

Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
London Borough of Hackney
Room 118, Hackney Town Hall
London.
E8 1AE

5th March 2026

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Deputy Mayor Bramble
Cabinet Member for Children Services & Young People

Dear DM Bramble,

Improving Outcomes for Black Children & Young People in Hackney

The Commission would like to thank you and officers from across the Council for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission on the 12th January 2026 to discuss the Improving Outcomes for Black Children and Young People (IOBCYP) in Hackney programme. This is an important body of work for the Council and its partners and the Commission welcomed the opportunity to review progress and to make suggestions to guide and inform future programme development. A full public record of the meeting is provided by the [draft minutes](#) and [meet recording](#).

In this year alone, the Commission's scrutiny work has consistently highlighted the disparities in outcomes that different groups of young people experience in relation to school exclusions, pupil absence, children's mental health and support for young parents. This work continues to confirm an unacceptable reality: many children from Black and other minoritised communities in Hackney continue to experience poorer health, education, and welfare outcomes than their peers.

The Commission would therefore like to commend council officers and local partners for their collaborative work to address local inequalities through the IOBCYP. The fact that Black and other minoritised communities in Hackney do achieve better outcomes than similar national and regional cohorts is testament to the effectiveness of this work. It is clear however, that much more needs to be done, and the focus of local work must not only to secure the gains already made but also to intensify efforts to address the persistent inequities that Black children and young people continue to face. In this context, the Commission greatly welcomed the commitment of the Chief Executive for Hackney to go "deeper" and "bolder" in its efforts to address racism and discrimination in all its forms.

The Commission fully recognises the Council and its partners' ambitious and innovative start to the IOBCYP over a decade ago, and whilst it may not have achieved the parity in outcomes for local children it had hoped for, it has helped bring greater clarity, focus and coordination to local work to address inequalities. This being said, the planned 10 year review to be commissioned this year will be a significant opportunity for the Council and its partners to reflect on the future strategic direction of this work. In this vein, the Commission would like to suggest the following to help guide and inform future direction of IOBCYP.

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1. *10 year evaluation:* it would be helpful to have further details of the scope, objectives and timeline for the external 10-year evaluation to understand how its findings will be used to directly reshape the next iteration of IOBCYP and establish a new framework for continuous learning and improved outcomes for black children and young people. It would be helpful to understand how the evaluation will set targets over the next five to ten years to help drive a necessary shift in improved outcomes and how these can be measured across the local authority and wider partnership (and align with new Local Outcomes Framework). The timeline for Cabinet approval would be helpful to help plan future scrutiny.
2. *Dedicated Resource:* The IOBCP is a complex programme of cross-cutting activities across the council and with partners which evidently requires dedicated coordination, oversight and programme support. Whilst acknowledging the challenging financial context, improving outcomes for black children and young people remains a central priority, and the Commission would therefore welcome greater clarity from the Council as to what dedicated resource will be made available to support the IOBCYP through its 10 year external evaluation and review, and the delivery of longer-term objectives and outcomes.
3. *Embed Goals and Targets:* The goal of improving outcomes and addressing disproportionality must be embedded within mainstream service delivery across the council, making it an integral part of directorate and individual service plans rather than being viewed as "additional work". The Commission would suggest that performance measures relating to IOBCYP should also be embedded within all directorate service plans to prevent them from being treated as an "add-on". This should link to a performance framework to ensure a "golden thread" of accountability links through to specific inequalities.
4. *Stronger and more accountable partnerships:* Poorer outcomes for Black children and young people is unfortunately a consistent feature across many of our public services. The Commission would therefore welcome plans as to how stronger working relationships with partners will be developed to ensure a shared local understanding and approach to anti-racist practice among statutory partnerships (with Health, Education, Policing, and Employment) so that there is improved consistency across the partnership to deliver equity in outcomes for black children and young people.
5. *Support for the Community Accountability Board (CAB):* The CAB is a key partner in the IOBCYP programme and plays an important critical friend and challenge function to the work of the Council and its partners in addressing local inequalities for black children and young people. Given the importance of this role, and its connections to local communities and young people, the Commission would welcome greater clarity as to how the Council will ensure that the Community Accountability Board is supported, empowered, and integrated into future strategic planning and programme delivery decisions.
6. *Trust and Confidence:* Trust and confidence in statutory services remains low among Black communities and other minoritised groups in Hackney, and is a significant barrier to service user engagement and takeup of services, especially the council's wider early help offer. The Commission would therefore welcome further details as to what specific new initiatives the IOBCYP might consider to help rebuild trust of Black communities in the Council and wider public services.

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7. *Communications Strategy*: It is vitally important that the work of IOBCYP is effectively communicated across the Council, but also to local partners and to the wider community, and especially black children and young people themselves. In this context, the Commission would welcome further details of a supporting communications strategy for the IOBCYP work (i.e. what work has been undertaken to date, what has been learnt from this, future plans and priorities as well as resourcing).
8. *Lobbying*: The Commission fully acknowledges that many of the challenges facing local public services in addressing poorer outcomes experienced by Black children and young people are complex and systemic, and are often not in the gift of local authorities to resolve alone. The Commission would therefore welcome renewed efforts from leaders across the local strategic partnership to work with other local authorities and regional bodies to lobby and campaign for additional governmental recognition and support to improve the outcomes and futures for Black children and young people.

Discussions with the Commission at this meeting underlined that local inequalities, particularly those rooted in systemic racism and affecting Black children and young people, not only need to be acknowledged but also require tangible and urgent action. Therefore, ongoing scrutiny will be vital to maintain momentum, hold partners to account, and ensure that the ambitions of the IOBCYP are translated into lived, equitable outcomes for every child in the borough.

Sincerely,

Yours faithfully

Cllr Sophie Conway

Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny
Commission

Cllr Margaret Gordon

Vice Chair, Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission

CC: - *Dawn Carter-McDonald, Chief Executive*

- *Kieran Read, Director of Corporate Strategy & Transformation*
- *Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children & Education*
- *Jason Marantz, Director of Education*
- *Deji Adeosun, Hackney Community Accountability Board*