

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Monday 18 November 2024

7.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Membership

Councillor Cassandra Brown (Chair)
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sunil Chopra
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Jon Hartley
Councillor Youcef Hassaine
Councillor Irina Von Wiese
Martin Brecknell (Co-opted member)
Jonathan Clay (Co-opted member)
Marcin Jagodzinski (Co-opted member)

Reserves

Councillor Gavin Edwards
Councillor Ketzia Harper
Councillor Sunny Lambe
Councillor Jason Ochere
Councillor Victor Chamberlain
Councillor Adam Hood

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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Contact

Amit Alva on email: amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

Althea Loderick

Chief Executive

Date: 10 November 2024



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Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Monday 18 November 2024
7.00 pm
Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
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PART A OPEN BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear working days of the meeting.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

Members to declare any interests and dispensations in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.

4. MINUTES

1 - 6

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2024.

5. INTERVIEWING RETIRED HEADTEACHER (SEND) AND SEND TRIBUNAL MEDIATOR.

To hear from Retired Headteacher, Fran Goggins working with SEND and SEND Tribunal Mediator, Catriona Ogilvy on SEND.

- Personal experience with Southwark
- Challenges dealing with SEND in Southwark.
- Improvements needed in Southwark SEND based on their experiences.

6. INCLUSIONS IN SCHOOLS

To receive a presentation from Councillor Jasmine Ali on Inclusion in Schools.

To hear from the executive headteacher GEM Federation of Schools (primary school) on dealing with persistent absences successfully.

To receive reports from Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice on persistent absences and permanent exclusions in schools.

- Schools with high number of exclusions
- Demographics of exclusions
- Schools with no exclusions
- Persistent absences (demographics of schools with absences)

To also hear from a secondary school teacher on issues around schools' exclusions.

7. UPDATE ON EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE PLAN (EHCP) 7 - 20

To get an update from Anna Chiva, Assistant Director for SEND on EHCPs'.

8. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025 21 - 28

To consider the proposed work programme for the 2024-2025 year.

DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER OPEN ITEMS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING.

Date: 10 November 2024



Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission held on Thursday 26 September 2024 at 7.00 pm at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Cassandra Brown (Chair)
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sunil Chopra
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Youcef Hassaine
Martin Brecknell (Co-opted member)
Jonathan Clay (Co-opted member)
Marcin Jagodzinski (Co-opted member)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor John Batteson (Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business)

OFFICER SUPPORT: Amit Alva (Scrutiny Officer)
Adam Wood (Scrutiny Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Councillor Irina Von Wiese.
Apologies for lateness received from Councillor Renata Hamvas and Co-opted Member Marcin Jagodzinski.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were no items of business which the Chair deemed urgent.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

There were no disclosures of interests and dispensations.

4. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2024 were approved as a correct record.

5. DRAFT TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

The Chair invited Councillor John Batteson (Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business) and Officer Danny Edwards (Head of Economy) to give an overview of the Draft Town Centre Action Plans.

Councillor Batteson thanked the Chair and noted:

- declining high streets over the last 15 years mean improving town centres is a national issue
- the Plans' relationships to the Council Delivery Plan and the work to deliver thriving High Streets; investing in delivering major improvements across Southwark town centres
- the Action Plans show work tailored to the needs of the designated town centres (Camberwell, Peckham, Elephant and Castle / Walworth and East Street, Bermondsey, and Canada Water), developed through feedback from residents and businesses, Councillor Batteson's engagement with the businesses and community, and that of the former Cabinet Member
- the Action Plans show the work to be carried out by the council working with a range of partners and stakeholders such as Business Improvement Districts, Camberwell's SE5 Forum, Peckham Business Forum and Elephant and Castle Business Forum
- the Strategic Policy Leads (within the Local Economy Team) would act as single strategic points of contact for stakeholders wishing to build relationships with the council and for building relationships between stakeholders themselves
- the Strategic Policy Leads are responsible for delivering each of the Action Plan's objectives
- the Action Plans include public-facing plans, currently being piloted, which will be updated as the work progresses, making them responsive to residents' feedback
- the Action Plans show committed and funded actions through the Thriving High Streets Fund
- the future funding situation can change as a result of changes in national government policies
- businesses have communicated hopes that national government will aim to

reduce retail theft by considering shoplifting charges for aggregate value below the current £200 threshold

- (through Danny) that the role of the Town Centre Leads is to be visible within their allocated communities and to use their in-depth area knowledge, working across the council to efficiently coordinate activity and engage with the community

The Chair noted that the report was yet to go to Cabinet, providing an opportunity for the commission to feed into the Town Centre Action Plans.

The commission then asked the following questions regarding:

- the Town Centre Leads' roles and how they fit into existing coordinating provision and reporting structures
- measures of the Plans' and grants' success
- the Action Plans' support for older residents and provision of wifi, benches and toilets as supportive infrastructure for building footfall and increasing safety
- the definition of town centres and how smaller shopping streets relate to the Town Centre Action Plans
- responsibility for deciding where funding is allocated and why the funding allocation process differs from, for example, funding for Neighbourhoods or the Cleaner Greener Safer (CGS) programme
- seasonality (and associated potential for seasonal employment) – how this related to the Plans
- opportunities for sharing lessons from areas deemed already to be thriving
- the balance between local, independent shops and bigger High Street brands, and how the Council can encourage brands to stay where these contribute to increased footfall
- plans for engaging with universities

In response, Councillor Batteson and Danny explained that the roles of the new Town Centre Leads will evolve. They would coordinate actions within the Local Economy Team and across the Council with an emphasis on shorter-term, action-led delivery rather than producing high-level strategy or vision documents.

Success measures will be developed with input from communities (given the consultative nature of the Plans) and feedback from this Commission. Specific, funded projects had their own evaluation processes.

Councillor Batteson noted that wifi connectivity was an important aspect and that it would be factored into the wider infrastructural development within the Plans.

The Council Delivery Plan defines the five town centres: Peckham; Camberwell; Elephant and Castle / Walworth and East Street; Bermondsey; and Canada Water. Support for and actions in smaller streets and parades are provided through other mechanisms in the Thriving High Streets Programme.

Councillor Batteson explained that funding through the Town Centre Action Plans was ultimately the responsibility of the Cabinet Member. Danny added that the funding was non-Council (being UK Shared Prosperity Fund-derived) and it required the Council to follow the processes and outputs established by the GLA and central government.

So far, local businesses had indicated that seasonality was not especially important but this could be explored further if there was interest at a later date.

The reason for a single point of contact in Town Centres is to provide detailed, local knowledge so that on-the-ground issues could be identified and brought to the Council's attention.

Lessons from other, already thriving Town Centres had already been shared. These complemented the conversations with businesses specific to the areas of the Action Plans so that best practices both 'wider' and 'deeper' could be combined. In addition, regular meetings between Bid leads have enabled further sharing of learning.

On the balancing and mixing of smaller, local shops with bigger brands, the Commission heard that the latter can generate spillover interest and business by attracting people to an area who then go on to shop in independent businesses. However, the Council has limited powers at influencing larger commercial interests to stay in an area if this is not to their advantage. Its role in contributing to thriving town centres through increasing footfall is more significant.

The focus of the Town Centre Action Plans is businesses and local residents (including students) whereas engagement with universities happens primarily through the Anchor Network.

6. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW- CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS & BUSINESS

The commission then heard from Councillor Batteson on his Cabinet role and remit in Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business.

Councillor Batteson made the following points:

Employment Support, Apprenticeships and Internships

Employment support focuses on the priority groups facing the greatest barriers to work and is delivered through Southwark Works, a framework of specialist providers supporting people with disabilities, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders, refugees and people at risk of homelessness. More work is needed to raise the

visibility of the service. If national government devolves skills and employment support then there may be increased opportunities for the service. Nationally, the apprenticeship system is struggling but Southwark is doing well, particularly in terms of entry level apprenticeships. A more diverse range of Apprenticeship industries and sectors would be beneficial as new apprenticeship posts are predominantly in the Construction industries. In terms of paid Internships, the programme offers three themes: for Sixth Form students; for penultimate year undergraduates; for graduates within 12 months of graduating.

The Skills Delivery Plan

This focuses on six sectors where long-term growth is expected. Activities are more advanced in some sectors (the Green sector has a Skills Centre and pathways into Southwark Works whereas the Hospitality sector has a Skills Hub opening in the next few months). Further work is needed to link employment sectors so that skills training and pathways more closely match how people look for jobs.

Business Support

Businesses are keen to access more funding. Southwark Pioneers and the Thriving High Street Programme are the main vehicles for this. Analysis of Southwark Pioneers (supporting start-ups, micro-businesses, social enterprises and businesses in growth phases) shows good distribution of support for businesses across the Borough.

Living Wage Borough

The Borough is making progress towards the target of doubling Living Wage Employers by 2026 (to 496) with a focus on developing conversations in the business community to highlight advantages for employers (recruitment and retention among others).

The Commission then asked questions on:

- the Council's role in linking Apprenticeships with Children in Care in Southwark and with schools
- the background to and funding outcomes of the Southwark Pioneers Fund and how it could be better advertised
- current provision for those leaving prison (given the national situation)
- how businesses are meeting the challenge of the Living Wage given the current economic situation

Danny explained that Care Leavers (Children in Care are supported by Children and Adult Services) are an important priority for the Council and a Priority group for

Southwark Works where they receive bespoke skills support and access to the support network.

Councillor Batteson explained the importance of the Pioneers Fund (currently in Year 2 of 4 and so outcomes yet to be fully evaluated). Councillor Batteson has been working with officers in Communications to increase visibility through existing channels and to focus on beneficiaries of the fund who can share their stories and so help to engage others. More work is needed to illustrate the support available to potential users.

Regarding ex-offenders, Councillor Batteson agreed to find out from Southwark Works and Pecan (relevant support organisation) on the current situation and report back to the Commission.

Councillor Batteson informed the commission that the aim is to reach the target number of Living Wage employers, noting that accreditation warrants a cost for the business and also that the Council has a role in encouraging and supporting the process of accreditation. Additional initiatives, such as encouraging businesses in Council-owned properties to be Living Wage employers, are being explored.

In response to a query about the appearance of a graph on page 10 of the Local Economy Programmes report, Danny noted the ward label formatting error which would be reformatted, and the report recirculated.

The Chair summarised the discussion and noted opportunities for further boosting communications around the Skills Delivery Plan (and employment support more generally) and links from these to the care system, prisons and schools.

7. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025

The Commission discussed the need to see Persistent Absences data and the Council's actions to reduce absences including considering possible actions in the near future.

The Commission agreed to invite a representative from a Southwark school that has successfully dealt with Persistent Absences.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm.

CHAIR:

DATED:

Item No. 6 a	Classification: Open	Date: 18 November 2024	Meeting Name: Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Southwark School Persistent Absence (November 2024)	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission are asked to note the contents of this report and officers and representative head teachers will be available at the commission meeting on 18 November to answer questions and support the commission in its work.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school¹.
3. Where parents decide to have their child registered at a school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.
4. Attendance at school is essential for children to gain the most of their school experience including attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. Pupils with higher rates of attendance have higher rates of attainment than those with the lowest attainment.
5. Regular school attendance also acts as a protective factor for vulnerable children and research highlights the association between absence and extra familial harm risk. As a proportion of the children who had been cautioned or sentenced for any offence, 81% had evidence of persistent absence and for those in the serious violence cohort this rose to 85%².

¹ [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#)

² [Education, children's social care and offending: local authority level dashboard, Academic year 2019/20 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

6. In order to improve the life chances of a child and also provide an important protective factor for vulnerable children it is important that the council and its partners continue to scrutinise school attendance.
7. The council's Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission requested the following specific data to support their consideration of inclusion in Southwark schools.
 - Persistent absence (demographics of schools with absences)
8. In order to help the Commission in its work it is important to include general information on attendance as well as the focus requested on persistent absence.
9. Annual comparator data of absence from the census data submissions was last published in March 2024 for the school year 2022/23.
10. For the 24/25 school year, state funded schools have a duty to share information and use the DfE tool provided. The council has access to this tool but has requested schools to sign up to the *Studybugs* platform which provides us with direct access to live data.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Statutory requirements

11. Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities was published in [Working Together to improve school attendance](#) (WTTISA) in August 2024.
12. The guidance promotes a support first approach to attendance issues and includes a new national framework for penalty notices but expects:

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

13. Schools have a duty to keep an attendance register, and take the register at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. This requires recording whether a pupil is physically present and if not, the reason why they are not by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes.

14. From 19/08/2024 all schools are expected to share live attendance information with the DfE through the View Your Education Data (VYED).

Overall absence

15. Southwark's overall absence rates are positive, with absence rates for primary and secondary schools below inner London and national rates.

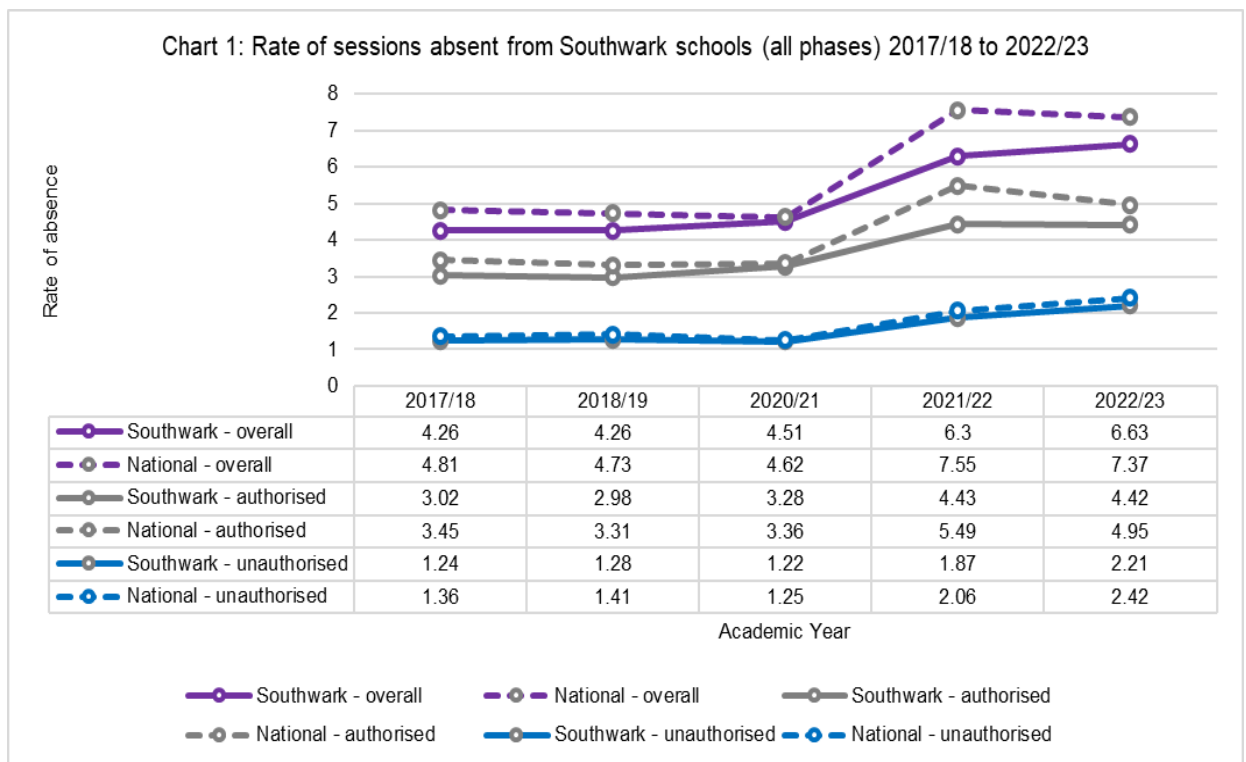
16. Overall absence rates from Southwark schools continue to be higher than pre-pandemic levels, with an increase seen in the most recently published academic year.

17. The overall absence rate from Southwark special schools is 1.5 times higher than pre-covid rates and over one percentage point higher than inner London and national rates.

Phase	Location	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Primary	Southwark	3.96	3.90	3.76	5.55	5.61
	Inner London	4.13	4.06	4.05	5.93	6.35
	National	4.17	4.03	3.64	6.26	5.90
Secondary	Southwark	4.55	4.59	4.95	6.94	7.47
	Inner London	4.97	4.96	5.21	7.31	7.96
	National	5.53	5.49	5.49	8.99	9.01
Special	Southwark	9.55	10.33	19.68	13.34	14.59
	Inner London	10.18	10.02	12.84	12.68	13.55
	National	10.22	10.13	15.21	13.18	13.02
Total	Southwark	4.26	4.26	4.51	6.30	6.63
	Inner London	4.54	4.51	4.67	6.63	7.18
	National	4.81	4.73	4.62	7.55	7.37

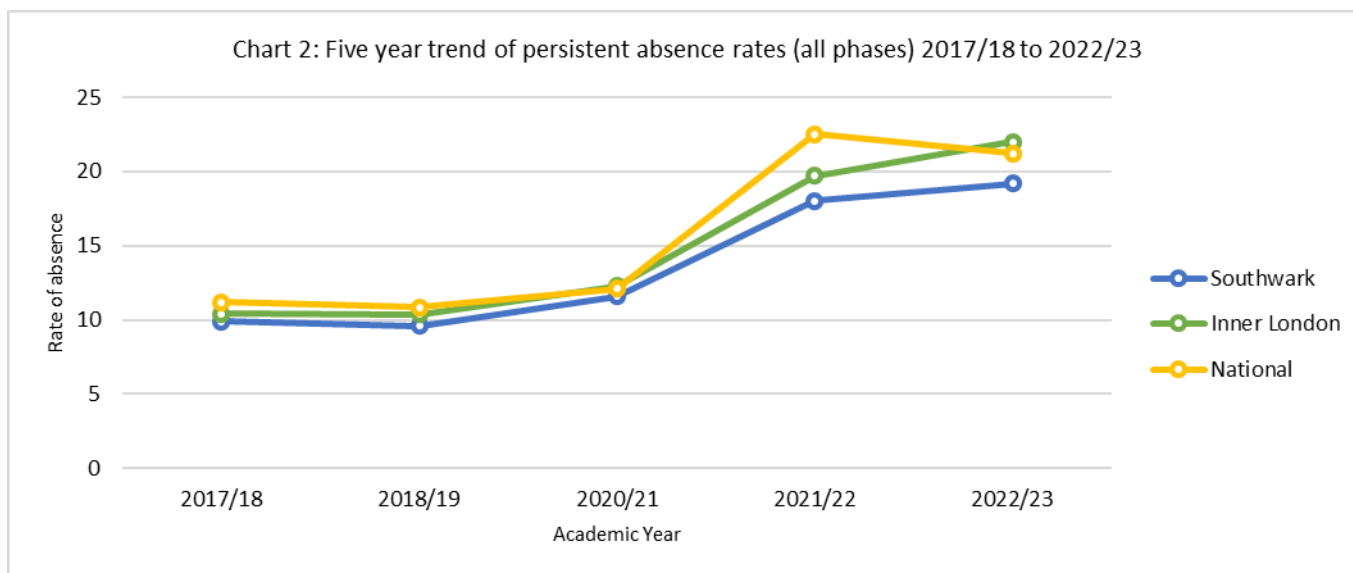
Authorised and unauthorised absence

- 18. Authorised absence rates in Southwark are lower than the national authorised absence rates.
- 19. The rate of unauthorised absence has increased, both nationally and within Southwark. Southwark remains below the national rate.
- 20. The special phase is the only phase in Southwark with higher levels of authorised and unauthorised absence than the national rates.



Persistent absence³

21. Chart 2 below shows the five-year trend of persistent absence rates in Southwark, compared to the inner London and national rates.



22. Southwark is performing well in this domain. Although substantial increases have been seen between 2021/22 and 2022/23, and rates are far higher than the pre-pandemic period, Southwark's rate is consistently below the inner London and national rates.

23. The national rate fell in the most recent period, although increases were seen in both inner London and Southwark. The rate of increase was steeper in inner London than Southwark.

24. For context, the 2022/23 Southwark rates relate to 6,930 children missing 10% or more of school sessions, up from 6,535 in 2021/22. 2,954 of these children are in primary school, 3,742 of these children in secondary school, and 234 in special schools.

25. Southwark's primary and secondary school persistent absence rates are below inner London and national rates, whereas the rate for special schools is between them.

³ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/methodology/pupil-absence-statistics-methodology> a pupil is classified as a persistent absentee if they miss 10% or more of their own possible sessions. Therefore, if an enrolment's overall absence rate is 10% or higher, they will be classified as persistently absent

Persistence absence by gender

Primary school

26. Persistent absence rate for boys in primary schools increased between 2021/22 and 2022/23 and is approaching the national rate, but the rate for girls decreased slightly in the same period.

Table 2: Persistent absence rates from Southwark primary schools by gender									
Type	Gender	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Inner London	National	Benchmarking
Persistent absence	Boys	8.77	8.25	9.34	15.58	16.48	20.10	16.68	▼
	Girls	8.67	8.24	9.29	15.47	15.42	18.59	15.72	▼

Secondary school

27. Post pandemic, girls in Southwark secondary schools have higher rates of persistent absence than boys and this matches the inner London and national trend.

28. Southwark is below inner London and national rates for persistence absence for both girls and boys.

Table 3: Absence rates from Southwark secondary schools by gender									
Type	Gender	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Inner London	National	Benchmarking
Persistent absence	Boys	11.70	11.71	12.55	18.92	21.12	24.01	25.28	▼
	Girls	10.43	10.71	12.87	21.38	22.79	24.76	27.80	▼

Special school

29. Persistent absence for girls in Southwark special schools has doubled since the pandemic and for both boys and has continued to increase over the last 3 school years but remains below the rate for boys.

30. Southwark is above the inner London and national persistent absence rates for boys but the rate for girls is below both.

Table 4: Absence rates from Southwark special schools by gender									
Type	Gender	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Inner London	National	Benchmarking
Persistent absence	Boys	26.47	30.53	59.66	39.96	41.40	41.22	37.70	▲
	Girls	20.48	19.77	63.55	27.19	38.35	45.96	40.04	▼

Persistent by year group

31. The tables below illustrate the year groups with the highest rates of persistent absence and how Southwark's rates compare to inner London and national rates.

Primary schools

32. Years 1 to 4 saw increases in the rate of persistent absence in 2022/23, when compared to the previous academic year, whereas Years 5 and 6 saw small reductions.

Table 5: Persistent absence in Southwark primary schools by year group						
Absence type	Southwark rate			Inner London rate	National rate	Benchmarking
	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Year 1 and below	18.56	18.70	▲	23.61	18.89	▼
Year 2	15.09	16.19	▲	20.16	15.86	◀
Year 3	14.44	14.66	▲	18.09	14.85	▼
Year 4	13.42	14.96	▲	17.56	14.93	◀
Year 5	14.79	14.62	▼	17.49	15.35	▼
Year 6	14.15	13.89	▼	16.33	15.42	▼

33. Southwark's rates are below inner London and national rates for persistent absence in four year groups, and between the inner London and national rate in years 2 and 4.

Secondary schools

34. Persistent absence increased between 2021/22 and 2022/23 in Southwark secondary schools in the Year 8, 9 and 11 year groups, with the largest increase seen in Year 11 (3.79 percentage points). Overall, Year 10 has the highest persistent absence rate (23.91).

35. Although increases were seen in some year groups between 2021/22 and 2022/23, the persistent absence rate for all year groups was below inner London and national averages.

Table 7: Persistent absence in Southwark secondary schools by year group						
Absence type	Southwark rate			Inner London rate	National rate	Benchmarking
	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Year 7	15.37	15.35	▼	18.28	19.56	▼
Year 8	18.50	21.23	▲	23.16	24.99	▼
Year 9	21.42	23.86	▲	25.96	28.43	▼
Year 10	24.61	23.91	▼	27.58	29.26	▼
Year 11	19.66	23.45	▲	26.49	30.15	▼

Special schools

36. Except for Year 9, persistent absence increased for all year groups in special schools, with the highest persistent absence rates being in Year 10 (a rate of 49.30).

37. Year groups showing the greatest increases in persistent absence in 2022/23 were Year 3, which increased by 19.81 percentage points to 45.45 and Year 2, which increased by 13.89 percentage points to 46.15.

Absence type	Southwark rate			Inner London rate	National rate	Benchmarking
	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Year 1 and below	45.16	47.22	▲	53.23	42.96	◀
Year 2	32.26	46.15	▲	45.88	38.56	▼
Year 3	25.64	45.45	▲	45.37	35.61	▲
Year 4	26.67	34.09	▲	43.73	34.47	▼
Year 5	33.33	34.35	▲	38.68	34.13	◀
Year 6	30.56	35.71	▲	40.57	34.18	◀
Year 7	30.88	34.67	▲	38.11	34.57	◀
Year 8	35.62	37.31	▲	37.00	37.54	◀
Year 9	46.38	34.67	▼	42.61	40.07	▼
Year 10	48.57	49.30	▲	45.61	43.17	▲
Year 11	38.81	39.68	▲	43.55	44.03	▼

38. Except for Years 2, 4, 9 and 11 all persistent absence rates from Southwark special schools are either above the inner London and national rates or between them.

39. The rate of persistent absence of Year 10 pupils in Southwark special schools (49.30) is above the inner London (45.61) and national (43.17) rate.

Persistent absence by ethnic background

40. Although persistent absence rates increased for Minority Ethnic pupils in 2022/23, when compared to 2021/22 they remain below the inner London and national rates.

41. This is not the case for White British pupils, where although decreases were seen in overall absence, authorised absence, and persistent absence all rates are between inner London and national rates.

Table 11: Persistent absence rates from Southwark schools (all phases) of Minority Ethnic pupils						
Absence type	Southwark rate			Inner London rate	National rate	Benchmarking
	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Persistent absence	16.38	18.34	▲	21.94	21.37	▼

42. Southwark's persistent absence rates for 2022/23 show that White British pupils continue to have higher persistent absence rates than Minority Ethnic pupils.

Table 12: Persistent absence rates from Southwark schools (all phases) of White British pupils						
Absence type	Southwark rate			Inner London rate	National rate	Benchmarking
	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Persistent absence	23.02	21.81	▼	22.23	21.14	◀

Persistent absence for children with SEND

Primary schools

43. Persistent absence for children with an EHCP in Southwark primary schools increased between 2021/22 and 2022/23 but remained below the inner London and national rate.

44. The rates of persistent for children with SEN support and severe absence decreased between 2021/22 and 2022/23 and are below inner London and national rates.

45. The persistent absence rate of children with an EHCP is 1.9 times higher than those with no SEND needs in Southwark primary schools and 1.6 times higher for those with SEN support needs.

Table 13: Persistent absence rates per SEN type in Southwark primary schools							
Absence type	SEN type	Southwark rate			Inner London	National	Benchmarking
		2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Persistent absence	EHCP	24.92	25.96	▲	31.63	30.99	▼
	SEN support	22.55	22.22	▼	25.92	24.77	▼
	No SEN	13.26	13.75	▲	17.05	13.91	▼

Secondary schools

46. In terms of secondary schools all groups (EHCP, SEN support and No SEN needs) increased in the rate of persistent absence between 2021/22 and 2022/23 but remained below inner London and national comparator rates.

47. The persistent absence rate for children with SEN support was slightly higher than the rate for children with an EHCP. These rates were 1.6 times higher than for children with no SEND needs.

Table 14: Absence rates per SEN type in Southwark secondary schools							
Absence type	SEN type	Southwark rate			Inner London	National	Benchmarking
		2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Persistent absence	EHCP	27.59	31.03	▲	32.51	39.13	▼
	SEN support	29.12	31.83	▲	34.32	39.05	▼
	No SEN	17.73	19.46	▲	22.15	23.78	▼

Special schools

48. There are far fewer pupils at special schools with SEN support (58, compared to 6045 with EHCPs) therefore the rates generated may be artificially higher for the SEN support category.

49. Persistent absence in special schools increased between 2021/22 and 2022/23, with authorised absence, unauthorised absence and severe absence being above both inner London and national rates.

Table 15: Persistent absence rates per SEN type in Southwark special schools							
Absence type	SEN type	Southwark rate			Inner London	National	Benchmarking
		2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23	2022/23	
Persistent absence	EHCP	36.35	40.04	▲	42.15	37.84	◀
	SEN support	83.33	75.00	▼	62.07	67.11	▲

50. There are clear differences between the rates of persistent absence for children with EHCPs in primary schools, secondary schools, and special schools, with the persistent absence rate 1.3 times higher in special schools.

Individual school persistent absence rates

Primary schools

51. For primary schools the persistence absence rate ranges from 4.52 to 36.07

School	Persistent Absence (10) %			
	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
John Keats Primary School	n/a	20.99	33.85	36.07
Cobourg Primary School	10.80	10.76	14.17	32.12
Peter Hills with St Mary's and St Paul's CofE Primary School	11.04	9.16	18.18	31.73
Alfred Salter Primary School	9.52	18.10	27.71	27.03
Friars Primary Foundation School	17.32	19.35	28.99	26.62
Oliver Goldsmith Primary School	12.11	14.38	27.21	26.35
Tower Bridge Primary School	10.84	24.84	24.53	25.81
Michael Faraday School	9.27	11.05	20.48	25.00
Comber Grove School	12.24	14.29	26.92	23.53
St Jude's Church of England Primary School	11.83	14.85	15.53	22.99
Harris Primary Free School Peckham	7.90	13.71	13.85	22.90
John Donne Primary School	6.25	10.39	15.92	22.66
Brunswick Park Primary School	5.35	9.23	15.58	22.37
Pilgrims' Way Primary School	8.89	11.11	23.98	22.29
Snowsfields Primary School	14.53	5.29	26.25	21.71
Surrey Square Primary School	9.59	13.82	15.66	21.58
St George's Church of England Primary School	9.03	15.71	25.15	21.56
Galleywall	11.67	6.69	18.06	21.28
Rotherhithe Primary School	10.11	14.08	26.30	20.82
Townsend Primary School	6.58	9.64	20.65	20.66
Bellenden Primary School	10.96	12.57	14.01	20.50
Keyworth Primary School	8.70	12.32	19.29	20.20
Goose Green (2859 & 2008)	10.32	10.20	19.17	20.09
Ilderton Primary School	8.56	10.23	18.99	19.63
St Joseph's Catholic Infants School	7.02	7.38	15.45	19.54
Southwark Park Primary School	13.48	11.17	19.38	19.53
Crampton Primary	8.99	3.85	14.05	18.92
Albion Primary School	10.30	11.46	17.53	18.91
Grange Primary School	15.22	18.15	17.92	18.88
St Francesca Cabrini Primary School	8.73	10.43	14.69	18.75
Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary School, the Borough	2.23	7.51	6.94	18.24
Lyndhurst Primary School	8.52	8.07	19.64	18.18
Charlotte Sharman Primary School	10.08	8.24	9.25	17.96
St John's Roman Catholic Primary School	7.26	11.11	16.48	17.92
Dog Kennel Hill School	11.27	10.34	10.95	17.67
Dulwich Wood Primary School	8.56	11.26	13.46	17.66

Angel Oak Academy	14.04	6.91	13.42	17.63
John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes	5.42	8.94	12.64	17.43
St James' Church of England Primary School	8.10	8.29	18.62	17.31
Crawford Primary School	9.96	10.84	16.54	17.13
Phoenix Primary School	8.85	9.90	14.20	16.52
St Francis RC Primary School	7.02	8.99	14.11	16.14
Rye Oak Primary School	10.00	10.30	19.64	15.79
St Peter's Church of England Primary School	13.90	10.49	11.76	15.00
Hollydale Primary School	6.88	9.20	13.41	14.86
Victory Primary School	10.45	3.60	18.58	14.15
St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School	9.50	14.49	12.15	13.68
St Joseph's Catholic Junior School	9.28	3.77	11.11	13.62
Harris Primary Academy Peckham Park	10.70	12.45	14.35	13.45
Redriff Primary School	7.50	4.27	11.93	13.23
Robert Browning Primary School	2.54	5.52	18.18	12.65
Heber Primary School	10.74	9.20	20.18	11.73
St John's and St Clement's Church of England Primary School	7.04	6.46	13.80	11.25
Harris Primary Academy East Dulwich	0.90	10.20	12.86	10.20
St George's Cathedral Catholic Primary School	4.39	4.65	11.83	10.19
The Cathedral School of St Saviour and St Mary Overie	1.14	1.13	14.20	10.17
Goodrich Community Primary School	5.83	7.80	14.86	10.17
Bessemer Grange Primary School	4.56	7.95	13.15	10.05
Boutcher Church of England Primary School	3.80	4.89	7.03	9.19
Camelot Primary School	8.70	3.73	5.19	9.09
St Paul's CofE Primary School, Walworth (3573 & 2010 for 2018/19)		14.92	13.33	9.04
Ivydale Primary School	8.73	6.19	15.21	8.87
Judith Kerr Primary School	5.56	3.39	15.26	8.52
The Belham Primary School	0.43	11.45	7.65	8.13
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School	2.56	2.42	10.27	8.12
Dulwich Village Church of England Infants' School	2.17	5.59	6.45	7.18
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School	2.17	2.96	8.96	7.14
Charles Dickens Primary School	7.38	8.20	18.13	7.03
St James the Great Roman Catholic Primary School	8.57	4.60	8.47	6.67
English Martyrs' Roman Catholic Primary School	3.14	2.63	5.32	6.53
Riverside Primary School	6.46	6.39	8.40	5.00
Dulwich Hamlet Junior School	1.93	3.25	8.99	4.92
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	1.76	2.82	4.52	4.52

52. The following table describes some of the demographics of the school population that will influence and impact school attendance such as size, location, free school meals, special needs alongside rates of exclusion, suspension and persistent absenteeism.

Primary School	No on roll	FSM rate (summer 2023/24)	Deprivation rate (summer 2023/24)	EHCP rate (2023/24)	SEN support rate (2023/24)	PEX rate 2022/23	Suspension rate 2022/23	Persistent absence 2022/23
John Keats Primary School	319	61.44	28.53	4.08	26.33	0.00	0.00	36.07
Peter Hills with St Mary's and St Paul's CofE Primary School	128	51.56	12.50	12.50	13.28	0.00	0.00	31.73
Alfred Salter Primary School	401	26.43	17.71	6.23	21.45	0.00	1.00	27.03
Friars Primary Foundation School	188	44.68	44.68	4.26	23.94	0.00	0.00	26.62
Oliver Goldsmith Primary School	404	53.22	10.15	2.97	8.42	0.00	0.28	26.35
Tower Bridge Primary School	198	59.09	30.81	4.55	22.73	0.00	10.50	25.81
Michael Faraday School	437	36.38	31.58	2.97	22.65	0.00	1.61	25.00
Comber Grove School	124	37.90	6.45	1.61	16.94	0.00	1.67	23.53
St Jude's Church of England Primary School	74	45.95	20.27	6.76	9.46	0.00	0.00	22.99
John Donne Primary School	401	54.11	17.21	4.74	11.22	0.00	3.69	22.66
Brunswick Park Primary School	411	50.36	3.41	5.35	17.76	0.00	0.00	22.37
Pilgrims' Way Primary School	217	49.31	32.72	2.76	15.21	0.00	1.41	22.29
Snowsfields Primary School	196	52.55	23.47	11.73	15.31	0.00	0.53	21.71
Surrey Square Primary School	467	58.46	25.27	5.35	18.63	0.00	1.95	21.58
St George's Church of England Primary School	173	49.13	9.83	8.09	15.61	0.00	0.00	21.56
Galleywall Primary School	382	42.15	34.82	4.71	16.23	0.00	3.68	21.28
Rotherhithe Primary School	339	43.07	49.56	4.42	19.17	0.00	1.49	20.82
Bellenden Primary School	211	40.76	9.48	2.84	16.59	0.00	0.00	20.50
Keyworth Primary School	356	55.06	6.74	4.21	12.08	0.00	0.00	20.20
Goose Green Primary School	254	45.28	9.06	2.76	22.05	0.00	0.33	20.09
Ilderton Primary School	208	37.02	40.38	4.33	13.94	0.00	0.00	19.63
St Joseph's Camberwell Catholic Schools' Federation (Infants)	106	27.36	12.26	2.83	19.81	0.00	0.00	19.54
Southwark Park Primary School	420	43.57	26.67	6.43	18.57	0.00	4.48	19.53

Crampton Primary School	208	34.62	5.29	1.92	24.52	0.00	0.98	18.92
Albion Primary School	448	38.39	30.36	4.91	20.31	0.00	0.23	18.91
Grange Primary School	313	52.08	41.85	4.79	21.09	0.00	2.79	18.88
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, the Borough	183	37.70	27.32	6.56	18.58	0.00	3.08	18.24
Lyndhurst Primary School	431	22.97	2.09	3.94	12.99	0.00	8.52	18.18
Charlotte Sharman Primary School	181	38.67	28.18	3.31	18.23	0.00	1.63	17.96
St Johns Primary School	228	29.39	22.81	3.07	15.35	0.00	1.38	17.92
Dog Kennel Hill School	246	39.02	10.16	3.25	16.67	0.00	0.00	17.67
Dulwich Wood Primary School	405	25.68	34.07	2.47	31.60	0.00	1.02	17.66
Angel Oak Academy	411	46.96	15.57	4.62	7.06	0.00	0.73	17.63
John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes	490	47.76	19.80	11.84	12.45	0.00	1.04	17.43
St James' Church of England Primary School	412	69.66	43.45	6.55	18.20	0.00	0.00	17.31
Crawford Primary School	373	48.53	13.14	1.88	30.56	0.00	2.20	17.13
Phoenix Primary School	512	39.26	29.69	0.78	16.02	0.00	1.27	16.52
St Francis RC Primary School	289	39.10	17.99	6.23	17.65	0.00	0.00	16.14
Rye Oak Primary School	283	56.89	13.43	12.01	30.74	0.00	0.73	15.79
St Peter's Church of England Primary School	161	50.31	24.22	4.97	10.56	0.00	3.93	15.00
Hollydale Primary School	151	38.41	12.58	5.96	16.56	0.00	1.27	14.86
Victory Primary School	140	50.00	25.71	2.14	22.14	0.00	0.00	14.15
St Mary Magdalene CofE Primary School	103	49.51	8.74	7.77	26.21	0.00	0.88	13.68
St Joseph's Camberwell Catholic Schools' Federation (KS2)	226	40.71	11.06	4.87	13.72	0.00	0.00	13.62
Harris Primary Academy Peckham Park	352	55.97	17.33	2.84	8.24	0.00	0.00	13.45
Redriff Primary School	493	22.11	12.17	6.90	15.82	0.00	5.39	13.23
Robert Browning Primary School	206	46.12	23.79	11.17	36.89	0.00	1.99	12.65
Heber Primary School	422	13.27	1.90	2.37	12.80	0.00	0.00	11.73
St John's and St Clement's Church of England Primary School	361	21.05	4.16	4.43	15.79	0.00	1.68	11.25
Harris Primary Academy East Dulwich	373	18.23	3.75	1.88	13.40	0.00	0.00	10.20
St George's Cathedral Catholic Primary	186	33.33	22.58	3.23	17.74	0.00	0.00	10.19
Goodrich Community Primary School	508	22.05	1.18	1.57	20.87	0.00	0.19	10.17
The Cathedral School of St Saviour and St Mary Overy	212	19.81	25.47	2.83	16.04	0.00	0.00	10.17
Bessemer Grange Primary School	569	21.27	3.69	3.34	11.95	0.00	0.00	10.05
Boutcher Church of England Primary School	209	33.97	43.06	2.87	25.36	0.00	0.00	9.19

St Paul's CE Primary School	185	45.95	19.46	1.62	20.54	0.00	0.52	9.04
Ivydale Primary School	486	16.67	14.61	4.32	15.43	0.00	0.20	8.87
Judith Kerr Primary School	393	4.58	5.09	2.29	9.16	0.00	0.79	8.52
The Belham Primary School	398	13.82	1.51	2.01	9.55	0.00	5.49	8.13
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School	437	27.69	7.32	3.66	18.31	0.00	0.46	8.12
Dulwich Village Church of England Infants' School	249	8.03	1.61	4.82	9.24	0.00	0.00	7.18
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School (George Row)	326	29.75	34.05	2.15	8.90	0.00	0.00	7.14
Charles Dickens Primary School	478	41.63	25.94	3.35	12.55	0.00	0.82	7.03
St James the Great Primary School	235	38.30	11.91	4.26	15.32	0.00	0.00	6.67
English Martyrs Primary School	373	38.07	30.03	2.14	16.89	0.00	0.00	6.53
Riverside Primary School	290	36.55	36.55	2.76	12.76	0.00	0.00	5.00
Dulwich Hamlet Junior School	357	14.57	1.68	5.60	14.01	0.00	3.07	4.92
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gomm Road)	222	26.13	43.69	4.05	11.26	0.00	0.00	4.52
Bird In Bush School	485	51.55	17.32	4.33	23.30			

Secondary schools

53. All schools have faced challenges with persistent absence post covid but rates of persistent absenteeism vary from 9.62 to 37.74 (2022/23 data).

School	Persistent Absence (10) %			
	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
South Bank University Academy (OPENED 01/09/2014)	11.40	17.43	32.81	37.74
Bacon's College (6911 & 4005)	14.67	15.04	26.61	28.38
Ark Walworth Academy	13.61	24.34	26.10	28.19
The Charter School East Dulwich (OPENED 12/09/2016)	11.21	10.65	20.19	27.35
Compass School Southwark	20.15	21.03	34.22	27.33
Haberdashers' Borough Academy (OPENED 02/09/2019)	n/a	9.43	19.31	27.24
Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich	8.01	10.42	23.77	27.23
City of London Academy (Southwark)	18.33	22.16	31.25	26.60
Harris Academy Peckham	14.49	16.10	19.83	24.41
Ark All Saints Academy	11.66	12.91	21.41	20.81
Notre Dame Roman Catholic Girls' School	11.99	10.66	19.48	20.43
The Charter School North Dulwich	10.33	7.83	21.46	20.17
Harris Academy Bermondsey	12.15	11.24	20.07	20.09
St Saviour's and St Olave's Church of England School	8.52	8.65	13.35	17.38
Kingsdale Foundation School	5.44	8.15	12.54	16.09
Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich	7.61	4.95	15.04	15.84
The St Thomas the Apostle College	11.74	7.13	11.88	13.65
St Michael's Catholic College	6.62	8.53	11.76	12.30
Sacred Heart Catholic School	9.42	4.72	11.35	9.62

54. The following table describes some of the demographics of the

school population that will influence and impact school attendance such as size, location, free school meals, special needs alongside rates of exclusion, suspension and persistent absenteeism.

Secondary School	No on roll	FSM rate (summer 2023/24)	Deprivation rate (summer 2023/24)	EHCP rate (2023/24)	SEN support rate (2023/24)	PEX rate 2022/23	Suspension rate 2022/23	Persistent absence 2022/23
University Academy of Engineering South Bank	587	46.17	18.74	2.56	7.84	0.31	28.13	37.74
Bacon's College	1016	44.49	26.48	2.95	11.42	0.19	11.28	28.38
Ark Walworth Academy	997	62.59	26.88	2.11	13.04	0.00	0.19	28.19
The Charter School East Dulwich	1249	23.38	2.64	4.00	15.85	0.00	11.76	27.35
The Charter School Bermondsey	446	56.05	32.51	5.83	25.11	0.25	13.58	27.33
Haberdashers' Borough Academy	870	34.14	30.00	2.64	17.36	0.43	24.86	27.24
Harris Girls Academy East Dulwich	864	39.00	14.24	1.62	7.52	0.23	7.76	27.23
City of London Academy	1561	43.88	28.06	2.31	15.50	0.13	18.96	26.60
Ark Globe Academy	1317	60.52	25.51	2.66	17.54	0.07	20.61	25.51
Harris Academy Peckham	623	50.88	12.20	1.28	18.46	0.00	4.24	24.41
Ark All Saints Academy	587	59.63	9.20	3.75	16.52	0.00	11.39	20.81
Notre Dame School	506	41.90	17.19	4.15	3.56	0.38	14.78	20.43
The Charter School North Dulwich	1322	15.96	3.33	5.45	18.23	0.00	7.29	20.17
Harris Academy Bermondsey	866	49.88	30.72	0.92	8.66	0.23	7.84	20.09
St. Saviour's & St. Olave's School	742	41.64	23.99	1.89	11.46	0.00	12.20	17.38
Kingsdale Secondary School	2521	15.31	7.42	3.21	15.83	0.00	0.04	16.09
Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich	883	34.65	11.10	2.04	14.27	0.23	2.62	15.84
St Thomas the Apostle College	1107	37.76	18.70	2.80	10.03	0.00	9.70	13.65
St Michael's Catholic College	955	30.26	21.88	3.35	7.23	0.00	8.63	12.30
Sacred Heart RC School	865	39.54	15.95	2.66	7.63	0.00	13.91	9.62

Promoting school attendance

55. The council's Family Early Help Service deliver a Team Around the School approach and have single points of contacts for all schools with the council's Education Inclusion Team also available for consultation. This team also hold the statutory duties for enforcement and use of sanctions.

56. In the 2023/24 school year Family Early Help facilitated 177 Team Around the School meetings and trialed the new Targeting Support Meetings required as part of the new [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) (WTTISA) duties. The aim of these is to:

- identify, discuss, and agree action plans and joint approaches for severely absent pupils (attendance less than 50%) where they do not already have a plan in place;
- discuss and agree approaches for persistently absent pupils where they have barriers to attendance that require a multi-agency response to overcome;
- agree which agency will act as lead practitioner, which will be the school in most cases, but can be a local authority or partner team where there are multiple needs if they are the most appropriate service.

57. Over 1300 children where the were attendance concerns were discussed in these meetings and actions agreed to support improvements.

58. A cross system group for attendance and inclusion has been leading this work within the council alongside our response to the new statutory guidance on WTTISA.

Policy implications

59. Southwark 2030 ambitions include a good start in life and effective engagement in school life and academic achievement are key to realising this goal for all children.

Community impact statement

60. Inclusive practice within education benefits all members of the school and wider community. For children who are persistently absent from school a systemic approach is needed with responsibilities shared to reduce inequalities, empower children and families and offer a preventative support first approach.

Resource implications

61. Additional interim staff have been approved to implement the new statutory duties contained within [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) which will also include support for attendance.

Consultation

62. All schools and their attendance champions were invited to a Keeping Children in Education network meeting in October 2024 to share best practice. This will become a termly event and opportunity for partners to work with schools to promote what works to improve attendance.

63. Southwark Youth Parliament were consulted on attendance issues in September 2024 and interested in ongoing engagement in our work on inclusion and attendance.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Working Together to Improve School Attendance		
Education, children's social care and offending: local authority level dashboard, Academic year 2019/20 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK		

APPENDICES

No.	Title

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children's Services	
Report Author	Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 November 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes/No	Yes/No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	9 Nov 2024	

Item No. 6 b	Classification: Open	Date: 18 November 2024	Meeting Name: Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Southwark School Permanent Exclusions (November 2024)	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission are asked to note the contents of this report and officers and representative head teachers will be available at the commission meeting on 18 November to answer questions and support the commission in its work.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The permanent exclusion of a pupil from a school is known to have a significant impact on a child and their family, both in the short and long term.
3. In order to improve the life chances of a child and provide them with the best tools for success in their future, it is therefore important that the council and its partners continue to scrutinise the use of exclusion in the borough, and for agencies to work together to reduce the need to use this sanction, and only use it when there is no alternative.
4. The council's Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission requested the following specific data to support their consideration of inclusion in Southwark schools.
 - Schools with high number of exclusions
 - Demographics of exclusions
 - Schools with no exclusions
5. In order to help the Commission in its work it is important to present such data alongside other data

6. This report serves as an update to the Permanent Exclusions in Southwark 2017-2023 completed in January 2024 (see Appendix 1).
7. Annual comparator data of permanent exclusions was last published in July 2024 for the school year 2022/23.
8. Census and local data has been used to estimate permanent exclusions in the 2023/24 academic year.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Permanent exclusion data

9. The rate of permanent exclusion from Southwark schools remains below the pre-pandemic level of 0.08 having risen to 0.05 in 2022/23 indicative figures for 2023/24 show a decrease to 0.04.
10. These rates equate to 5 pupils in 2021/22, 20 in 2022/23 and an indicative 15 in 2023/24.
11. The permanent exclusion of pupils from Southwark Primary Schools is extremely rare with only 1 recorded in 2023/24 and 1 from a Primary Special School in 2022/23.
12. Overall, permanent exclusion rates in 2022/23 were equivalent to the inner London rate, and lower than the national rate.

Permanent exclusion rates at local authority, Inner London and national level							
Phase	Location	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Local indicative 2023/24
Primary	Southwark	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Inner London	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	National	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.03	
Secondary	Southwark	0.21	0.06	0.07	0.03	0.10	0.07
	Inner London	0.16	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.10	
	National	0.20	0.13	0.10	0.16	0.22	
Special	Southwark	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.00
	Inner London	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.07	
	National	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.08	
Total	Southwark	0.08	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.04
	Inner London	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.05	
	National	0.10	0.06	0.05	0.08	0.11	
Source: School census, statistics: exclusions – GOV.UK							

Schools with lower and higher numbers of permanent exclusions

13. There are several Southwark secondary schools who have not permanently excluded a pupil in the last 5 years. The free school meal (FSM) rate has been added to give some context to the profile of pupils.

Secondary School with no PEX in previous 5 years	FSM rate
Kingsdale	15.3
St Saviours and St Olave's,	37.5
St Thomas the Apostle College	36.8

14. In the previous 3-year period this also includes the following schools who have not permanently excluded a child.

Secondary School with no PEX in previous 5 years	FSM rate
Harris Academy Peckham	50.1
Charter North Dulwich	16.0

15. Schools excluding the highest number of pupils over a 5-year period are.

Secondary School	Number of PEX over previous 5 academic years	FSM rate
Charter School Bermondsey (Compass)	9	55.2
Bacon's College	8	43.8
City of London Academy	7	43.6
Harris Academy Bermondsey	6	48.3

16. Schools excluding the highest number of pupils over a 3-year period.

Secondary School	Number of PEX over previous 3 academic years	FSM
Bacon's	5	43.8
City of London Academy	5	43.6
Haberdashers' Borough Academy	5	27.6

Demographics of children permanently excluded

Gender

17. The table below outlines the published rates of permanent exclusions from Southwark secondary schools by gender for the last five academic years, as well as indicative data from the most recent academic year.

18. 2022/23 data showed significant increases permanent exclusions for both girls and boys, although neither were above the national rates. The notable increase in permanent exclusion of girls in both 2020/21 and 2022/23 has now reduced by 4% to 0.04 and is below that of boys.

Table : DfE published rates of permanently excluded pupils (by gender)								
Gender	Southwark rates						National rates	
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*	2021/22	2022/23
Girls	0.12	0.05	0.09	0.03	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.15
Boys	0.30	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.11	0.10	0.22	0.29
Indicative, using local census exclusions data, and spring census as proxy cohort group								

Year Group

19. Year groups with the highest rate of permanent exclusion in 2022/23 were Years 9 and 10, however neither had exclusion rates above the national.

20. Provisional rates for 2023/24 indicate that the year group with the highest rate of permanent exclusion was Year 10, however this rate is below the Southwark and national 2022/23 rate for this year group.

21. Of emerging concern in 2023/24 is Years 7 and Year 8, both of which saw increases between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Six of the fourteen permanent exclusions from Southwark schools were of pupils in these year groups.

Rates of permanent exclusions from secondary school by year group (NCY)											
NCY	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24
	SW	National	SW	National	SW	National	SW	National	SW	National	SW*
7	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.15	0.09
8	0.13	0.21	0.03	0.12	0.06	0.11	0.00	0.19	0.03	0.28	0.09
9	0.36	0.31	0.07	0.18	0.16	0.15	0.03	0.25	0.30	0.35	0.06
10	0.30	0.38	0.07	0.22	0.10	0.18	0.13	0.28	0.18	0.36	0.12
11	0.32	0.15	0.08	0.14	0.03	0.06	0.00	0.08	0.06	0.11	0.06
12+	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
• Indicative, using local census exclusions data, and spring census as proxy cohort group											

Ethnicity

22. The ethnicity group (as published by the DfE) rates of permanent exclusion for pupils in the secondary phase (both in Southwark and nationally are shown in the table below) with indicative figures for 2023/24.

Rates of permanent exclusion per ethnicity group in Southwark, compared to the national rate								
Ethnicity	Rate of PEX in secondary schools					National rate	Comparison	2023/24*
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			
Asian	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	▼	0.07
Black	0.24	0.04	0.05	0.01	0.09	0.17	▼	0.06
Mixed	0.20	0.14	0.18	0.08	0.04	0.28	▼	0.08
White	0.26	0.06	0.10	0.04	0.13	0.25	▼	0.09
Any other ethnic group	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13	▼	0.07
Unclassified	0.17	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.39	0.30	▲	0.00

• Indicative, using local census exclusions data, and spring census as proxy cohort group

23. Although an increase was seen in permanent exclusions in 2022/23, no rate was above the national rate, with the exception of 'unclassified' (3 pupils).

24. The table below provides a more detailed breakdown of ethnicity group however given that there were 5 permanent exclusions in 2021/22, multiple ethnic groups saw increases in 2022/23, in terms of both the number and rate.

25. Particular increases were seen in the White British (from 2 to 7) and Black African (1 to 4) ethnic groups.

26. Indicative data for 2023/24 shows the increase in permanent exclusions of White British pupils in 2022/23 has somewhat reduced in 2023/24 (from 0.19 to a predicted 0.11). The group with the largest increase was seen in the Bangladeshi ethnic group – though it must be noted this ethnic group has a small community within Southwark, and the rate of 0.21 relates to one pupil.

27. Other than the artificially high rate for Bangladeshi pupils, when comparing the predicted 2023/24 figures with national figures for 2022/23, no ethnic group has a rate higher than the national rate.

Rates of permanent exclusion per detailed ethnicity group in Southwark										
Ethnicity	Number			Southwark Rate			National rate	2023/24*		
	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2022/23			
Any other Asian background	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	0.08	0.00		
Any other Black background	0	1	▲	0.00	0.11	▲	0.22	0.00		
Any other Ethnic group	0	1	▲	0.00	0.07	▲	0.13	0.07		
Any other Mixed background	1	1	◀	0.09	0.09	▼	0.19	0.09		
Any other White background	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	▼	0.13	0.06		
Bangladeshi	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	0.06	0.21		
Black African	1	4	▲	0.02	0.07	▲	0.12	0.05		
Black Caribbean	0	2	▲	0.00	0.13	▲	0.33	0.13		
Chinese	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	0.02	0.00		
Gypsy Roma	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	1.19	0.00		
Indian	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	0.03	0.00		
Irish	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	▼	0.23	0.00		
Pakistani	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	0.13	0.00		
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	1.19	0.00		
White and Asian	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	◀	0.20	0.00		
White and Black African	1	0	▼	0.23	0.00	▼	0.28	0.00		
White and Black Caribbean	0	0	▼	0.00	0.00	▼	0.50	0.16		
White British	2	7	▲	0.06	0.19	▲	0.26	0.11		

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

28. The table below shows the rate of permanent exclusions from Southwark secondary schools in terms of SEN status. There was an increase in both the number and rate of permanent exclusion of children with SEN support in 2022/23.

29. Indicative 2023/24 data shows that of the 14 pupils permanently excluded from Southwark secondary schools, none had an EHCP at the time of permanent exclusion and 8 were in receipt of SEN support (57% with SEND). This was a lower proportion than the 73% of children permanently excluded in 2022/23 who had SEND needs.

Number and rate of secondary phase permanent exclusions per SEN type in Southwark, compared to national rate										
SEN type	PEX (numbers)				PEX rate in Southwark			National PEX rate		
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 ¹	DoT	2021/22	2022/23	DoT	2021/22	2022/23	DoT
EHCP	0	1	0	☐	0.00	0.19	☐	0.27	0.41	☐
SEN support	2	7	8	☐	0.07	0.25	☐	0.50	0.71	☐
No SEN	3	11	6	☐	0.02	0.07	☐	0.11	0.15	☐

Free school meals (FSM) eligibility

30. Eight of the fourteen permanent exclusions from 2023/24 were eligible for free school meals (57%)

Rates of permanent exclusions from secondary school by FSM eligibility											
	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24
	SW	National	SW	National	SW	National	SW	National	SW	National	SW
FSM eligible	0.45	0.60	0.10	0.35	0.10	0.27	0.05	0.44	0.14	0.60	0.11
FSM non eligible	0.13	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.07	0.11	0.05

¹ The one child permanently excluded from a primary school in 2023/24 had an EHCP.
Southwark School Permanent Exclusions (November 2024)

Alternatives to Permanent Exclusion and promoting inclusion

31. Following a Keeping Children in Education conference with schools and partners in 2020 an inclusion charter was developed with 14 principles and a focus on the need for cross system working to support children.
32. A cross system group for attendance and inclusion has been leading this work within the council alongside our response to the new statutory guidance on [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).
33. Progress against the Inclusion Charter principles are reviewed by the cross system group and the impact of this multi-agency collaboration with schools is reflected in the maintenance of exclusion rates below the national average.
34. Key achievements against the principles of multi-agency, evidence based working and collaborative support to work with schools, families and children include:
 - a) 177 Team Around the School (TAS) / Targeting Support meetings (TSM) held with 82 schools in 2023/24
 - b) Schools access to the Education Inclusion Handbook outlining the three-stage approach to attendance and inclusion: encouraging schools to have conversations with young people and their parents at the earliest opportunity; with the local authority able to provide help and support around often challenging conversations. Restorative trained staff are available to support conversations with parents as well as TAS and Team Around the Family (TAF) support for schools in assisting with managing relationships with parents
 - c) 768 consultations in the 2023/24 school year were provided by the Family Early Help Education Inclusion Team (an increase of 11% from 2022/23)
 - d) All children at risk of permanent exclusion offered whole family support and mentoring support provision through Power2 and St Giles Trust VRU funded provision (24 pupils)
 - e) Managed transfer to Southwark Inclusive Learning Service (SILS) process updated in 2023/24 with secondary schools (16 requests made and 13 approved)

- f) Increased mental health support to schools through the Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) in schools and The Nest School Engagement Team (30 Primary and 14 Secondary School) and Trauma Informed Weapons Awareness Programme providing targeted support in secondary schools from the Youth Justice Service
- g) The Education Psychology Service (EPS) provide a consultation model service, to a range of educational settings providing support for children from 0-25. EPS uses psychological and evidence-based approaches to work collaboratively with children, teaching staff and families to explore and problem solve issues that may impact on a child's access to education and/or the social, emotional and mental health
- h) SEND consultant link for all schools for advice and support
- i) EPS provides a Parent Consultation Service for families that wish to discuss home based issues – this is solution focused brief intervention. The service also includes Video Interactive Guidance (VIG) Practitioners which is a strengths-based intervention that focuses on attunement and positive interaction between parent and child or a key staff member and child.
- j) School nursing implementation of the Lancaster Model surveying 500 Year 9 children in 2023/24 and working in these schools to provide follow up whole school and targeted support
- k) Coordinated approach to all year 6 children in 2023/24 school year to offer transition support across education psychology, family early help, adolescent sure start and VCS provision to ensure all vulnerable children were offered targeted support (including 80 vulnerable children invited to a 10 day [Learning for Life](#) summer programme with evidence of increased confidence). SENDIP transition process embedded and available across all schools.
- l) Liaison with the SAFE Taskforce targeted mentoring, sports and cognitive behavioural therapy provision to develop an evidence base for what works to prevent serious youth violence.
- m) Launch of termly Keeping Children in Education forum for schools and partners 21/10/24 attended by over 100 school, local authority and partner agency staff
- n) Families of children & young people with SEND access impartial advice and support from [SIAS](#) in relation to exclusions or risk related issues. Families can self-refer to the service at any stage.

- o) Southwark Virtual School has purchased membership of the Attachment Research Community (ARC) for all Southwark Schools. ARC offers a framework for schools to audit trauma-informed practice in their school, review the need for trauma-informed training for staff and achieve a bronze, silver, gold kite mark for trauma-informed and relational practice. After nomination by the Virtual School Beormund School has been shortlisted for the Alex Timpson Award for trauma-informed practice which is a national award. Currently 47 Southwark schools have signed up to use the ARC tools and access the online learning.

Policy implications

- 35. Southwark 2030 ambitions include a good start in life and effective engagement in school life and academic achievement are key to realising this goal for all children.

Community impact statement

- 36. Inclusive practice within education benefits all members of the school and wider community. For children at risk of exclusion from school a systemic approach is needed with responsibilities shared to reduce inequalities, empower children and families and offer a preventative approach.

Resource implications

- 37. Additional interim staff have been approved to implement the new statutory duties contained within [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) which will also include support for inclusion.

Consultation

- 38. Secondary schools through SASH have had annual reports on permanent exclusions and suspensions circulated.
- 39. Southwark Youth Parliament were consulted on attendance issues in September 2024 and interested in ongoing engagement in our work on inclusion and attendance.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Working Together to Improve School Attendance		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Permanent Exclusions in Southwark 2017-2023

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children's Services	
Report Author	Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 November 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes/No	Yes/No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	9 Nov 2024	

Item No. 7	Classification: Open	Date: 18 November 2024	Meeting Name: Education & Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Education, Health and Care Plans Update (November 2024)	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Anna Chiva, Assistant Director SEND	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission are asked to note the contents of this report and officers will be available at the commission meeting on 18 November to answer questions and support the commission in its work.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. In December 2023 the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission received a report on *Demand and Timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans*.
3. The December report set out the background to the current statutory arrangements for the local authority's role in assessing and ensuring support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) under the 2014 SEND Code of Practice (The Code).
4. The December report explained the broad approach to the provision of support for children with SEND. For most children support is provided through a *Graduated Approach* and what is commonly referred to as *Ordinarily Available Provision*.
5. The *Graduated Approach (figure 1)*, is set out in The Code and refers to additional support to meet an assessed need, provided within mainstream provision that schools or settings together with health and care providers are expected to provide for a child or young person through their existing universal funding and resource arrangements. This response is usually led and co-ordinated within the mainstream provision by the settings Special Educational Need Co-Ordinator (SENCO). Children receiving this level of support are statutorily referred to as in receipt of *SEND Support*.

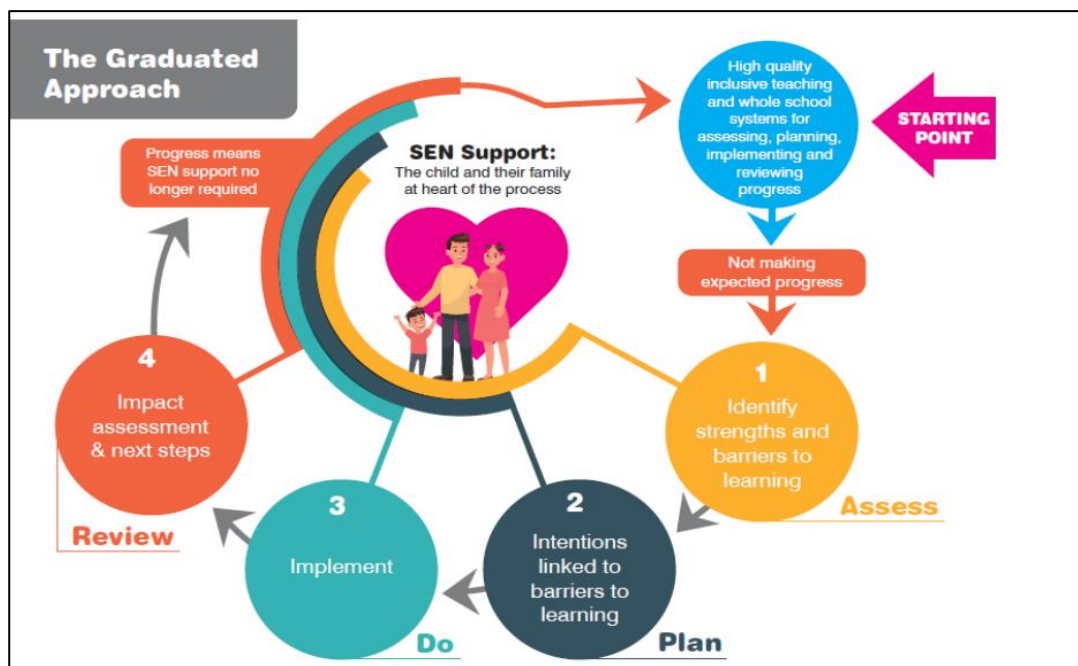


Figure 1: The Graduated Approach Model

6. The December report also sets out the approach to the statutory process for education, health and care needs assessment (EHCNA). The EHCNA is undertaken through a staged process with an overall requirement that from initial request to the issuing of a plan is completed within 20-weeks. This is the statutory 'timeliness' measure.
7. The EHCNA process is broken down into three stages (figure 4):
- **Stage 1** - within 6 weeks of a request to assess the local authority must decide whether to carry out an EHC needs assessment. The parent, guardian or young person is also given the right to appeal that decision to the tribunal.
 - **Stage 2** - by 16 weeks the LA (local authorities) must have finished the assessment and decided if an EHCP is needed. We must send parents a draft plan or a 'feedback' and given them 15 days to comment and request a specific school. If issued with 'feedback' the parent, guardian or young person is also given the right to appeal that decision to the tribunal
 - **Stage 3** - by 20 weeks the LA must complete the final draft of the plan. All plans must be reviewed annually. The parent, guardian or young person is also given the right to appeal that decision to the tribunal.



Figure 2: EHCNA Process

8. This report provides information on the current local and national performance in relation to the delivery of EHCNAs. It includes information on the backlog and challenges as well as the planned improvement programme to address issues affecting performance.
9. This report also provides information on appeals relating to EHCPs, both local and the national context, as well as the role of the council's Legal Services.
10. The report also provides information on the spend of funding for children with SEND placed out of the borough.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Update on EHCPs

11. The rate of new EHCNA requests per 10,000 children aged 0-25 in Southwark had previously remained relatively stable, with a small 3% fall across the period 2018-2022.
12. In the last year there was a marked increase in new requests for assessment, with the rate in Southwark increasing by 39.5%, to 87 children per 10,000. This is 235 more requests for assessment than the previous year.



Figure 3: EHCNA Request Rates Per 10,000 population (0-25)

13. The December 2023 report noted that there has been an overall national deterioration in achieving the 20-week timescale for completed assessments. With the same trend occurring across London and in Southwark. Average timeliness across London fell by 12.1% between 2014 and 2022, to a low of 52%. In 2023 the average increased in London to 68% with the national rate standing at 49%.

14. The December report noted that the fall in timeliness had been particularly noticeable in south east London (SEL) authorities (Figure 8). Except for Bexley (82.6%), Southwark was the best performing SEL authority in 2022 at 48.4% compared to Lambeth at 15.8% and Lewisham at 40%, Greenwich at 34.5% and Bromley at 27.2%. This is shaped by the sustained increase in requests in recent years.

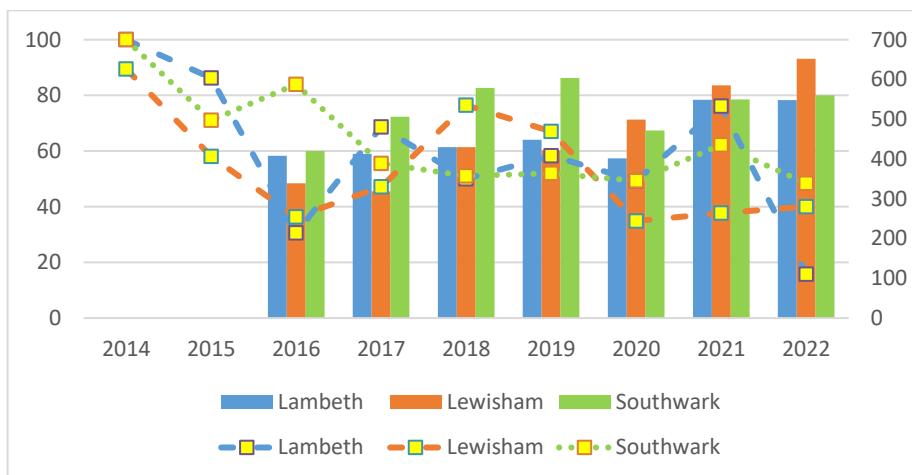


Figure 4: Timeliness vs New EHCP Requests

15. Over the last 12-months there has been significant investment in addressing the timeliness of EHCNAs and this has started to show improvements in performance.

- 16. A systemic review of the SEND statutory services, procedures and structure has resulted in significantly improved timeliness. Key lines of accountability and a strong performance management culture is now well embedded in the service.
- 17. Investment in the team training has been thorough to improve knowledge and skills to create a culture of ownership and a more family centric approach. There is now a clear correlation between meeting statutory deadline and outcomes for our young people.
- 18. In September 2023 only 62% of open assessments were still within the 20-week timescale for completion. At the end of September 2024 90% of open assessments are still within the appropriate timescale (figure 5 below).
- 19. There are currently no assessments waiting for completion over 52 weeks, and there has been a 90% reduction in the number of assessments that have been waiting for completion between 30 and 52 weeks. This means that all of the EHCNAs that had previously been described as being in the *backlog*, meaning they are open and have been open more than 30 weeks, are almost completely cleared.

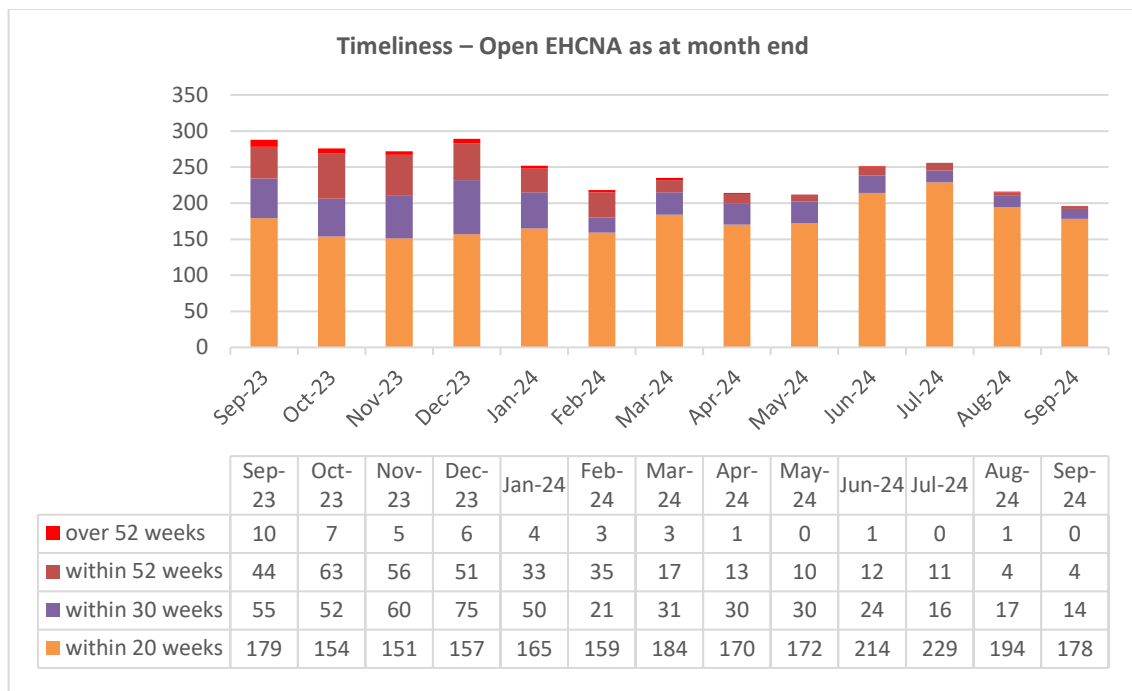


Figure 5: Open EHCNAs by current timeliness

- 20. There continue to be a small number of EHCNAs that are taking up to 30 weeks for completion and this is due to a variety of factors including assessment capacity within professional groups, available provision and the impact of the summer holidays on accessibility of young people in education settings.

21. Acknowledging there remain wider system issues which continue to impact on performance, the scale of the residual issues is significantly less impactful on the timely delivery of EHCNAs and the number of children and families waiting too long for their assessment outcomes is significantly reduced. The total number of overdue assessments having reduced by 86% since the high point in December 2023 (figure 6 below).

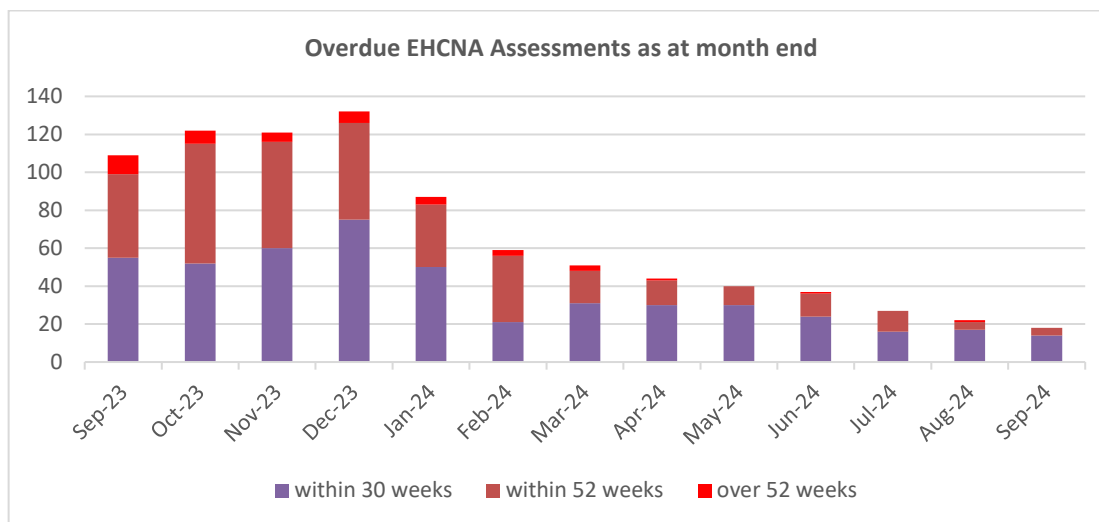


Figure 6: The number of EHCNA assessments which were overdue as at month end

22. As described above the council's SEND service that manages the council's statutory functions, has been through a root and branch re-design of the structure of the team and the associated processes, so that the team is enabled to meet its statutory requirements and is spending the proportionate amount of time on statutory activity. This has delivered key improvements in the following areas:

- Increase % of decisions are being made in a timely way
- Increase % of Draft EHC Plans being issued on time.
- Increase % of Final plans being issued on time

19. The EHCNA process is co-dependent on effective cross system working and collaboration. There continues to be challenges in this regard that are impacting performance and assessment timeliness, these are:

- Capacity of key statutory advice providers – educational psychology which is a local and national issue
- Joint commissioning arrangements with health partners
- Retention, recruitment and training of qualified professional groups such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists which is an acute local and national issues.

20. There is a broad correlation between the rate of Educational Psychologists in post per assessment completed in boroughs with the overall performance in delivering EHCNAs within timescale (figure 7 below).

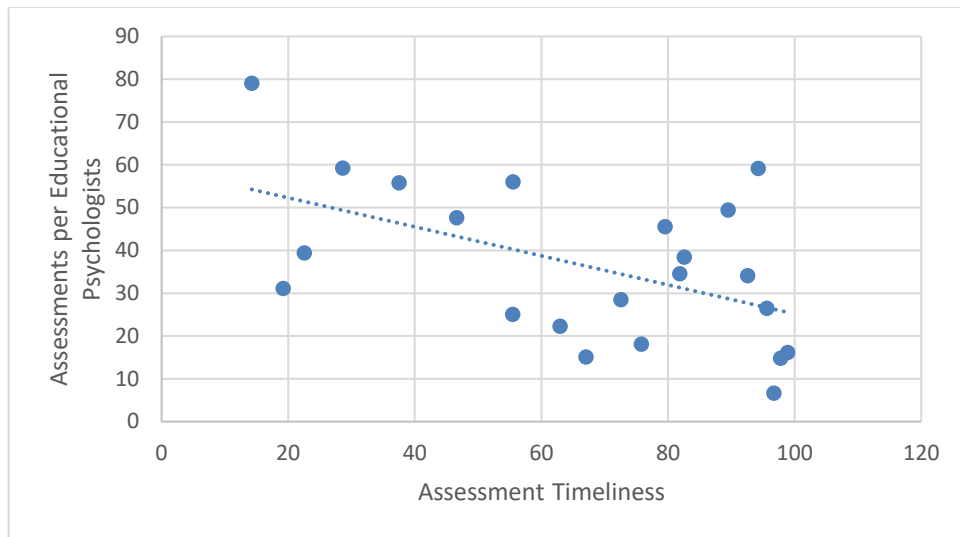


Figure 7: Rate of EPs per assessment against timeliness in London boroughs

21. The timeliness of partner professional responses to requests to input into EHCNAs is a critical factor in ensuring overall timeliness. This has been a persistent issue over recent years, and in particular during August and September this performance is often impacted due to the ability of professionals accessing young people in educational provision to assess their needs, this then creates a higher level of assessment activity in September and October which impacts the flow of work.
22. Again, as with the performance of internal services we are beginning to see improvements in partner performance and quality of contributions to EHCNAs. The Speech and Language Therapy Service at Guy's and St Thomas' in particular are a positive example of improving compliance, and steadily increasing timeliness, as a direct result of joint working between the SEND and GSST team. Whilst this is a positive overall performance remains too variable, and too consistently low (figure 8 below).

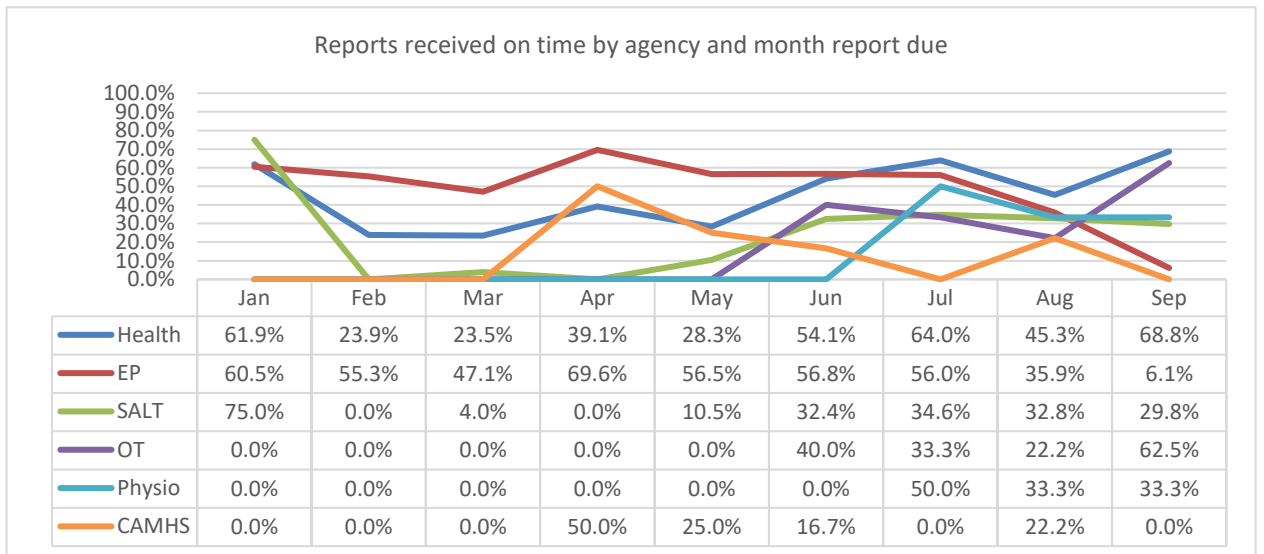


Figure 8: % of reports received on time by agency type (N.b. 0% performance often relates to no requests being made to that agency in a particular month)

Appeals

23. In the academic year 2022-23 there were 14,000 registered SEND appeals nationally. This was an increase of 24% on the previous year indicating systemic issues at a national level.

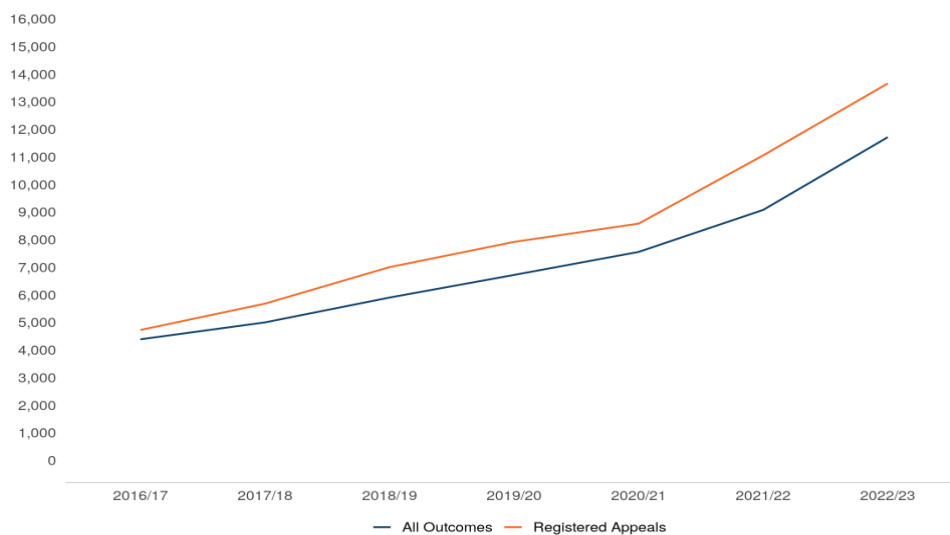


Figure 9: Number of SEN registered appeals

24. In the year 2023 the national average of appeals upheld in the local authority's favour was 1.7%. 17% of appeals were upheld in Southwark council's favour.

25. There are mainly two types of appeal, the first is about refusal to assess (RTA) and the second is appealing the content of the EHCP including the child's educational placement.

Refusal to assess appeals (RTA)

26. Refusal to assess represent 28% of all appeals submitted nationally versus 25% for Southwark.

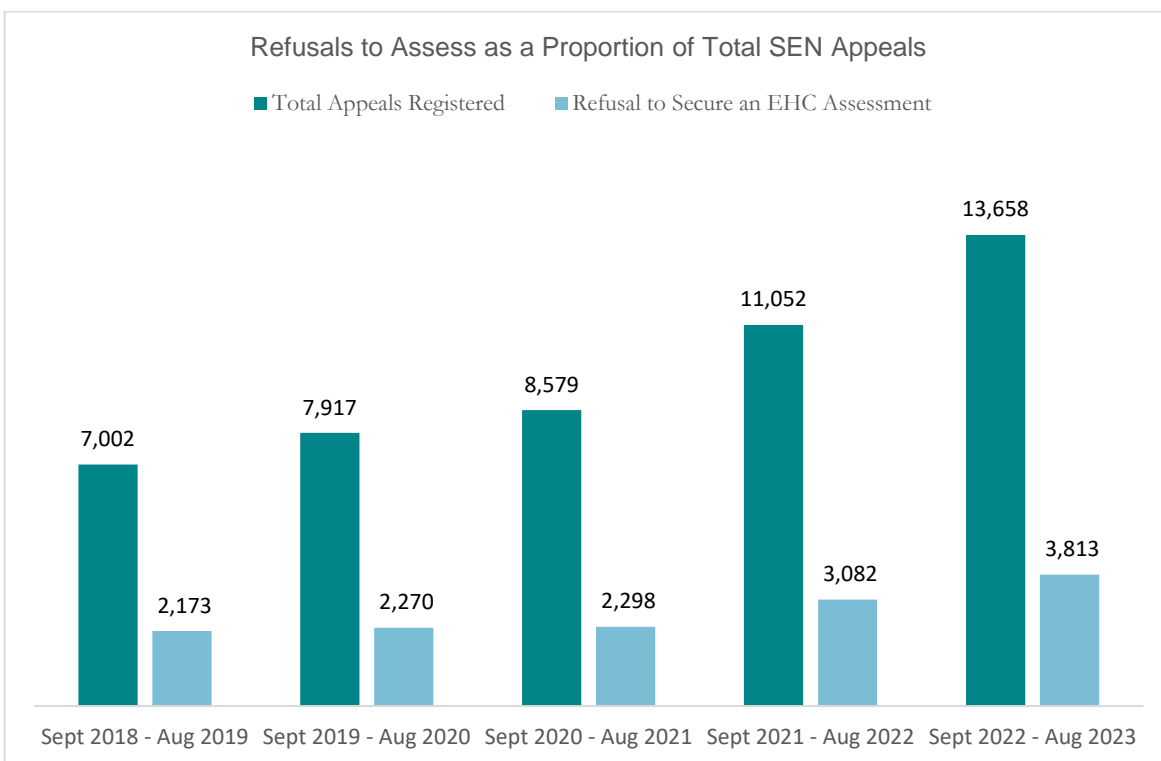


Figure 10: Refusal to assess as a proportion of all appeal

27. In 2022-23, 51% of RTAs were conceded compared with 50% for Southwark which is in line with the national average.

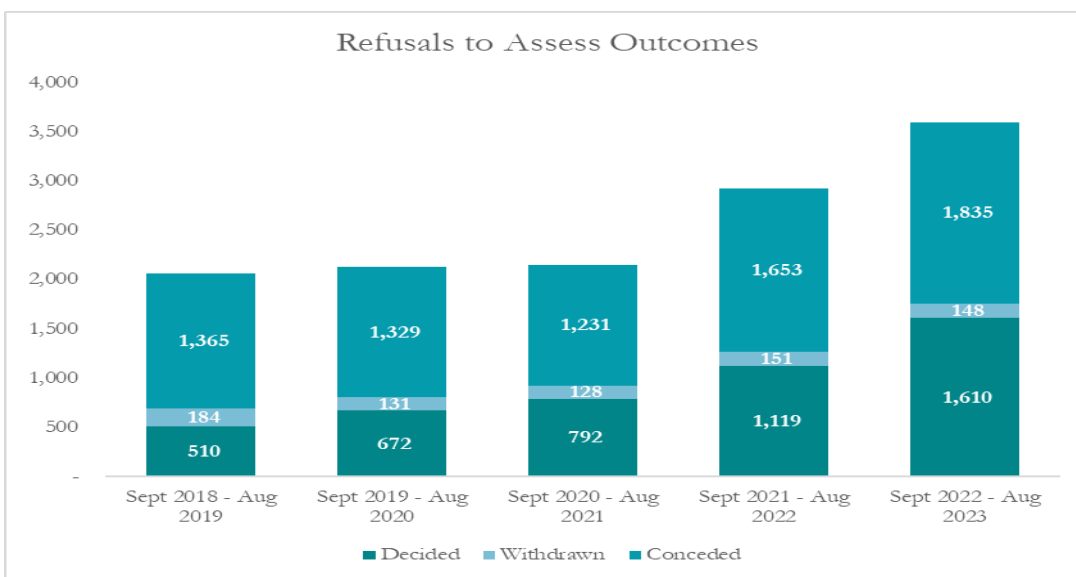


Figure 10: Refusal to assess outcomes

28. For the council there are a significantly higher number of RTA appeals this financial year compared with the whole of last year. There has been the same number of appeals in the first half of this year as there were in the whole of last year (table 1).

29. This is related to a number of factors, some of which are; parental confidence in the local offer and securing provision such as therapy, media influencing anxiety around school financial sustainability and seeking support through an EHC plan for mental health needs and broader care needs.

Outcome	April 2023 - March 2024	April 2024 – YTD
Refusal to assess (RFTA)	21 (2.6% of all assessments)	21 (4.5% of all assessments YTD)
Upheld in LA's favour	0	1
Conceded	14 (66.6% of registered appeals)	3 (14.2% of registered appeals)
Allowed/ upheld in parents favour	6	0
Still not heard	1	19 (Significant delay of appeals due to volume nationally)

Table 1: Appeals 2023-24 and year to date, with outcomes

Content of plan appeals in including child's educational placement

30. For the council, the number of appeals against the content of plans remain the significant proportion of appeals at 74%. These appeals often relate to most of the sections in plans, and the suggested provision and placement are usually contested.

31. If the council and family reach agreement on a placement, then the majority of the other areas tend to fall away and agreement is reached.

32. The majority of appeals relating to placement recommendations are where parents are seeking an independent placement, often out of the borough and at higher cost, and the council has a local school which it believes can meet the needs.

33. The local arrangement for joint commissioning of therapies at assessment stage are underdeveloped which means the council does not always have the ability to defend the appeal as cogently as it could have. This is because either the evidence is not sufficient, or the tribunal will not allow the council to assess the young person at a later date as it states this should have been completed at the initial assessment stage.

How appeals are legally supported

34. To meet the requirements, administer and defend the position of the council, the council's SEND Service has commissioned a legal firm called SV Law to administer SEND Appeals. The firm has been commissioned for the last three years. Prior to that appeals were managed by Southwark Legal Services.
35. Southwark Legal Services have no role with the SEND Service and their associated appeals.
36. As part of the redesign of the SEND Service, it will be decommissioning SV Law and creating its own Disagreement and Tribunal Service, with a keen focus on mediation. This new team should be in place by January 2025. The team will have a relationship with Southwark Legal Services to commission legal advice and representation as required.
37. The anticipated positive impact of an inhouse team is that they understand the services which supports children and families, have an integrated and pro - active approach to case management working closely with internal teams and a greater focus on mediation and resolution.

Funding provided to out of borough schools

38. The council is currently spending £19.7m, 37% of overall high-needs budget of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), across 977 students attending provision outside of Southwark.
39. It is important to note that a significant number of those pupils attend schools and colleges in our neighbouring boroughs, which are likely to be closer to their own home address than comparable provision inside Southwark.
40. The makeup of the spend delivers a range of provisions, the significant proportion is on independent specialist provision pre and post 16 years old and further education.
41. Whilst independent providers are part of our local offer and we use them for some of our complex needs young people, the costs of these providers and services are increasing year on year.
42. The role of the council's SEND Commissioning Team is critical to delivering best value. Table 2 below shows how the spend is distributed for children with SEND educated out of borough.

School Type	Total Cost	Number of Pupils
Academy & free schools - mainstream	956,159	80
Academy & free schools - special	271,435	11
Academy & free schools – resource bases	165,207	9
Alternative provision & hospital schools	1,059,700	43
Non-maintained early years settings	96,795	1
Independent mainstream schools	1,818,575	56
Independent special schools	4,728,523	100
Other local authority - Mainstream	886,056	89
Other local authority - Special	2,920,805	125
Southwark maintained hospital school (OOB) - Bethlem	29,630	3
Further Education	3,381,535	228
Specialist Post-16 college	3,105,043	101
One of payments	563,288	159
Total	19,708,438	977

Table 1: Out of borough funding distribution

Key / Non-Key decisions

43. This report does not deal with a key decision

Policy implications

44. The SEND Team performs the statutory functions for SEND as set out in the Children's and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015. The Team is not able to carry out these statutory functions in terms of new assessments and annual reviews at the current time. As a result, statutory national requirements and local policy standards are not being met.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

45. The effect of the current timeliness of EHCNAs and reviews on the SEND community of Southwark is impacting on our ability to consistently engender trust between the authority and our families which exacerbates issues of demand and further delays in ensuring appropriate support to children and young people. The approach set out in these reports aims to reverse the impact of these trends and ensure our families and community feel and are provided with nationally leading levels of support.

Policy Framework Implications

46. There are no policy framework implications

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

47. The content of the report and the plans described to ensure the service offer improves will address the needs of a cohort of children and young people with protected characteristics and those who are commonly in the most socio-economically disadvantaged groups

Health impact statement

48. The content of the report and the plans described to ensure the service offer improves will support positive outcomes in the health of children and young people with SEND.

Climate change implications

49. There are no relevant climate change implications

Social Value considerations

50. There are no relevant social value considerations

Economic considerations

51. The content of the report and the plans described to ensure the service offer improves will ensure more support is available to children to prepare them for independence in adulthood and support their parents to access employment and training by ensuring their children are properly supported in education.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Documents	Held At	Contact
Demand and Timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans	160 Tooley Street	Michael Crowe 0207 525 5000
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s117425/Report%20EHCP%20Scrutiny%20Report.pdf		

APPENDICES

No	Title

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jasmine Ali, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education	
Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children's Services	
Report Author	Anna Chiva, Assistant Director - SEND	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 November 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Head of Procurement	No	No
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Contract Review Boards		
Departmental Contract Review Board	No	No
Corporate Contract Review Board	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional/Community Council/Scrutiny Team	9 Nov 2024	

Meeting Name:	Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
Date:	18 November 2024
Report title:	Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2024-25
Ward(s) or groups affected:	N/a
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/a
From:	Scrutiny Officer

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the education and local economy scrutiny commission note the work programme as at 18 November 2024 attached as Appendix 1.
2. That the education and local economy scrutiny commission consider the addition of new items or allocation of previously identified items to specific meeting dates of the commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The general terms of reference of the scrutiny commissions are set out in the council's constitution (overview and scrutiny procedure rules - paragraph 5). The constitution states that:

Within their terms of reference, all scrutiny committees/commissions will:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions
- b) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the cabinet and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time in areas covered by its terms of reference

- c) review and scrutinise the performance of the council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas
 - d) question members of the cabinet and officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects and about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area
 - e) assist council assembly and the cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues
 - f) make reports and recommendations to the cabinet and or council assembly arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process
 - g) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants
 - h) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working
 - i) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance
 - j) conduct research and consultation on the analysis of policy issues and possible options
 - k) question and gather evidence from any other person (with their consent)
 - l) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the scrutiny process and in the development of policy options
 - m) conclude inquiries promptly and normally within six months
4. The work programme document lists those items which have been or are to be considered in line with the commission's terms of reference.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. Set out in Appendix 1 (Work Programme) are the issues the education and local economy scrutiny commission is due to consider in 2024-25.

6. The work programme is a standing item on the education and local economy scrutiny commission agenda and enables the commission to consider, monitor and plan issues for consideration at each meeting.
7. As of 22 May 2024 the commission also now has within in its remit the cabinet portfolio elements listed below:

Children, Education & Refugees (Councillor Jasmine Ali, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member)

- **Early years and childcare** – including children and family centres, early years education, childminders and nurseries
- **Schools** – including school standards, inclusion, places and admissions; special education needs; free healthy school and nursery meals and fruit; healthy schools and Southwark’s Let’s Go Zero schools network
- **Further, higher and adult education** – including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), adult literacy and numeracy; and scholarships
- **Children’s social care** – including children in care and care leavers, fostering and adoption, support for children with disabilities and their families; and child safeguarding
- **Family support** – including parenting programmes, the council’s sure-start for teenagers service and support for families who are providing unpaid care for a child with a disability or health condition, including respite care
- **Youth offending services.**

Climate Emergency (green economy), Jobs & Business (Councillor John Batterson)

- **Greening our local economy** - engaging local people, businesses and organisations in action to reduce carbon emissions; delivering more green jobs, promoting climate justice; and reducing the council’s own emissions
- **Increasing employment** - support to find a job or start a new carer; careers advice and work experience; paid internships; supporting young people and care leavers’ into employment, education and training; relationship with Jobcentre Plus; supporting businesses to engage with schools and colleges (including the Education Business Alliance)
- **Vocational Skills** - including apprenticeships, vocational training and skills centres
- **Businesses support** - for local businesses, cooperatives, social enterprises and entrepreneurs; increasing procurement from local businesses; and relationships with local business groups and Business Improvement Districts.
- **High streets** – including town centre action plans, Thriving Highstreets Fund, markets

- **Commercial property** – management, leasing and rent setting of the council’s retail and commercial units, office accommodation and related property
- **Industrial strategy** - growing industries that generate good jobs and wider value for our community, including green industries, life sciences and creative and cultural industries
- **Living Wage** - promoting the London Living Wage employers
- **Workers’ rights** - promoting good employment practices and equality and diversity at work and trade union membership.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=550&Year=0		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Work Programme 2024-25

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer	
Report Author	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	10 November 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	10 November 2024	

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Work Programme – 2024/25

Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
4 September 2024	Parent Carer Forum Representative (SEND)	To hear from a Parent Carer Forum representative on Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
	Early Intervention and SEND including EHCP's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND IF Formula • EHCP backlog, timelines for processing • No. of Early interventions carried out • Improvements for EHCP Process in Southwark 	To receive a presentation and written/verbal responses on Early Intervention in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); and Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) backlogs and processing timelines.
	Cabinet Member Interview- Children, Education & Refugees	To interview Councillor Jasmine Ali covering a holistic overview of key strategies and projects under the Cabinet member portfolio for Children, Education and Refugees with a focus on key aspects.

26 September 2024	Draft Town Centre Action Plan	To receive the Draft Town Centre Action Plan from Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business, Councillor John Batteson, Danny Edwards, Head of Economy and Libby Dunstan, Principal Strategy Officer.
	Cabinet Member Interview- Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business	To interview Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business, Councillor John Batteson covering a holistic overview of key strategies and projects under the cabinet member portfolio.
Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
18 November 2024	<p>Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on EHCP back logs (challenges faced in EHCP assessments) • Number of appeals cases in Southwark in EHCP compared to the number of appeal cases dropped (EHCP granted). • Southwark Council's Legal team's role in EHCP appeals cases. • Monies spent on SEND places for Southwark Children in schools outside of Southwark. 	To get an update from Anna Chiva, Assistant Director for SEND on EHCPs'.

	<p>Interviewing retired Headteacher (working with SEND) and SEND tribunal mediator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experience with Southwark • Challenges dealing with SEND in Southwark. • Improvements needed in Southwark SEND based on their experiences. 	<p>To hear from Retired Headteacher, Fran Goggins working with SEND and SEND Tribunal Mediator, Catriona Ogilvy on SEND.</p>
	<p>Inclusions in schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools with high number of exclusions • Demographics of exclusions • Schools with no exclusions • Persistent absences (demographics of schools with absences) 	<p>To hear from the executive headteacher GEM Federation of Schools (primary school) on dealing with persistent absences successfully.</p> <p>To receive reports from Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice on persistent absences and permanent exclusions in schools.</p> <p>To receive a presentation from Cllr Jasmine Ali on Inclusion in Schools.</p> <p>To also hear from a secondary school teacher on issues around schools' exclusions.</p>
<p>Upcoming Meetings</p>	<p>Agenda item yet to be scheduled</p>	<p>Comment</p>
<p>4 February 2025 8 April 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing representatives from charities on SEND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Council for Disabled Children ➤ Mencap ➤ Scope 	<p>To be confirmed</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP)	
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Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024-25

AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)

NOTE: Original held by Scrutiny Team; all amendments/queries to Amit Alva Tel: 020 7525 0496

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