

**Councillor Jasmine Ali, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care:
Statement to Council Assembly**

28 January 2020

A revolution in children and young people's mental health

In 2018 I advised Council Assembly that this council and its partners on the Health and Wellbeing Board had made an historic pledge to support 100 per cent of children with a diagnosable mental health need to access services that will support their mental wellbeing.

When we evaluated our CAMHS service we found some good practice but we always strive for better. We were also shocked that the NHS target to support children with mental health needs was just 35 per cent.

In Southwark around 1,460 children are living with emotional disorders such as depression and anxiety, 2,300 children with conduct disorders such as oppositional defiant disorder, and 650 children with hyperkinetic disorders like ADHD.

We believed then as we do now that the time has come for mental health to be treated in the same way as any other health emergency.

Furthermore, we said that we would work to support 100 per cent of children by the close of 2020.

As this is the first Council Assembly of 2020 I would like to update you on our journey to revolutionise support for children and young people with mental health needs.

- We have invested an additional £2 million to develop early intervention and prevention in this area in every school.
- We have established a high level Children and Young Peoples Mental Health Commission which includes a number of mental health experts including Anne Longfield, the Children's Commissioner.
- In May this year we will open an exciting open access facility – where children and young people with mental health needs will be able to drop in and access support as well as be sign posted to other services.

I am sharing this information with you now so together we can publicise these developments within our communities.

This council remains appalled by the national scandal that children and young people with suicidal thoughts, self harming or have other serious mental health needs that make their lives a living nightmare - have to wait months for a referral.

The NHS estimates that just 30.5% of children and young people with a diagnosable mental health condition accessed NHS-funded treatment in 2017–18.

Not on our watch! Please tell our constituents that we remain committed to meeting 100% of our children and young people's mental health needs in Southwark.