

1. The Place to Grow Up



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Borough Context

In Greenwich, our ambition is for every child and young person to be safe, healthy, happy, and able to thrive. We want Greenwich to be the most child and young person friendly borough in London, where children and young people are heard, valued and supported to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background, needs or circumstances.

Our vision for 2050 is that where you start in Greenwich does not limit where you can go or the opportunities you have, and that every young person grows up with the confidence, skills and connections to aim high, whatever their background or postcode. The next four years are about laying those foundations: a safe and stable childhood, a strong start in the early years, the right support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and places close to home to play, learn and belong.

We are transforming how we work with children and young people, through our Families First approach, putting relationships, family networks and lived experience at the heart of

everything we do. We believe families are usually the best place to care for their children, and our role is to build on their strengths, increase resilience and provide the right help at the right time. Alongside families, through the Children and Young People's Partnership, we are working with schools, health services, communities and the voluntary sector to create the conditions for every child to have the best possible start in life and a positive future.

We have made significant progress over the past four years since our previous Corporate Plan. In 2025, 72% of Greenwich children achieved a Good Level of Development at the end of Reception, outcomes at Key Stage 2 remained above national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics, and English and Maths GCSE results have exceeded the national average across all grade boundaries for the last three years. This progress has been recognised through external inspection, with Greenwich receiving an 'Outstanding' judgement from Ofsted for its Children's Services in 2024 and the highest available grading through the Area SEND Partnership inspection.

We are committed to building on our progress in educational outcomes, ensuring all children and young people can develop the skills, knowledge and confidence for the future.

While we recognise these achievements, we are acutely aware that many children and young people continue to face increasing challenges and that inequalities continue to affect life chances and opportunities for some. Demand for SEND support continues to grow rapidly, with children and young people with SEND now representing almost a quarter of pupils attending Greenwich schools, and the number of children with Education, Health and Care plans has increased significantly in recent years. Through our SEND transformation programme, STARSS Greenwich, alongside a strengthened Inclusion Strategy, £36.4m of new investment in SEND provision and closer partnership working across education, health and care, we will ensure children and young people receive the right support as close to home as possible to enable more children to thrive within their local communities. We will strengthen clear, accessible channels for genuine dialogue with parents of children with

special educational needs and disabilities. Currently, nearly 1 in 4 children in care are placed more than 20 miles from home. We want children to remain close to their families, schools, friendships and communities - recognising that strong, stable relationships are key to helping them thrive. We are committed to improving outcomes for children in our care by improving sufficiency across the care system, reducing reliance on out-of-borough placements, and growing local foster and kinship care. We will achieve this through targeted recruitment and retention, stronger carer support and creating more Local Authority residential provision to help more children in our care stay connected to Greenwich.

We want every child and young person to enjoy childhood, develop confidence and resilience, and benefit from the opportunities Greenwich has to offer. We will continue to work closely with childcare providers across the borough to ensure we have sufficient high quality, affordable and accessible childcare places and support the provision of free school meals so that every child has access to healthy,

nutritious food. We will invest in safe, welcoming places where children and young people can learn, play, belong and build positive relationships, including through our pioneering NextGen youth offer, wellbeing hubs and wider community provision. We will ensure children and young people have a meaningful voice in shaping the services, policies and places that affect their lives

through the Greenwich Young People's Council, Young Advisors and wider participation opportunities. Our goal is that every child and young person in Greenwich grows up safe, supported, connected and hopeful about their future, with the relationships, opportunities and support they need to thrive throughout childhood and into adulthood.



1.1 Children and young people grow up safe and well-supported

What this means

- We will work to keep children and young people safe, healthy and happy - at home, in their communities, online and in education.
- Working as one partnership, we will improve outcomes for all children - with a particular focus on those facing disadvantage, children with additional needs, vulnerable young people and children in our care.
- We will improve sufficiency across the care system to ensure more children can remain close to their families, communities and support networks.
- We will act collectively to protect children from exploitation, violence and harm, strengthen families and communities and ensure the right help reaches children, young people and families at the right time.

Commitments

Social care

- Deliver the national Families First reforms - strengthening prevention and early help, family-led decision-making and multi-agency support to ensure more children can remain safely within their families and communities, and families receive help at the earliest opportunity
- Continue to improve access so there is one place to go for mental health support, so that families and professionals can find the right service without being passed between systems

Fostering and residential care

- Strengthen local fostering and kinship care through recruitment, retention, targeted support and housing solutions
- Create more Local Authority residential provision for children in our care



Indicators (6)

Percentage of children looked after with 3 or more placements during the year (Council Indicator)

The proportion of children in care who moved between three or more different homes within a year

Number and rate of children subject to a child protection plan (rate per 10,000 0-17) (Borough Indicator)

Number and rate of children in our care (rate per 10,000 0-17) (Borough Indicator)

Percentage of looked after children placed more than 20 miles from home (Council Indicator)

Percentage of child protection plans which were a second or subsequent plan (Borough Indicator)

The proportion of child protection plans that were not a child’s first plan, meaning the child had been on a plan before

Average strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) score for children looked after (Borough Indicator)

A score reflecting the emotional and behavioural wellbeing of children in care, based on a standard questionnaire completed about each child. A lower score means fewer difficulties, so a lower average is better



1.2 Children and young people are happy and can thrive

What this means

- We will work together, through the Children and Young People's Partnership, to improve educational outcomes, reduce inequalities and support children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need for the future.
- We will invest in welcoming places, enriching activities and opportunities for participation, ensuring every child and young person feels valued, connected and able to thrive.

Commitments

Activities for children and young people

- Launch our new NextGen service and open five youth hubs (including a new hub in North Greenwich), operating seven days a week, with wraparound services and fully staffed
- Create a new £1.6m Youth Opportunity Grant, as part of our NextGen offer, which will fund a range of local activities and support for children and young people

Education, Training and Employment

- Develop an Early Years Strategy that prepares every child for school while supporting parents throughout every stage of parenthood. Through our network of children's centres and family hubs, we will ensure high-quality childcare is within reach of every family

- We will champion reading for every child in the borough, working with the Dolly Parton Foundation, schools and childcare settings so every child discovers the joy and power of reading from the earliest age
- Continue developing the Greenwich Learning Partnership for all schools in Greenwich, through which we can strengthen standards, improve education, deliver better outcomes for children, share best practice, commission innovative research and deliver initiatives such as the Greenwich Education Conferences
- Deliver an opportunity and skills plan, working hand in hand with our Jobs of the Future programme, so that every young person aged 16-25 has the support they need to get into education, training or work

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- Deliver £36.4m investment in schools for children with SEND, including building a new SEND school where children can stay from primary age through to sixteen without moving, and a new centre for 16 to 25-year-olds to help them into adult life
- Develop a new Alternative Provision site, bringing education, health and care staff together in one place to support young people with SEND and their families
- Through our STARSS programme we will develop a sustainable, resilient and ambitious SEND system that helps young people to flourish – preparing for the SEND reforms and a new system in 2029, ensuring children receive the right support earlier and closer to home in mainstream settings wherever possible

Indicators (8)

Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 for all non-independent Greenwich schools. (Borough Indicator)
The proportion of children in Year 6 (aged 10-11) who reached the expected level in their reading, writing and maths tests
Percentage of SEN pupils meeting expected standard in reading, writing and math at Key Stage 2 (all SEN provision, children and young people with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) and SEN support without an EHCP). (Borough Indicator)
The proportion of children in Year 6 (aged 10-11) with special educational needs, who reached the expected level in their reading, writing and maths tests
Key Stage 4 attainment 8 data for all non-independent Greenwich schools. (Borough Indicator)
The average score pupils achieve across eight GCSE subjects, used as an overall measure of exam performance at the end of secondary school (Year 11)
Key Stage 4 attainment 8 data for SEN pupils (all SEN provision, children and young people with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) and SEN support without an EHCP). (Borough Indicator)
The average score pupils with special educational needs achieve across eight GCSE subjects, used as an overall measure of exam performance at the end of secondary school (Year 11)

Percentage of children achieving good level of development at 2 and 2 and a half year review. (Borough Indicator)
The proportion of young children meeting expected development milestones for their age, based on a health check carried out between the ages of 2 and 2 and a half
Percentage of children with a good level of development at 5 years old (Borough Indicator)
The proportion of children meeting the expected level of development by the end of their first year in primary school, covering things like communication, physical development, and early reading and number skills
Proportion of CYP with an EHCP who are in mainstream provision (Borough Indicator)
The proportion of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan who attend a mainstream school, rather than a specialist school for children with additional needs
Participation in youth services in the last 12 months (including sport, music, art or youth clubs). (Borough Indicator)