



Children and young people are protected and get the best start in life and realise their potential

Executive Summary

The strategic plan area of young people realising their potential relates to the activity undertaken by the council to support children and young people in the borough. This profile captures the key equality gaps and issues which exist both nationally and locally for children and young people and looks at educational attainment, number of young people not in education, employment or training, (NEET), apprenticeships, bullying, safeguarding, looked after children and bullying.

Within this strategic plan area there have been a number of improvements and achievements in recent years however inequalities still exist particularly in the context of some of the highest levels of child poverty in the country. Local Key Stage 2 and GCSE results are now consistently above national averages however white British children still experience lower attainment outcomes. The number of NEETs in Tower Hamlets is at its all-time lowest level however white British young people are over represented in this category. There are also challenges in the translating improvements in attainment at GCSE into improved achievement post-16 for young people. Apprenticeships offer a key route into employment and there

are still some communities who remain under-represented in terms of take up of these opportunities such as young Somali people.

Some of the headline findings of this assessment are that:

- The Borough has the highest level of child poverty in the country. 42 per cent of children live in poverty. There had been a strong downward trend in the borough's child poverty rate since 2007, but in 2014, the rate increased again. Across the UK, welfare reform is likely to add increased financial pressures for families in receipt of benefits, presenting a key challenge for some families.
- A high proportion of children are eligible for free school meals. This is based on means tested benefits and is an indicator of the level of financial need within families with children. 33 per cent of our primary pupils are eligible for and claim free school meals, compared with 16 per cent London and the national average of 14 percent. Similarly, 40 per cent of our secondary pupils are eligible for and claim free school meals, compared with the London average of 17 per cent and the national average of 13 percent.
- The proportion of early years pupils achieving a good level of development has increased from 46 per cent in 2013 to 68 per cent in 2017, compared to 70.7 per cent across England.
- White British attainment is lower than attainment levels across other ethnic groups. Differences in attainment are evident in Early Years Outcomes with lower attainment amongst boys and those eligible for free school meals. These differences continue over key stage 1, 2 and 4 but become more significant for White British children. For example only 37 per cent of White British Children achieve a strong pass 9 – 5 in English and Maths compared to BME groups at 46 per cent achieving the same.
- At the end of 2016, 6 per cent of 16-17 year olds in Tower Hamlets were NEET (including those whose activity is unknown), which is line with the national average (6 per cent) and slightly higher than the London average (5 per cent). However White British young people are over represented in NEET cohort.
- Child Protection challenges around vulnerable children in context of domestic abuse and mental health problems within families. There is a need to consider role of Neglect and VAWG strategies and what they can achieve.

- Low uptake of childcare for two year olds particularly amongst more disadvantaged groups. Children's Centres in the borough are well thought of by local families in Tower Hamlets. There is a need to further develop the role of Children's Centres, and to encourage more disadvantaged families to use them.
- There is a high percentage of young people who are leaving care and are not in education, employment or training: 38.5 per cent of care leavers are NEET compared to 32.8 per cent in neighbouring east London boroughs.
- Children aged 0-5 and boys have the highest number of Child Protection Plans (106 and 173 in March 2015 respectively). White children and young people are underrepresented whilst "Mixed heritage" (particularly mixed White and Caribbean and mixed White and Other backgrounds) children and young people are over-represented.
- There is a need to continue to tackle radicalisation of young people. A range of activity has been put in place to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm in this regard, and there is a need to develop this work further through improving the council's knowledge, practice and multi-agency response to children and young people at risk.
- 57 per cent of pupils said that their school deals with bullying 'quite well' or 'very well'. On the other hand, BME pupils (excluding Bangladeshi) (29 per cent) were more likely than average to say that their school handled bullying 'not very well' or 'badly' compared with all pupils (22 per cent).

What is the purpose of the Strategic Plan Outcome Area?

Tower Hamlets is a 'young borough', with an estimated 74,700 children and young people aged 0-19 living in the borough. It is a growing borough, having experienced the fastest growing population in the country in recent years and growing by 27 per cent between 2001-2011 and this is set to continue over coming years.

This strategic plan area focus has been to:

- Ensure adequate early help for the most vulnerable children and families, with a strong focus on safeguarding.

- Develop a sustainable offer of support to children with special educational needs.
- Improve educational aspiration and attainment.
- Ensure better outcomes for looked after children and young people.
- Improve educational and vocational provision at post-16.
- Support all young people to access enrichment and social activities.

The council will continue to focus on improving outcomes for children and young people despite operating in an increasingly challenging political landscape, with the relationship between schools and local authorities undergoing significant change as the number of academy and free schools grows.

The OFSTED inspection in April 2017 found that some, safeguarding services in Tower Hamlets were either inadequate or requiring improvement . The council is implementing a detailed improvement plan and investment across:

- Leadership, Management and Governance
- A robust model of social work practice
- A sufficient and skilled workforce
- Quality assurance and audit.

Informal feedback from the subsequent monitoring visits by OFSTED is encouraging about the direction of travel on the improvement journey. A formal report is due in early 2018.

What is the national picture in terms of inequality for this topic?

Educational Attainment & Aspiration – LBTH performance vs London & national performance

Two new measures have been introduced to measure the attainment levels of key stage 4 pupils; Attainment 8 and Progress 8. GCSE performance in 2014/15 used the existing performance measure of 5 GCSEs A* - C including Mathematics and English. 2015/16 was the first year to use the new measures.

Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to eight qualifications (the same subjects that count for Progress 8). The eight qualifications are split into three elements:

- English and mathematics,
 - Three qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).
- The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a performance measure for schools, awarded when students secure a grade C or above at GCSE level across a core of five academic subjects – English, mathematics, history or geography, the sciences and a language.

- Three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the Department for Education's approved list.

Tower Hamlets achieved an average Attainment 8 score of 50.0 points. This performance is in line with the national average of 49.9 points, though lower than the London average of 51.9 points. Tower Hamlets scores are below London across all of the elements with the largest gap (of 0.7 points) being in the English Baccalaureate element.

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point. The Progress 8 measure shows Tower Hamlets pupils' are making greater progress between Key Stage 2 & Key Stage 4 than their peers nationally and similar to the average for London. Tower Hamlets had an overall Progress 8 score of 0.15 indicating that on average pupils achieved better than their peers nationally. The London average Progress 8 score was 0.16 and the scores for London boroughs ranged from -0.14 to +0.35.

For overall Attainment 8 scores, Tower Hamlets is in the top performing 25 per cent of local authorities nationally (ranked 69th) but in the lowest half of London boroughs (ranked 25th). Similarly for overall Progress 8 scores, Tower Hamlets is in the top performing 25 per cent of local authorities nationally (ranked 23rd) and the lowest 50 per cent of London boroughs (ranked 20th).

Tower Hamlets has experienced a decline in the percentage of pupils who attained A*- C grades in both English and mathematics GCSEs. This fell by 4 percentage points from 66.9 per cent in 2014/15 to 62.9 per cent in 2015/16. This went against the London and national trends where performance on this measure improved.

- Key Stage 4 attainment is higher than the national average for strong pass (grades 9_5) in English and Maths (44 per cent in Tower Hamlets vs. 42 per cent in England), standard pass (grades 9_4) in English and Maths (65 per cent in Tower Hamlets vs. 64 per cent in England), and Average Attainment 8 scores (47 points in Tower Hamlets vs. 46 points in England).
- On average, girls have higher attainment levels in schools in the borough than boys, White pupils have lower attainment levels than BME pupils, pupils whose first language is not English have higher attainment levels than those whose first language is English, and pupils eligible for free school meals have lower levels of attainment than pupils not eligible for free school meals.

NEET

The number of young people aged 16-24 who are not in Education, Employment or Training is monitored as a way of tackling youth unemployment.

Around 843,000 (11.7 per cent) of all young people aged 16 to 24 in the UK are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Just under half (46 per cent) of all young people in the UK who were NEET at the end of the second quarter of 2016 were looking for work and available for work and therefore classified as unemployed. The remainder were either not looking for work and/or not available for work and therefore classified as economically inactive. The unemployment rate for young people is more than twice the rate for all working age adults (14.0 per cent for those aged 16-24 compared with 5.3 per cent for those aged 16-64).

The number of 16-17 year olds who are NEET has been declining since the mid-2000s as more young people stayed in full time education. In the second quarter of 2016, 88 per cent of 16-17 year olds were in full time education compared to 74 per cent in the first quarter of 2002.

There are more females who are NEET than males. Around 434,000 (12 per cent) of all women aged 16-24 are NEET compared to 409,000 (11 per cent) of all men aged 16-24.

Apprenticeships

There are over 200 different types of apprenticeships currently available in England, through existing and new apprenticeship frameworks. The Government has made a commitment of delivering 3 million new apprenticeships starts in England between 2015 and 2020.

The public sector is delivering comparatively fewer apprenticeships than the private sector. In order to meet the target of 3 million new apprenticeship starts between 2015 and 2020 there needs to be more apprenticeships within government departments and agencies, and within the NHS and frontline services. To help achieve this target an apprenticeship levy will be introduced on the 6th April 2017. This mandates public sector organisations to spend 0.5 per cent of their payroll bill on the apprenticeship levy. Moreover organisations will be required to meet the statutory requirements of the Enterprise Bill which stipulates that all public sector organisations will be required to ensure that 2.3 per cent of their workforce is made up of apprenticeships at any one time.

Safeguarding

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts which make this clear.

In 2013-14 over 650,000 children in England were referred to local authority children's social care services by individuals who had concerns about their welfare.

Concerns of child sexual exploitation increased by 39 per cent between 2013 and 2014. However, the number of investigations into child sexual exploitation is unlikely to fully reflect the problem as research suggests that children and young people do not always come forward and are not always identified. A 2015 NSPCC report states that some of the barriers to identifying and protecting victims include Social Workers identifying more evident indicators of physical abuse or neglect, Social Workers not having the time or training to be able to identify cases, and child protection processes that may be less effective when it comes to adolescents. Victims find it difficult to disclose their abuse and they need proactive engagement from workers to help and support them over the long-term. It is estimated that around 25 per cent of children in the UK are exposed to domestic abuse between adults in their homes at some point in childhood.

Looked after children

The number of looked after children has continued to rise; it has increased steadily over the last eight years. Across the UK, there were 70,440 looked after children at 31 March 2016, an increase of 1 per cent compared to 31 March 2015 and an increase of 5 per cent compared to 2012. The rise this year reflects a rise of 1,470 in unaccompanied asylum seeking children, compared to a rise of 970 in all looked after children. At 31st March 2016, unaccompanied asylum seeking children represented 6 per cent of the looked after children population. In 2016 the number of children in foster care continued to rise; of the 70,440 looked after children at 31 March 2016, 51,850 (74 per cent) were cared for in foster placements – the same proportion as in 2015.

Looked after children are predominantly White (75 per cent in 2016). Children of Mixed ethnicity were the next largest group (9 per cent) followed by Black or Black British (7 per cent), Asian or Asian British (4 per cent) and other ethnic groups (3 per cent). At 31st March 2016, 56 per cent of children looked after were male, 44 per cent female and these proportions have varied little over recent years.

What is the local picture in terms of inequality for this topic?

Development

The early years of a child's life are crucial to their development and life chances. The proportion of early years pupils achieving a good level of development has increased from 46 per cent in 2013 to 68 per cent in 2017, compared to 70.7 per cent across England. Children of a "Black" ethnic background in Tower Hamlets are slightly less likely to be assessed as having a "good" level of development.

Children Centres

The role and location of Children's Centres provide an opportunity for a variety of early years support services to be provided from them, and this is being increasingly utilised. Research indicates that early years services can have a positive impact on

a child's development. Ofsted inspections indicate that not all Children's Centres in the borough are reaching and sustaining contact with enough disadvantaged families, leaving a risk that not all children from disadvantaged families are accessing services that may be of benefit to them. This translates to too few children presenting in Reception classes as school ready giving schools a very significant gap to close for children from our most disadvantaged families.

Educational Attainment & Aspiration

In 2017, the proportion of early years girls in Tower Hamlets who achieved a good level of development (75 per cent) was 12 percentage points higher than boys (63 per cent). This is lower than the gender gap as in England (14 percentage points), and slightly lower than the gender gap in London (13 percentage points).

Unlike 2016, White pupils have slightly higher levels of attainment (69 per cent achieving a good level of development) than BME pupils (68 per cent) in 2017. Early years pupils whose first language is not English have slightly lower levels of attainment (68 per cent) than pupils whose first language is English (71 per cent). Pupils eligible for free school meals have lower levels of attainment (61 per cent) than pupils not eligible for free school meals (71 per cent).

In 2017, the proportion of girls in key stage 1 who achieved the expected standard in reading (81 per cent) was 9 percentage points higher than boys (72 per cent). This is slightly higher than the gender gap in London (8 percentage points). White pupils have lower levels of attainment (72 per cent for reading) than BME pupils (77 per cent). Unlike in 2016, the 2017 key stage 1 results, show pupils whose first language is not English have higher levels of attainment (78 per cent) than pupils whose first language is English (74 per cent) in reading. Pupils eligible for free school meals have lower levels of attainment (71 per cent for reading) than pupils not eligible for free school meals (79 per cent).

In 2016, the proportion of girls in key stage 2 who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (71 per cent) was 7 percentage points higher than boys (64 per cent). White pupils have lower levels of attainment (62 per cent) than BME pupils (68 per cent). At key stage 2, pupils whose first language is not English have higher levels of attainment (69 per cent) than pupils whose first language is English (62 per cent). Pupils eligible for free school meals have lower levels of attainment (61 per cent) than pupils not eligible for free school meals (72 per cent).

In 2017, the proportion of girls in key stage 4 who achieved a strong pass 9_5 in English and Maths (47 per cent) was higher than boys (41 per cent). White pupils have lower levels of attainment (37 per cent) than BME pupils (46 per cent). At key stage 4, pupils whose first language is not English have higher levels of attainment (47 per cent) than pupils whose first language is English (41 per cent). Pupils eligible for free school meals have lower levels of attainment (39 per cent) than pupils not eligible for free school meals (48 per cent).

A significantly higher proportion of White British pupils had some form of SEN provision (34 per cent over the three year period) compared to other pupils (18 per cent). This over-representation is visible across all categories of need. The proportion of White British pupils with SEN support (including School Action and School Action Plus) is 12 percentage points higher than for all other pupils. The proportion of White British pupils with a Statement of Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan is four percentage points higher than for all other pupils.

The Tower Hamlets Pupil Attitude Survey 2015 found that secondary pupils (9 per cent) are three times more likely to say they will not attend university or higher education compared to primary pupils (3 per cent). Similarly, boys (8 per cent) are twice as likely as girls (4 per cent) to say they will not attend university or higher education. Finally, White (10 per cent) and BME ex. Bangladeshi pupils (9 per cent) are more likely than the average for all pupils (6 per cent) to say they will not attend university in the future.

NEET

At the end of 2016, 6 per cent of 16-17 year olds in Tower Hamlets were NEET (including those whose activity is unknown), which is line with the national average (6 per cent) and slightly higher than the London average (5 per cent).

At the same time the numbers of 16-18 year olds in learning (in full time education, training or work with training) has risen from 83.9 per cent in November 2015 to 86.9 per cent in January 2016.

There has been a constant pattern of 'White British' young people being overrepresented in the NEET cohort compared with the number in the population. In 2013 the White British cohort represented 8.9 per cent who were NEET. Whilst this figure has dropped to 5.9 per cent who are NEET in 2016, which is in line with the overall reduction of young people who are NEET falling year on year, the issue of overrepresentation of White British young people remains a challenge.

There are more females (41.5 per cent) than males (24.79 per cent) moving forward into Higher Education at 18. Overall 32.84 per cent of the cohort is moving into Higher Education at 18, which is an increase from 28.46 per cent in 2014 and 25.11 per cent in 2013.

22.18 percent of White British 18 year olds moved into Higher Education which is up from 16.24 per cent in 2014 and 13.2 per cent in 2013.

Care leavers and young offenders can face specific barriers to employment, further education or training, and "NEET" figures for these groups are higher than the borough average at 38.5 per cent and 41.7 per cent respectively. Teenage parents can also experience difficulties in this area.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are forming an increasingly important route for young people moving forward into learning and employment.

The council runs a number of different apprenticeship and pre-employment programmes:

- Admin L2 Apprenticeship
- Admin L3 Apprenticeships
- Youth Work L3 Apprenticeships
- Pre-apprenticeships
- Leaving Care (Internship & Traineeship)
- Working start programme

There are currently more females (49) participating in these programmes than males (42).

There is currently an underrepresentation of Somali young people involved in the apprenticeship programme. There are currently only 2 Somali young people out of a total of 91 young people participating in the numerous apprenticeship and pre-employment programmes delivered by the council. The Somali Task Force reported that in the Somali community there is a lack of understanding of what an apprenticeship is and the benefits it holds as a career option. There is a perception that apprenticeships are linked to manual labour jobs, and people are unaware that there are roles in areas such as engineering, law, health, education and ICT.

Safeguarding

is the child poverty rate in Tower Hamlets is more than double the rate in England (20 per cent) and well above the London average (24 per cent). All wards in the borough have child poverty rates well above the national average of 20 per cent, ranging from 33 per cent in St Katherine's & Wapping up to 48 per cent in Bow East.

Another measure, the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), also shows that Tower Hamlets has the highest proportion of children living in income-deprived families in England. This measure finds that 39 per cent of children in the borough are in poverty, which is almost double the rate in England (20 per cent) and well above the London average (24 per cent).

In 2017, 33 per cent of our primary pupils were eligible for and claimed free school meals, compared with 16 per cent London and the national average of 14 percent. Similarly, 40 per cent of our secondary pupils were eligible for and claimed free school meals, compared with the London average of 17 per cent and the national average of 13 percent. This depicts the overall deprivation levels of our school population. This level of disadvantage is likely to have negative effects on the health and wellbeing of children and their overall life chances.

Unsurprisingly given the multiple indicators of social disadvantage, the rate of children in need per 10,000 population for Tower Hamlets in 2015/16 remains relatively high at 779.1, compared to the 2014/15 figure for England of 674.4 and 702 for London. This year's figure for Tower Hamlets has increased from 2014/15, where the rate of children in need per 10,000 was 736.2.

In 2015/16, the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 population in Tower Hamlets was relatively high (50.1) compared to the 2014/15 rates per 10,000 for England at 42.0 and 40.6 in London. The figure for Tower Hamlets in 2014/15 was 50.9 per 10,000.

Children aged 0-5 and boys have the highest number of Child Protection Plans (106 and 173 in March 2015 respectively). White children and young people are underrepresented and "Mixed heritage" (particularly mixed White and Caribbean and mixed White and Other backgrounds) children and young people are over-represented.

The percentage of child protection plans lasting two or more years has increased in 2014-15. A sample of cases has revealed particular issues with longstanding sibling abuse and return of violent offenders who return to the home, where it was appropriate to maintain plans for a long period. However in some cases where issues of parental capacity to protect were present, issues were not resolved early enough.

Neglect and emotional abuse remain the most frequent reasons for children having a child protection plan in Tower Hamlets; with 30 per cent of children with a child protection plan was for the primary reason of neglect.

Locally, for the year ending January 2018, there were 3051 incidents of domestic abuse reported to the police. The majority of households where there is domestic abuse are households with children living in them.

Concerns for young people at risk of sexual exploitation is reported through the multi-agency safeguarding hub or directly to the single point of contacts in either children's social care or the police public protection unit. For the period between November 2014 and October 2015, 67 young people of concern were reviewed by the Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Panel or were subject to CSE/Missing child protection strategy meetings. The local 'victim' profile has remained consistently in line with age, demographics and presenting behaviours over the last few years. All were female with the highest numbers falling within the 13-16 age group. The breakdown of ethnicity of the 67 young people is: 20.1 per cent Bangladeshi/Asian/Mixed Asian; 11.4 per cent White/British; 5.36 per cent Black/African/Mixed; 4.69 per cent Mixed/Other and 2.68 per cent were from White/Other background. 5.36 per cent were known to have a disability. Concern for boys remains unreported.

Tower Hamlets has been designated by the Home Office as a priority area for local "Prevent" action since 2011. The size of the borough's Muslim community (35 per cent), the high proportion of young people in our population and significant levels of deprivation are key risk factors for which the council has been developing a local response to this agenda. There have been a small number of arrests made under the Terrorism Act and a small minority of extremists continue to operate within the borough. A more recent challenge has been the cases of young girls choosing to leave the UK in order to support violent extremism abroad, following high-profile incidents of school girls going to Syria in December 2014 and February 2015. Furthermore, in 2014-15 the Social Inclusion Panel (the body in Tower Hamlets which considers all cases relating to children and young people where there is a concern of them being drawn into violent extremism) considered 56 cases where violent extremism was considered a factor for concern. This is a rise compared to 2014 where just 7 cases had "prevent" factors. Over the last year, a small number of these cases have resulted in young people's passports being confiscated, on the understanding that this action would keep these young people free from harm.

[Looked after children](#)

In March 2017, there were 335 looked after children in Tower Hamlets. This equates to a rate of 50 looked after children per 10,000 children – the same as the rate in London and lower than the rate in England (62 looked after children per 10,000 children). This represents a reduction from the number of looked after children in March 2011 when there was 350 looked after children in the borough.

Children looked after in Tower Hamlets are likely to be slightly older than children elsewhere in the country with 77 per cent of the looked after children population older than 10 years of age compared to 58 per cent nationally. The percentage of young people who turned 18 and remained in their foster care placement under an arrangement supported by the local authority has increased. In 2014/15 there were 155 care leavers in Tower Hamlets between the ages of 19 and 21 years of age. Local data shows this to have increased in January 2016 to 189 care leavers.

There are more males (54 per cent) in the children looked after cohort than females (46 per cent). This is a trend which can be seen across the last 5 years, with males overrepresented by 8-10 per cent.

Whilst the number of Bangladeshi children looked after is increasing, this group remains slightly unrepresented against the local population. Children with a Caribbean heritage (or White/Caribbean) are over-represented within this cohort.

The percentage of children in the same placement for at least 2 years continues to grow and the percentage of children placed within 20 miles of their home is better than the national average or our statistical neighbours. However while our young

people are normally placed within 20 miles of their home, this will often mean being placed outside the borough and 36 per cent were placed outside London.

Tower Hamlets care leavers have a high percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training: 38.5 per cent of care leavers are NEET compared to 32.8 per cent within Tower Hamlet's statistical neighbours.

There has been an improvement in immunisation rates (88.2 per cent in 2014-15 compared to 78 per cent in 2013-14, however there is a reduction in the percentage of children looked after who had dental checks (87.6 per cent in 2014-15 compared to 92.7 per cent in 2013-14).

Bullying

The Pupil Attitude Survey 2015 found that nearly a quarter of pupils (24 per cent) said that they have experienced bullying in school in the past year. Primary pupils saw a significant rise in reported bullying (from 26 per cent in 2013 to 31 per cent in 2015). Of those who said they had experienced bullying in school, the majority (69 per cent) said that it happened 'just one time' or 'a few times' in the past year. However, 23 per cent of pupils said that they were bullied 'most days' or 'every day'.

The majority of all pupils (57 per cent) said that their school deals with bullying 'quite well' or 'very well'. Primary pupils were more likely to feel positive about their school's response. On the other hand, BME pupils (ex. Bangladeshi) were more likely than average to say that their school handled bullying 'not very well' or 'badly' (29 vs. 22 per cent).

Stonewall found that in England, three in five (61 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect their child would be bullied in primary school if it were known that the child had gay parents. More than four in five (83 per cent) expect the same for a child in secondary school.

Exclusions

The borough continues to have one of the lowest rates of permanent exclusion in the country but permanent and fixed term exclusions overall are rising. In 2015-16 the rate of permanent exclusion was 0.07 per hundred pupils on roll, compared to 0.04 per hundred pupils on role in 2014-15. The most recent national comparator from 2014-15 is a rate of 0.15, which is more than double the LBTH rate.

More boys than girls are subject to Permanent or fixed term exclusions. – add in stats for this.

White British pupils are significantly over-represented, with 27 per cent of White British pupils being referred under Fair Access Protocol, while White British pupils make up only 12 per cent of the secondary school population, therefore this cohort are increasingly vulnerable. The LA and the Behaviour and Attendance Partnership

are aware of this and there are several intervention programmes being trialled in schools, but it will be vital to capture successful strategies resulting from these and ensure that this is disseminated to all schools.

Pupils with SEN are over-represented in the exclusion statistics and schools should ensure that resources for SEN are targeted appropriately to ensure support is effective. The SEN review and new SEN strategy will need to take exclusions rates amongst this cohort into account.

What are the good practice examples on tackling inequality in the topic area?

- Annual Parent Conference, Informed and Empowered, Keeping Our Children Safe and Well. The event took place on the 22nd March. 200 parents / carers attended. Raising awareness of CSE, online safety, mental health, Transition, Sex & Relationship Education
- Keeping Children & Young People Safe workshop - delivered to 475 parents/carers in school between January 2015- March 2016. Session covered on-line grooming including sexual exploitation and cyber bullying, Prevent and Extremism, Online radicalisation techniques and the role of social media
- A borough wide Transition Support programme ensuring families receive access to impartial advice and support with school admission, exclusions and related matters. 32 transition events, 580 families supported
- Young people trained as Wellbeing Champions to boost young people's participation in the Tower Hamlets Children and Young People's Mental Health Transformation Plan. Young people have been involved in Young Mind's campaign, Wellbeing film making project and the design and delivery of mental health/ wellbeing services

What evidence is there that we are making a difference?

- A programme of work is already underway to improve how care services work together. The "Vanguard" programme in Tower Hamlets aims to develop a new integrated model of care for children, with a focus on prevention, early help and access to high quality "joined up" services.
- The Careers Service works with young people to raise their aspirations and attainment and reduce the number of NEETs in the borough. The service provides Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and job matching for young people.

- As an employer, the council offers 50 apprenticeship places each year in a range of career areas. The council also plans to offer 20 pre-apprenticeship placements for people with disabilities.
- The council have carried out a range of awareness-raising activities on issues relating to being free from harm. For example, last year over 1,000 young people and over 350 professionals attended training and workshops on tackling violence against women and girls.
- Compared to the England average, looked after children in Tower Hamlets are more likely to be placed close to home and are more likely to have a stable placement.
- Last year, the rate of referrals for Children's Social Care in Tower Hamlets was higher than the England average. This highlights effective arrangement between agencies to work together to help children at an early stage.
- Pre-apprenticeship team is working closely with the Tower Project to identify suitable candidates and determine their work areas of interest and experience. This has led to 6-12 month bespoke work experience programmes to train and give experience across a range of work areas
- The council has worked with organisations in the borough to deliver supported Internship programmes for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. In November 2015, the council worked in partnership with the Tower Project and Langdon Park School to deliver a supported internship programme, thought to be the first Local Authority in the country to deliver such a scheme.

What more do we need to know?

- Develop a better understanding of domestic abuse cases where children are involved.
Understand needs of families, particularly families in poverty, where children live with adults with mental health issues or have mental health illnesses themselves
- Improve our understanding of the context and risk factors for sexual exploitation/child abuse by identifying how many people have been arrested, what the numbers are, and what type of crimes are committed. This will provide a picture of the risks around child sexual exploitation in terms of children the numbers and specific groups at risk.

- Identify ways to tackle underreporting of boys who are sexually exploited.

What are the priorities for tackling inequality?

- White British attainment lower than other ethnic groups
- White British over represented in NEET cohort
- Somali young people underrepresented in apprenticeship programmes
- Child Protection – vulnerable factors domestic abuse and mental health. BME children are particularly vulnerable as service provision is not geared in the right way.
- There is a huge range of childcare available to families in the borough. A number of families on low incomes who are eligible for free childcare for two-year-olds are not using this, and may benefit from doing so.
- Children's Centres in the borough are well thought of by local families in Tower Hamlets. There is a need to further develop the role of Children's Centres, and to encourage more disadvantaged families to use them.
- Although children and young people achieve considerable success at school, Key Stage 1 results (for children aged 5 to 7 years old) and A-Level results are the two areas where we are improving year on year but are below the national average. In addition, research indicates that education choices for pupils aged over 16 who do not want to take A or AS Levels is not as wide as it could be.
- Children who are looked after and children in need of help or protection from social care can face problems, and whilst the average performance of these children is in line with or above national averages for these groups, performance is still below the borough average.
- A significant number of children and young people live in poverty. Across the UK, welfare reform is likely to add increased financial pressures for families in receipt of benefits, presenting a key challenge for some families.
- Neglect can play a part in a number of child protection cases in Tower Hamlets. There is a significant need to continue to tackle this issue through the Neglect Strategy.
- Domestic abuse and gender-based violence are key issues in the borough that can have far-reaching and devastating impacts on children and

families. There is a need to continue to tackle this and work through the Tower Hamlets Violence towards Women and Girls Plan.

- The radicalisation of young people has been an emerging issue in recent years. A range of activity has been put in place to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm in this regard, and there is a need to develop this work further through improving the council's knowledge, practice and multi-agency response to children and young people at risk.

Services Engaged

- Education and Partnership
- Children's Social Care
- Careers Service
- Workpath

Reviewed: August 2017