

## Case Study

How London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Education Inclusion Team is using Pupil Pathways to achieve their 'Best Chance in Life' strategy through early intervention and reducing exclusions

**Barking & Dagenham**

### INTRODUCTION

#### The need for a better system

 Foresight™

 SixIntoSeven™

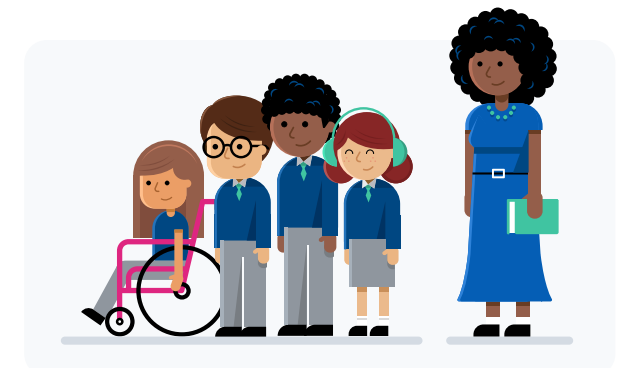
In 2022 Pupil Pathways was awarded a contract to help **London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD)** develop a case/risk management system to enable schools and the local authority (LA) to work together more efficiently to help keep children in education. LBBD recognised that a more effective system for sharing information needed to be put in place to help them meet the growing challenges of attendance, transition, at risk of exclusions, and to achieve the borough-wide Best Chance in Life strategy for their young people.

Out of this partnership with LBBD the product **Foresight** was created. Foresight enables schools to work collaboratively with local authorities to help reduce suspensions and

exclusions. Through access to high quality pupil information, schools and local authorities can easily identify pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism, have 'at risk' behaviour concerns and proactively put early interventions in place to support pupils and minimise escalation of issues.

Foresight was successfully rolled out across all schools in LBBD in April 2024. It is used in tandem with Pupil Pathways' existing transition service **SixIntoSeven**, which enables primary schools to create a detailed pupil profile for transition and share securely with the destination secondary school. LBBD has used SixIntoSeven since 2023 to manage the cohort admission from Y6 to Y7.

We spoke to **Exclusion Lead David Bottrill** to find out more about the positive impact that Pupil Pathways services have had for the inclusion team.



**ABOUT THE LBBD INCLUSION TEAM**

## Keeping young people in education

The Education Inclusion Team in the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (LBBD) aims to support schools, young people, and families in Barking and Dagenham by focusing on ways to engage young people in their learning and keep them in education.

*"We do this through early intervention and looking at key strategies such as the prevention of/and reducing suspensions, exclusions and keeping pupils in school to achieve good attendance."*

*"We aim to work together with the local community to provide a supportive service to keep children and young people in education and ensuring that their education and learning needs are met and supported."*

Their ambition is based on the Local Authority's **'Best Chance in Life'** strategy especially in reference to the following priorities:

1. Ensuring all children have a choice of a good quality, local provision (including alternative provision) that meets their child's needs, is inclusive, improves equity of outcomes and **reduces likelihood of poor attendance and exclusion.**

2. Improving educational outcomes and standards across all key stages and subjects, in line with England and London performance **including attendance.**

In addition to meeting the aims of the Best Chance in Life strategy, the LA faces the additional challenge of meeting the government's new statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance.

There is now a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to *'Rigorously track local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support'* (Point 87)

**THE CHALLENGE**

## Lack of information and poor collaboration

LBBD faced several challenges around the sharing of information for transition and inclusion.

- A **lack of consistency** in how data was shared led to poor-quality or missing data and negatively impacted the collaboration between schools and with the LA, especially in relation to attendance. Data was often shared in a way that was difficult to analyse, for example

spread across different Excel spreadsheets or on paper forms, which created a huge **burden of data entry and management**, reducing the time and resource available to put pupil support strategies in place.

- Pupil information for transition was previously shared on spreadsheets, which often resulted in errors such as **information being incomplete** or not being disseminated at the secondary school on a pupil's return. Sometimes the wrong pupil was even being discussed. On a yearly basis, the LA would receive **complaints** that secondary schools had not been told about a certain pupil.
- By sharing sensitive or special category data on spreadsheets both schools and the local authority were also at risk of breaching data security, by providing information in a **non-GDPR-compliant format.**
- The **lack of a clear system for sharing information between schools and the local authority** meant that LBBD was **unable to get a clear picture of attendance in their authority** and therefore unable to put effective measures in place to support their *One Life Strategy* aims of keeping children in education, and of meeting the new statutory guidance.

**THE SOLUTION**

## High-quality information shared at the right time with the right people

Pupil Pathways has given LBBD the **structure and consistency** their teams and schools needed to **share pupil information in a streamlined, secure way**.

The **quality, quantity and timeliness of data available** to schools and the local authority for transition and to support inclusion has **vastly improved**. This in turn has meant that rather than spending time analysing spreadsheets, the Inclusion Team have space for **more strategic, high-level work that will have a real impact on pupil outcomes**.



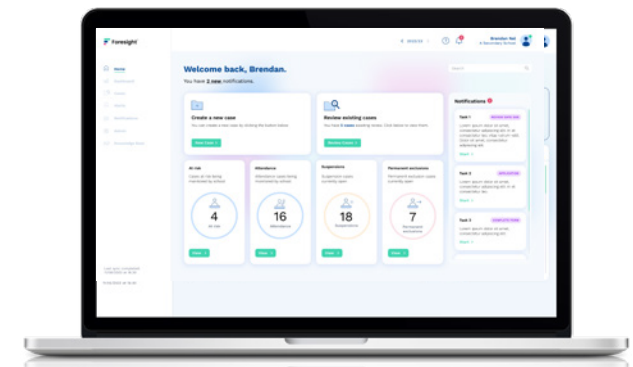
### In the 2023–2024 academic year, Pupil Pathways helped LBBD support:

- Increased collaboration and information sharing between **45** primary and **17** secondary schools in the LA
- A smooth Y6 to Y7 transition for a total of **3768** children
- Targeted intervention and planning for **1040** SEND and vulnerable pupils in the focus cohort. Of these pupils **662** have SEND and **624** were flagged in the system as requiring additional attention for transition. This enables schools and the LA to easily track these pupils through transition and work together effectively to keep them in education.

### Attendance

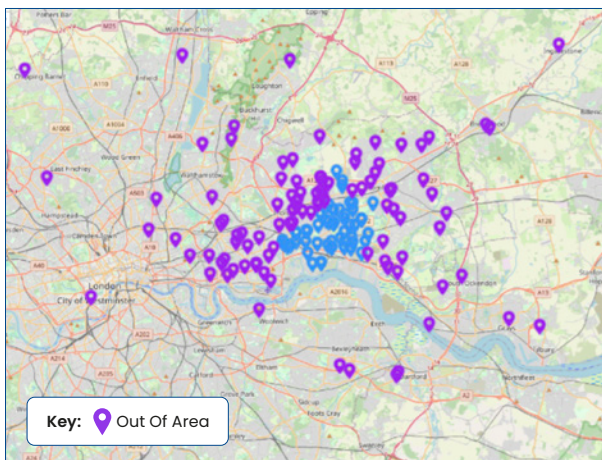
- The information that Pupil Pathways provides not only enables the LA and schools to easily see which pupils are at risk of persistent absence, but to then **investigate why persistent absence is happening and provide the necessary support**.

- The new statutory guidance for LAs and schools working together to improve attendance requires schools to put attendance action plans into place for pupils at risk. The LBBD Inclusion Team is now able to use attendance data shared in Pupil Pathways to work closely with schools and **ensure that attendance plans are put in place**.
- Through Pupil Pathways schools in LBBD now have the information they need to **action plan for Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)**, and refer pupils to alternative provisions or managed moves.
- **Virtual school heads can monitor vulnerable groups** and develop early interventions and action plans.



## Transition

- **SixIntoSeven** has made sharing transition information safer and easier for primary schools, resulting in **more detailed information being shared with secondary schools, particularly for children with SEND or who are vulnerable.**
- The value of pupil information being stored on one platform has been particularly clear when a child has appealed against one school and ended up going to another. Rather than that handover information becoming redundant, the **data remains up to date in the system and follows the child,** so that it can easily be picked up by the right people at the new school.
- The **Transition Watch List in SixIntoSeven** gives schools and the local authority access to a list of Y6 pupils at risk of persistent absence and makes their **full attendance data** available to the secondary school before the summer break and immediately in September. Having this **information in one place** for the secondary schools to review has been **highly beneficial compared to the previous paper-based system.**
- **Early identification of children at risk of missing education (CME)** during the transition phase leads to **proactive collaboration**



Map Function in Pupil Pathways showing in purple the movement of pupils out of LBBD and into neighbouring LAs during transition. Pupil Pathways Lite enabled schools in LBBD to track these pupils and work collaboratively with the destination schools even though they are out of area.

between primary schools and the LA CME team. Safeguarding concerns are reported prior to summer break.

- The map function in Pupil Pathways clearly displays the **movement of children out of LBBD during transition.** The creation of **Pupil Pathways Lite**, a free version of Pupil Pathways available to local authorities receiving or sending children from or into LBBD, facilitated **better collaboration with out of area schools and neighbouring local authorities.** This meant teams could be confident that vulnerable children would receive **continuity of care.**

## Conclusion

The **accessibility, quality** and **quantity** of the information provided by Pupil Pathways has created space for the Inclusion Team in LBBD to undertake more **strategic, high-impact activity** working with schools, parents, SENCOs and case workers to start early conversations and **set action plans to ensure that all parties are working together effectively to achieve their shared goals.**

The team at LBBD have demonstrated real leadership in their approach to using the data made available to them by Pupil Pathways, demonstrating **the power of using good information to make tangible impact on pupils' lives and create best practice across the LA.**

“““

***This is more than just data***

**David Botterill,**  
LBBD Exclusion Lead