

Children and Young People Select Committee Chair's Update September 2026

Scrutiny Review – Additionally Resourced SEND Provision

The purpose of the scrutiny was to receive an update on the implementation of the transfer from September 2025 and engage with the secondary schools to encourage additional applications from the secondary sector. The Select Committee wanted to fully understand the barriers to schools becoming ARPs and identify ways that these could be overcome to secure the provision required for children and young people in the Borough.

However, early in the scrutiny review, the Government announced that it would be publishing a White Paper outlining the intended approach to SEND reform. The announcement came amid increasing calls for action regarding the rising number of registered SEND pupils and the associated challenges faced by councils. Following the announcement, the Select Committee decided to pause the review to await the detail of the White Paper.

In May 2026 the Select Committee received a presentation on the White Paper and considered the implications for their work. The Select Committee agreed to summarise the evidence collected and key findings and advise Cabinet that they would be concluding their work given that the Government was now making plans to direct all schools to have Inclusion Hubs.

The September Cabinet meeting received a report from the Select Committee summarising the evidence collected and key findings and noted the report.

Scrutiny Review – Children Not in School

The final report was considered by Cabinet in June and all recommendations were approved. An Action Plan was considered by the Select Committee in September.

Scrutiny Review – Alternative Provision

A tri-partite meeting was held on 25 June and the July meeting of the Select Committee received an introductory presentation and considering the scope and project plan for the review.

This scrutiny review will examine the Council's approach to Alternative Provision (AP), assessing whether current arrangements meet need and improve outcomes.

The following key lines of enquiry have been identified:

- What are the reasons that children are placed in alternative provision?
- How has demand changed over time? What does the data tell us?
- Are particular groups more likely to access alternative provision?
- What proportion of children return to mainstream education? How is this managed?
- What is the AP Framework? How is quality measured?
- What are the outcomes for children accessing alternative provision? How is progress monitored? How is attendance tracked?
- How is alternative provision commissioned and monitored? What is the average cost per placement? Is there sufficient local provision? How is provision regulated?
- How do we ensure robust safeguarding in all AP settings?

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- What do children and young people say about their experience of AP? How are their voices heard? How are mental health and emotional wellbeing supported?
- How do we engage with parents/ carers?
- What preventative strategies are in place in mainstream schools?
- How well to partners work together? Is there a shared AP strategy?
- What are the rules around OFSTED registration?

Evidence gathering will commence from October 2026. The review is scheduled to report to Cabinet in February 2026.

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance

Key Issues / Problems or concerns	The September meeting received overview and performance reports on Children's Social Care and Education, Inclusion and Achievement
Problems or concerns	None
Requests for more information	None

Monitoring

Key Issues / Problems or concerns	Outstanding monitoring: • Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Relationships - A further progress update to be scheduled for the October meeting of the Committee • Holidays are Fun – A further progress update is scheduled for the October meeting of the Committee • Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment – Progress updates have considered by the Select Committee over the past few months. In November a summary report will be presented to capture outcomes and impact
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Remaining 2026-2027 Meetings (all 5.00pm unless stated)

16 September 2026
 14 October 2026
 11 November 2026
 16 December 2026
 13 January 2027
 10 February 2027
 17 March 2027