Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Early Years Partnership and Childcare workforce. Equalities Act training ensures that parents/carers are not discriminated against due to their gender or gender identity. This will include consultation with parents about their preferred language with respect to identity and inclusivity		Respondents to the parent survey were asked to identify their gender.
Marriage or Civil Partnership	Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Partnership Early Years and Childcare workforce.		
Religion or belief	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Partnership Early Years and Childcare workforce.</p> <p>The strategy supports places being available for all children regardless of religion or belief.</p> <p>Private childcare providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>As part of the delivery planning process, and the commitment to inclusive practice, the possibility of an equality dashboard including data from across the system partners will be explored.</p> <p>All children aged up to the age of 5 and their families, regardless of their religion or belief are included in the Strategy.</p>		
Race	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Partnership Early Years and Childcare settings and workforce.</p> <p>The strategy supports places being available for all children regardless of Race</p>		The 0 to 5 population is very diverse compared to London.

	<p>There will be targeting of children and their families of under-represented ethnic groups to improve take up and outcomes.</p> <p>The strategy supports children whose first language is not English and those who have come from war torn countries, e.g. asylum seeking and refugee parents and children.</p> <p>The strategy supports a workforce which is representative of the people it serves. Two priorities in the workforce workstream are 1. staff to attend unconscious bias training 2. to collect more robust workforce data to more fully understand the characteristics of the workforce and how this reflects the population – the workforce is largely not Council employees or in commissioned services.</p>		<table border="1"> <caption>Comparison of Ethnic Groups: Croydon vs London</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnic Group</th> <th>Croydon (%)</th> <th>London (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>30</td> <td>45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black</td> <td>30</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>18</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed</td> <td>18</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ethnic Group	Croydon (%)	London (%)	White	30	45	Black	30	15	Asian	18	20	Mixed	18	15	Other	5	5
Ethnic Group	Croydon (%)	London (%)																			
White	30	45																			
Black	30	15																			
Asian	18	20																			
Mixed	18	15																			
Other	5	5																			
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Partnership Early Years settings and workforce.</p> <p>Providers have a statutory duty to have policies in place which meet the requirements of the Equalities Act for staff and the children and families they serve.</p> <p>The parent survey used ONS data questions to ask parents, carers about their sexual orientation.</p> <p>One of the strategy's six workstreams is parental engagement. Within this a key priority is to: Work with parents and carers to understands what 'inclusive' means to them' This will include the needs and wishes of same sex parents</p>		<p>Of the 476 responses to the parents and carers survey, 17 identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or other.</p>																		

Pregnancy or Maternity	<p>Yes. The Strategy promotes and supports diversity within the Partnership Early Years settings and workforce.</p> <p>The scope of the strategy is from pre-conception to the age of 5-6, so incorporates pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Pregnant mothers and those with young babies may be advantaged by the provision of childcare places in their locality.</p> <p>The parent and carer survey included a section for pregnancy. The top three issues identified were: mental health in pregnancy, meeting others in a similar position and support for after the baby was born. Please see the outcome report for more information.</p>		6000 babies are born on average each year in Croydon.
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Important note: You must act to eliminate any potential negative impact which, if it occurred would breach the Equality Act 2010. In some situations this could mean abandoning your proposed change as you may not be able to take action to mitigate all negative impacts.

When you act to reduce any negative impact or maximise any positive impact, you must ensure that this does not create a negative impact on service users and/or staff belonging to groups that share protected characteristics. **Please use table 4 to record actions that will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact**

3.2 Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

Table 2 – Additional information needed to determine impact of proposed change

<p>If you need to undertake further research and data gathering to help determine the likely impact of the proposed change, outline the information needed in this table. Please use the table below to describe any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposed change. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:</p>		
Additional information needed and or Consultation Findings	Information source	Date for completion
<p>No negative impacts have been identified. Early Years services have a positive impact on children and families with protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Census data, school population data ,health statistics informal knowledge from schools and communities</p>	

3.3 Impact scores

Example

If we are going to reduce parking provision in a particular location, officers will need to assess the equality impact as follows;

1. Determine the Likelihood of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the likelihood of impact score is 2 (likely to impact)
2. Determine the Severity of impact. You can do this by using the key in table 5 as a guide, for the purpose of this example, the Severity of impact score is also 2 (likely to impact)
3. Calculate the equality impact score using table 4 below and the formula **Likelihood x Severity** and record it in table 5, for the purpose of this example - **Likelihood (2) x Severity (2) = 4**

Table 4 – Equality Impact Score

5	4	3	2	1
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	3	3	6	9
	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
Likelihood of Impact				

Key

Risk Index	Risk Magnitude
6 – 9	High
3 – 5	Medium
1 – 3	Low

Table 3 – Impact scores

Column 1 PROTECTED GROUP	Column 2 LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT SCORE Use the key below to score the likelihood of the proposed change impacting each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group. 1 = Unlikely to impact 2 = Likely to impact 3 = Certain to impact	Column 3 SEVERITY OF IMPACT SCORE Use the key below to score the severity of impact of the proposed change on each of the protected groups, by inserting either 1, 2, or 3 against each protected group. 1 = Unlikely to impact 2 = Likely to impact 3 = Certain to impact	Column 4 EQUALITY IMPACT SCORE Calculate the equality impact score for each protected group by multiplying scores in column 2 by scores in column 3. Enter the results below against each protected group. Equality impact score = likelihood of impact score x severity of impact score.
Age	2	2	4
Disability	2	2	4
Gender	2	2	4
Gender reassignment	2	2	4
Marriage / Civil Partnership	2	2	4
Race	2	2	4
Religion or belief	2	2	4
Sexual Orientation	2	2	4
Pregnancy or Maternity	2	2	4

4. Statutory duties

4.1 Public Sector Duties

Tick the relevant box(es) to indicate whether the proposed change will adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties in the Equality Act 2010 set out below.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who belong to protected groups

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Fostering good relations between people who belong to protected characteristic groups

Important note: If the proposed change adversely impacts the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out above, mitigating actions must be outlined in the Action Plan in section 5 below.

5. Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts of proposed change

Important note: Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative impact identified in Table 1. Attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc:

Table 4 – Action Plan to mitigate negative impacts

Complete this table to show any negative impacts identified for service users and/or staff from protected groups, and planned actions mitigate them.				
Protected characteristic	Negative impact	Mitigating action(s)	Action owner	Date for completion
Disability				
Race				
Sex (gender)	The majority of the EY workforce is female	Include ways to increase male representation in the workforce through the work of the workforce stream	Workforce workstream	March 2024

Gender reassignment				
Sexual orientation				
Age				
Religion or belief				
Pregnancy or maternity				
Marriage/civil partnership				

6. Decision on the proposed change

Based on the information outlined in this Equality Analysis enter **X** in column 3 (**Conclusion**) alongside the relevant statement to show your conclusion.

Decision	Definition	Conclusion - Mark 'X' below
No major change	Our analysis demonstrates that the strategy is robust. There has been consultation with parents, carers and partners which has informed the working principles, objectives and workstream priorities. Implementation of the strategy through the delivery planning phase will include the detailed actions on inclusive practice and reducing inequalities. The evidence shows no potential for discrimination, and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review. If you reach this conclusion, state your reasons and briefly outline the evidence used to support your decision.	x
Adjust the proposed change	We will take steps to lessen the impact of the proposed change should it adversely impact the Council's ability to meet any of the Public Sector Duties set out under section 4 above, remove barriers or better promote equality. We are going to take action to ensure these opportunities are realised. If you reach this conclusion, you must outline the actions you will take in Action Plan in section 5 of the Equality Analysis form	
Continue the proposed change	We will adopt or continue with the change, despite potential for adverse impact or opportunities to lessen the impact of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and better advance equality and foster good relations between groups through the change. However, we are not planning to implement them as we are satisfied that our project will not lead to unlawful discrimination and there are justifiable reasons to continue as planned. If you reach this conclusion, you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and it must be in line with the duty to have due regard and how you reached this decision.	

Equality Analysis

Stop or amend the proposed change	Our change would have adverse effects on one or more protected groups that are not justified and cannot be mitigated. Our proposed change must be stopped or amended.	
Will this decision be considered at a scheduled meeting? e.g. Contracts and Commissioning Board (CCB) / Cabinet	Meeting title: Date:	

7. Sign-Off

Page 134

Officers that must approve this decision		
Equalities Lead	Name:	Date:
	Position:	
Director	Name:	Date:
	Position:	

Agenda Item 7

REPORT TO:	Children & Young People Sub-Committee 1 November 2022
SUBJECT:	Early Help, Children Social Care & Education Performance Dashboard
LEAD OFFICER:	Debbie Jones Corporate Director Children Young People & Education
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	Performance dashboards are provided for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee as a standing item on the work programme.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to review the performance dashboard provided for Early Help, Children Social Care and Education and consider whether there are any areas of concern that may need to be scheduled for further scrutiny at a future meeting.

1. EARLY HELP, CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE & EDUCATION PERFORMANCE DASHBOARDS

- 1.1. In order for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee maintain an overview of the performance of the Early Help, Children Social Care and Education services, performance data is provided in dashboard form at most meetings.
- 1.2. The performance dashboard is appended to this cover report.
- 1.3. If in reviewing the data provided the Sub-Committee identifies any area of concern that it feels may require further investigation this will be reported to the Scrutiny Work Programming Group by the Chair for further consideration.

REPORT AUTHOR: Tom Downs – Democratic Services & Governance Officer

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Early Help, Children Social Care & Education Performance Dashboard

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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Corporate Performance Report Overview - CYP&E Sept 2022

Red - Performance has not met target / performance differs from comparators by more than 10%

- Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of the previous referral is above target
- Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds not known if in education, employment or training (NEET) is above target
- Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions) is below target

Amber - Performance has not met target but is within 10% / performance differs from comparators by 10% or less

- Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days is below target
- Percentage of children for whom Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) was held in the month within 15 working days of the Strategy discussions is below target
- Net current expenditure per child on local Children Looked After (CLA) is above target
- Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics is below target
- Percentage of children with an EHCP educated in-borough mainstream schools
- Average Caseload per Special Educational Needs caseworker is above target

Green - Performance has met or exceed target / performance has matched one or more comparators

- Total net current expenditure on CSC
- Net current expenditure on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) CLA
- Number of local CLA
- Rate of local CLA per 10,000 under 18 years population
- Number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) CLA
- Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC
- Average Caseload per allocated Social Worker in Children's Social Care
- Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds
- Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'

CROYDON CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK



KEY
■ Red
■ Amber
■ Green
 Data but no target
 No data
 ↑ Getting better
 ↓ Getting worse
 ↔ Same

REF.	INDICATOR	Bigger or Smaller is better	LATEST DATA					PREVIOUS DATA		BENCHMARKING				COMMENTS ON CURRENT PERFORMANCE	
			Frequency	Timeframe	Target	Croydon position	Change from previous	RAG	Timeframe	Croydon position	Timeframe	Statistical Neighbours	London		England
CYPE 01	Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of the previous referral	Smaller is better	Monthly	Financial year to Sep 22	20%	23%	↑	Red	Financial year to Aug 22	24%	2020/21	18%	19%	23%	A detailed audit of re-referrals has been undertaken leading to a greater understanding of the factors contributing to families being referred back to Children's Social Care for a second time within a year. Transformation work is re-designing systems and processes to foreground the MASH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub element of our initial response to referrals. Working with partners for the next three months while concurrently improving Children's Social Care practice will gradually reduce the rate of re-referrals over the next quarter. It is anticipated that our target rate will be met by December, as long as the demand profile remains static, progress is gradual.
CYPE 02	Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days	Bigger is better	Monthly	Financial year to Sep 22	85%	81%	↓	Amber	Financial year to Aug 22	82%	2020/21	92%	89%	88%	Practice improvement work continues in the re-designed Family Assessment Service where the majority of assessments are undertaken. The proportion of assessments taking longer than 45 days to complete has been impacted by locum staff leaving at short notice. Permanent recruitment is in train with 9 permanent staff joining in August and September. The changes to systems and practice will lead to overall improvement however the challenges of recruiting suitably experienced managers are impeding progress. Managers continue to review all delayed assessments to ensure that services are in place where families require them prior to an assessment concluding and this continues to be an area of focus for improvement.
CYPE 03	% of children for whom Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) was held in the month within 15 working days of the Strategy discussions	Bigger is better	Monthly	Financial year to Sep 22	77%	75%	↑	Amber	Financial year to Aug 22	73%	2020/21	74%	78%	83%	The operational teams and Quality Assurance team continue to work closely tracking the progress of Section 47 investigations to ensure timely scheduling of ICPC's ensuring all key partners and the family can participate. Improved communication between Quality Assurance and Social Work teams has delivered improvement since the last report. Continuation of improvement is noted and it is anticipated that the target will be met by November 2022.
CYPE 04	Total net current expenditure on CSC	Smaller is better	Monthly	Financial year forecast outturn July 22	£67.787m	£67.500m	↑	Green	Financial year forecast outturn June 22	£67.971m	2020/21	Comparable data not yet available	Comparable data not yet available	Comparable data not yet available	CSC budget net of grant income. Forecast outturn as at July 2022.
CYPE 05	Net current expenditure per child on local Children Looked After (CLA)	Smaller is better	Monthly	Financial year forecast outturn July 22	£52,000	£52,592	↓	Amber	Financial year forecast outturn June 22	£49,766	2020/21	Comparable data not yet available	Comparable data not yet available	Comparable data not yet available	Increase in higher cost residential placements
CYPE 06	Net current expenditure on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) CLA	Smaller is better	Monthly	Financial year forecast outturn July 22	£6.235m	£6.235m	↔	Green	Financial year forecast outturn June 22	£6.235m	2020/21	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	Gross spend including grant income
CYPE 07	Number of local CLA	Smaller is better	Monthly	Sep-22	450	439	↓	Green	Aug-22	433	2020/21	4,640	8,340	76,780	
CYPE 08	Rate of local CLA per 10,000 under 18 years population	Smaller is better	Monthly	Sep-22	47.2	46.1	↓	Green	Aug-22	45.4	2020/21	51.3	40.8	63.5	
CYPE 09	Number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) CLA	Smaller is better	Monthly	Sep-22	98	92	↑	Green	Aug-22	96	2020/21	36	1330	4070	Threshold for all Local Authorities regarding UASC was raised to 0.1% of Child Population on 24th August which is 98 children minimum. Consequently our target has been adjusted to reflect this change. With Lunar House situated in Croydon the council will always have an expectation of supporting the initial assessment of these asylum seeking and separated children liaising with other LA's regarding their transfer through the National Transfer Scheme.
CYPE 10	Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC	Smaller is better	Monthly	Sep-22	0.100%	0.097%	↑	Green	Aug-22	0.101%	2020/21	0.004%	0.060%	0.034%	See above commentary for CYPE 09
CYPE 11	Average Caseload per allocated Social Worker in Children's Social Care	Smaller is better	Monthly	Sep-22	17.0	16.7	↓	Green	Aug-22	16.5	2020/21	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	
CYPE 12	Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds	Smaller is better	Monthly	Financial year to Sep 22	262	210	↑	Green	Financial year to Aug 22	220	2021	207	184	147	Historically having a large youth population and a borough land size being second largest in London has meant Croydon's throughput of first time entrants to the criminal justice system has been higher than the London average. The Youth Offending team has assisted in the implementation of Community Resolutions (an alternative to arrest for small cannabis amount which was a leading offence type) since October 2021 and have already begun to see a significant number of young people being diverted away from the system. This together with a decline in first time entrants following the lifting of COVID restriction means we could see the Croydon rate be in line the London average for the first time by December 2022.
CYPE 13	Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'	Bigger is better	3 times per year	Dec-21	87%	87%	↓	Green	Aug-21	89%	Dec-21	92%	93%	87%	
CYPE 14	Overall absence rate from State-funded primary, secondary and special schools	Smaller is better	Termly	2020/21 Academic Year	4.62%	4.65%	↓	Amber	2018/19 Academic Year	4.57%	2020/21 Academic Year	4.74%	4.44%	4.62%	Due to the disruption faced during the Spring 2020/21 term, caution should be taken when comparing data across to previous years. Pupil absence in schools in England for autumn term 2021 and spring term 2022 will be published on 20 October 2022.
CYPE 15	Persistent absence rate from State-funded primary, secondary and special schools	Smaller is better	Termly	2020/21 Academic Year	12.08%	12.20%	↓	Amber	2018/19 Academic Year	10.75%	2020/21 Academic Year	12.64%	11.32%	12.08%	Due to the disruption faced during the Spring 2020/21 term, caution should be taken when comparing data across to previous years. Pupil absence in schools in England for autumn term 2021 and spring term 2022 will be published on 20 October 2022.
CYPE 16	Permanent exclusions from schools as a percentage of the school population	Smaller is better	Annual	2020/21 Academic Year	0.06	0.03	↑	Green	2019/20 Academic Year	0.05	2020/21 Academic Year	0.03	0.03	0.05	Like the previous year, the 2020/21 academic year was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools were open to all pupils in the Autumn term, however during the Spring term schools were only open to key worker and vulnerable children from January for the first half term, before all pupils returned during the second half term. During this period online tuition was provided for pupils. Schools were then open to all pupils during the Summer term. As with 2019/20, while suspensions and permanent exclusions were possible throughout the academic year, these restrictions will have had an impact on the numbers presented and caution should be taken when comparing across years.
CYPE 17	Suspensions (fixed period exclusions) from schools as a percentage of pupils	Smaller is better	Annual	2020/21 Academic Year	3.76	3.46	↓	Green	2019/20 Academic Year	3.39	2020/21 Academic Year	2.78	2.79	4.25	See above commentary for CYPE 16.
CYPE 18	EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) - Percentage of children achieving a good level of development	Bigger is better	Annual	2018/19 Academic Year	71.8%	74.6%	↑	Green	2017/18 Academic Year	73.8%	2018/19 Academic Year	73.3%	74.1%	71.8%	The EYFS profile results in England: 2019 to 2020 publication were cancelled due to coronavirus (COVID-19). In 2020 to 2021, EYFS profile was not mandatory, therefore the data collection was cancelled and it's subsequent statistical release in 2021. Results for the 2021/22 academic year will be published in November 2022.
CYPE 19	KS2 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics	Bigger is better	Annual	2021/22 Academic Year	65%	60%	↓	Amber	2018/19 Academic Year	67%	2021/22 Academic Year	62%	65%	59%	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the KS2 external assessments had not taken place in 2019-20 or in 2020-21. The assessments in 2021-22 were set at the same standard as 2018-19 and previous years in order to measure the effects of the pandemic on pupil achievement. The drop of 7%, as a result of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic was in line with that of other local authorities and national figures.
CYPE 20	KS4 - Average Progress 8 score per pupil	Bigger is better	Annual	2018/19 Academic Year	-0.03	0.07	↔	Green	2017/18 Academic Year	0.07	2018/19 Academic Year	0.17	0.23	-0.03	Progress 8 measures were not being published in 2020/21 due to the changes to the way GCSE, A/AS and VTQ grades have been awarded over the last two years mean. Therefore 2020/21 pupil attainment data should not be directly compared to pupil attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring year on year changes in pupil performance.
CYPE 21	KS4 - Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	Bigger is better	Annual	2020/21 Academic Year	50.9	50.0	N/A	Amber	2019/20 Academic Year	48.9	2020/21 Academic Year	51.6	54.2	50.9	The changes to the way GCSE, A/AS and VTQ grades have been awarded over the last two years mean 2020/21 pupil attainment data should not be directly compared to pupil attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring year on year changes in pupil performance. Results for the 2021/22 academic year will be published in October 2022.
CYPE 22	KS4 - Percentage of pupils achieving grades 9-5 in English and Maths	Bigger is better	Annual	2020/21 Academic Year	51.9%	50.7%	N/A	Amber	2019/20 Academic Year	48.9%	2020/21 Academic Year	52.5%	57.4%	51.9%	The changes to the way GCSE, A/AS and VTQ grades have been awarded over the last two years mean 2020/21 pupil attainment data should not be directly compared to pupil attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring year on year changes in pupil performance. Results for the 2021/22 academic year will be published in October 2022.
CYPE 23	Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	Annual	Average of Dec 20, Jan 21 and Feb 21	2.8%	1.8%	↑	Green	Average of Dec 19, Jan 20, Feb 20	2.3%	Average of Dec 20, Jan 21 and Feb 21	1.7%	1.8%	2.8%	
CYPE 24	Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds not known in education, employment or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	Annual	Average of Dec 20, Jan 21 and Feb 21	2.7%	3.6%	↓	Red	Average of Dec 19, Jan 20, Feb 20	2.9%	Average of Dec 20, Jan 21 and Feb 21	3.2%	2.2%	2.7%	Croydon has the largest 16-17 cohort in London; at any point in time, the population fluctuates around the 9,500 mark and is commonly around 500 or so larger than 2nd largest borough (often either Enfield or Newham). In comparison to other local authorities, Croydon's team resource to support young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is comparatively small. We are required to report monthly to the DfE on both the number of young people who are NEET and Not Known as a summative figure as well as per each category. In order to have a factual understanding of the cohort, neither the NEET nor Not Known figures should be considered in isolation. More often than not, if the destination of a Not Known young person is confirmed, they are in more cases than not, NEET. The two figures are interdependent. This is demonstrated in the figures in CYPE 23 & CYPE 24; whilst our NEET stat is smaller than target, this invariably means that there are more young people whose destinations we have not been able to confirm, hence higher Not Known figures. Whilst the team does heavily focus on tracking work from Oct - March, the resource vs size of cohort is sparse. So that NEET caseworkers (who work directly with young people to support them [back] into education, employment or training) are not taken away from their core activity, we have historically hired an agency staff member over our busy period, to concentrate on tracking young people who are classified as Not Known. This allows for quick identification and referral to a caseworker. We were unable to do this during Dec 20 - Feb 21, due to lack of financial resource / permission to hire. Whilst caseworkers could help with tracking at times, it was imperative not to take them away at length from the core work. Whilst Croydon's Not Known position is above target, it must be noted that the figure is considerably lower than the more typical historical stats in excess of 10%, which did previously attract ministerial attention.
CYPE 25	Number of children with an EHCP educated in-borough mainstream schools	Bigger is better	Monthly	Sep-22	N/A	1143	↓	N/A	Jun-22	1170	2020/21	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	
CYPE 26	Percentage of children with an EHCP educated in-borough mainstream schools	Bigger is better	Monthly	Sep-22	To increase	29%	↓	Amber	Jun-22	31%	2020/21	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	In September 2022, there were 1143 children with an EHCP educated in-borough mainstream schools. This is 27 lower than June 2022 which covers the previous academic year 2021/22. Over this same period children with an EHCP in-borough special schools rose by 69, in-borough post 16 institutions by 62, other in-borough provision by 37 and in-borough independent settings by 16.
CYPE 27	Average Caseload per Special Educational Needs caseworker	Smaller is better	Monthly	Sep-22	180	189	↔	Amber	Aug-22	189	2020/21	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	No comparable data available	In September 2022, the average caseload per SEN worker is 189, no change from the previous month, a rise of 3 compared to same period last year but significantly lower than the high of 200 in June 2022.
CYPE 28	Number of Education Health & Care Plans issued (excluding exceptions)	N/A	Monthly	Rolling Year to Sep 22	N/A	577	N/A	N/A	Rolling Year to Aug 22	547	2021	2538	5464	34249	
CYPE 29	Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)	Bigger is better	Monthly	Rolling Year Av. to Sep 22	62%	26%	↔	Red	Rolling Year Av. to Aug 22	26%	2021	61%	64%	60%	We have now taken action and allocated the EHCPs across the whole team. We have internally reorganised the service so that we are working as one with no age divide. This has brought more officer resource to addressing the issue and is having a positive impact as can be seen by the significant rise in number of plans addressed and reported to DfE. We anticipate continued performance improvement and stabilisation of service delivery with all backlogs cleared by December - by which point the service will have been reorganised into all age locality based teams with a dedicated assessment service at the centre.

Agenda Item 8

REPORT TO:	Children & Young People Sub-Committee 1 November 2022
SUBJECT:	Scrutiny Stage 2 Responses to Recommendations arising from: Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group report on Inclusion and Exclusions
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Cabinet response to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group on Inclusion and Exclusions is provided for the Sub-Committee's information.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to note the response given by the Cabinet to recommendations made by the Committee and consider whether any further action is necessary.

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to note the responses given and consider whether any further action is necessary.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The rights of scrutiny to make recommendations to the Cabinet, Council, non-Executive Committee, Partner Agency or Partnership Board is set out in Section 8 of Part 4E – Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution.
- 2.2 When making a recommendation to the Cabinet, a response needs to be given within two months to confirm whether the recommendation has been accepted or not. If accepted, this response should include how the recommendation will be implemented.
- 2.3 To ensure the Committee can monitor the response given to its recommendations, this report will be included as a standing item on each agenda, setting out in Appendix A the response from the Cabinet to the recommendations of the Committee.
- 2.4 The Committee is asked to review the responses given and consider whether any further action is necessary.

3. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Scrutiny recommendations are contained in the appendix to this report.
- 3.2 The detailed responses, including reasons for rejected recommendations and action plans for the implementation of agreed recommendations are also contained in the appendix.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to note that Exclusions is included on the 2022/23 work programme for the February 2023 meeting where an update on the attached Appendix will be given.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Stage 2 - Response to the Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group report on Inclusion and Exclusions

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Report to Children & Young People Sub-Committee on 2 November 2021.

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=167&MId=2569&Ver=4>

REPORT TO:	Cabinet 12 October 2022
SUBJECT:	Response to the Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group report on Inclusion and Exclusions
LEAD OFFICER:	Debbie Jones, Interim Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Shelley Davies, Director of Education, Children Young People and Education Jo Jack Acting Head of Access to Education
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
WARDS:	All

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report is a formal response to the task and finish group report in relation to inclusion and exclusion and in particular the recommendations from the task and finish group following the extensive focus on this.

The Education Department welcome the report and the opportunity to be involved in the process.

To implement the recommendations within the report the Education Department will need to work in partnership with school leaders across our sector. We will highlight, encourage, and support with the application of the recommendations. Several of the recommendations are not within the gift of the Local Authority to dictate but linked to individual education provisions decision making and it is them who will influence how the proposals will be delivered.

It is important that we do not focus on the recommendations in isolation but alongside the Education White and Green papers, the detail which is included in the report body, which focus on inclusion.

Oversight of the recommendations will be overseen by the Access to Education team in conjunction with school leaders. Governance of them will be through the Learning and Inclusion Board which has membership from our Lead Member, Corporate Director and officers.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The delivery of the recommendations should not result in any additional cost to the council but this will be explored based on further work in this area.

KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO: not a key decision

This is not a policy decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive Mayor, in Cabinet, is recommended to:

- I. Consider and comment on the report and recommendation on Inclusion and Exclusions from Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group; and
- II. To approve the draft response to the scrutiny recommendations which is set out at Paragraph 2 of this report

1. DETAIL OF YOUR REPORT

1.1 Context and Background

1.1.1. The legislative context: Green and White Papers and the importance of them alongside the Task and Finish Group recommendations

Alongside the Task and Finish Group report ‘Removal from roll and off-rolling of pupils in Croydon schools’ two key DfE Papers published in March 2022, will have considerable impact on how children are identified as needing support, how quickly they receive this support and from whom. Helpfully the factors identified within the report sit alongside some of the proposals within the DfE papers.

The White Paper *Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child* aims to fortify support (at the right place and time) for children if they fall behind so as equip and enable them to have a fulfilled life.

Despite the Disadvantage Gap narrowing 9.1% between 2011 & 2019, more schools nationally being graded *good* or *outstanding* by Ofsted and better funding of increased Pupil Premium Grant (PPG), it is the Government’s perception that there are still too many children who leave education with a lack of key knowledge & skills. Therein lies the focus of the White Paper and our focus as an LA alongside our education provision.

There is an umbrella ambition that by 2030, the national GCSE average grade will increase from 4.5 (as it was in 2019), to 5. This ambition will be reinforced by an additional focus on ‘levelling up’ attainment at Key Stage 2.

How this is done will involve:

- Sharing practice (schools, teaching staff and children services)
- Attracting and developing a high-quality teaching taskforce and
- Scrutinising the functionality of the school environment – namely the improvement of behaviour and raising attendance.

The SEND Review (Green Paper): *Right support, right place, right time* also focuses on the need for children with SEND and / or with a Social Worker to receive timely and appropriate targeted support, so that they have the same opportunities as their peers.

This Review is in response to the acknowledgement that the reform of the 0 – 25 Service (implemented in 2014) was not working as it should. The system has not been without its complexities and the Paper identifies three main challenges:

1. Poor attendance and attainment outcomes for children and young people with SEN or in alternative provision in comparison to their peers.
2. The need to streamline processes, so that children, young people and their families can more easily navigate the SEND system. Furthermore, their success of this is not influenced by their access to finance and social resources.
3. Disparity between investment into the system vs. value for money outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The aim of the Review was to identify the causes of the identified challenges, set out a plan of action to rectify these and as a result, restore parents' / carers' confidence and rebalance the financial robustness. The Review is running alongside the health & social care reform - significant due to the very common overlap between young people with SEND accessing social care services.

The timing of these Papers are of particular significance. Prior to COVID, there was nationally some distance to travel in terms of attainment and progress. COVID has for some SYP had a negative impact on many children's learning and mental health, particularly those that are vulnerable.

In Croydon, the focus on early intervention / prevention is the drive for our current and developmental practise within the Access to Education Service and across the whole department. We champion a reflective, collaborative local area approach. All activities focus on levelling up the opportunity for participation for all children and young people. The Papers promote an inclusive system that includes early identification, good quality teaching and a knowledge rich curriculum. This ethos parallels with our work around inclusion, exclusions and behaviour in our Croydon schools.

1.1.2. The local context

Croydon has the 4th largest population of children and young people in London: 22.2% (85,672) of the population are aged 0–15 years. The projected growth in the population of children between the ages of 0 and 6 in Croydon between now and 2030 is just under 1000 - 40,431 – 41225.

1.2 Managed moves and exclusions

1.2.1. The responsibilities on local authorities in relation to exclusions / managed moves

All Croydon education settings must ensure that their exclusion procedures comply with the [Department for Education's \(DfE's\) statutory guidance](#), last updated in September 2017. In addition, the Council has a policy, which supersedes all other school-level handbook or policy statements in relation to exclusions. The policy outlines the varying stages and parameters of an exclusion, likewise the involved parties' duties.

1.2.2. The local context

The Access to Education Service continues to strive to reduce the rate of exclusions in Croydon schools and actively works to support schools and providers. It has been a combination of interventions that have led to the steady decrease in permanent exclusions at both primary and secondary ages. At primary school level there has been a total of 0 permanent exclusions this academic year. There has also been a steep decline in the number of pupils suspended/Fixed term excluded from school this academic year.

However exclusion rates for black Caribbean students nationally are disproportionately higher than those of their white peers in some local authorities, unfortunately the data in Croydon mirrors the national picture and our priority is to target support and resourcing for the pupil demographic presenting the most concern to reduce the disproportionality.

The complexion is also similar with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children nationally. Exclusions are at much higher rates, with Roma children nine times more likely to be suspended in some areas. Similarly, exclusion rates for mixed-race white and black Caribbean students were more than four times higher than their white peers in several local authorities.

We understand that children who are outside of mainstream education are more vulnerable to becoming the victim of childhood criminal exploitation, the process of manipulating, threatening or coercing children into engaging in criminal activity, often to transport drugs in so called "county lines" operations.

The Access to Education Team have implemented several preventative models designed to support the reduction of pupils at risk of exclusion and to reduce disproportionality; schools are encouraged to take up this offer before considering permanent exclusion:

- Missing Monday Panel meeting (multi-agency panel meeting triaging and allocating out support for children at risk of or missing in education).
- Fair Access Panel (FAP) and Primary School Forum.
- The Team Around the School Approach (multi-agency early intervention support for schools).
- Frontline support from Attendance Improvement Officers (holistic support for pupils and their families).
- Exclusions Advice and guidance.
- Appropriate challenge at exclusion panel hearings.

1.3 Data on exclusions and managed moves

Local data

Indicator Title	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Source
Overall					
Number of suspensions (fixed term exclusions)	1663	1401	1465	689	Capita One
Number of permanent exclusions	43	41	27	27	Capita One
Number of permanent exclusions reinstated	2	2	8	6	Capita One
Number permanent exclusions withdrawn	8	4	2	2	Capita One

Indicator Title	Published data						Source
	Croydon			2019/20 Benchmarking			
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	London	England	Stats Nbr Av.	
Permanent exclusions from schools as a percentage of the school population	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.03	DfE
Suspensions (fixed period exclusions) from schools as a percentage of pupils	3.83	3.82	3.39	2.61	3.76	2.55	DfE

The ongoing strategy for the new academic year is to continue with best practice in this area and to roll out the Team Around the School (TAS) approach to the most vulnerable schools, based on data on attendance and exclusions performance indicators. The goal is to ensure these schools are provided with on-going multi agency support that will support with early identification and early intervention to promote participation and further support vulnerable families.

2. Implementing the recommendations

To implement the recommendations within the Task and Finish Group report on '*Removal from roll and off-rolling pupils in Croydon schools*' the Education Department will need to work in partnership with school leaders across our sector.

We will lead on recommendations that fall within our remit and highlight, encourage, and support with the application of the recommendations which are part of education

provisions decision making processes and it is them who will influence how the proposals will be delivered.

	Recommendations	Response
1.	<p>That the Scrutiny and Overview Children and Young People Sub Committee seek from the Director of Education an annual report on Exclusions and Managed Moves, such report to be presented at an Autumn meeting and separate from the Standards report, the report to include the following areas at least in relation to managed moves:</p> <p>The number of managed moves agreed by the Fair Access Panel in the preceding academic year, including the provision of data as to the following characteristics of the children concerned: age, gender, free school meal eligibility, national curriculum year, SEND provision, ethnic group and level of deprivation - these are the characteristics which must be reported in respect of permanent exclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of managed moves from a mainstream school to a PRU or other alternative provision • the number of managed moves from a mainstream school to another mainstream school • the number of managed moves which broke down during the 12 weeks' probationary period • an analysis of the reasons for the breakdown during the probationary period and information about the subsequent pathways of the children concerned. • the number of children reintegrated from alternative provision into mainstream, broken down into the number reintegrated who immediately prior to admission to AP had undergone permanent exclusion and the number reintegrated who immediately prior to admission to AP had undergone a managed move • in respect of managed moves to mainstream schools the number from each presenting school, and the number to each receiving school • such information as the local authority may possess about the number of managed moves not passing through the FAP process, including the characteristics set out in the first bullet point above • the chart of givers and takers (that is, for each school, the number of children 	<p>As part of a wider piece of work across the Service, progress is being made towards developing a data dashboard which aims to be inclusive of the points raised above.</p>

	<p>each school successfully presents to FAP, and the number each school accepts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the destinations of children who have been permanently excluded 	
2.	<p>The Director prepares a paper on managed moves for the consideration of key stakeholders in FAP which sets out factors perceived to conduce to both good and bad outcomes and including some objective case studies.</p>	<p>Documents prepared include the following (which have been attached):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed Move Protocol A Managed Move Guide for Parents Secondary FAP Guidance. <p>The documents aim to act as a reference (in line with DfE legislation and guidance) and working guide in respect of operational best practice likewise strategic reflection of practise. We have started to collate case studies and will broaden the breadth of example schools.</p>
3.	<p>The Director instigates an independent evaluation of how participants perceive the collegiality of the managed moves process, and what might be done to enhance it.</p>	<p>There would be a cost to commission an independent evaluation of the managed move process, however in response to this the managed move process has been reviewed in its entirety in conjunction with a Working Group (11 secondary schools, including head teacher representation). The review has resulted in revised paperwork for stakeholders, ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All offers of placements in mainstream schools, which are brokered through the Fair Access Panel will be managed moves. A managed move between two schools requires the knowledge, cooperation and consent of the parents / carers and governors of both schools. <p>This recommendation will need further discussion.</p>
4.	<p>The Director requests headteachers who are invited to the FAP to include information about the number of managed moves to and from their school in their termly report to their governing body, such as data to include all managed moves whether brokered through the FAP or in some other way.</p>	<p>The Working Group who scrutinised the Fair Access Protocol review have discussed this recommendation as part of our review. As a result, the Local Authority now receives and duly records data around manage moves that occur outside of the FAP process.</p> <p>This recommendation is not fully within the gift of the LA and Education Department and will be require the support of school leaders.</p>
5.	<p>The Governor Supports Team briefs secondary school governors on managed moves and provides guidance as to how they might scrutinise the issue.</p>	<p>The Strategic Lead responsible for FAP / managed moves has started discussions with Governor Services. It has been agreed that managed moves will be a component covered during future Governor training. Furthermore, Governors will be notified about any managed moves during their meetings with school leaders.</p>
6.	<p>The Director requests that the headteachers notify the Local Authority of a managed move they have arranged other than through FAP, such notification to be</p>	<p>Data collation as outlined in the recommendation has started (see Managed Moves outside of FAP 2021 – 2022 data attached). The next step in this process is to further develop the data dashboard,</p>

	<p>provided by the headteacher of the presenting school immediately after a starting date for the move has been agreed by all relevant parties</p>	<p>so that it encompasses the suggested characteristics above.</p> <p>This recommendation is not fully within the gift of the LA and Education Department and will be require the support of school leaders</p>
7.	<p>That the Director of Education continues to report to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee providing detailed information on how effective inclusion has been promoted in Croydon schools, including in particular information about how the Council has been using its role as community leader to inspire, share and disseminate good practice in inclusive education, and in particular but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further encouragement of schools to develop awareness of how and in what way they can use trauma-informed approaches • the identification of the characteristics of good pastoral care • the development of the use of quiet rooms in our schools to allow for pupils to benefit from non-punitive time out . • bringing school and community stakeholders together with a view to building capacity in more of our schools to introduce an extended day 5. • co-ordinating schools to ensure that commissioning of AP is conducted in a way which maximises the chance of the speedy and successful reintegration of children in AP/In-School Behaviour Units into the mainstream classroom. • working in concert with school and community stakeholders to make the case to government and other potential funding providers funding levels which enable schools to be able to commission sufficient specialised support so that more children can remain in or be reintegrated into the mainstream classroom 	<p>An example of promoting effective inclusion has been the introduction of the Team Around the School model.</p> <p>This multi-agency operating model addresses incidents whereby vulnerable families do not meet the threshold for statutory support, but would benefit from additional intervention.</p> <p>A guidance pack was put together and an introductory letter sent to Head teachers introducing the model and how it can benefit them, their pupils and their families.</p> <p>Some of this is included within our Standards report.</p>
8.	<p>The Director of Education be invited to present a report to the Scrutiny and Overview Children and Young People Sub-Committee with a view to improving primary to secondary school transition in Croydon, and taking particular account of the points set out in paragraph 3.1 of Section B of this</p>	<p>Whilst a report has not yet been completed, preliminary work has started in this area. In Summer term 2022, a roundtable discussion was held, led by the Education Safeguarding lead with DSLs / named members of staff in both primary and secondary schools. The aim of the session (held over two days) was to discuss / raise awareness and put in place plans for any learner</p>

	report.	transitioning from Yr. 6 – Yr. 7 that was cause for concern.
9.	The Director of Education is invited to consider those recommendations of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Autism which have most direct bearing on local authorities as set out in paragraph 3.2 above, and to set out in a report to the Scrutiny and Overview CYP Sub-Committee what the Council might do to address those recommendations.	This will be included as part of the development of the SEND strategy.
10.	The Director of Education is invited to publish pages on the Council website which set out in plain English: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the law on informal exclusions • the responsibilities of schools towards pupils with special educational needs and disabilities pursuant to the Equality Act, the SEND Code of Practice, and statutory and non-statutory guidance on suspension and exclusion practice and school behaviour policies as may be published and revised from time to time by the DfE; and, further, • to develop a clear procedure to enable parents to make anonymous reports about schools breaking exclusions law, and publicising the availability of the procedure on the website 	There is information on the website pertaining to exclusions with details of how parents can get in touch to anonymously report schools breaking exclusions law. SEND https://www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/special-educational-needs-and-disability-support/SEND-support - access the Local Offer section.
11.	The Director of Education is invited to consider how all mainstream schools can be made aware of the best practice existing in Croydon schools as to the education of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.	https://www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/special-educational-needs-and-disability-support/SEND-support - access the Local Offer section.
12.	The Director of Education is invited to consider the issue that parents quite often find meetings with school leaders and/or other professionals (particularly meetings which are potentially contentious) as extremely stressful, and provide guidance to schools and other professionals who may attend such meetings on how to set up such meetings in a sensitive, constructive and unthreatening way.	This will be included as part of our meetings with School Leaders.
13.	The Director of Education is invited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ask Octavo Partnership Governor Services to provide training to school governors on issues surrounding removal from the classroom, and to publicise the availability of the training in all schools • to include questions on the use by schools of in-school behaviour units in the annual local authority safeguarding audit. 	The Octavo Partnership teams became LA staff at the start of the pandemic. We will work with these staff in relation to the points raised.

14.	<p>The Director of Education is invited to take into account the conclusions of the TFG in drafting the Council's response to the current DfE consultation on revised guidance about school behaviour policies, and in particular to highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of clarity about different short-term and longer-term pathways for a pupil which might reasonably follow after removal from the classroom • The need for there to be a clear safeguarding framework surrounding removed pupils, including where necessary unannounced visits to units to which pupils have been removed, and for the local authority in which an ISU may be located to have the key role in undertaking the safeguarding function • The implications of the guidance for Ofsted in respect of its inspection framework: in particular, when Ofsted inspect a school with pupils registered at that school and an off-site ISU, the quality of the ongoing care and support provided by the school to those pupils should be a focus of their inspection, quite separate from inspection of the ISU itself • The funding implications if ISUs are to follow best practice as indicated in the draft guidance 	
15.	<p>The Director of Education is invited to hold an early discussion with borough headteachers and AP units about the implications of the draft DfE guidance for the development of good practice on removal of pupils from classrooms in Croydon schools and AP units.</p>	
16.	<p>That the KPI dashboard which is presented to Scrutiny and Overview CYP Sub-Committee shows what percentage of annual reviews of EHE have been completed.</p>	<p>Work is being undertaken to ensure that this data is presented in the KPI dashboard going forward. For the purpose of this report, a narrative about annual reviews of EHE has been included.</p>
17.	<p>That the Corporate Director responsible for Children and Young People provides by 18 March 2022 a written briefing note to members of the Scrutiny and Overview CYP Sub- Committee addressing the issue of whether the principles and practices set out in paragraphs 9.4-9.6 of the 2019 EHE policy are being implemented.</p>	
18.	<p>The Director of Education is asked to provide a short report setting out the Council's response to that part of the draft</p>	<p>FAP is a Statutory process, it does not just support managed moved but is part of the admissions process</p>

	<p>consultation which relates to managed moves, and dealing with among other things the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the potentially positive and potentially negative consequences flowing from disbandment of the FAP • whether the FAP should continue as long as possible, or be disbanded at an early specific time • what contingency plans are being made to face a future without the FAP 	
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3. Governance

Governance of the strategy will be overseen by internal strategic management groups and partnership boards (see chart below). The Learning and Inclusion Board will provide support and challenge in relation to the delivery of the recommendations. (Considering the decision making of School Leaders to implement.)

4. Consultation

4.1 This report is for information purposes only – to provide an annual overview of education standards and pupil outcomes – and therefore consultation is not appropriate.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

5.1 The Executive Mayor is asked to note the actions in response to the recommendations listed within the CYP Scrutiny sub-committee Task and Finish group report.

6. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

NA

7. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 **The effect of the decision** – Not applicable

7.2 **Risks** – Not applicable

7.3 **Options** – Not applicable

7.4 **Future savings/efficiencies**

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Under Section 9F Local Government Act 2000 (“The Act”), Scrutiny and Overview Committee (SOC) have the powers to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any executive and non-

executive functions and to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. SOC also have the powers to make reports or recommendations to the executive or to the authority on matters, which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of its area. To discharge this scrutiny function, SOC has appointed Scrutiny Review Sub-Committees, which includes Children and Young People's (CYP) Scrutiny Sub-Committee. Pursuant to the above provision, CYP Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group has provided a report on Inclusion and Exclusions and made several recommendations, set out in the report.

- 8.2 Under Section 9FE of the Act, there is a duty on Cabinet to respond to the scrutiny report, indicating what (if any) action Cabinet proposes to take, within 2 months of receiving the report and recommendations.
- 8.3 Local Authorities have a legal duty to ensure that every child fulfils their educational potential and to promote high standards of education and fair access to education under the Education Act 1996, 2002 and s.88 Equality Act 2010.

Approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 9.1 The recommendations contained within this report will be dependent upon a high quality teaching workforce, effectively trained in equality, diversity and inclusion good practice. These will be important issues for the directorate and school leadership to address

Approved by: *Dean Shoesmith, Chief People Officer*

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.2 Section 149 involves the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This requires organisations to undertake the following:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- 10.1 This means we must take particular care to ensure that we seek the views of protected equality groups who are often 'seldom heard'
- 10.3 Due consideration will be given to ensuring that our focus of work in this area aims to reduce disproportionality particularly in relation to race and gender and that this is explicit to our stakeholders including parents / carers and families to ensure inclusion.

10.4 The Educations Standards Cabinet report will include a full breakdown of both National and Local Exclusions data.

Approved: Denise McCausland – Equality Programme Manager

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

11.1 It is considered that there are no increased or decreased negative environmental sustainability impacts arising from the proposals in this report.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

12.1 The recommendations seeks to improve the pathway.

12.2 It is considered that there are no increased impacts on children and families from these proposals.

13. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

14. WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

NO

15. HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

15.1 If required in the future, Information Management will be consulted for advice at the earliest opportunity.

15.2 Approved by: Shelley Davies, Direction of Education

CONTACT OFFICER: Shelley Davies, Director of Education

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Managed Move Protocol – see attached.

A Managed move Guide for Parents – attached.

Secondary FAP Guidance – attached.

Managed Moves outside of FAP 2021 – 2022 – attached.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

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Agenda Item 9

REPORT TO:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY SUB- COMMITTEE 1 November 2022
SUBJECT:	WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Work Programme is scheduled for consideration at every ordinary meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To consider any additions, amendments, or changes to the agreed work programme for the Committee in 2022/23.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This agenda item details the Sub-Committee's work programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee has the opportunity to discuss any amendments or additions that it wishes to make to the work programme.
- 1.3 The Sub-Committee is able to propose changes to its work programme, but in line with Constitution, the final decision on any changes to any of the Committee/Sub-Committee work programmes rests with the Chairs & Vice-Chairs Group, following consultation with officers.

2. WORK PROGRAMME

2.1 The work programme

The proposed work programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Members are asked to note that the lines of enquiry for some items have yet to be confirmed and that there are opportunities to add further items to the work programme.

2.2 Additional Scrutiny Topics

Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to suggest any other items that they consider appropriate for the Work Programme. However, due to the time limitations at Committee meetings, it is suggested that no proposed agenda

contain more than two items of substantive business in order to allow effective scrutiny of items already listed.

2.3 **Participation in Scrutiny**

Members of the Sub-Committee are also requested to give consideration to any persons that it wishes to attend future meetings to assist in the consideration of agenda items. This may include Cabinet Members, Council or other public agency officers or representatives of relevant communities.

3 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- 3.1 Note its work programme for the remainder of 2022-23, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 3.2 Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that need to be reviewed.

CONTACT OFFICER:	Tom Downs Democratic Services and Governance Officer- Scrutiny 020 8726 6000 x 63779
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:	None
APPENDIX 1:	Work Programme 2022/23 for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Children & Young People Sub-Committee

The below table sets out the working version of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee work programme. The items have been scheduled following discussion with officers and may be subject to change depending on any new emerging priorities taking precedent.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope
01/11/22	Early Years Strategy	To review the Early Years Strategy approved at Cabinet on 21 September 2022 and consider whether there are any recommendations or concerns it may wish to submit to the Cabinet.
	Antenatal and Health Visiting	To review shortfalls in the number of health visitors, antenatal and postnatal visits.
17/01/23	Budget Deep Dive	To review in-depth high risk budget areas as part of the scrutiny of the 2023-24 budget setting process.
	Education Estates Strategy	To consider whether there are any considerations or concerns it may wish to submit to the Cabinet during its consideration of the Strategy.
	Education Quality and Standards	To receive the summarised performance of children and young people in Croydon schools for the academic year 21/22.
28/02/23	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	To look at targets for waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services alongside the monitoring framework.

	Exclusions	To look at the use of Behavioural Isolation Units, Pupil Referral Units and Off-siting. To look at progress made against adopting the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group.
	Police representation and Multi-Agency Working (Provisional)	To look at the ways in which the police work in partnership with the Children, Young People & Education department to promote safeguarding and youth safety and how well this is working; Coverage of the Community Safety Strategy as it relates to children and young people; Stop and Search figures for young people for the borough.
18/04/23	Elective Home Education	To look at Elective Home Education in the borough and to review the number of children who have not returned to schools following the pandemic. To review how many families follow the curriculum and framework, the number of children completing exams and other data.
	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (Provisional)	To review the number of UASC in the borough alongside central government funding and the performance of the National Transfer Scheme. To look at the impact of the war in Ukraine on additional numbers of UASC.

Standing Items:

Early Help, Children Social Care & Education Performance Dashboards - review and consider whether there are any areas of concern that may need to be scheduled for further scrutiny at a future meeting.

Items of Interest

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but are highlighted as potential items of interest to be scheduled during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Notes
Recruitment and Retention (S&O Committee to review People Strategy in September 2022)	<p>To review Staff Caseloads, AYSE Caseload Sharing and the number of supervisions carried out.</p> <p>To receive a breakdown of vacancies and caseloads by individual teams and to look at London Councils best practise for recruitment and retention.</p> <p>To undertake direct engagement with social workers</p> <p>To look at how feedback from exit interviews can be incorporated into retention strategies</p>
Apprenticeships & Youth Unemployment	To look at the offer of available apprenticeships in the borough and data on youth unemployment.
OFSTED Reports	To review any OFSTED reports as and when they are available.
Delivery of Early Years Strategy	To review the delivery and implementation plan of the Early Years Strategy
SEND Strategy	To review the renewal of the SEND Strategy
Surplus Schools Places	To review the Surplus Schools Places report
Free School Meal offer in Croydon	To scrutinise the provision of free school meals in the borough and why nursery children in our primary schools are not able to access this provision.

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