

## CABINET

16 November 2021

<b>Title:</b> Annual Education Performance Review 2020/21	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement &amp; Cabinet Member and Champion for Disabled People</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> None	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
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<b>Summary</b>	
<p>The purpose of this Cabinet report is to review educational and participation performance in Barking and Dagenham in 2020/21 in relation to the five priorities of the Education &amp; Participation Strategy 2018-22 and in the context of Covid 19. It also provides an opportunity to identify emerging priorities for 2022 and beyond.</p> <p>The five strategic priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) a place in a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school, college or early years setting for every child and young person.</li><li>2) exceeding national standards and then London standards across all headline performance areas. This includes A level where performance has traditionally been weaker.</li><li>3) supporting greater numbers of young people, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), to progress at ages 16 and 18 to high quality, appropriate destinations; and to reduce numbers of young people not in education, training or employment;</li><li>4) working collaboratively to strengthen the wellbeing and resilience of all children, young people and the wider school community which nurtures them; and</li><li>5) maximising the Council's wide range of influences and levers so that the Council can play an even stronger role in raising aspirations and increasing opportunity for the children and young people who live and learn here.</li></ol> <p>For the second year, owing to the pandemic, there is little test and examination data to report. There will be no comparative performance tables published for schools and Local Authorities. In 2021, Key Stage 4 and 5 results were awarded on the basis of teacher assessment, supported by moderation. Government guidance is that 2020 and 2021 results should not be used for making performance comparisons as results for 2020 and 2021 were reached using different methodologies.</p>	

2020/21 saw another year of disruption for pupils, with significant numbers of staff and pupils self-isolating in the second part of the Autumn term 2020, and schools closed to most pupils for almost all the Spring term 2021. Nevertheless, there is still much positive activity to highlight. This report affords us the opportunity to focus in more detail on initiatives that are supporting children and young people's health, wellbeing, creative and cultural opportunities and safety, alongside schools' determined efforts at maintaining a strong education provision in these unprecedented times.

Headlines from this report include:

- At 31 August 2021, the proportion of schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted remained at 91.5% (54/59 schools) – unchanged from last year since Ofsted did not carry out standard inspections during 2020/21. This performance remains well above the latest published national benchmark (86% in March 2021) and just under (the equivalent of one school below) the London benchmark (93% in March 2021).
- Exceptionally strong partnership work has been demonstrated between schools, Barking & Dagenham School Improvement Partnership (BDSIP), the Council and partners during Covid 19. Elements of this have been built into ongoing arrangements with all schools. For example, staff known as 'Education Inclusion Partners' in the Council, continue to work in partnership with clusters of schools, discussing their registers of vulnerable children and connecting these children and families with the support they need from other agencies. Hot Clinics for discussion of vulnerable pupils have been established in which school staff refer cases for advice by a multiagency group of practitioners. In the May 2021 Ofsted focused visit to the Local Authority (LA)'s Children's Services, Ofsted highlighted partnership working between children's services and schools as strong. Ofsted also highlighted that 'Robust initiatives such as drop in ('hot') clinics [...and] education improvement partners support schools well to plan additional support and help for vulnerable children...'
- BDSIP delivered advice and guidance to schools throughout Covid 19 which focused on effective use of e-learning and online teaching and curriculum resources. This included a micro-site ([see here](#)) to help provide advice to schools.
- 1300 Year 7 students (over a third of the total number of Year 7 pupils in mainstream schools) from 6 secondary schools achieved an Arts Award certificate from Trinity College London, supported by the Cultural Education Partnership (CEP), Inspiring Futures. This aided the successful transition of these students to secondary school.
- In Summer term 2021, the Council commissioned a review of all 27 Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs) by Ofsted accredited practitioners. Each ARP was evaluated against the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes of pupils, personal development of pupils, leadership and management and safeguarding. The visits highlighted a wealth of strong and, in many cases, inspiring practice. This showed that, for the vast majority of pupils, the borough's ARPs offer a high-quality curriculum which is increasingly tailored to meet the highly complex needs of pupils. The report's recommendations for further improvement are being taken forward.
- Numbers of young people progressing to Higher Education from Barking and Dagenham institutions rose by 8% between 2019 and 2020. Nearly 42% of young people progressed to the most competitive (i.e. top third) institutions, up

from 38% in 2019. It is anticipated that 2021 data will continue this trend and indications are that this is the case.

- Additional information for young people aged 18+ in 2020 shows that 23 young people secured higher level apprenticeships. These were at a number of prestigious and competitive organisations including BT, Allen & Overy, CISCO, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, Goldman Sachs, Google, GSK, Hiscox, HM Treasury, Linklaters, Mazars, Morgan Stanley, the NHS, Santander and Sky. At age 18+, there is a continuing trend of young people securing higher level apprenticeships.
- Between 2020 and 2021, the proportion of Year 12s and 13s in Barking and Dagenham who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose post 16 destination was 'unknown' increased very slightly to 3.7% as result of Covid 19 (equating to around over 220 young people). This is a better position than a number of neighbouring boroughs and better than national (5.5%) and London (4%). Barking and Dagenham has retained its position of being in the second highest performance quintile nationally for its proportion of NEETs and 'unknowns'.
- The 'Step Up, Stay Safe (SUSS)' 'Lost Hours' campaign launched successfully with secondary schools in March 2020. A partnership workshop with multi agency and community stakeholders and some Cabinet Members took place in June 2021, highlighting the innovative impacts of SUSS for the borough's young people.

### **Recommendation(s)**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Renew the Council's commitment to continuing to strengthen and develop partnerships with Barking and Dagenham's family of schools, BDSIP, Barking & Dagenham College, CU London and other key partners to achieve the best possible outcomes and opportunities for the borough's children and young people; and
- (ii) Note performance against the priorities of the Education and Participation Strategy 2018-22 as set out in section 3 of the report and in the dataset at Appendix A to the report, acknowledging that most benchmarking data in Appendix A was for 2019 and 2020/21 provisional updates were made to lines 23-28 of the dataset only.

### **Reason(s)**

Achieving the best possible outcomes and opportunities for all children and young people, including the most vulnerable, is central to the 'The Barking & Dagenham Corporate Plan 2020-22' and to the vision in the Borough Manifesto.

The Council's strategic priorities include 'Prevention, Independence and Resilience'. Within this priority, the following themes are particularly relevant to the progress, achievements and developments set out in in this Annual Education Performance Review 2020/21:

- Every child gets the best start in life and all children can attend and achieve in inclusive, good quality early years settings and local schools.

- More young people are supported to achieve success in adulthood through higher, further education and access to employment.
- Young people and adults at risk are safeguarded in the context of their families, peers, schools and communities and safeguarded from exploitation.

The Borough Manifesto sets out that Barking and Dagenham will be a place: with high quality education and sustained attainment for all; with access to lifelong learning, employment and opportunity for everyone; with great arts and culture which leads change in the borough; and which supports residents to lead independent, healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.

Continuing to support BDSIP, and work in close collaboration with the borough's family of schools, education, and increasingly business, employment and training partners, is vital to driving forward outcomes for the borough's children and young people. This will be particularly important given the impact of the pandemic on children and young people, their families and schools.

## **1. Introduction and Background**

### **Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22**

- 1.1 In November 2018, Barking and Dagenham's Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22, developed in partnership with the borough's schools, BDSIP, Barking & Dagenham College, CU London and young people, was agreed by Cabinet.
- 1.2 The strategy's five priorities are:
  - 1) a place in a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school, college or early years setting for every child and young person;
  - 2) exceeding national standards and then London standards across all headline performance areas. This includes A level where performance has traditionally been weaker;
  - 3) supporting greater numbers of young people, including those with SEND, to progress at ages 16 and 18 to high quality, appropriate destinations; and to reduce numbers of young people not in education, training or employment;
  - 4) working collaboratively to strengthen the wellbeing and resilience of all children, young people and the wider school community which nurtures them; and
  - 5) maximising the council's wide range of influences and levers so that the council can play an even stronger role in raising aspirations and increasing opportunity for the children and young people who live and learn here.
- 1.3 This report reviews further progress on the strategy in the context of the pandemic. It mainly focusses on priorities 1, 3, 4 and 5 in section 3 of the report, given the very limited data available on results, which were awarded through teacher assessment and moderation in 2021 due to Covid 19. The process this year for awarding results was a significant improvement on Summer 2020. There were no algorithms and pupils had the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities on a number of occasions through internal tests and assessments.
- 1.4 There will be no comparative performance tables for results published for schools

and Local Authorities. Government guidance is that 2020 and 2021 results should not be used for making performance comparisons as results for 2020 and 2021 were reached using different methodologies.

- 1.5 This report also updates Cabinet on the local context and key priorities during 2020/21 during the pandemic.

### **The local context**

- 1.6 Progress and achievements in 2020/21 in Barking and Dagenham have taken place against the following local backdrop:

- Prior to Covid 19, there was increased recognition by the government of the financial pressures faced by schools, particularly in relation to the High Needs Block. The borough received a further 10% uplift in relation to the High Needs Block in 2021/22 and is expecting an increase of 10% in 2022/23. Nevertheless, funding pressures on schools continue to be very challenging.
- Schools are being presented with high numbers of children with complex needs in mainstream schools. They are telling us that numbers of children coming into Reception with complex high needs in September 2021 is unprecedented. In relation to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), in Barking and Dagenham, numbers of young people with EHCPs rose from 1,655 in January 2020 to 1,733 in January 2021 (based on Census data and including new EHCPs and EHCPs which have ceased). There were 164 new EHCPs issued from January 2021 to July 2021.
- A growing borough with continued expansion of school places to meet demand. The total pupil population in Barking and Dagenham has increased from 30,967 (January 2010 Census) to 44,157 (May 2020 Census) excluding nursery and special schools. This is a 42.5% increase over the last ten year period. Recent expansion has been predominantly within the secondary sector where Greatfields Secondary phase 2b, currently in construction, will become operational in February 2022. This will enable the current two year groups being taught from the City Farm school site to permanently relocate to the main school campus in Barking. The new primary phase of Robert Clack school opened its doors in September 2021.
- The financial year 2020/2021 saw the first year of five years of annual reductions to the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This has been imposed by the DfE. It will impact on schools and LA services and will, over the 5 years, remove £1 million of funding which currently supports the following services - Trewern, the Community Music Service, BDSIP, Schools Estates and School Games Organisers. The services are implementing new service delivery models and exit strategies to mitigate the reductions.

## **2. The Covid 19 context**

- 2.1 Over the last academic year, there were over 3,000 positive Covid 19 cases amongst children of statutory school age living in Barking & Dagenham. Numbers of positive cases amongst staff and pupils was highest in the borough during December 2021, just before schools closed. At 9 December 2020, 581 teaching and other school staff were unavailable for work owing to Covid-19-related circumstances and 5,723 pupils were self-isolating. At the beginning of January

2021, the borough had the highest levels of infection in the country, showing how well schools did to stay open during November and December 2020 when positive cases were rising exponentially.

- 2.2 All schools moved to remote education for most of the Spring term 2021 and quickly gained substantial expertise in this way of teaching and learning. This is not a substitute, however, for face-to-face learning, and many children continued to suffer ongoing disruption to their education through this period.
- 2.3 Schools reopened fully from 8 March 2021. Since then, the overall trend in attendance at the borough's schools has been positive, evidencing the successful work of schools, the Council and BDSIP in working in partnership to encourage the large majority of children to return to school.
- 2.4 All Headteachers have worked together and in partnership with the Council more strongly than ever during the pandemic. While the Summer Headteachers conference was rescheduled for September 2021 due to Covid 19, it provided a much-needed opportunity for Headteachers and the Council to come together to shape priorities for the future.

### **Priorities during Covid 19**

#### **Schools' (re)opening risk assessments**

- 2.5 The Council's Public Health, Health & Safety and HR teams, trade unions and schools together reviewed and updated 'Schools Reopening' risk assessment' templates for the March 2021 reopening and again when new operational guidance was published in mid-August 2021. The Council also supported schools to update individual risk assessment templates for vulnerable staff and pupils.

#### **Tracking and supporting vulnerable pupils, and encouraging pupil attendance**

- 2.6 During Covid 19, schools, working with the Council, have tracked the attendance of vulnerable pupils. Schools have been required to submit attendance data daily to the DfE on overall pupil attendance and attendance of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans and those with a Social Worker. Alongside this, schools have submitted supplementary weekly data to the Director of Education.
- 2.7 Building on strengths in the borough's arrangements for supporting vulnerable pupils during the pandemic, the Council's Education team organised three staff – as 'Education Inclusion Partners' – to work in partnership with clusters of schools. These staff help to connect vulnerable pupils and their families with other Council and partner services so they can access the support they need.
- 2.8 As additional support for vulnerable pupils, new multi-agency partnership forums were established, including:
  - Vulnerable Pupils' Hot Clinics: These allow professionals, including school staff, to refer cases of children or young people to a multi-disciplinary team from Children's Social Care, the Youth at Risk Matrix (YARM), North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), and Youth Offending Service (YOS).

- Team Around the Area (TAA): These meetings bring professionals together from across Education, Children's Social Care, the YARM and Police to share local information about issues faced by schools and to plan next steps.

2.9 The May 2021 Ofsted focused visit to the LA's Children's Services commended partnership working between Children's Services and schools as strong, stating that 'Robust initiatives such as drop in ('hot') clinics [...and] education improvement partners support schools well to plan additional support and help for vulnerable children...'

### **Remote learning & catch up**

2.10 As the 2020/21 academic year progressed, schools continued to refine their remote learning offers, drawing on feedback from teachers, pupils and parents. Most offered a mix of live sessions, recorded and posted clips, and - particularly for younger pupils - some paper-based work. All schools tracked attendance and engagement and followed up with families where children and young people did not appear to be registering or taking part in learning. Headteachers have seen the potential for developments in home learning – for example, opportunities for pupils who missed lessons to access materials and catch up.

2.11 All schools in Barking & Dagenham have continued to review their curriculum content, based on the assessed needs of their pupils. To support this, in the Summer term, around a third of schools used the National Tutoring Programme (NTP). It is early days, but the picture has been mixed about the quality of support provided, with some examples of good and effective tutoring. This largely depends on the quality of individual tutors. Other schools preferred to spend the grant through engaging their own staff to support pupils.

2.12 For pupils with SEND, schools have assessed where children are in terms of learning, identifying the most important gaps and adjusting and developing the curriculum to focus on those gaps. This is important for all children and particularly those with SEND where learning needs to be broken down into smaller, manageable steps.

2.13 During 2020, LBBD supported the recovery of SEND provision by evaluating the experiences of children and their families and focussing on the following 3 areas specifically:

- Understanding the impact of lockdown on families of those with SEND at a local level.
- Supporting schools in planning for their SEND pupils' return and to consider any implications that schools may need to address.
- Supporting SEND learners in recovering prescribed and targeted therapies so that this does not continue to inhibit their development.

2.14 Weekly support to Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) was provided by the LA and BDSIP. Training was provided by the LA and leaders within SEND and Education. This was well received by schools.

2.15 To support the resilience and well-being of school staff, THRIVE training was offered to them. Based on established neuroscience, attachment theory and child

development, the THRIVE Approach provides training and support to equip adults with the knowledge, insights and resources needed to develop the relationships that help children and young people to flourish and learn. 62 staff members took up this offer, with over 30 schools involved. This was very well received, with excellent feedback provided. The remaining schools used alternative programmes and approaches to provide support in this area.

### **Supporting transition year groups**

- 2.16 A group of Headteachers and Council colleagues worked together to develop creative ways to help Year 6 pupils quickly settle into secondary school when the usual Summer term visits could not take place owing to Covid 19 restrictions. A number of Barking and Dagenham schools delivered DfE government-funded 'Summer schools' this year to support the transition of Year 6/7 pupils from the primary to secondary phase and to support specific groups of pupils to catch up. Innovative plans were also put in place by a number of schools, working in partnership with the CEP, to support transition from the start of term through the delivery of the Arts Award to Year 7s (please see paragraph 3.24 for more details about this).

### **Access to technology for remote learning**

- 2.17 Despite the government providing 5,313 devices to schools to distribute to vulnerable pupils, many pupils still did not have adequate access as at January 2021. Headteachers estimated that around 8,000 pupils (20%) in the borough did not have sufficient access to an appropriate device and around 4,000 (10%) did not have sufficient broadband. Schools worked determinedly to provide these pupils with access to devices and sufficient data. The LA and BDSIP supported these efforts through the DfE's data offer (free data for pupils without WiFi in the home in Years 3-11). The LA engaged internet providers, such as TalkTalk, in discussions about providing free data for disadvantaged families.
- 2.18 The borough's Infant schools were particularly disadvantaged due to the allocation criteria, however, through the Council Leaders' Office, funding pledges totalling £40,000 were made by businesses in March 2021. This was shared across the Infant schools to enable them to buy digital devices for pupils that needed them.
- 2.19 Schools have learnt much over the past 18 months about how IT can best support effective remote learning. They have used this to help engage families at home, as well as where pupils continue to require remote learning.

### **Free School Meals (FSMs) & Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) Programme**

- 2.20 The number of pupils eligible for FSMs increased from 9,451 to 10,600 during the academic year. This was supported by a campaign towards families highlighting that their child could be eligible for FSMs.
- 2.21 The government announced the Winter-Covid Fund grant, which the Council used to support eligible FSM pupils during the school holiday periods. This ran from Christmas 2020 through to Summer of 2021. No government funding was given for the October 2020 half term; this matter was raised nationally by Marcus Rashford MBE.



- 2.22 The Covid funding provided enabled schools to purchase supermarket vouchers or food hampers which were given out to families before each school holiday period.
- 2.23 There have been no recent further announcements from the government around Covid funding for FSMs. A return to the pre-Covid position is anticipated in which funding is not provided to eligible FSM pupils during holiday periods.
- 2.24 In December 2020, the DfE announced funding for every LA for the HAF Programme. This aimed to provide free access to holiday activities and food that met the school food standards for FSM children and young people.
- 2.25 During Easter 2021, 783 individual children and young people were reached through HAF provision across 12 sites, delivered by 6 providers. In addition, all children of statutory school aged received an Easter activity pack via their school. For Summer 2021, 21 providers delivered across 30 sites including 18 schools, reaching a significant proportion of the borough's FSM population through a range of engaging activities with a food offer. Programmes were well attended, with 3,173 children and young people reached (of which 2,887 were eligible for FSM, and 337 were children and young people with SEND). The DfE visited Barking and Dagenham's programme over the Summer and commented that it was one of the strongest in London.

### **Mental health support for schools**

- 2.26 Due to the pandemic, children and young people have faced traumatic experiences including bereavement, isolation, a loss of routine, uncertainty about their futures, and a breakdown of usual support mechanisms.
- 2.27 Since Summer 2020, Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have delivered virtual weekly Hot Clinics for school staff. Staff refer pupils whose emotional wellbeing they are concerned about and who are not already receiving CAMHS support. Bereavement Clinics have also been delivered by CAMHS from end April 2021. Both clinics have been well-received by schools.
- 2.28 Since Summer term 2020, 31 schools have taken out annual THRIVE membership with the LA's reduced cost offer. Schools have reported that THRIVE has been key to helping them manage increased mental health needs amongst children.
- 2.29 THRIVE London, in partnership with Education, delivered 'Bounce Forward', a 6-week resilience programme for just under 250 parents and carers to help them support their children and themselves during challenging times.
- 2.30 To support school staff wellbeing, the DfE launched a fund to support how schools (staff and pupils) respond to the emotional impact of the pandemic. Locally, 31 schools took part in 'Wellbeing for Education' training funded from this, with positive feedback received.

### **Supporting young people to secure appropriate post 16 destinations**

- 2.31 The Council worked with schools to successfully collect over 99.8% of pupils' 'Intended Destinations' data. This information was used to work with post 16

partners to support young people into appropriate destinations wherever possible. Schools supported young people on A level results day to secure their desired destinations, with many students securing their original chosen university destinations or a destination that they wanted. The LA developed an agreement with Barking & Dagenham College so that specific data could be exchanged with them to reduce the chance of early exits by pupils from their courses in the first two weeks of term. This work was supported by a Year 11 Transitions Group, which looked at strategies and resources to support smooth transition to post-16.

### **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

- 2.32 There was a sharp increase in numbers of families opting to electively home educate from September 2020, both nationally and locally, reaching a peak of 377 during April 2021. These have now reduced and sit at around 330 as of September 2021. However, EHE numbers remain 50% higher than before the pandemic. A number of cases are from out of borough schools. Covid 19 or 'Health' reasons made up the most common reasons for choosing to home educate since September 2020. The numbers of vulnerable children being withdrawn to EHE is low and being closely monitored. The LA and schools have continued to encourage families to take up a school place so that, over time, these numbers should reduce.
- 2.33 In the focused visit to the LA's Children's Services, Ofsted showed positive recognition that 'routine oversight of children [...] who are electively home educated has increased since the beginning of the pandemic.'

### **Early Years**

- 2.34 The LA worked closely with early years providers to ensure that there was sufficient childcare for all children who wished to return to nursery from March 2021. Numbers increased steadily throughout Summer 2021 with better-than-expected take up for 3 and 4-year-olds particularly. Take up of 2-year old places remains below expected. Take up of the 30 hours offer has returned to pre-pandemic levels. As at September 2021, all settings were open and providers have been encouraged by the numbers of children accessing places.
- 2.35 The borough's Early Years team have developed a sophisticated range of on-line training including YouTube videos and 'bite size' training which has proved very popular with providers.

## **3 Performance Update**

- 3.1 This section sets out performance in relation to priorities of the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22.

### **Priority 1 - a place in a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school, college or early years setting for every child and young person**

- 3.2 At 31 August 2021, the proportion of schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted was 91.5% (54/59 schools), the same as last year. Standard Ofsted inspections were paused from the start of the first lockdown period in March 2020 and throughout the 2020/21 academic year. The borough's performance is well

above the latest published national benchmark (86% in March 2021) and just under the London benchmark (93% in March 2021).

- 3.3 The borough has an ultimate, longer-term aspiration of 100% of schools rated 'Good' or better by Ofsted. At August 2021, there were 5 schools in the borough not yet 'Good' or that 'Requires Improvement', excluding the new Pathways school, due to be inspected within 3 years of opening.
- 3.4 During 2020/21, BDSIP expanded on their work undertaken during 2019/20. In 2020/21, individual meetings were held with Headteachers, led by an Ofsted inspector, including to discuss the implementation of Ofsted's new inspection framework. BDSIP also carried out initial 'Ofsted readiness' checks with schools. From July 2021, a quality assurance activity formed part of visits to schools, with BDSIP also appointing new Primary and Secondary Advisors in Summer term 2021.
- 3.5 Between September 2020 and end July 2021, Ofsted carried out 3 Section 8 inspections, one remote and two physical visits. All went positively and are set out below:

School	Date & Type	Current grade	Judgement
Eastbrook Community School	Two visits – 3 February 2021 & 1 July 2021 Monitoring Visits	Requires Improvement	Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.
Thames View Junior	12 July 2021 Monitoring Visit	Requires Improvement	Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.

- 3.6 From September 2021, Ofsted is phasing a return to the inspection cycle with greater emphasis on those schools that were graded 'Requires Improvement' at their last inspection or have historically been 'exempt' from inspections as 'Outstanding' schools.

**Priority 2 - Exceeding national standards and then London standards across all headline performance areas.**

**Summer 2021 achievements**

- 3.7 2021 is the second year that pupils' results have been awarded without students sitting examinations. Schools were asked to use a range of data to provide teacher assessed grades. These results were what students were most likely to achieve. Exam boards provided details of the quality assurance expectations and looked at samples from all schools.
- 3.8 Schools in Barking and Dagenham followed the advice scrupulously, drawing on a range of evidence including completed work, marked assignment and mock examination results. Grades in every subject were agreed following a robust internal quality assurance process and in some cases moderation across schools.

- 3.9 The process this year was a significant improvement on Summer 2020. There were no algorithms and pupils had the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities on a number of occasions through internal tests and assessments.
- 3.10 National results for Key Stage 4 and 5 awards have been published and can be viewed at [Examination results - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#).

### **Summer 2020 achievements**

- 3.11 Some additional data on young people's destinations in Summer 2020 can be shared and is set out below.
- 3.12 At post 18, there is a continuing trend of young people securing scholarships abroad and higher level apprenticeships. In 2020:
- 21 young people secured scholarships abroad (this is based on some secondary schools' data only); and
  - 23 young people secured higher level apprenticeships. These were at a number of prestigious and competitive organisations including BT, Allen & Overy, CISCO, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, Goldman Sachs, Google, GSK, Hiscox, HM Treasury, Linklaters, Mazars, Morgan Stanley, the NHS, Santander and Sky.

### **Looked After Children (LAC)**

- 3.13 As Corporate Parent, the LA has a particular responsibility to support and promote the best possible outcomes for children and young people in its care. A key means through which the LA carries out this duty is through the Virtual School.
- 3.14 Due to the pandemic, no results are made available for 2019/20<sup>1</sup> at LA level for Key Stages 1, 2 or 4. The Key Stage 1 cohort was made of 7 students, of which 3 had EHCPs. The Key Stage 2 cohort was made up of 16 students. Of these students, 6 students had EHCPs and a further student was identified as requiring additional help by their school. For Key Stage 4, of the 29 eligible students, 9 students had an EHCP and 2 students were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).
- 3.15 In Summer 2021, LAC students progressed to a number of exciting Year 12 destinations. These included: going onto Sixth Form in the borough; going to college to study Media and Marketing, Accountancy, Childcare, Health and Social Care, Mechanics, Hairdressing and Beauty and e-Sport; and an apprenticeship.
- 3.16 To support LAC during the academic year 2019/2020 and during the pandemic, the Virtual School:
- continued to ensure that foster carers had access to quality online learning resources when needed;
  - carried out an audit to ascertain the availability of computers and technical support to UASC;
  - implemented additional Pupil Premium + funding requests as received for appropriate IT equipment for LAC;

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to paragraph 1.4 for the explanation for this.

- moved tuition online for those who required it;
- streamlined ePEP (Personal Education Plans) to ensure this reflected the current situation, including additional questions for young people to ensure they were accessing school/education;
- delivered virtual training sessions on ePEP for schools and Social Care colleagues;
- identified years 6, 11 and 13 as needing the most attention from the Virtual School as they would be having Teacher Assessed Grades rather than examinations and transitioning to a different establishment;
- commissioned The Goblin's Chest <https://www.thegoblinschest.com/> to work with students who had been identified as needing additional support during lockdown;
- continued to commission The Transformed You mentoring service to mentor a select number of students during the academic year. This became virtual where needed; and
- increased attendance at PEP meetings to support Social Workers and Designated Teachers during PEP meetings.

3.17 In 2019/20, Barking and Dagenham continues to be in the top performance quartile A nationally for exclusions for LAC (the percentage of pupils looked after for at least 12 months with at least one fixed term exclusion) and for overall absence and unauthorised absence for LAC.

### **Exclusions (all pupils)**

3.18 Barking & Dagenham has generally performed well on exclusions in comparison to the latest published benchmarks which are for 2019/20. The borough is in the top performance A for permanent exclusions (PEX) at secondary phase, and in performance quartile B for PEX at primary phase. For secondary phase Fixed Term Exclusions, the borough is the best performing authority in London and 3<sup>rd</sup> nationally.

3.19 Total PEX for Barking and Dagenham, for 2019/20, is 0.03%, better than the national and London benchmarks and in top performance quartile A.

### **Priority 3 – to support greater numbers of young people, including those with SEND, to progress at ages 16 and 18 to high quality, appropriate destinations; and to reduce numbers of young people not in education, training or employment.**

3.20 Numbers of young people progressing to Higher Education (HE) from Barking and Dagenham institutions rose by 8% between 2019 and 2020. Nearly 42% of young people progressed to the most competitive (i.e. top third) institutions, up from 38% in 2019. Barking and Dagenham has seen the largest growth in resident young people – an increase of 65% - progressing to university of any London borough between 2007/8 to 2016/17. It is anticipated that 2021 data will continue this trend and indications are that this is the case.

3.21 Between 2020 and 2021, the proportion of Year 12s and 13s in Barking and Dagenham who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose post 16 destination was 'unknown' increased very slightly to 3.7% as result of Covid 19 (equating to around over 220 young people). This is a stronger position than a

number of neighbouring boroughs which dropped back further, and better than national (5.5%) and London (4%) benchmarks. Barking and Dagenham has retained its position of being in the second performance quintile nationally with regards to NEETs and 'unknowns'.

- 3.22 The Council continues to deliver a panel to help support Care Leavers into education, employment and training. This is making a difference, with the borough's NEET performance figures for Care Leavers continuing to be significantly better than the national average. The Council's extensive Provider Forum has been proactive during the Covid 19 lockdown periods and has worked collaboratively to deliver effective offers to young people who are NEET, remotely and in person. The Council's annual 'What Next?' Careers event, which is supported by the Forum, had the strongest attendance it ever had.

**Priority 4 – to work collaboratively to strengthen the wellbeing and resilience of all children, young people and the wider school community which nurtures them.**

- 3.23 The Council has worked collaboratively with colleagues in NELFT, for example, through Vulnerable Pupil and CAMHS hot clinics (set out in paragraphs 2.8 and 2.27 of the report respectively). The Council is also working collaboratively with schools and Health partners to develop a mental health hub in schools. This is due to commence in 2021/22.
- 3.24 The CEP, called Inspiring Futures, has ensured that, despite lockdowns and Covid restrictions, creativity and cultural education has been supported in school and is seen as a key tool for young people's wellbeing. Establishing the entitlement for all young people to benefit from high quality cultural education remains the priority and Inspiring Futures has pivoted into a digital and hybrid delivery model to support teachers and schools. Inspiring Futures continues to broker opportunities to work with major arts partners within hubs of schools. Successes include:
- Artsmark remains stable with 35 schools in the borough (57%) registered for the programme and 2 secondary schools achieving Platinum Awards over the last 12 months.
  - 1300 Year 7 students, from 6 secondary schools, achieved an Arts Award certificate from Trinity College London as part of the recovery curriculum, working through the Transition Working Group in November 2020. The Discover Arts Award Transition Programme is taking place again with 8 secondary schools in Autumn term 2021.
  - A digital 'Slow Conference' in November 2020 with 207 registrations, 120 participants from schools, 19 cultural partners, 18 virtual sessions and 9 video workshops.
  - Successfully applied to Paul Hamlyn Teacher Development Fund for £147,000 for a 2 year CPD programme for 7 primary schools to develop language acquisition for EAL students using theatre and story-making.
  - Developed the pre-16 film skills pathway for schools with Inclusive Growth and FilmLBB, working in partnership with the Sector Development Lead to commence September 2021.
  - Schools are represented on the Becontree 100 Steering Group (Sydney Russell, Becontree Primary, Henry Green Primary and Southwood Primary) and 3 schools are working on a co-commissioned artist project with Cultural

## Development Team.

- 3.25 Barking and Dagenham schools have continued to outperform their peers in the London Healthy Schools Award. With almost 100% of schools registered - one of only a handful of boroughs to achieve this - the borough has amongst the highest participation in, and achievement of, Healthy Schools in London, particularly at Silver and Gold level. Over three quarter of schools have achieved at least Silver.
- 3.26 Schools have continued to find delivering physical activity and sport a challenge with the pandemic. By the Summer term, the School Games Coordinators delivered 7 virtual inter-school competitions and 14 individual virtual competitions. Including a limited face to face competition programme of 23 events, 7,551 young people took part in School Games activity. Other achievements despite Covid 19 restrictions included a Barking and Dagenham sports leaders booklet for secondary schools and a CPD programme with Far From the Norm, an international dance company whose artistic director attended Sydney Russell.

### **Priority 5 – to maximise the Council’s wide range of influences and levers so that the council can play an even stronger role in raising aspirations and increasing opportunity for the children and young people who live and learn here.**

- 3.27 During Summer term 2021, a review of all 27 of the borough’s ARPs was undertaken by Ofsted accredited practitioners with extensive experience of evaluating specialist SEND provision.
- 3.28 The review showed that the ARP model works very well, with almost all of the ARPs being judged as ‘effective’ or stronger. The review highlighted the wealth of strong and often inspiring practice across the borough’s ARPs, which, for the vast majority of pupils, offer a high-quality curriculum and one that is increasingly tailored to meet highly complex needs. The review supported evidence that many pupils with SEND make at least good progress.
- 3.29 The Colin Pond awards, in conjunction with the Council, is now in its fifth year of providing over 50 annual scholarships to the borough’s top achieving GCSE students who will remain in the borough to study A levels. Impact analysis has demonstrated that ‘staying on’ rates for the top 10 and 20 achievers in participating schools have increased by 5% and 10% respectively. Average Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores of the top 10 and top 20 young people in these schools have increased markedly since the introduction of the Colin Pond Bursary in 2017. This year, Greatfields and Goresbrook Schools have been added to the programme and sponsorship for the ceremony has been secured from BD Group.
- 3.30 Following input from the research organisation ISOS, a renewed post 16 partnership, which comprises representatives from schools, Barking & Dagenham College, the Council and BDSIP, has been developed and will recommence in the Autumn term 2021. Areas of focus will include improving A level outcomes, particularly in Maths and Science, and developing vocational pathways.
- 3.31 Work is underway with colleagues in Inclusive Growth to generate new education, training and employment opportunities for young people in the borough. This is looking to make sure that our young people can benefit from opportunities in new

industries such as the Film Studio, the Creative and Green industries and London Markets.

- 3.32 There has been considerable work with partners to draw together multi disciplinary approaches to help young people to keep themselves safe from exploitation, known as the 'Step Up, stay Safe' (SUSS) partnership programme. This has involved key Council and external stakeholders including Children's Services, Community Safety, Community Solutions, the Police, schools and youth and community organisations.
- 3.33 A successful second phase of the 'Lost Hours' campaign launched on 24 March 2021 with the borough's secondary schools. A further SUSS partnership workshop was held in June 2021 and demonstrated the very positive impacts of SUSS for young people.
- 3.34 The LA has continued to successfully deliver its Young Londoners funded programme (with funding awarded of £1 million) called 'From Roads to Community', in direct support of the aims of SUSS. Whilst lockdown halted some important activity, such as face to face detached youth work, all elements of the programme have now resumed. 319 young people were reached during the first six months of the year, with participation now increasing significantly. The programme has received Project Oracle accreditation for its robust evaluation processes.

### **Barking & Dagenham College**

- 3.35 Barking & Dagenham College plays a key role in supporting and contributing to the five priorities in the borough's Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22. The Ofsted rated 'Good' college educates around 2,900 young learners including 300 young apprentices and as such helps to raise the participation rates and outcomes of young people within the borough. The College has been praised by Ofsted for its outstanding support for students and works hard to strengthen the wellbeing and resilience of young people.
- 3.36 Barking & Dagenham College plays a key role in supporting SEND learners to progress to further education and training and high-quality employment through the REACH Programme. The programme has grown from strength to strength and is now supported by 10 local employers. The College has invested in its facilities for SEND which includes a custom-built kitchen, sensory room and music room.
- 3.37 During 2021-21, the East London Institute of Technology (IOT), one of the first 12 Institutes of Technology established in the UK, benefitted from significant capital investment to establish the Industry 4.0 Smart Factory, Renewables Lab, Hydraulics and Pneumatics Lab, Multimedia Studios, CyberHub, Creative Hub, iTek (Esports) and Computerised Numeric Control (CNC) workshop.
- 3.38 Alumni Idris Elba and Shaun Escoffery launched the openings of the state-of-the-art TV & film and music studios named after them. David Bailey, world renowned fashion and portrait photographer, endorsed the industry-standard David Bailey photography studio.
- 3.39 The East London IOT is benefitting from the development of employer-led technical pathways at advanced and higher levels through the Technical Skills Advisory



Group and launched the new T Levels in Construction and Digital with progression pathways through Level 2 transition programmes.

## **BDSIP**

- 3.40 Launched in April 2018, BDSIP was created to provide Barking and Dagenham schools with high quality support to raise education standards further through sharing proven best practice and enabling schools to design and purchase services with the greatest impact.
- 3.41 The partnership relationship between BDSIP and the Council is strong and both organisations work closely together with schools. All of the borough's schools use BDSIP services in some capacity and 95% buy into the company's shared ownership.
- 3.42 An external review of BDSIP was undertaken in 2021 which highlighted the very positive progress BDSIP has made in establishing itself as a sustainable company highly valued by schools. In April 2021, the LA agreed a 2 year contract extension with BDSIP, which will continue until 31 March 2023. It is expected that BDSIP will contribute to priority outcomes during this period. These include: all schools rated 'Good' by Ofsted, with an increasing number moving to 'Outstanding'; exceeding national and then London standards in key education headline measures; and supporting young people into appropriate post 18 destinations. 2021 also saw the further strengthening of the BDSIP Board with members with business and industrial experience.
- 3.43 The Council commissions BDSIP to undertake work particularly in the areas of School Improvement and SEND, comprising a universal service and more targeted support to some schools. The Council also has opportunities to seed-fund broader initiatives which matter to schools and young people. An important example in 2021 was commissioning BDSIP to work with schools around Race and Social Justice. This included a very highly rated September 2021 conference for all the borough's schools with top speakers and national experts. As a result, all schools will shortly have a lead practitioner and champion Governor for this important work.
- 3.44 The Council and BDSIP also have shared objectives in the areas of Governors Services, Positive Destinations for Young People and specific Health activities.
- 3.45 Highlights of commissioned activity in BDSIP's third year of operation include:
- Convening and leading a borough wide conversation on Race and Social Justice. Led by a working group of Headteachers, this programme is examining issues of inclusion and student experience; staff recruitment, progression and experience; and curriculum in our schools. The launch conference for the programme in September 2021 was attended by 92 delegates and received an average rating of 4.7 / 5.
  - Delivery of advice and guidance to schools throughout Covid 19, focused on effective use of e-learning and online teaching and curriculum resources. This included development of a micro-site ([see here](#)) to help provide advice to schools.
  - Delivery of a range of innovative CPD, including a 10 week Early Literacy programme which has delivered, on average, 8.7 months' progress in reading

age in year 1 pupils in four pilot schools. The programme is currently being accredited with the CPD Certification Service prior to further roll-out.

- Delivery of a programme of Inclusion compliance checks to ensure schools are meeting key Inclusion requirements, with follow-up advice and support where required.
- Delivery of practical, hands on Inclusion support to schools and individual pupils at greatest risk of exclusion, guiding schools to develop effective, tailored strategies for keeping young people in school wherever possible and appropriate.
- Delivery of strategic support to Inclusion, including convening and facilitating networks of SENCOs, ARP Leads and Behaviour Leads, and delivery of a major SEND conference which was rated 4.4. / 5 by over 70 delegates.
- Provision of curriculum support and training to schools in key areas including English as an Additional Language, English, Maths and Science.
- Introduction of the revised Religious Education syllabus, developed by a leading expert who advises the DfE in this area, with training provided for all schools.
- Delivery of additional, targeted improvement support to schools identified as vulnerable by the Council.
- Continued to offer a range of targeted services in response to priorities identified by schools. These include Counselling and Speech and Language therapy.
- In response to Covid 19, BDSIP redesigned its entire CPD offer and moved to online delivery via Zoom. This has enabled BDSIP to engage a stronger range of external speakers than would have been possible for face-to-face training.

### **Other key services**

- 3.46 The Careers Advice service, which was moved online during the pandemic, has now resumed face-to-face delivery. Online careers advice was provided throughout lockdowns, with support targeted to vulnerable young people and those who schools identified as being at risk of becoming NEET.
- 3.47 The Aimhigher programme of events to introduce young people to a variety of career and further education pathways continued to run throughout lockdowns, with online events engaging young people and allowing BDSIP to bring in speakers from further afield, including teaching staff and current students from Russell Group Universities as far afield as Liverpool and Southampton. A blended programme of face-to-face and online events is being delivered in 2021/22.
- 3.48 It has not been possible to deliver work experience since the start of lockdown in March 2020. However, schools are now returning to the service, with the first cohort since the start of Covid due to go out in the 2022 New Year. BDSIP have created a dedicated post to focus on the recruitment of employers to host work experience as the pool of available placements has been significantly impacted by the pandemic. Available placements have also been impacted by changes to working practices (i.e. towards more home based working, in which the possibility of hosting work experience placements is not possible).

## **4 Priorities for 2021 and beyond**

- 4.1 Under the overarching priorities of the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 and the 'The Barking & Dagenham Corporate Plan 2020-22', the following areas are

a priority for the academic year 2021/22.

### **Supporting BDSIP in their work with schools**

- 4.2 Working in partnership with BDSIP to support schools as they maintain education provision and recover throughout the pandemic will continue. A focus will be on preparing for exams in 2022, and for Ofsted inspections for those schools expecting one in the 2021/22 academic year. Schools with longstanding judgements of 'Outstanding' are now subject to more regular inspection. The Council will continue to commission BDSIP to provide additional support to LA maintained schools not yet rated 'Good' or considered vulnerable. The DfE is continuing to monitor school attendance in the Autumn term 2021 and schools, the Council and BDSIP will continue to encourage pupils to be in school (with remote learning, where required).

### **Establishing the renewed post 16 partnership group and working with Inclusive Growth**

- 4.3 Generating a wider range of inclusive pathways which support young people's different education, training and employment interests and aspirations is everyone's business. From September 2021, the renewed post 16 partnership will act as a step towards this, in addition to, crucially, working to improve A level performance in the borough. A joined-up approach across the Council, with Inclusive Growth, BDSIP, training providers, businesses, schools and young people will be vital to increasing the range of inclusive high quality opportunities and pathways available. This work has started and will continue in earnest in 2021/22.

### **Strengthening joined up working for vulnerable pupils**

- 4.4 Joining up support for children, young people and families, particularly those most vulnerable, will remain key, with schools increasingly placed at the heart of arrangements. The increased support put in place during the pandemic for vulnerable pupils will be built on with planned closer working with Early Help. In addition, there is much strong, inclusive practice across the borough's schools and ARPs and consideration will be given to how this can be further strengthened, shared and recognised.

### **Continuing to support schools to manage pressures in SEND and to allocate resources effectively so that children and young people can attend a local school as far as possible and appropriate**

- 4.5 Schools are being presented with increasingly high numbers of children with complex needs coming into Reception in mainstream schools. This is exacerbated by the disruption from the pandemic over the last 2 academic years and many have not been identified early enough. An important aim in the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 is that children and young people, including those with SEND, can attend a local school wherever possible and appropriate. The Council will continue to work closely with schools and the DfE around the planning of specialist places, including in ARPs, and through placement panels and the Schools Forum. Collectively, this will seek to ensure the most effective use of available resources and will help provide a good learning environment for children.

## **Sufficient accommodation of the right kind with outdoor spaces**

- 4.6 Ensuring there is sufficient specialist provision in the borough will be vital. The demand for specialist school places is still rapidly increasing. We will continue to increase support for specialist places within mainstream schools. New permanent sites for 2 special schools are also being developed. A new special school called Pathways opened in September 2019 in part of the City Farm School site. Plans are being developed by the DfE who will procure and build the new permanent school on the former Dagenham Motors site in Dagenham. The new school will be constructed and handed over by mid-2023. Beam Bridge, now renamed Oxlow Bridge, will be a new school for 90 pupils with Profound, Multiple, Learning Difficulties (PMLD). The project is being procured and delivered by the DfE and will be located on the former Pondfield depot site where it is expected to open in late 2023. It will also be a priority to improve facilities at Mayesbrook Park.
- 4.7 Two new primary schools, Ford View and Mallard, are also being developed with the DfE to meet the needs of new housing developments. The future demand for mainstream school places will be driven by the ambition of urban regeneration and large housing developments such as Barking Riverside where long term planning for social infrastructure requirements are needed for these new communities. This will include work on securing sites, funding and school operators. It is important to get this right as each school in the borough will educate thousands of children and young people for decades to come.
- 4.8 At present, using data received from the GLA, London is experiencing a transition period which has been attributed to the longer-term impacts of Brexit and the pandemic. This has seen short term outward migration and a reduction in birth rates. Inner London boroughs have seen falling demand for pupil places. Although Barking and Dagenham has the highest proportion of 0-15 year olds (27%), as part of the borough's population in London, demand is being monitored. This enables us to understand if there is any potential impact or deviations from previous forecasts in the short term.

## **5. Financial Implications**

Implications completed by: Kofi Adu, Group Finance Manager.

- 5.1 The DSG reported an overall underspend of £3,843k (please see the table below). This consists of an underspend on Early Years of £2,367k, an underspend on the High Needs Block of £1,636k and a net overspend on the Schools Block of £160k.
- 5.2 The Early Years funding is based on prior year allocations and funding is only finalised using the previous two Spring Census data after year-end, around July 2021. During the pandemic, the DfE introduced protection arrangements to allow payments to providers to be based on pre-Covid Census data (October 2019) for the Summer and Autumn term. However, Spring 2021 payments were reverted back to actual places occupied. We have assumed a full claw back of the Early Years underspend. Although there will be a retained element, this will not be known until November 2021.
- 5.3 The underspend on High Needs is £1,636k. This is primarily due to an in-year net increase in import and export funding adjustments of £229k, effective management

of the gatekeeping budget of £935k set aside for in year pressures, generally reduced activities due to Covid 19, and savings relating to out of borough children. This has provided the opportunity to reallocate the underspend in October 2021 to support those primary phase schools experiencing the most significant High Needs pressures.

- 5.4 The Schools Block reported an overspend of £160k, and this relates to the known cash shortfall in the funding formula previously reported to the June 2020 Schools Forum. This was previously agreed to be funded as a cash advance from the DSG reserves and treated as the first call on the 2021/22 DSG grant allocations. The Central School Services Block reported a break-even position.
- 5.5 The total reserves before the Early Years clawback is £9,828k, of which £3,848k relates to in-year movements discussed above. Other elements include DSG brought forward balances of £3,542k including £1,817k of favourable prior-year adjustments. The carry forward balance on growth fund is £641k which is available to support future growth proposals. Included in the DSG reserves is Schools Facing Financial Difficulty (SFFD) funds retained centrally to finance future loan requests. Previously reported DSG reserves were net of historic provisions and contingencies spanning several years, and these are no longer required and can be released back into the DGS reserves. Therefore, the overall DGS reserves before grant adjustments is £9,828k. However, it is prudent to assume a clawback on Early Years underspend.

#### 2020/21 DSG Outturn Position

	2020/21 Funding £'000s	2020/21 Projected Out-turn £'000s	(Surplus) / +Deficit March 21 £'000 s
Schools Block – ISB	171,254	171,414	160
Central Block	2,364	2,364	0
High Needs Block	34,015	32,379	(1,636)
Early Years Block	22,933	20,566	(2,367)
<b>Total</b>	<b>230,566</b>	<b>226,723</b>	<b>(3,843)</b>
DSG reserves b/f			(3,542)
Growth Fund balance b/f			(641)
SFFD retained centrally			(699)
DSG release of contingencies			(1,103)
<b>DSG out-turn</b>			<b>(9,828)</b>
<b>Early Years adjustment</b>			<b>2,367</b>
<b>Adjusted DSG exc Early Years</b>			<b>(7,461)</b>

- 5.6 The Central Schools Services Block has been reduced by 20% in 2020/21 by the DfE. This is the first year of cuts to the historical commitments funded from the Central Block. The budget for the historical commitment is £1.526m. A reduction of 20% is equivalent to £305k. The historical commitment will continue to reduce by 20% for the next 4 years. Services funded from the Central Block include Trewern,

the Community Music Service, BDSIP commissioning, School Games and Schools' Estates, so pressures in these areas will need to be managed.

## 6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Lindsey Marks, Deputy Head of Law.

- 6.1. The LA has a number of statutory education duties which include establishing a Schools Forum, formulating and reviewing the schools funding formula; ensuring there are enough early education and school places to allow for parental choice; the promotion of educational excellence; school admissions; establishing and funding a Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE); Education Welfare; school attendance and exclusions, children missing education; responsibilities regarding employment of children; Special Educational & Health Needs; careers advice; monitoring of national curriculum assessments; outdoor education, music and creative provision for maintained schools; monitoring the education of the LA's Looked After Children; home to school transport; and safeguarding.
- 6.2. This report asks that the Council's commitment to strengthen and develop partnerships between the borough's schools and other organisations is renewed, that delegation for non-material changes to this report before publication is given to the DCS and that the contents of information within it are noted. Cabinet is not required to make any decisions about which legal comments are needed.

## 7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Risk Management** – Principal risks are potential further national financial cuts affecting the Council's ambition for improved outcomes for young people and financial pressures on schools and Education due to funding reductions and Covid 19. Collective delivery of the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 by education partners and the Council and increasing collaborative working to grow capacity will help to mitigate some of this. Whilst management action and monitoring are in place to control and review the pressures on the High Needs Block, the legacy of historic underfunding of this block places severe pressures on many schools as they strive to meet the needs of all the children in their care. There remains ongoing uncertainty about examinations in 2022 along with the periodic need for young people to self-isolate. Whilst robust remote learning arrangements can help mitigate this, they cannot wholly replace on site teaching.
- 7.2 **Contractual Issues** – The Council's contract with BDSIP commenced a 2 year extension from 1 April 2021 and will run until end March 2023. A new contract, subject to agreement, will be required following this period.
- 7.3 **Staffing Issues** – There remain pressures on the core Council team in its oversight of our vulnerable groups. Work to review some key senior posts took place in 2020/21 and will continue into 2021/22.
- 7.4 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – The priorities set out in the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 represent a significant opportunity to improve outcomes for all children and young people, including the most vulnerable, while addressing and managing the unique challenges which Covid 19 presents. This, in turn, should serve to help mitigate risks to inclusion during Covid 19.

The Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 connects directly to the Borough Manifesto which sets out the long-term vision, aspirations, and targets for the borough. The Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 is informed by the priorities in 'The Barking & Dagenham Corporate Plan 2020-22', particularly 'Prevention, Independent and Resilience'. The Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy sets out the borough's approach to equality and diversity. The strategy has actions to improve educational attainment and tackle inequality for specific groups where there are known issues or underachievement. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy incorporates focusses on the best start in life for the youngest children and the wellbeing and resilience of children and young people, mirroring priorities and key elements of the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22.

- 7.5 **Safeguarding Adults and Children** – The Education & Participation Strategy 2018 - 22 aims to improve the wellbeing of children and young people (where relevant including up to the age of 25 for those with SEND). This includes by supporting those most vulnerable and at risk of exploitation through reducing inequalities in educational attainment and opportunity; and supporting collaborative working, including through the SUSS programme, with key partners such as Social Care, Health and the Police.
- 7.6 **Health Issues** – A priority of the Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 is building collective responsibility across key partners, including Health, and the community for children and young people's wellbeing and resilience. Covid 19 further underlines the importance of this. The DCS is leading work to improve joined up working with Health and deploy much needed specialist resources around schools.
- 7.7 **Crime and Disorder Issues** – The Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 emphasises a collective responsibility for children and young people. Relations with the police are generally positive. Schools highly value the community police officers based in their schools and have strongly expressed their concerns about reductions. The Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22 promotes increased collaborative working between education partners and the Council which will be key to helping to keep children and young people safe, including through the SUSS programme.
- 7.8 **Property / Asset Issues** – Trewern Outdoor Education Centre, owned by the Council, plays an important role in offering adventure and physical activities to school pupils in the borough, with particular benefits for emotional and physical wellbeing. Owing to Covid 19, the centre was closed, and staff furloughed from March 2020 to June 2021. The government's 10 May 2021 guidance allowed for residential visits to resume which enabled Trewern to plan to reopen fully. Residential sessions will resume from September 2021. Schools are extremely keen to return to the Centre.

During the period that the Centre was shut, good progress was made on significant capital works and improvements to the site. Despite the income loss, the Centre looks to be in a good financial position as management have made significant economies to mitigate the loss of income. In addition, Public Health funding has been secured to subsidise places for more vulnerable children once the Centre can

reopen fully. The Centre also received a share of the Council's grant for income loss.

**Public background papers used in the preparation of the report:**

- For exclusions data: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england>
- For absence data: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england>
- Education & Participation Strategy 2018-22: [Education and Participation Strategy | LBB](#)
- Published 2021 national benchmarks for Key Stage 4 & 5 [Examination results - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

**List of appendices:**

**Appendix A:** Education performance dataset 2020/21