

#CognusandProud

End of year review

2020/21



Foreword

As someone who has worked in Education for their entire career, I am a firm believer that it is a privilege to work in a sector where we have a daily opportunity to impact on the lives of children, young people and their families. As Managing Director of Cognus, another privilege I experience on a daily basis is to work with a wide range of highly skilled, motivated and empathetic professionals who are passionate and ambitious about putting those skills to good effect and making a difference.

In the last 16 months Cognus staff have experienced a time like no other; the global pandemic which descended upon us in early 2020 has meant that like many other organisations, our sense of “business as usual” was thrown up in the air as we started to deliver our range of services whilst working from home, adapting our delivery to online wherever possible, ensuring that there was minimal disruption for children, young people and families.

Throughout this time, staff have thrown themselves into thinking creatively about how we deliver effectively and impactfully; listening to the views of children young people and families, continuing to work collaboratively with local area partners, as well as developing news partnerships, all the while showing compassion and commitment to their work, our service users and to one another.

A key part of our organisational philosophy and behaviours has been to ensure that we learn, grow, communicate and celebrate. To this end, our communications with one another and externally have been an important part of our daily lives, capturing positive feedback and things that we are proud of, that have had a real impact on the lives of the local area we serve.

I am proud to share our very first End of Year Review with you and hope we give you a sense of the fantastic work that our teams deliver day in, day out, as well as data headlines which provide an indication of the extent of our reach and impact.

And finally, I am grateful to each and every member of the Cognus staff who have created the content or done the work which inspired the content, as well as those who have overseen its production, including our Staff Comms Working Group. Excellent teamwork!

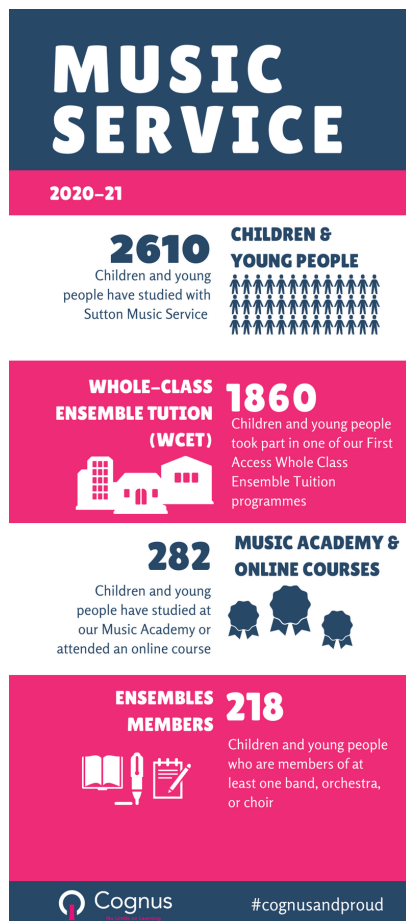
Forever, Cognus and proud.

Joanna

Joanna Cassey
Managing Director



Singing Success in Sutton with Sutton Music Service and Friday Afternoons



In May 2021, Sutton Music Service was thrilled to work with one of its National Singing Partners, Friday Afternoons. The result was a brand new singing and signing project based on Russell Hepplewhite's new work, with lyrics by Michael Rosen. Friday Afternoons Ambassador Charlotte Brosnan and Dr. Paul Whittaker delivered the virtual workshops. Roughly 630 Year 5 & 6 pupils from the LEO Academy Trust accessed the workshops..

"The project has been a huge success and it has been enormously rewarding watching the children grow in confidence with their singing and signing over the past few weeks. Technology has enabled a large number of children to participate in this amazing opportunity in a Covid-secure environment and I hope that the children enjoyed exploring their voices, learning how to sing and sign new songs and that they feel inspired to keep singing!"

Emily Murphy, Senior Vocal Curriculum Leader, Sutton Music Service

As a result of the project, some of the classes have recorded a mini-performance. The project was an exciting and interesting way to bring singing back in Sutton schools. We hope that by sharing these videos and links to Friday Afternoons resources, we will encourage all of our schools to keep singing!

"Pupils from across LEO Academy Trust were delighted to take part in the Friday Afternoons Singing Project. They loved learning to sing and sign the songs by Russell Hepplewhite, with texts by Michael Rosen. This was such a lovely way to reinvigorate singing across our schools after a very difficult year. Thank you to Friday Afternoons and Sutton Music Service for giving us this fantastic opportunity."

Jane Greene, Director of Music, LEO Academy Trust

Friday Afternoons



Attendance: Getting our children ready for school



The attendance service has been promoting the importance of improving school attendance. They have released a podcast to support parents in this. Research shows that regular school attendance is important in giving children the best possible start in life. It can also support strong educational outcomes. Children who miss school can fall behind with their work and find it difficult to build skills. They can fail to make progress and as result struggle to reach their full potential.

Cognus attendance service continues to explore ways of connecting with parents. The service can help parents find ways to build consistent attendance patterns from an early age and lay a solid basis for their child's future. **For further support with attendance, contact attendance@cognus.org.uk**



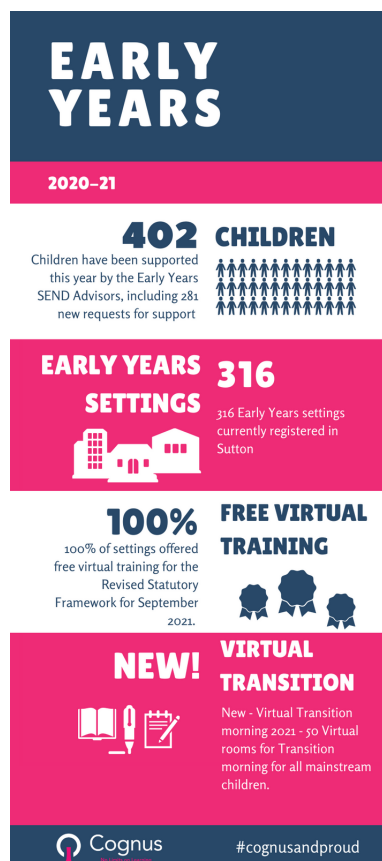
Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) gain support during COVID

It has been difficult to be a newly qualified teacher (NQT) this academic year. Many teachers have had limited chances to teach children face-to-face. They have had to adapt their skills to virtual mediums. Now schools have fully returned to face-to-face learning, NQTs have taken the chance to develop their skills in the classroom.

Sutton's NQTs have shown great strength in adapting during COVID. All signs show that they are progressing well. Children in Sutton enjoy the new ideas and energy that come from new teachers, and this year is no different.

Cognus' NQT service has been available to provide support and guidance to schools and NQTs throughout the COVID period. This support has ensured that all NQTs have the best chance to be successful this year.

Early Years: Supporting schools with new framework changes



The Cognus Early Years service has linked with Ruth Swailes to send out the key messages from the Revised Early Years Framework (which comes into force in September 2021). Every early year school and setting in Sutton has had a video presentation from Ruth. Five further training sessions took place to update settings on what the Department for Education and Ofsted expect.

Schools showed their appreciation of the training support, with positive feedback. *"Thank you for the recording. I thought this was absolutely fantastic, and so well explained."*

Sutton Local Offer: Support for families with SEND



Sutton Local Offer, a website that provides support for young people with SEND, has found a new way to reach more young people and families.

The Local Offer has launched a Facebook page (Sutton Local Offer) so that young people and their families can receive up-to-date news. The Facebook page also provides a great chance for co-producing content for the Local Offer.

If you are a family with SEND, please ensure you follow us on Facebook.

Cognus E safety Advisor returns to school after lockdown



Cognus Safeguarding Service made sure that schools were equipped to support children on E-safety. During lockdown, many children and young people spent far more time online, often keeping in touch with their friends on social media. The internet has many positive qualities and social media allows us to have free 24/7 contact with our friends and family. Yet, not all children have a good outcome online and many come to harm due to things like cyber-bullying, negative comments, and grooming.

“Online safety is a huge focus for schools. We noticed an increase in issues relating to social media arising during lockdown”

Head of Year 13

Steve Welding, E-safety Advisor, delivered training to 400 year 12 & 13 students at Nonsuch High School for Girls as part of their PSHE lessons. The talk focused on various subjects around internet safety and general safety rules.

“That was super – a really comprehensive look at lots of important issues to help our pupils feel safer when using social media and online platforms” (Head of Year 13)

Steve has also delivered training to 180 year 6 children in Primary Schools. The sessions led to lots of questions from the children. Many children believe that when they are playing interactive games, they are playing with other people who are about the same age as they are (or a bit older). In reality, many of the people they are playing the games with are adults. The average age of an online gamer is 38 years old!

“This is my favourite year group to speak to for a couple of reasons, they are just about to start their journey to Secondary school and they are beginning to use the internet and social media to communicate with others – and many are getting it wrong”

Steve Welding, E-safety Advisor

Many of the Year 6 children did not understand social media or what it was. When Steve asked the question *“Who has a social media profile?”*, about 30% of the class put their hand up. He then asked the question *“Who communicates with their friend on some kind of social media”* and 80% of the class put their hand up!!

Steve will continue to deliver online safety sessions in our Sutton Schools, raising awareness of the issues and risks.

Paving the Way go virtual and boost self-esteem for their families!

Paving the Way launched their first virtual family workshop to provide support for families during school holidays. Before, the workshops were held in children's centres around the borough and have now moved online with great success.

The first session run by Ann, Kemi and Sarah covered self-esteem using a mixture of games, videos and verbal interaction. The workshops are run every holiday. They cover a range of different topics and challenges for children e.g. self-esteem, friendship, transitions and anxiety. The sessions welcome all family members to support the child that has been referred to Paving The Way. Our aim is for families to take away ideas, strategies and to have fun.

'.....was really helpful and good to meet, he had some really good ideas for when I get angry' (child)

'I learnt that self-esteem is like a muscle in your body that can grow and get stronger' (child)

'I learnt that self-esteem helps you to achieve your goals' (child)

The workshops are available on the Cognus website for families to access. Paving the Way is an early intervention service that provides a menu of support for children & young people, parents and carers and schools. Support is for here a child has a range of difficulties that cause barriers to learning, social interactions and achieving their full potential. **If you have any questions about this service please email: earlyintervention@cognus.org.uk**

Sutton Local Offer: Personal budgets



Sutton young people can now learn about Personal Budgets, understand the choices they have and work towards their goals.

Information around Personal Budgets is often confusing and difficult to understand. We want to enable our young people to better understand Personal Budgets – what are they, can I ask for one, how am I assessed? This year, Sutton Local Offer created a video explaining Personal Budgets to our families and young people. View the video on the Local Offer.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL

2020-21

249 CLA

Children Looked After (CLA) in the London Borough of Sutton



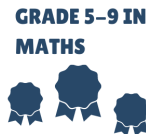
GRADE 5-9 IN ENGLISH +4%



4% increase in CLA achieving grade 5-9 in English

+6%

6% increase in CLA achieving grade 5-9 in maths



CARE LEAVERS STARTING UNIVERSITY



100%

9 Nine care leavers started university Sept 2020

CLA started Year 12 in education, employment, or training



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TRAVEL ASSISTANCE (TRANSPORT)

2020-21

323,380

323,380 passenger trips provided during a school year or 1,702 passenger trips undertaken each school day

PASSENGER TRIPS



APPLICATIONS 99%



99% of applications for school transport were reviewed within 10 working days

91%

97% of parents informed of the outcome and the details of the transport provider within 5 working days



CONTRACTS 350



350 SEN school transport contracts



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TRAVELLER EDUCATION SERVICE

2020-21

93% CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

93% of traveller children in receipt of suitable education



VACCINE UPTAKE 99%



Partnership work between TES and public health saw a 99% covid vaccine uptake on a local Traveller site

NEW! PODCAST

Released their first podcast focusing on Traveller culture
<https://cognus.org.uk/suttonvirtualschool/families/education-untapped-podcast/>



PARTNERSHIP

Joint work between Cognus Traveller Education Service, Health and a range of other partners nationally recognised by Public Health England



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School Admissions: Primary and Junior National Offer Day 16th April 2021

Every year families apply for their children to start school for the following September. This year, schools have been unable to offer their usual open day offer. Even when faced with this challenge, families were supported by Cognus' Admissions team to gain school places.

Schools adapted well to the lockdown restriction and arranged virtual tours via their websites. Cognus' Admissions team supported parents by giving advice and also providing guidance to schools.

'Thanks as always, you are all so helpful, it is very reassuring.'

(Sutton school)

'This is a very stressful time for mums that haven't applied before. I received a call about changing addresses and the lady on the phone was most helpful and I really thank all the staff there for settling my nerves and being so kind. Great job'

(Sutton parent)

'Hoping they are as helpful as Sutton were, with a prompt response.'

(Sutton parent)

'The School Admissions team responded quickly to my queries and were very helpful. Thanks'

(Sutton parent)

'The advisors were very helpful in my case and I am very grateful for their support'

(Sutton parent)

This year, there were 2771 starting school applications for September 2021 received. 97.27% of Sutton residents got an offer of a school that they applied for.

Also, all Sutton parents that applied got an offer to start at a Sutton school in September. 616 applications for Junior School places were received. 99.9% of Sutton residents received a preference offer.



Improving the educational outcomes for a Sutton care experienced child

High-quality education that meets individual needs is vital to get the best educational outcomes for children in care. This year, a Sutton looked after child described himself as 'the happiest boy in the world' after a school change to a more suitable setting.

Donna Spiller, Sutton Virtual School Education Advisor, worked with foster carers and SEND services to find a new school. Donna worked to create a high-quality transaction. This led to the young person to report feeling very happy and re-motivated by education. It has led to an increase in his academic progress.

"Donna was instrumental in a successful move to a school better suited to meet needs."

(Foster carer)

Sutton's looked after children attend good or better schools across the UK and receive a very high quality of education. Sometimes a child's needs are not met by a school. Sutton Virtual School is important in making sure that intervention, or a change of setting for a child, is successful.

Sutton Virtual School works to support the education of about 250 young people under the care of Sutton, from age 2 to 18. They ensure they have the best educational opportunities possible.

To find out more about Sutton Virtual School, visit our website and follow us on Twitter @SuttonVS_CLA



Supporting families arriving in Sutton through the Hong Kong Resettlement Scheme

Sutton Admissions team has been a key support to families who have asked about Sutton school places as part of the Hong Kong Resettlement Scheme.

This scheme is expected to see hundreds of thousands of families move from Hong Kong to the UK over the next 5 years.

The exact numbers who are likely to settle in Sutton are unknown, but local groups supporting families say it may be over 1000. Most of the families will arrive in 2021, the first year of the scheme. Over 170 families with school-aged children have arrived from Hong Kong since September. We know from local surveys that education is top of the list of concerns, ahead of things like housing and work. This has been shown in the number of telephone and email enquiries to the School Admissions Team.

The Admissions team have joined with a local Facebook group for families who have arrived, or who are planning to arrive in Sutton. They have been meeting to talk about the latest number of arrivals, school places, and education.

In May, a question and answer session was aired on Facebook Live to around 100 viewers. Peter Gasparelli and Ann Potter answered questions for the Admissions Team. The questions ranged from the process, the timing of applications, and vacancies. There were also concerns about EAL support, SEND and SEND support, selective school tests, school travel, and more.

This session and the meetings are good examples of community engagement. They reassure families moving to the area and make them feel welcomed and supported. An example of feedback from a family supported through the process is below:

'We would like to express our deepest appreciation for your interventions in assisting our daughter to get a place in school. Relocating from one country to another and settling in a new country is a daunting challenge, especially with regard to finding a school for a child, and the child being placed in the appropriate grade/year, as countries have different syllabuses amongst other things. The willingness to help, thoughtfulness, quick responses, and guidance during this very difficult period of the COVID-19 pandemic is very helpful in our ongoing settlement in Sutton'

Autism service: Improving the wellbeing outcomes for a Sutton Child in Need

For some young people, the lockdown has made difficult situations worse, meaning they reached a breaking point. The Autism service has worked with schools to support the young person, family, and setting. They have supported them to problem solve and try and make a positive change.

With one young person, the Autism service worked as a team around the child and family. They made sure that the family got regular support and knew they could ask for advice at any time. It was also vital to help the young person have a better understanding of their own wellbeing, triggers, and buffers. One-to-one sessions helped the young person to better understand his autism diagnosis and what this meant to him. As well as helping him to use wellbeing strategies, it had a good impact on his identity and wellbeing.

An outside agency who contributed to this wider network of professionals commented:

"The level of support that the school and Rebecca have put in place has truly been first class and set the benchmark for my working with professional networks going forward. I am so pleased to see this young person has a network of professionals around him who truly care for him and that he trusts."

Collaborative working between the SEND team and Early Years helps confirm primary school placements



During May, the SEND Team liaised with all families with children due to start their primary school journey this September. We have been on hand to answer questions and provide support following our internal Early Years Panel. The panel welcomes all professionals who know the children well, as well as the Head Teachers and SENCOs from our primary school settings.

We were delighted to be able to confirm many placements for September 2021. We look forward to hearing of the children's progress when they join their new schools in September.

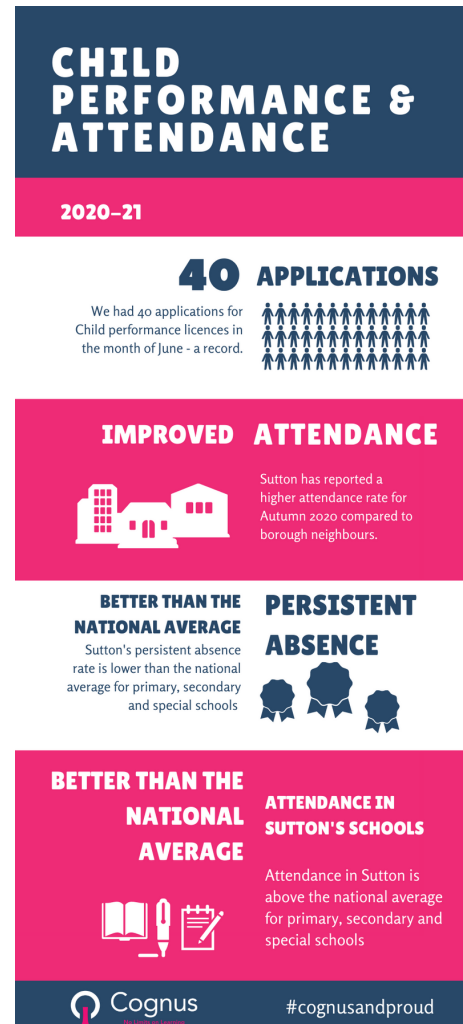
School Improvement Service: Supporting school leaders through a difficult year

The School Improvement team appreciates the great job our school leaders do every day. They work hard to create a better future for the children and young people within Sutton. This has never been a small task. Yet, during the past year, the demands of Covid-19 have put them and their teams under a lot of pressure. Covid-19 has greatly increased their workload and demanded quick changes in working practices. This means our school leaders have had to lead their schools under a unique set of emotional and mental challenges. We believe it is more important than ever that our school's leaders are given the proper support. We believe that leadership coaching is a powerful way to do this.

At the start of the spring term 2021, we worked in partnership with TT Education to begin a coaching programme for all our senior leaders. Each of these leaders will receive three half-day coaching sessions, one each term. The feedback from our leaders has been positive and it has been viewed as very supportive.

'Thank you for the comprehensive package of support you have put in place for us all! We do appreciate it.'

(Sutton Headteacher)



Supporting practitioners and parents to meet the needs of young people with SEND

"It's the best job in the world, but one of the hardest, loneliest, most misunderstood roles in a school."

Helen Curran, Bath Spa University.

SENCOs and parents now have access to a new resource. The resource provides guidance and information for those working to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in Sutton.

The SENCO Guidance and Information Tab are now live on Sutton's Local offer. The Education team at Sutton Council has been working with colleagues to produce new SENCO guidance and information pages on our Local Offer website. This is a new resource for practitioners and parent/carers working to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Sutton's schools - maintained mainstream schools, academies, special schools, early education settings, sixth forms, and colleges of further education.

Hearing Impairment Service opening up

Children with hearing impairment have again been able to enjoy face-to-face support from the HI service. The HI service has enjoyed being back out on home visits and returning to schools.

It was lovely to see one of our youngest children starting to get used to wearing hearing aids, after at first not being able to tolerate them. It was also great to see a two year-old chatting away and wearing his hearing aids all day while he waits for an update on his cochlear implants.

Home intervention visits are vital to teaching early language skills. Early intervention is key to making sure our HI children have the best start in life, working hard to becoming school ready.

Vulnerable community receive 2nd dose of vaccinations

After the success of the first round of Covid 19 vaccinations on Sutton's Traveller site, there was a second visit. The second visit was to make sure that all follow-up vaccinations were given.

Once again Cognus' Traveller Education Service worked with NHS Sutton to make it happen. The action was well-received by the families on the site. The services will work together again to have a coffee morning for residents to talk about any other health issues or concerns. The services will give advice and support. This has been a very positive outreach project. It has helped a vulnerable community to access vital resources during Covid-19.

Traveller Pupil is top of the class!

St Elphege's RC Infant School were given access to a programme called Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI). This was part of a scheme funded by the Department for Education, in response to Covid-19.

The programme is made for Reception pupils. It involves targeted small group and one-to-one support for children who would gain from more support with their language and early literacy skills. The programme first uses a tablet-based assessment called LanguageScreen with Reception pupils. This helps see who may gain most from NELI.

LanguageScreen is a short and fun activity for children. It gives useful information about children's language skills. The same assessment will be used again at the end of the school year to see how children's language have moved on.

One of the Traveller pupils supported by the Traveller Education Service (TES) scored joint highest in his class. We were all so proud of his achievement. His mum said that she was not surprised as he never stops talking when he's at home!

PAVING THE WAY

2020-21

157 NEW REFERRALS

157 new referrals in to the service over the year



PROGRESS IN AT LEAST THREE AREAS



90%

90% of children are making progress in at least 3 impact areas after being supported by PTW

5 NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Developed five new partnerships including Leo Academies, Limes College, Childrens Centres, Sutton Music Service & Homestart



15 SCHOOLS



Introduced half termly teacher consultation surgeries supporting staff from 15 different schools since November



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SAFEGUARDING

2020-21

292 PRIMARY

A total of 292 DSLs attended five Primary DSL Safeguarding events



SECONDARY 253



A total of 253 DSLs attended six Secondary DSL Safeguarding events

1626 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

18 Online Safety training events, attended by 1626 children and young people



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE 1626



18 Online Safety training events, attended by 1626 children and young people



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SUTTON INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE (SIASS)

2020-21

477 NEW REQUESTS

477 new requests for support 2020/21



SATISFIED OR BETTER



90%

90% of service users said they were at least satisfied with the service

4 VOLUNTEERS

Four Volunteers recruited to provide signposting, information, advice and guidance



NEW! YOUTH FORUM



Developed and implemented SIASS youth forum, increasing youth participation to shape the service



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SENSORY IMPAIRMENT SUPPORT

2020-21

410 CYP

children and young people with a sensory impairment on our database



VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (VI) TRANSITION 10



Univeristy 1
Sixth form 2
High school 6
Nursery 1

16 HEARING IMPAIRMENT (HI) TRANSITIONS

University 1
Secondary 7
Primary 8



HI EQUIPMENT 52



52 items of equipment on loan, including a mixture of radio aids for schools and hearing loops for online learning

100%

100% pass rate for BSL Level 1



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Partnership training boost for the next generation of music teachers

Sutton Music Service, the lead partner in the Sutton Music Education Hub, has helped future secondary school music teachers. The teachers were in their first teaching post, working towards their Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year. Since 2019, Sutton Music Service has worked with the Music PGCE team and Sutton SCITT and Roehampton University. They have provided training and support, adding to the student teachers' programme.

Sutton Music Service has delivered sessions on leading ensembles (music groups) and how to teach GCSE using Music Technology. There were also sessions on the roles for Music Education and the Department for Education's goals for Music Education Hubs. In the past, student teachers visited a local primary school to see Sutton Music Service's Whole-Class Ensemble Tuition (WCET). They saw first-hand the musical experiences of pupils in Key Stage 2. This year, because of COVID-19, the trainees watched a live video stream of a WCET lesson.

"Understanding KS2 whole class music-making is important for trainee teachers, not only to understand the learning phase and curriculum before pupils enter secondary school but also an opportunity to observe and understand whole class music-making and the teaching strategies used for engagement."

Kate Potts, Music PGCE Course Leader for Sutton SCITT/ Roehampton University

"Working with the music trainees in the Sutton SCITT and at Roehampton University is a fantastic partnership for the Music Hub. It is a great way of introducing the student teachers to what a Music Education Hub is and how their local Hub can support them in their NQT year and beyond."

Gareth Gay, Head of Music Service, Cognus Limited



To find out more about the work of Sutton Music Service, visit their website <https://suttonmusicservice.org.uk/>

Parent thanks Cognus SALT for support provided to their child

Jess Wood, Speech and Language Therapist recently received the following feedback from a student's mother.

'Thank you so much for taking the time to call me today and to give me some feedback of your lesson with my son. I'm so grateful for your help and support. I was immensely happy and emotional that you managed to unlock one important step with him yesterday. Being able to open up and confide to you that he doesn't know how to ask for help, is a big step. I really value your effort to help and support and your willingness to make sure that teachers, parents, and carers are all aware and how we can all be in the same line on how to support him further.'

I know how busy and stretched you are especially with the current circumstances after the lockdown, and I'm so grateful that you still giving your 100% to your students and making sure that you feedback to the parents.'

The Therapies Team work with a huge number of children and young people in the Local Area. The team works to develop Speech and Language and Occupational therapy skills. This work supports access to education and develops independence.

We will continue to share more stories from the Therapies Team which highlight their work in support of families in the local area.

Sutton Virtual School teams up with Solent University and St. Georges for Sutton CLA and Care Leavers

Sutton Virtual School is working with Widening Participation teams at Solent University and St. George's Hospital. They are working to raise goals and aims for Sutton's Children Looked After and Care Leavers. We are supporting a series of workshops made to help young people into University. These workshops include information for Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

For further information, visit our website :

<https://cognus.org.uk/suttonvirtualschool/news/its-not-too-early-to-think-about-university/>

Financial education helping secure a better future for Sutton's care experienced children

Children under the care of Sutton can access the help of high-quality financial education. This will help them grow the skills and understanding to support them financially in their future adult lives. Vicky Ford MP highlighted the need for children in care to receive financial education. She said: *"Care leavers move into independence and become responsible for their own finances at a much younger age than their peers ... and are at higher risk of financial vulnerability."*

Statistics show that around one-third of care leavers become homeless within the first two years of leaving care (Stein, 2006). It is vital that children in care have access to financial education from an early age. Sutton Virtual School has introduced MoneyReady, an online financial curriculum. MoneyReady gives young people the chance to use self-paced modular learning. The learning covers everything from saving and investments to pensions. Bianca Powell-Norris, Education Advisor at Sutton Virtual School who has overseen the start of MoneyReady says:

'Introducing the MoneyReady course to our children and young people has encouraged them to develop their financial literacy in a fun, age-appropriate, and engaging way, through videos, quizzes, and games. The course can easily be accessed on electronic devices and the website also provides helpful guidance for parents, carers, and teachers – promoting a united approach to financial literacy education. I am hopeful that we can encourage more organisations who support care experienced children and young people, to incorporate financial literacy into their packages of support, as this is a crucial life skill for our young people to acquire as they transition into adulthood.'

The recent study 'Care to talk about money?' said that Personal Education Plans (PEP) for children in care should also have a clear goal for individual financial ability. Sutton Virtual School has taken steps to make sure that all PEP meetings for children in Key Stages 2-4 review their financial education development. There is now also a foster carer training requirement, which will help carers become more confident in helping a child to learn about finances in the home.

A foster carer for two children in Key Stages 2 and 3 says,

'MoneyReady is really good. It is important to start teaching young people early on about money before they have to start managing it when they turn 16. Sutton Virtual School seems to be leading the way on this initiative and other Virtual Schools should consider this approach, as it is so important.'

Cognus Outdoor Education Adviser sees educational visits starting to return

Schools have been keen to work with Cognus' Outdoor Education advisor to get educational visits back on the timetable. Many children have begun to again enjoy educational enrichment activities. The DfE first changed their advice to allow schools to have 'day visits' and then to allow residential visits. This news was very welcome as few visits have been able to take place for most of the last year.

Educational visits and outdoor learning are seen by DfE, Ofsted and the Education Endowment Foundation (and other groups) as positive. They have a good effect on children's attendance, motivation, and outcomes. A recent survey of students at Perseid school in Merton found that educational visits are what students have missed the most in the last year.

Mick Bradshaw, Outdoor Education Advisor, gave a staff session to make sure that all teaching staff was confident to start planning and leading visits again. The session started looking at why school staff should take the responsibility of leading off-site visits. The session was a good reminder of some of the many benefits to children. Off-site visits give children new experiences and chances, widens their horizons, and develop their personal and social skills.

Enjoyment and fun were also mentioned by many of the staff as benefits that make visits worthwhile!



Cognus Educational Safeguarding visit the KMTV Studios at The University of Kent

Hayley Cameron, Education Safeguarding Manager, was invited to the KMTV Studio in Medway. to record a visual podcast on learning from serious case reviews, with a focus on multi-agency working.

Poor multi-agency working is mentioned time and time again in child protection cases and serious case reviews. It is important to look deeper into the causes and outcomes for this issue, to ensure children are better protected in the future. There has been lots of research on multi-agency working but the same problems still remain. There needs to be a different approach to future practice. When we look back to the Public enquiry after the death of Maria Colwell in 1974, the learning that arises is the same as what we see today. The same themes and issues arise. There is failure to listen to the voice of the child, a lack of information sharing, and poor multi-agency working.

"I felt the need to question why this is still the case after all these years and consider more importantly what else needs to be done to change this"

(Hayley Cameron).

During the recording, Hayley was able to stress how important multi-agency working is, highlighting some of the fantastic work that has been taking place in Sutton since the start of Covid-19.

"Multi-agency working is when professionals from all different sectors, including Children's Social Care, Education, Police and Health, come together to ensure a joined-up stance and vision is adopted to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people. Professionals should work holistically and use an ecological systems approach within their practice to enable them to build a more informed understanding of what life is really like for a child on a daily basis"

This was also a great chance to promote the Child Safeguarding Toolkit which began locally and nationally in March 2021. The Child Safeguarding Toolkit is a unique and full learning research. It is for everyone who comes into contact with children and has been made to help prevent further serious injury or child deaths. All the Toolkit's training and resource materials are free. **You can access the materials here: www.childsafeguardingtoolkit.org.uk.**

It is important that when there are issues, professionals can come together to think about what has happened. They can then share these ideas and views with a wider audience. This will get the biggest impact and support changes to be made for the best of the child. Instead of focusing on individuals to blame, we need to review wider systems. This is something that may take years to get right. The important thing to realise is that there is no quick fix. Learning can take place even years after the event when feelings and emotions have been understood.

Sutton schools rise to the challenge

The last fifteen months have provided challenges for our schools. School leaders and their staff have had to change their working settings and practices to keep their staff, pupils, and parents safe. They have also had to deliver quality learning for pupils in school and at home.

The nature of Covid-19 and the Government's understanding of coping with it means that advice has been changed often. Sometimes our school leaders have had to make big changes to their ways of working at very short notice.

Gaps in pupils' learning have been found. Clear plans have been made and set in action to narrow the gaps, using school resources and Catch-up funding. Communication with our families has been good. A mixed model of online and face-to-face meetings has been used, to meet individual needs.

The Cognus School Improvement team has carried out supportive school visits in the autumn and this term. They felt that our schools seem to be some of the most normal places to be, compared to wider society.

Schools still face many difficulties because of Covid-19. There will be further difficulties in the next academic year, but we have seen that schools are well planned and ready to fight these. They have worked very hard to ensure our families have the much-needed support. The work done by all members of our school communities is to be praised. Our schools have risen to the challenge, shown strength, and been a ray of light in these very challenging times.

Measuring the Financial Capability of 4, 5 and 6 Year old Children

Children aged four, five and six years will be helped to build financial skills. Nicholas English (the Educational Psychology Service) took part in a workshop to look at how to measure and record financial skills and financial education for children. The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) held the workshop.

More understanding of what is possible with this age group will inform the Financial Foundations Agenda for Change. This is part of the ten-year UK Strategy for Financial Wellbeing.

Extended Hours for Assisted Travel Team

After a review of working arrangements, the Assisted Travel team will now be available from 07:30 in term-time weekdays. They are available to take calls and deal with any issues that may happen early morning. It was first tried at the peak of Covid-19, due to the many last-minute changes and to deal with any early operational problems.

Chris Pettifer, the SEND Transport Manager, said: *"This early morning availability was so well received by parents, schools, and operators, that as a team we have decided to make this a permanent change. It allows us to deal with any issues as vehicles prepare to go out and for parents or schools to be in touch if any early morning issues develop. We anticipate it will be particularly helpful as we start the new school year and dealing with extreme weather during the colder winter months. Overall, it is an important part of making transport more responsive to the needs of our pupils and passengers. We've also extended the availability in the afternoon by a further half-hour during term time until 17:30, in an endeavor to support those parents who find it easier to contact us at the end of the working day."*

The Assisted Travel Team can be contacted on 020 8323 0460 between 07:30 and 17:30 Monday to Friday during term time. They can also be contacted via SEN.Transport@cognus.org.uk

Revised EYFS Framework - Teams share good practice across the borough



It has been great to share good practice across the borough recently. One of our training opportunities for the new Revised EYFS Framework has given us this chance.

There were ideas like using cooking for maths opportunities and how to make your role-plays more true to life. This included how to support children's transition using real things. For example, using school uniform, PE kits and lunch boxes. It left us all keen for more great learning.

SAFEGUARDING

2020-21

292 PRIMARY

A total of 292 DSLs attended five Primary DSL Safeguarding events



SECONDARY 253

A total of 253 DSLs attended six Secondary DSL Safeguarding events



1626 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

18 Online Safety training events, attended by 1626 children and young people



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE 1626

18 Online Safety training events, attended by 1626 children and young people



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INCLUSION

2020-21

100% VERY SATISFIED OR SATISFIED

100% of schools said they were at least satisfied with the inclusion support they receive with 68% saying they were very satisfied



NEW! INCLUSION FUND



Supporting complex in-year admissions.

NEW! TRANSITION PILOT

Year 7 multi-agency transition pilot rolled out across 2 secondary schools and this is set to grow in 21/22



BRIGHTER FUTURES

Brighter Futures project research and outcomes published by DfE highlighting 'what works' for pupils transitioning out of pupil referral units in to post-16 provision



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ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

2020-21

94.1% VERY SATISFIED OR SATISFIED

of EHE survey responders said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the service



INCREASE 60%



60% increase in number of families choosing to EHE this year

NEW! NEWSLETTER

termly EHE newsletter for families



STEERING GROUP NEW!

New EHE Steering Group created



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Powerful film unlocks opportunities to support care experienced young people

Professionals working with Sutton's children looked after had the chance to watch the short film 'Be-Longing.' The praised film was directed by Mike McKenzie. Sutton Virtual School staff who watched the film enjoyed the emotional and moving story of a child in care. The film asks professionals to always consider the impact of decision-making on children. It shows how much hope there is for children in care to make progress and achieve.

Sutton Virtual School continues to find ways to raise awareness of the issues that surround children in care. Sutton Virtual School will be working with Mike McKenzie and his team to make sure that as many Sutton teachers, Governors, and other professionals will get a chance to watch the film.

Kate Leyshon, Headteacher of Sutton Virtual School said, 'The film Be-Longing is an excellent production that strikes an emotional chord, highlighting the experience of a child in care that acts as a reminder to us all of the importance of our work each day. Witnessing the power of a child establishing a sense of belonging and purpose in their community is inspiring and further drives us to achieve this for all our Sutton children looked after. "

For more information about Sutton Virtual School visit our website or follow us on Twitter @SuttonVS_CLA



Good news on Sutton Schools attendance and absence figures

Schools have faced very uncertain times since Covid-19 hit us last year. Nobody knew how lockdowns and long school closures would affect school attendance and repeated absences in schools – we were in unknown times.

In May 2021 the DfE released data for the Autumn term 2020. The reopening of schools on 1 September 2020 was during this term. Schools were expected to be open throughout the whole of the Autumn term. This was the first absence data collected from the school census covering Covid-19.

The Attendance Team at Cognus analysed this data. They are happy to see that Sutton schools have reported excellent figures for the first term. This is when compared to the national average and our neighbouring Local Authorities of Croydon, Merton and Kingston.

The main points to gather from the statistical release are:

- **Attendance** - Sutton has reported a higher attendance rate for the first term compared to Kingston, Croydon, and Merton. This is for primary, secondary and special schools. Sutton is also better than the national average for primary, secondary, and special schools for school attendance.
- **Persistent Absence** - Sutton has reported fewer persistently absent pupils than the national average. This is for primary, secondary, and special schools. Sutton had fewer persistently absent pupils in primary and special schools compared to Kingston, Merton, and Croydon.

The Attendance Team was in contact with most of the schools in the Borough during the lockdown. They recognise the difficult challenges and uncertainty schools faced. So, we are delighted to share some long-awaited good news about school attendance and persistent absence in Sutton.

You can find out more about the work the Attendance team do and take a listen to their episode of our #EducationUntapped podcast "Getting your child ready for school"

Visually Impaired Transition support

This year we have had a high number of visually impaired young people transitioning to a new school. Visits to new settings have taken place weekly or every two weeks. How often visits take place depends on the needs of the individual. Orientation around their new settings has been enjoyed by all. The team were delighted to receive an email from the parent of one student who is Severely Sight Impaired (SSI). The student has been transitioning from infants to juniors:

"M has expressed how much she enjoyed the visit to Year 3. M felt very nervous about joining Year 3 given her usual anxiety about new spaces due to visual and mental non-familiarity of the environment. However, since the visits, she has said she feels braver and is looking forward to September. Thank you for initiating and conducting the visits Miranda".

One year 11 student we are supporting is keen to learn independent bus travel. We have worked with the local bus garage to allow the student to practice what you need to ask the bus driver and how to find a seat on the bus. This is an exciting time for him as he becomes more independent in preparation for leaving school. To aid his preparation for adulthood, we also asked Blind in Business to help him find work after his studies. Signposting individuals is key in helping them get the correct support on time.

Snapshots of SEND Service support for our children and young people

B is a 16-year-old young lady with significant health issues currently attending an out of borough special school. Although very happy at the school, she was not able to remain there for Post 16 education because the provision doesn't cater for this age group. The young person and parents preferred a mainstream, in borough FE College. A discussion was sent but the college said that it did not feel able to meet her needs. The SEND Service organised some meetings between parents, current school, nursing team, the FE College, and the EHCP Coordinator. The meetings were to discuss B's needs and how they could be supported, working together with community nursing teams. They looked at how the college would be able to meet these needs, allowing her to make a smooth transition.

The College is now looking forward to welcoming B. There will be further meetings between all parties to make sure that all services are working together to let the placement succeed. B is moving from an out-of-borough special school to a mainstream in the borough college.

Paving the Way partner with Leo Academy Trust

During the May half term, The Paving the Way team tested an exciting new project with Leo Academy Trust. The project is to provide support and advice for parents of children facing new and ongoing challenges.

The project is just the start of a range of new support surgeries and workshops for parents and children across the borough. We will be working in partnership with Leo Academy Trust and The London Borough of Sutton. This project will continue throughout the summer holidays for vulnerable children.

Members of Paving the Way ran a surgery for parents, to discuss issues, signpost services, and provide resources. We had a lot of interest. Attendance from parents was excellent and we were able to offer a great deal of support. There were tears and laughter from some grateful families. The project highlighted the need for early intervention/parental support. It aims to prevent issues from getting worse. It also gave parents the confidence to ask for a referral to our service where necessary.

'That's great that there has been a good take up, obviously, a service that is really needed, especially at this time.' – Leo Academy

Budding Picassos amongst Sutton's Traveller children

The Traveller Education Service received some amazing entries to their art competition. The competition was in celebration of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month (GRTHM) in June. The children made such colourful and interesting pictures of "What they are most proud of / love about being a Traveller."

The winners from each of the four age categories received a prize. Their artwork and photos are displayed on the TES page of the Cognus website. The parents of our 4 winners were so delighted and were keen to access the website so they could share in the celebrations with family and friends. Thank you to our wonderful judges, Joanna Cassey and James Leadbetter. They took the time to award every entry some positive feedback which we passed on to all the children. To view the winning masterpieces and for further information on GRTHM please visit the TES page of the Cognus website.

Therapist makes a difference to young person's engagement

Gitty joined the Cognus Therapies Post 16 Speech and Language team in December 2020 and is already a key part of the team. Due to Covid-19, she has yet to meet any of the team or the students on her caseload face to face. She delivers both 1:1 and group sessions under the supervision of a Speech and Language Therapist. Gitty is confident and innovative in her work. She also makes good use of the supervision networks available to her. Gitty has supervision from the Speech and Language Therapy Team and also from our Post 16 Specialist Occupational Therapist, Emma Perridge.

The Speech and Language Therapist supervising this work said that Occupational Therapists are "*amazing colleagues to work with.*" The impact she has made is evident in the feedback from a rehab worker who attends the Speech and Language sessions alongside the student:

"We started to work with Gitty 3 weeks ago to support X in SaLT. She has found Zoom sessions difficult in the past, has been quiet and often muted, often relied on her support worker, and had not engaged well. Gitty has been amazing and is able to identify when she becomes agitated and no longer wants to discuss certain subjects. Gitty has built such a good rapport with her, that has enabled them to engage well throughout sessions. Gitty is able to identify when her mood starts to dip and will then divert to discuss her strengths which completely changes the mood and she starts to engage once again. In such a short space of time, Gitty has been able to build a great working relationship with X which has encouraged her to engage and complete tasks set by Gitty. Thank you so much for your hard work, co-operation and patience. You have been amazing and we look forward to seeing you for face-to-face sessions when we can."

"..... Gitty really is a pleasure to work with and is a credit to your team."

For more information on the use of assistants and the excellent contribution they make please read the Royal College of Speech and Language (RCSLT) Position Statement Education and training for assistants/support workers [click here](#)

The Therapies Team work with a huge number of children and young people in the Local Area developing their Speech and Language and Occupational therapy skills to support their access to education and prepare them for adulthood.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

2020-21

15,845

HOURS OF BUSINESS SUPPORTS

The Business Support team provide 15,845 hours of support to teams across the company on an annual basis



EMAILS 12,000



The Business Support team have responded to well over 12000 emails this academic year

4,500

TELEPHONE CALLS

The Business Support team have answered in excess of 4,500 telephone calls this academic year



MEETING SUPPORT 150



The Business Support have provided meeting / minute taking support to around 150 SEN panels, professionals meetings, steering groups, and Board meetings



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AUTISM

2020-21

100+ PROFESSIONALS

Over 100 professionals have engaged in CPD on Autism



TRAINING SESSIONS 33



33 settings accessed Autism training sessions

25% INCREASE

Following training, participants knowledge of Autism had increased on average BY 25%



NEW! AUTISM FESTIVAL



Ran Sutton's first virtual Autism Festival



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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

2020-21

9

SUBJECT SESSIONS

Subject Leadership sessions for English, Maths, Science, Art, History, PE, D&T, Assessment and Computing – 12/15 for every subject



LEADERSHIP COACHING FOR SLT'S 60



60 delegates attended our Leadership Coaching for SLT's

ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT 15

15 schools took part in our action research project



DELEGATES 543 ATTENDED OUR CPD SESSIONS



543 delegates attended training modules on dyslexia, dyspraxia, PDA, dyscalculia and FASD



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Positive Feedback Quotes

'Thank you again for your dedication to all the students you teach. I am so pleased that we are able to continue to provide such fantastic music provision in these incredibly challenging times! '

(School – about Sutton Music Service)

'I wanted your team to know how grateful we have been to be included in the foster carers group. Everything you have done [...] has been fabulous. We are indebted to you for your kindness and thoughtfulness... All of your team are amazing and dedicated to these children in need. You should be proud of yourselves. I cannot praise your work enough. '

(Parent – about Sutton Virtual School)

'Just to say thank you for all your help and support so far this term - we were just saying how good the Sutton Transport Team have been [...] so I wanted to let you know how much we appreciate it.

(School – about SEND Transport)

'We would like to express our deepest appreciation for your interventions in assisting our daughter to get a place in school. Relocating from one country to another and settling in a new country is a daunting challenge, especially with regard to finding a school for a child, and the child being placed in the appropriate grade/year, as countries have different syllabuses amongst other things. [Sutton Admissions'] willingness to help, thoughtfulness, quick responses and guidance during this very difficult period of the COVID-19 pandemic is very helpful in our ongoing settlement in Sutton and the UK in general. Keep up the good work.'

(Parent – about Admissions Service)

'Behaviour link meetings are a useful way to dedicate time to supporting staff with strategies for pupils with emotional/behavioural difficulties. Teachers are keen to implement the strategies which have a direct effect on the children. Often teachers return for follow-up sessions to discuss progress or to flag up other children. Support staff have even asked to attend on occasions in their own time! You have also provided me with lots of information about resources/services to support the 'Mental Health & Wellbeing' agenda as well as lots of ongoing personal/professional advice. It is really useful to have your professional advice - it is hard to be a specialist in everything as a SENDCo! It is useful to have your view on when to refer to Paving the Way and when to carry on with school-based strategies.'

(School – about Paving the Way)

'Thank you and your team for the continued hard work supporting local children, young persons, and schools through this very difficult time. You may not receive the credit, but you are doing a brilliant job under incredibly challenging circumstances!'

(School – about SEND Team)

'I just wanted to thank you at the end of a long and difficult term for the invaluable support you have provided our boys and their families, as well as me and the Learning Support team, over the last few months. You all do such a fantastic job and we are so grateful for your input.'

(School – about Cognus Therapies)

'Your help over a number of cases has been so helpful and we have really appreciated your support this year.'

(School – about Inclusion Team)



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No Limits on Learning

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