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Portfolio: Young People, Learning and Leisure

The Report of: Councillor Tim Roca, Cabinet Member for Young People Learning and Leisure

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- 1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 12 September 2022**
 - No key decisions have been made.
- 2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date of the new administration:**

2.1 Children’s Services

Successful A- Level and GCSE results across Westminster

Results day was a day of celebration for many students and schools across the borough, with GCSE and A-level students performing exceptionally well in their exams this year. Bucking the trend in the national headlines, provisional data submitted by schools shows that GCSE performance has continued to improve, during the lock-down period and in 2022 with the return to public examinations. 67.8% of students achieved a good pass (grades 9-5 in English and Maths) compared with 53.5% in 2019. There are no national averages at present for 2022 but compared with the 2021 national average for this English and mathematics measure (51.9%), Westminster is well above the national average. The Westminster score is also well above the Inner London average in 2022 (55.4%).

Table 1: Westminster Schools’ GCSE results

	Westminster				National				Inner London			
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020	2021	2022
5-9 English & Mathematics	53.5%	63.1%	65.1%	67.8%	43.4%	49.9%	51.9%		45.9%	53.4%	55.4%	
4-9 English & Mathematics	75.2%	81.6%	82.4%	82.6%	64.9%	71.2%	72.2%		66.5%	73.6%	74.7%	
Attainment 8	53.4	57.1	57.6	56.1	46.8	50.2	50.9		48.4	52.3	53.4	

Source: [DfE GCSE published results, LA, Inner London and National](#)

Post- Sixteen students also excelled in their exams this year with a provisional 67% of A-levels graded at A* - B grade- over ten percent higher than pre-pandemic A level exam results. Across all the grade ranges, students have performed higher than the national average.

Table 2: Westminster Schools' A- Level results

	Westminster				National			
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020	2021	2022
A*	8.2%	14.7%	19.0%	17.0%	7.8%	14.2%	19.0%	14.6%
A*-A	29.0%	40.3%	47.5%	41.0%	25.5%	38.0%	44.1%	36.3%
A*-B	56.8%	69.5%	73.0%	67.0%	51.4%	65.3%	69.6%	62.8%
A*-C	79.0%	90.1%	87.6%	85.0%	75.6%	87.4%	88.1%	82.7%
A*-D	91.8%	97.4%	94.9%	94.0%	90.8%	96.7%	96.1%	93.8%
A*-E	97.6%	99.5%	98.7%	99.0%	97.5%	99.6%	99.4%	98.6%

Sources: <https://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk/apps/Alevel/Outcomes/>

[DfE published results, grade level - LA \(single year\)](#)

[DfE published results, grade level - National \(single year\)](#)

These excellent results are testament to the hard work and dedication of our children and young people through a particularly turbulent time in their education, and the adaptability of our schools in continuing to provide high quality education in the face of disruption of the pandemic. The sustained high attainment in our schools also shows how they have taken full advantage of education recovery funding.

On GCSE results day, one pupil at Paddington Academy said that *'I am very happy and very grateful with my results - it doesn't feel real! I want to say thank you to all teachers at Paddington Academy who helped achieved the results today'*. Another student said *'I am very proud of myself as all the hard work I put in has paid off. I would like to thank all my teachers and especially my head of year for the everyday motivation but in particular towards the end when it got really tough, and we needed it the most. I am proud of everyone in my year, we did it!'*

School Performance at Early Years and Primary Key Stages

Westminster results in Early Years, and in Primary schools at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, did slip in comparison with 2019, which reflects the nationwide trend. However, they were above the published national averages for each of these phases.

In Westminster primary schools, the percentage of children entering reception in class with a Good Level of Development (GLD) was 65.9%, slightly above the national average of 65.2%. Key Stage 1 attainment continues to be above national averages across all assessed subjects, and in Key Stage 2 (age 11), the percentage of children reaching the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics continue to be above national: 64% compared to the national figure of 58%.

Development of the new three-year Children and Young People's Plan

Officers in Children's Services have been developing a new Bi-Borough Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for Westminster City Council and Kensington Chelsea. Sitting directly under the 'Fairer

Westminster' Strategy, the CYPP is the overarching strategy for Children's Services and sets out what Westminster City Council wants to achieve with, and for, Children and Young People over the next three years. It serves as a framework that we will use to track and improve outcomes for children and young people, with a focus on the most vulnerable. The priority outcomes that form the plan have been developed from what children and young people have told us is important to them in our direct engagement. Delivery of these priority outcomes will be through our more focused service and thematic delivery plans and strategies.

This summer, officers designed and delivered 13 workshops across the Bi-Borough, engaging with over 130 children and young people aged 11- 25 including young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Looked After Children and Care Leavers, Youth Council members, and young people engaged in youth clubs. We heard from young people about their concerns, their ambitions for their futures and their communities, and what they think needs to be done to achieve these. We also engaged with residents through the new Resident's Research panel and held workshops with key decision makers and partners. This engagement alongside analysis of all service specific engagement we have undertaken with children and families over the past two years has informed our priority outcomes.

At the time of writing, prior to final sign-off, the draft priority outcomes for the Children and Young People's Plan are as follows;

- All young people, and particularly those who are vulnerable can realise their ambitions and take advantage of opportunities and life skills which prepare them for adulthood.
- All Children and Young People are happy and healthy, with access to a diverse range of activities and opportunities to support their physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing within the post pandemic context, environmental challenges, and rising cost of living pressures.
- Children and young people feel safe, and are protected from serious youth violence, harm, harmful practices, abuse and neglect at home, online and in the community.
- Children and young people have access to high quality education and training opportunities, have good attendance at school and achieve their full potential.
- All Children have the best start in life, needs are identified and supported early and they are school ready at five.
- All our young people feel listened to, empowered to take action and have opportunities to co-produce/co-design services that affect them.
- (RBKC Only) Children and young people affected by the Grenfell tragedy continue to be supported. The council, NHS and commissioned voluntary sector providers work together with communities to learn from their experience of the past five years and to ensure support is effective for children and their families. Issues of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion were reflected strongly during our engagement and co-production activities. These issues, concerns and aspirations are reflected in each of the seven priority outcomes set out in the Plan.

Launch of Westminster's Youth Justice Strategic Partnership Plan

Westminster's Early Help service and Youth Offending Team, with partners in the Youth Crime Prevention Partnership (including the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, local Clinical Commissioning Group, Health and other council services) have developed and launched the new Youth Justice Strategic Partnership Plan. The plan sets out the Youth Crime Prevention Partnership (YCPP)'s vision and strategy for the next three years. The strategy is underpinned by a relational and

trauma informed approach, believing that by focusing on understanding the reasons behind a young person's behaviour, rather than just the result of the behaviour, children and young people will be supported to make and sustain change. Active partnership working is at the core of the strategy and under the plan partners will work to the same guiding principles and shared behaviours that parties believe are vital in making a shift 'from offending to achieving'.

The new plan went before Westminster's Children & Adults, Public Health & Voluntary Sector Policy and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 12th September 2022. Performance against the plan is monitored by the YCPP, an active and well-attended board who will update the Policy and Scrutiny Committee on progress against the plan in six months' time.

Update on plans to reopen Bayswater Children's Centre

In line with the manifesto commitment to re-establish services from Bayswater Children's Centre and expand the provision of stay and play schemes, officers have been working to develop options for services at Bayswater. The Bayswater site is currently partly occupied by the Chelsea Community Hospital School until July 2023, and therefore it is proposed that in the interim we work on the development of a short term offer delivered in the basement of the centre before a longer-term offer is developed.

After reviewing options, we are looking at a way forward that would establish a part-time offer running five sessions in a week. This would allow for testing the service offer and gauging take up and assessing needs of families. The offer would include 3-4 universal drop-in sessions supporting up to 15 children with a parent/carer and a SEND focussed workshop and/or drop-in session, supporting up to 10 children with a parent/carer. An offer of this kind aligns well with the objectives of our SEND strategy to increase the availability of early intervention support. Officers are now pursuing funding options to meet the additional delivery and capital costs outlined against the second option, and an investment proposal is being submitted to address the costs.

There will be further discussions on the longer-term vision for Bayswater and the services which could be located from the site. The current view is that we should build from the Family Hub model which is well established and has a focus on children, families and wider community engagement. We would want to engage the local community, service users and partners in shaping the service offer using the principles of co-design and development and would expect this to include a stay and play offer for 0-5s complemented by a wider range of council and partner services.

Update on Music in Westminster Schools and the Tri-Borough Music Hub

The Tri-borough Music Hub (TBMH or 'The Hub') is the award-winning lead organisation that oversees the delivery of music education in the three West London boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and the City of Westminster. The Hub receives core funding from the Department for Education via Arts Council England. It operates a shared-services model across three Local Authorities to deliver an expansive programme of musical learning, in and out of school.

The Hub offers a variety of free services to maintained schools in the borough, ranging from access to the Virtual Music School, curriculum guidance documents, whole class teaching resources, network meetings, performance events, and wider partnership opportunities. All maintained Primary and Secondary schools in Westminster access free services from the Hub. The Hub also offer low-cost traded services to schools including instrumental/vocal teaching, instrument loan and some further performance events. 18 maintained Primary schools in Westminster receive traded services. The Hub also has 51 out-of-school pupils receiving music tuition, of which 8 are in receipt of Free School Meals.

Due to falling pupil numbers in the borough, the Hub’s core funding for music education in Westminster has reduced year-on-year, from £222,839 in 2016-2017 to £194,724 in 2021-2022. This is made up of a main grant of £167,273 with an additional allocation of £27,451 for students eligible for Free School Meals. Traded services have been a source of income for the Hub, however this is not sustainable with the downturn in funding coupled with the costs of inflation, and the Hub are currently considering how they can source additional funding from other organisations and sponsors in order to maintain their service offer.

Last year, The Tri Borough Music Hub presented 26 performance events featuring almost 3000 children and young people across the boroughs and reached audiences of over 4000 people. On an event held on 26th May 2022, the Lord Mayor launched Music Makes Me, the Hub’s next large-scale multi-school music education and performance programme in co-production with the Royal Albert Hall. Music Makes Me’s innovative approach is rooted in inclusive musical practice and will happen in the 2022-23 academic year (TBMH’s 10th anniversary year), culminating in a performance in the Royal Albert Hall on Tues 27th June 2023.

Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme update and plans for October Half Term additional provision

The Department for Education’s Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) supports local authorities to deliver a range of activity-based programmes with meal provision for school-age children eligible for Free School Meals during the Easter, Summer, and Christmas Holidays. In addition, WCC made an extra £239k available for holiday activities and a meal offer to address Holiday Hunger and support a wider group of children and young people.

Headline data for both programmes, for Summer 2022, is set out in the table below:

Programme	Total providers	Funding available	Number of unique CYP attending (estimated)	Total number of sessions attended (estimated) (*one session is typically a day)
HAF Summer 22 (DfE funded)	33	£430k	2000	18,000
Additional Funding Summer 22	44	£239k	1250	7,000
TOTAL	72	£669K	3250	25,000

The HAF programme requires strict adherence to DfE guidelines (a minimum of 4 hours a day, 4 days a week, for 4 weeks), however the additional local funding was flexible and enabled providers to deliver appropriate activities tailored to the needs of their communities. A variety of activities were offered, including; sports sessions, cultural trips, arts, crafts and drama sessions, residentials, cookery sessions, personal development and educational programmes, and health and wellbeing activities. This includes children and young people who are experiencing hardship but fall short of Free School Meal eligibility. Last year the Council supported 1966 unique CYP, whilst this year, the Council increased support by 60%, with the help of the additional funding.

Monitoring visits were very informative and enabled Young Ambassadors and representatives from both the Council and Young Westminster Foundation to view the provision and to watch the children enjoying and engaging with the activities – and were also able to sample the healthy meal offers.

In January 2022, a longer-term funding commitment to HAF was given by the DfE, up to and including Christmas 2024. In response, Westminster is now looking to award HAF grants to providers, for up to the next 2 years, to enable the voluntary and community sector to undertake longer term planning to deliver the HAF programme and reach the most vulnerable children and young people in most deprived areas of the borough.

The Government's HAF programme does not cover half term breaks. However, the Council is providing additional grant funding of £80,000 to support at least 800 children and young people who would also benefit from activities and a meal offer, over the October Half-Term 2022. The funding will ensure that disadvantaged children and young people are supported in the half term to access life enhancing and creative opportunities and receive a healthy meal per day.

Update on Department for Education's proposed changes to Nursery School Funding

As discussed at the previous Policy and Scrutiny Committee, the Department for Education (DfE) is proposing to reduce funding for our Maintained Nursery Schools (MNSs) in WCC from April 2023. In essence, the MNS supplementary funding WCC will be receiving from April 2023 will be reduced by £342,941, or 25% of the current funding of £1,431,641.

The Council has been lobbying the DfE to challenge this proposal, and have met with the DfE funding team, discussing our concerns in greater detail, and proposed an alternative timeline for a phased introduction to funding changes, must they go ahead. The Council has submitted a formal response to the consultation which among other points, included the following:

- Current general linear model (GLM) data that the new Early Years Funding Formula is built on is out of date (2013- 2014 data) and therefore may result in highly inaccurate funding calculations for many local authorities
- Basing funding on uptake of Free School Meals (FSM) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) does not accurately reflect the level of need as many children's additional needs will not be captured
- The DfE should consider providing MNSs with a lump sum unrelated to number of pupils (as with schools) and supplementary funding based on the number of children.
- Should a reduction in funding be introduced, this should be done in a graduated way to allow any transition taking place without causing major disruption to our most vulnerable families. A timescale to achieve this within four years has been shared.

We await a response from the DfE and will update the Policy and Scrutiny in due course. This will not be until at least November.

Update on Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement

Since the closure of the Hilton Metropole Bridging Hotel in May/ June 2022, there are currently no Afghan refugees awaiting resettlement by the Home Office in Westminster.

We have now permanently settled four Afghan families in Westminster, one of which came from the Hilton Metropole Bridging Hotel in Westminster and the other three from out-of-borough bridging accommodation.

All our resettled families receive support through the Single Homeless Project, who provide a designated member of staff who supports families to integrate in the borough, including supporting

them to access financial support, access to health services, education, and training. Each family also has an allocated Family Navigator who links in with child and family-specific services. We also carried out a census of families in the hotel, and the school admissions team used that information to allocate school places to every child.

In line with our commitments to house refugees, our housing service continues to work with landlords to identify suitable properties to offer to the Home Office. We have identified and offered another two properties which have been accepted by the Home Office and these have been matched to two families. We are currently awaiting move-in dates for these families.

2.2 Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES)

Ofsted Inspection report

WAES had a full inspection by Ofsted from 21 June to 24 June 2022. The overall grade is Good, and Behaviour and Attitudes has been graded as Outstanding. The [inspection report](#) has now been officially published on the Ofsted website. We were due to highlight and publicise key elements of the report via our social media channels and the website but suspended this due to the national period of mourning.

Start of new term

There have been strong enrolments at the start of the new academic year across most areas, particularly for Digital and Accounting programmes. This demonstrates a clear demand for learners to engage with education in Westminster. The demand for ESOL has grown, with a good number of the Ukrainians now being enrolled on mainstream programmes. Our Community Learning programmes have also seen a positive start to the year. These programmes help resident learners who may need more support to engage in mainstream programmes or who are engaging for their own wellbeing within Westminster. We are also running money management workshops to support residents with the current pressures of the cost-of-living crisis.

2.3 Culture

Culture Fund

The Culture Fund paper is being prepared for an Executive Decision following further feedback from Cabinet Members. This will provide £1.8m over four years to deliver grants to cultural and community partners to participate in Inside Out, the council's outdoor summer arts festival, and various learning, wellbeing and outreach activities benefitting residents. It will also support a new Local Cultural Education Partnership, London Open House participation, Exhibition Road Cultural Group membership and various public realm initiatives.

Energy price rises/warm spaces

A letter is being sent to DCMS following widespread consultation with cultural venues in Westminster on projected energy price rises, with several facing costs rising by over three times recent levels. The Westminster Culture Network members have also been invited to take part in the council's campaign to promote free warm spaces this winter. Several cultural, community and faith venues including National Gallery and Royal Academy of Arts have agreed to participate, with some venues also keen to develop bespoke resident events.

2.4 Leisure

Seymour Leisure Centre

There is work ongoing to refine the design of the Centre following feedback and input from Willmott Dixon and the design team. A revised Communications and Engagement Plan will be circulated shortly.

Everyone Active Contract

We are close to finalising with Everyone Active the terms for the contract extension over the period 2023-2026. This includes formalising shared objectives around sustainability, social value and community provision and considering provisions to support ongoing enhancements to the scope of our leisure portfolio.