



Children, Young People and Learning Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Alisa Flemming January 2020

LATEST NEWS

Croydon's Takeover Challenge



Croydon's Takeover Challenge – giving young people a unique chance to shape their borough by taking on the roles of local leaders – returned this year with more positions on offer than ever before.

With 93,000 under-18s, Croydon is home to more young people than any other London borough and local leaders stepped aside to give some of them the chance to step into their shoes.

This year 56 young participants aged between 11 and 18 took over 26 different roles helping to run the council, police, the newly-reopened Fairfield Halls and other organisations.

Our award-winning Choose Your Future campaign encourages young people to raise their voices on the issues that matter to them, and supports them to make positive life choices and follow their dreams.

Takeover Challenge goes to the heart of this – it gives the young people the chance to come in and shape decision-making, and it is great for their confidence and CVs.”

Early Help and Social Care Staff Conference and Launch of Academy



Staff from early help and children's social care gathered at their departmental conference (5 December) to hear from the senior leadership team and learn about the launch of an exciting new academy that provides a framework to deliver learning and development programmes – the Croydon early help and children's social care academy.

AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON



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The conference included an update on the improvement journey so far and next steps, a keynote from Ian Thomas CBE, chief executive Kingston Council and the launch of the children's and early help academy.

Nicki Shaw, head of children's workforce improvement, launched the new academy which has been set up to deliver a learning and development programme from newly qualified social workers right through to senior leaders.

The ambition of the academy is to build and sustain a learning culture which supports the workforce to have the right tools and practice conditions for early help and social work to flourish.

The academy's learning and development framework provides a comprehensive offer to support staff in developing skills and knowledge on a range of themes and topics. All staff will be supported through their career progression pathways, with routes into social work offered for differently qualified staff.

The academy will also include a broad range of leadership development and manager essential offerings to further develop adaptive and systemic leadership skills across all services. Coaching and mentoring schemes are also set to be developed to provide all staff help and support through their career progression.

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Improving staff safety – roll out of lone worker alarms

Following feedback from staff about feeling unsafe when undertaking visits alone, we have invested in lone worker alarms for front line staff and I'm pleased to announce that the roll-out has begun.

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School Admissions and Locality working

As part of Croydon's locality working to deliver better services to residents, through improved collaboration and multi-agency working at the local level, the school admissions team have been working closely alongside partners and residents and tailoring and delivering its service in various community, family centres, libraries and schools to meet local needs in Thornton Heath, Central Croydon and New Addington where the locality model is being piloted. Parents/carers have been provided with assistance with their online school application to ensure that they apply before the closing date.

The School Admissions Team have also been delivering an in-year admissions surgery twice a month in the Croydon central library. This is to support families either



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in making their in-year application for a school place, answer admission related enquiries or provide support to secure a school place for children who are out of school.

The above approaches are aimed at producing a reduction in the number of late school applications and contributing to the delivery of the following key priorities in the council's corporate plan: 'Our children and young people thrive and reach their full potential':

- Children and young people in Croydon are safe, healthy and happy, and aspire to be the best they can be
- Every child and young person can access high quality education and youth facilities
- Ensure there are high quality school places for Croydon's increasing numbers of children and young people.

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Virtual School



3 members of staff from the Virtual School took 11 of the newly arrived asylum seeking young people (UASC), who attend our interim provision at Croydon Town School, to Jamie's Farm.

The young people got involved in all aspects of farm life, including feeding and mucking out the animals, rounding up the sheep and bringing them into the barn ready for lambing, gathering the crops and preparing the ground ready for next year's planting, preparing and cooking the meals, team work and bonding. They were each involved in group work, and one-to-ones with the staff at the farm, and individual support notes were provided to support their learning and pastoral care back in their individual settings.



The young people were able to enhance skills they already had and learn new skills.

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