

# Hillingdon Council: Children, Families & Education Select Committee

Six-month performance report  
First half 2025/2026 (April to October)



# Approach

The aim of this performance report is to assess the value the council provides by benchmarking our expenditure against key performance indicators across each directorate. The analysis is based entirely on publicly available data to ensure a fair, transparent, and repeatable comparison with other local authorities. As with all published datasets, the figures are only as accurate as the information submitted by each authority.

Because this report relies on published national datasets, it uses the most recent information available. For most measures, this is the 2024/25 financial year, although a small number of datasets cover slightly different periods. These variations are due to the time required for data cleansing and standardisation by both local authorities and the relevant national publishing bodies (e.g. DLUHC, DfE).

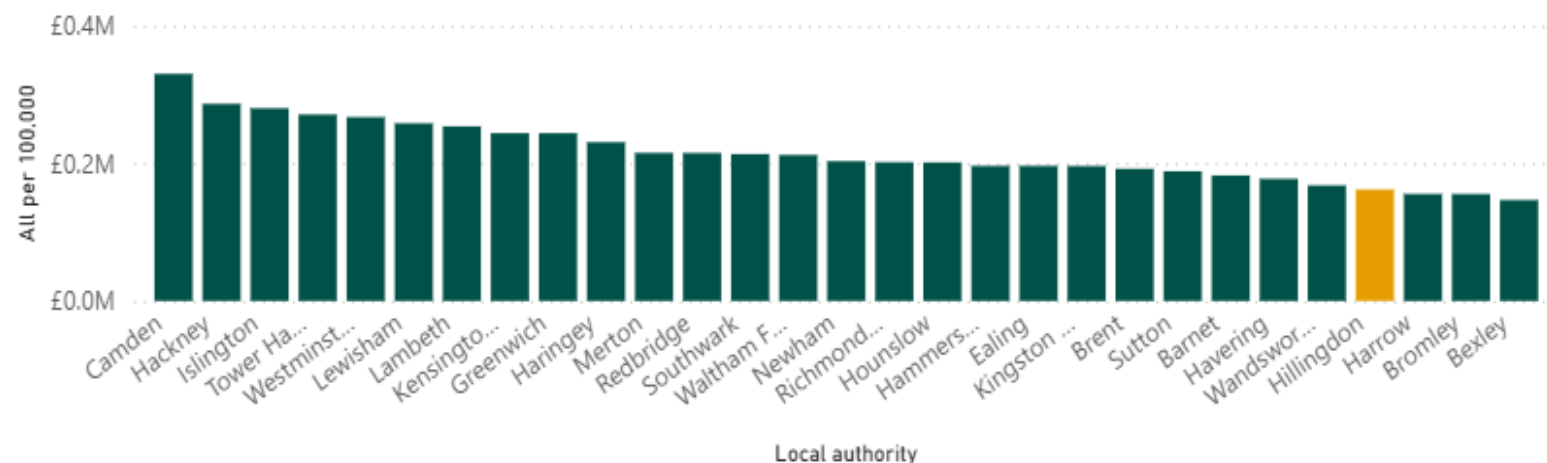
The report incorporates financial benchmarking from the 2024/25 Local Authority Revenue Expenditure and Financing Outturn to demonstrate how effectively Hillingdon deploys its resources to deliver positive outcomes for residents. To allow meaningful comparisons, expenditure figures have been standardised using published population data relevant to each service area—for example, using the 0–18 population when analysing Children’s Services.

Where available, comparisons are made against statistical neighbour groups, recognising that different services have different socio-demographic comparators, such as Youth Justice having a different statistical neighbour set from Adult Social Care . Where statistical neighbour sets are not published, nearest neighbours have been used instead.

# Executive Summary

- ❖ Hillingdon had the 4th lowest net expenditure in London per 100,000 residents.
- ❖ Heathrow Airport's presence within the borough creates unique operational and financial pressures that many other London authorities do not face.
- ❖ Despite years of government underfunding and these unique challenges, Hillingdon continues to be recognised as a well-run council, consistently delivering strong value for money and maintaining one of the lowest net expenditure levels in London.

Council net expenditure per 100,000 population



- Adult Social Care had the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest expenditure of London boroughs per 100,000 residents.
- Achieved a 'Good' Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating with an overall score of 73%. This score continues to see Hillingdon in the top quartile of inspected authorities.
- Assessed across 5 key areas: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led.



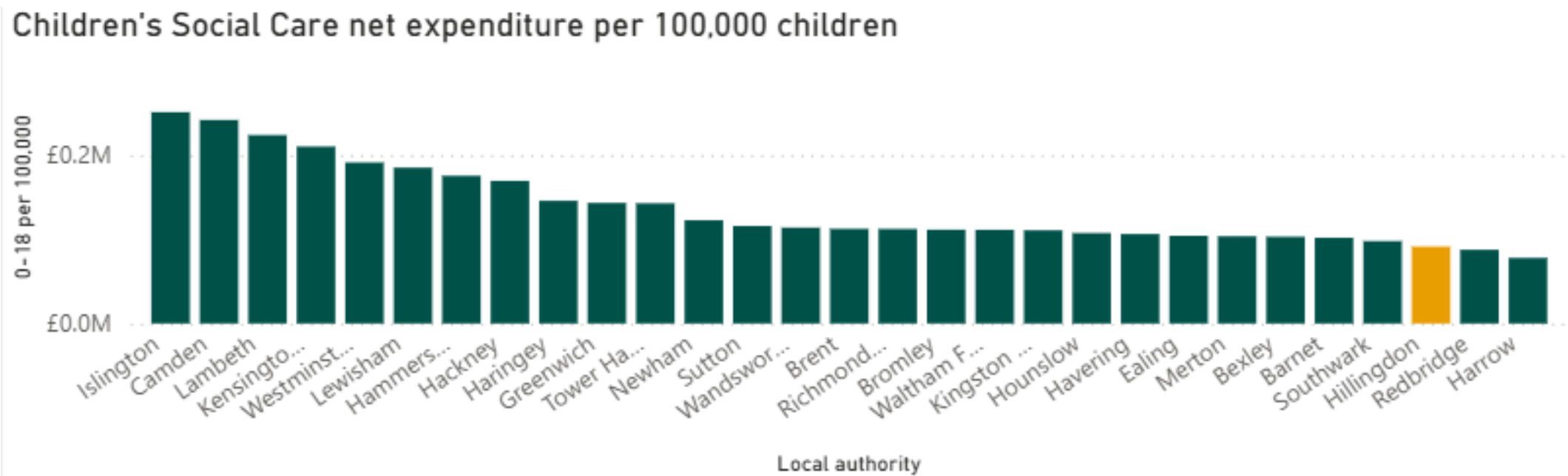
- ❖ Resident Services had the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest expenditure of London boroughs for housing general fund and homelessness expenditure per 100,000 residents.
- ❖ Achieved a C2 (2<sup>nd</sup> highest) grade from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).
- ❖ Grading ranges from C1 to C4. Only 7 of 66 (10.6%) local authorities assessed achieved the C1 grade and most authorities (56%) received a C3 or C4 grade.



- Children's social care had the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest expenditure of London boroughs per 100,000 children.
- Achieved an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating in November 2023, the highest grade indicating a high quality, innovative service that consistently exceeds expectations where children achieve excellent outcomes.
- Only 15% of Councils Nationally are currently assessed at the highest standard.

Julie Kelly  
Corporate Director of Children's Services

# Children's Services Summary



Hillingdon has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest net expenditure across all London councils for children's social care per 100,000 children, but despite this achieved an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating at the last inspection in November 2023.

Achieving the highest grade indicates a high quality, innovative service that consistently exceeds expectations where children achieve excellent outcomes. Only 15% of Councils nationally are currently assessed at the highest standard.

# Children, Families and Education – Children’s Social Care (Demand and Safeguarding)

Comparators	Children Social Care net expenditure	Safeguarding CYP services net expenditure	Referrals	Completed Assessments	Assessment Timeliness	s47 enquiries	Re-registrations for CPP	Open CPP
Reading	152892	29323	791.7	729.5	62%	288.2	30.0%	62.0
Coventry	138394	41266	559.7	596.4	84%	316.5	27.2%	63.5
Southampton	133614	29002	614.2	633.1	88%	262.0	29.3%	54.8
London	127345	33312	556.4	542.7	86%	195.3	21.2%	40.5
England	120316	26482	518.3	536.0	84%	187.1	24.7%	41.6
Waltham Forest	111208	27338	719.8	640.2	98%	225.3	19.4%	36.1
Peterborough	110878	29496	662.7	560.8	83%	173.3	22.6%	49.5
Hounslow	107353	17815	382.1	508.6	96%	149.7	15.8%	37.0
Ealing	104107	23401	529.3	522.2	86%	138.9	21.5%	38.0
Hillingdon	91258	19923	520.4	527.4	92%	167.1	24.5%	34.0
Redbridge	87598	37567	505.0	501.5	93%	176.5	13.9%	32.0
Harrow	77882	26181	413.7	464.3	65%	202.2	18.8%	48.6
Slough			749.4	797.3		275.4	19.7%	43.5

- Understanding the data:
- **Children’s Social Care net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-18-year-olds.
  - **Safeguarding Children and Young People’s Services (CYP) net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-18-year-olds.
  - **Referrals<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the number of children referred to social care in 2023-24 per 100,000 0-17-year-olds.
  - **Completed Assessments<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the number of children completing a social care assessment in 2023-24 per 100,000 0-17-year-olds.
  - **Assessment Timeliness<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the percentage of assessments completed in 45 working days in 2023-24.

- **S47 enquiries<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the number of s47 (Child protection enquiries) in 2023-24 per 100,000 0-17-year-olds.
- **Re-registrations for child protection plans (CPP)<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the percentage of child protection plans starting in 2023-24 that had a previous CPP in the last 12 months.
- **Open CPP<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the number of open CPPs per 100,000 10-17-year-olds at the end of the year 2023-24.

# Children, Families and Education – Children's Social Care (Demand and Safeguarding)

Hillingdon had the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest net expenditure for children's social care when compared to our children's statistical neighbours and are lower than the London and national average. Hillingdon also has the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest net expenditure for safeguarding children and young people's services compared to statistical neighbours. Hillingdon's low cost is reflected in the demand indicators, as Hillingdon falls in the lowest third for assessments completed, section 47 enquiries and open child protection plans. However, Hillingdon's referral rate is more in line with the average at 520 referrals per 100,000 0-17-year-olds, which is slightly above the national average of 518 but below the London average of 556.

Hillingdon's assessment timeliness was the 4<sup>th</sup> highest among neighbours at 92%, well above the London (86%) and national (84%) averages. The re-registrations for child protection plans was 24.5%, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest when compared to the statistical neighbours, slightly below the national (24.7%) average and above London (21.2%). Lower numbers result in higher percentage swings, deep dive into re-registrations take place to consider any learning.

# Children, Families and Education – Children’s Social Care (Care experienced)

Comparators	Children Social Care net expenditure	CLA net expenditure	CLA UASC net expenditure	LAC in foster placements	Open LAC at year end	UASC at year end	19-21yr old care leavers in touch	19-21yr old care leavers in suitable accommodation	19-21yr old care leavers in EET
Harrow	77882	25705		70%	29	15%	97.00%	91%	66%
Waltham Forest	111208	49687	3768	74%	50	9%	93.00%	89%	59%
London	127345	56520	2318	69%	51	12%	93.00%	89%	58%
Redbridge	87598	35370	4071	71%	40	23%	91.00%	88%	58%
Coventry	138394	64363		73%	84	10%	93.00%	86%	57%
Ealing	104107	48615		65%	37	11%	96.00%	95%	57%
Hounslow	107353	55328		61%	42	18%	91.00%	90%	56%
England	120316	64898	2314	67%	70	9%	92.00%	88%	54%
Hillingdon	91258	47937	6367	51%	43	26%	85.00%	89%	54%
Peterborough	110878	45728		70%	75	10%	88.00%	80%	46%
Slough				60%	45	13%	75.00%	89%	44%
Southampton	133614	72843	2958	71%	97	8%	86.00%	79%	44%
Reading	152892	69046	2952	66%	70	11%	85.00%	81%	43%

Understanding the data:

- **Children’s Social Care net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-18-year-olds.
- **Children looked after (CLA) net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** – Shows the 2024-25 expenditure on looked after children. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-18-year-olds.
- **CLA unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-18-year-olds.

- **LAC in foster placements<sup>2</sup>** – Shows the percentage of looked after children in foster placements at the end of 2023-24.
- **Open LAC at year end<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the number of looked after children open at the end of 2023-24 per 100,000 0-17-year-olds.
- **UASC at year end<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the percentage of looked after children who are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children at the end of the year 2023-24.
- **19-21-year-old care leavers in touch<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the percentage of care leavers the service are in touch with whose 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> birthday fell in the year 2023-24.
- **19-21-year-old care leavers in suitable accommodation<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the percentage of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation around their 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in the year 2023-24.
- **19-21-year-old care leavers in EET<sup>2</sup>** - Shows the percentage of care leavers who are in education, employment or training around their 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in the year 2023-24.



# Children, Families and Education – Children’s Social Care (Care experienced)

Hillingdon had the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest net expenditure for children’s social care when compared to our children’s statistical neighbours, and the 4<sup>th</sup> highest net expenditure on looked after children. Hillingdon is lower than the London and national average for both figures. However, Hillingdon has by far the largest spend on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) at £6,367,000 per 100,000 0-18-year-olds – 56% more than the next highest statutory neighbour Redbridge (£4,071,000). Hillingdon has the highest percentage of looked after children who are UASC, at 26% compared to Redbridge’s 24% and the London and national averages at 12% and 9%, respectively. While UASC costs are significant this is fully grant funded.

Hillingdon had the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of looked after children (43) at the end of 2023-24, lower than both the London (51) and national (70) averages. However, Hillingdon had the lowest percentage of children in foster placements at 51%, significantly lower than the London (69%) and national (67%) averages. This may be contributing to higher reliance on residential placements, with associated cost and stability implications.

Increasing the number and percentage of children cared for by foster carers is a key priority for the service area. Hillingdon has increased the number of fostering household by 14 with a further 14 expected by the end of this financial year.

Hillingdon’s performance for 19 to 21-year-olds care leavers is mixed. Hillingdon has a high percentage (89%) of care leavers in suitable accommodation, in line with the London (89%) and national (88%) averages. Hillingdon was in touch with 85% of care leavers. This is the joint 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest percentage when compared to our statistical neighbours and below London (93%) and national (92%) averages. Hillingdon’s education, employment and training rate for care leavers was 54%, in line with the national (54%) rate but below the London (58%) average.

# Children, Families and Education – Youth Justice

YJS Family	Youth Justice Net Expenditure	Use of Custody	First Time Entrants	Reoffending Rate	Reoffending Frequency
London	7636	0.13	200.0	30.4%	3.31
Brent	6419	0.06	210.0	27.5%	2.60
Hounslow	5806	0.10	178.0	34.7%	4.68
Hillingdon	5719	0.09	138.0	37.7%	2.73
Ealing	5043	0.05	151.0	20.7%	2.58
National	4651	0.10	157.0	31.9%	4.30
Merton	4614	0.05	96.0	38.8%	3.84
Sutton	4573	0.04	55.0	20.0%	2.50
Coventry	4450	0.03	151.0	34.6%	5.17
Redbridge	4299	0.18	161.0	42.1%	3.86
Barnet	3635	0.02	177.0	30.5%	3.92
Harrow	3244	0.18	110.0	29.6%	2.50
Reading		0.00	161.0	28.1%	2.63

## Understanding the data:

- **Youth Justice net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 11-18-year-olds.
- **Use of custody<sup>3</sup>** - Published figure from Youth Justice Board (YJB) 2024-25. Shows the number of children receiving a custodial sentence in 2024-25 per 1,000 10-17-year-olds.
- **First time entrants<sup>3</sup>** - Shows the number of children who receive a youth caution or court conviction for the first time in 2024-25 per 100,000 10-17-year-olds.
- **Reoffending rate<sup>3</sup>** - Shows the percentage of children who reoffend within 12 months of a previous offence. Latest data is for July 22 - June 23 due to cohort being tracked for 12 months.
- **Reoffending frequency rate<sup>3</sup>** - Shows the average number of reoffences per reoffender within the 12 months of a previous offence. Latest data is for July 22 - June 23 due to cohort being tracked for 12 months.

# Children, Families and Education – Youth Justice

Hillingdon has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest net expenditure when compared to our youth justice statistical neighbours, however Hillingdon is lower than the London average. It is positive to see Hillingdon has the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of first-time entrants compared to the statistical neighbours and lower than the London and national averages. Hillingdon's rates of custody are higher than most statistical neighbours but below London and national average. Hillingdon has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest reoffending rate, but the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest reoffending frequency, meaning children who enter the youth justice system are more likely to commit another offence, but are likely to commit fewer further offences.

Often children commit a subsequent offence before being directed to youth justice services, where Hillingdon's youth justice service can then intervene and successfully reduce the rate and number of offences.

# Children, Families and Education – SEND and Education

Comparators	Education net expenditure	Early years net expenditure	EHCP Active Caseload	Requests proceeding to assessment	EHCNA requests	Eligible 3&4yr olds for 15 hours funding	NEET 16 & 17yr olds
Ealing	485396	171739	320	70.8%	66	87.73%	1.0%
Redbridge	470980	165861	300	71.2%	62	94.02%	2.3%
Southampton	437298	226060	293	69.3%	60	84.00%	4.9%
London	415485	185910	338	67.1%	74	85.75%	1.9%
Hounslow	399564	172544	347	58.5%	72	85.29%	1.7%
Waltham Forest	396241	155472	415	64.1%	90	84.26%	1.0%
National	344568	198604	358	65.4%	86	93.12%	3.4%
Reading	343931	206035	311	55.5%	82	96.00%	3.4%
Hillingdon	320566	165091	310	50.4%	61	87.32%	2.5%
Harrow	319783	112001	312	78.4%	62	84.06%	1.3%
Coventry	285925	164835	255	55.9%	84	86.00%	3.6%
Peterborough	249226	202001	380	59.3%	90	92.00%	5.4%

Understanding the data:

- **Education net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-18-year-olds.
- **Early years net expenditure<sup>1</sup>** - Shows the 2024-25 expenditure. Value is in £000s, per 100,000 0-4-year-olds.
- **EHCP active caseload<sup>4</sup>** - Shows the rate of open education, health and care plan on census day in January 2025, per 100,000 0-25-year-olds.
- **Requests proceeding to assessment<sup>4</sup>** - Shows the percentage of requests to SEND that proceeded to an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment in the 2024-25 census year.
- **EHCNA requests<sup>4</sup>** - Shows the rate of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment requests in the 2024-25 census year, per 100,000 0-25-year-olds.
- **Eligible 3 and 4-year-olds for 15 hours funding<sup>5</sup>** - Shows the percentage of 3 and 4-year-olds who are eligible for up to 15 hours of free childcare funding in 2025.
- **NEET 16 and 17-year-olds<sup>6</sup>** - Shows the percentage of 16 and 17-year-olds who are not in education, training or employment in 2025.

# Children, Families and Education – SEND and Education

Hillingdon had the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest net expenditure for education and early years when compared to our statistical neighbours. Hillingdon are lower than the London and national average. This is reflected in the demand data for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) as Hillingdon has the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of children on an Educational Health Care (EHC) plan and the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest rate of education health care needs assessments (EHCNA) requests compared to the statistical neighbours. Additionally, Hillingdon has the lowest percentage of requests proceeding to assessment. However, this may suggest a tendency to reject valid requests and should be considered alongside data on appeals and complaints.

Hillingdon's not in education or training (NEET) figure for 16 and 17-year-olds is 2.5%, which is the 6<sup>th</sup> highest compared to our statistical neighbours but below the national average of 3.4%. There has been a robust focus on NEET which has driven down the number of children whose destinations are 'not known' which subsequently raised the percentage of NEET. This however enables targeted intervention.

Early years higher costs were attributable to the subsidised nursery provision that is no longer part of our delivery model.

The service is aware that Key Stage 5 opportunities and outcomes need improving and have prioritised this area, recent output being a digital Post 16 Prospectus.

# Children, Families and Education - Data Sources

## Data Sources:

1. LA revenue expenditure and financing: 2024- 2025
2. ChAT tool published data for 2023-24
3. YDS Published Data
4. SEN2 2025
5. DfE, Education provision for children u5
6. DfE