

## NOTICE OF MEETING

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL

**Tuesday, 5th March, 2024, 7.00 pm - George Meehan House, 294 High Road, N22 8JZ (watch the live meeting [here](#), watch the recording [here](#))**

**Councillors:** Makbule Gunes (Chair), Anna Abela, Gina Adamou, Marsha Isilar-Gosling, Sue Jameson, Mark Grosskopf and Anna Lawton

**Co-optees/Non Voting Members:** Yvonne Denny (Church representative), Lourdes Keever (Church representative), Amanda Bernard (Haringey SEND Parent Carer Forum)

**Quorum:** 3

### 1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Please note that this meeting may be filmed or recorded by the Council for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site or by anyone attending the meeting using any communication method. Although we ask members of the public recording, filming or reporting on the meeting not to include the public seating areas, members of the public attending the meeting should be aware that we cannot guarantee that they will not be filmed or recorded by others attending the meeting. Members of the public participating in the meeting (e.g. making deputations, asking questions, making oral protests) should be aware that they are likely to be filmed, recorded or reported on.

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The chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of urgent business (late items will be considered under the agenda item where they appear. New items will be dealt with as noted below).

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and
- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Register of Members' Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interests are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct.

#### **5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS**

To consider any requests received in accordance with Part 4, Section B, Paragraph 29 of the Council's Constitution.

#### **6. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 8)**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

#### **7. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES**

Verbal update

#### **8. PRIVATE FOSTERING SEPTEMBER 2022-23 (PAGES 9 - 16)**

#### **9. SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE 2022/2023 (PAGES 17 - 40)**

#### **10. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2022/26: PROGRESS REPORT**

To follow

#### **11. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (PAGES 41 - 44)**

#### **12. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items admitted at item 3 above.

### **13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

There are no more meetings in the 2023/24 municipal year.

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Fiona Alderman  
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Monday, 26 February 2024

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## **MINUTES OF MEETING Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Thursday, 4th January, 2024, 7.00 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

**Councillors: Makbule Gunes (Chair), Sue Jameson and Matt White**

**Attending Online: Lourdes Kever**

### **25. FILMING AT MEETINGS**

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

### **26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors; Abela, Adamou, Grosskopf, Lawton and Isilar-Gosling.

Cllr White attended the meeting a substitute for Cllr Abela.

### **27. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

It was agreed to vary the order of the agenda. Item 9 – Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report, was taken before Items 7 and 8. The Minutes reflect the order the items were considered, rather than the order set out on the published agenda.

### **28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

### **29. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS**

None

### **30. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting on 13 November were agreed as a correct record.

**31. HARINGEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023**

The Panel received the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022-23, as set out in the published agenda papers at pages 111 to 160, along with an accompanying sets of slides which were published as tabled papers. The annual report and presentation were introduced by David Archibald, Chair of HSCP. The Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families was also present for this item, along with the AD for Safeguarding and Social Care. The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Panel sought assurances around the confidence levels felt by the independent chair in terms of how Haringey was performing. In response, the independent chair set out that he was confident with respect of the improvements made in delivery of services and how well the Council and its partners worked in relation to safeguarding. It was commented that the Council and its partners needed to continually learn and to get better. There were a number of audits and other opportunities in this regard which would allow them to reflect on how well the Partnership worked and to improve further.
- b. The Panel commented that information sharing was often a key issue when different partners were working together and assurances were sort around how well information sharing was working. In response, Mr Archibald acknowledged that this was a key issue and that it was something that was often highlighted in case file reviews. The Partnership shared information well but that they were continuing to work on how to improve this.
- c. The Panel sought clarification about how the Partnership operated. In response, the Panel was advised that it was a partnership body that worked across borough and had three statutory partners – Police, Health and the Council. The Partnership was not externally based and all partners had to work together to achieve effective safeguarding. In response to a follow up, Mr Archibald advised that the Partnership undertook a huge amount of activity to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding in the borough. These included: Multi-agency training, including training on working together as different agencies; improved performance data collection and monitoring; and learning from the different reviews that the Partnership had to undertake.
- d. A co-opted member of the Panel raised concerns about the lack of accessibility in reports and highlighted the fact that a high proportion of parents in the borough did not speak English as first language. The co-opted member also questioned the extent to which schools had access to the Partnership and was engaged by them. In response, officers set out that it was the responsibility of the Partnership to ensure that the Annual Report was accessible and that the Partnership Executive Board would be working to ensure that it was more accessible in future. In relation to ensuring that schools were involved in decision making, the Partnership had recently recruited a former head teacher to sit on the Board and that they would also be seeking further opportunities to engage with other head teachers. Safeguarding partners met every six weeks and there was a regular newsletter that went out. Officers advised that school governors should raise any safeguarding issues to the LADO and the safeguarding leads for their respective schools. Officers advised that they would take these comments on board when preparing the next local authority quarterly briefing for school governors.

- e. The Panel queried what some of the key difficulties were that the Partnership faced in relation to multi-agency working. In response, Mr Archibald advised that whilst the three statutory partners had very different roles, their agendas in relation to safeguarding overlapped to a significant degree. The partners worked well together and there was little conflict when it came to safeguarding, any challenges in terms of working across different agencies were rapidly overcome. The Cabinet Member added that the Partnership had been going for two years and that it had made a real difference in that time. The Cabinet Member emphasised that safeguarding was everyone's business, not just the Council's and that Partners had taken seriously their roles in safeguarding. It was commented that the Board sat within the Council's structure and the Council provided most of the funding, however it was important to emphasise that this was multi-agency partnership and it had an independent chair.

## **RESOLVED**

Noted

### **32. SCRUTINY OF THE 2024/25 DRAFT BUDGET & 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024/2029**

The Panel received the Council's Draft Budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial strategy (MTFS) 2024-2029 proposals, relating to the Panel's remit. The Panel was asked to consider the proposals and to provide recommendations to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on these proposals. The report was introduced by Neil Sinclair, Head of Finance (People) as set out in the agenda pack at pages 7-92. The Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families was present for this item. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care was also present for this item, along with the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning.

By way of introduction, the Panel was advised that the December Cabinet report set out that there was an overall budget gap of around £16.4m. This budget gap was largely due to demand pressures, particularly in Adult Social Services. Finance would be working with the Directorates between now and February to close this budget gap and to present a balanced budget to Cabinet in February. It was noted that nationally, a lot of councils were struggling to set a balanced budget and that it was a very challenging picture across the board.

It was noted that within Children's there were a number of challenges arising from the demand pressures created from more people needing those services and from the increasing costs of those services. These included the reorganisation of SEND transport. Appendix 5 of the report set out that there were new savings around the transition of young people into adulthood. This was effectively a new investment in the Adult Social Care and was reflected as a new growth proposal in that budget area, but it sat as a saving within the Children's budget. There were also around £3m of growth proposals in Children's over the next three years, which reflected additional investment in recognition of the high cost of children's social care placements and inflationary pressures within that market. The capital programme in Children's showed £64m of new capital investment, mainly in schools infrastructure which included the costs of dealing with RAAC and other maintenance challenges.

The Cabinet Member commented that the draft budget position in Children's was a C. £600k overspend, which had come down from the Q1 position. The Cabinet Member commented that the fact the service had got to a position where it was presenting an almost balanced budget was very impressive and reflected a huge improvement from previous years. The Cabinet Member set out that the growth in transition services was something that had been in discussion for a long time, and was a key development. It was anticipated that having a dedicated focus on transitioning children with SEND, rather than doing so on an ad-hoc basis would be transformative for the lives of the young people involved and would also provide cost savings to the Council. The Cabinet Member set out that a lot of the pressures faced by Children's were national pressures and were not down to the service. The increasing prevalence of private equity in the Children social care market was seen as a worrying trend and one that would inevitably extract money out of the system. The Panel was advised that a lot of the schools budget was reflected in the Dedicated Schools Grant, which was not reflected in these budget papers as it went straight to the schools themselves.

The following arose as part of the discussion of this report:

- a. The Panel welcomed the fact that last year's savings were achieved and that the overall budget position in Children's was close to being a balanced position. The Panel also commented that this was the only opportunity that it would have to scrutinise the budget and in that context it sought assurances about the extent to which further savings would be extracted from Children's services in order to meet the budget gap. In response, the Cabinet Member set out that in the past the service had not put up savings that it couldn't achieve. The Cabinet Member set out that the service knew where the hotspots were and it was around residential accommodation, which was very costly and even a small number of additional cases where secure accommodation was needed, could have a detrimental impact on the budget. The AD Safeguarding and Social Care echoed the Cabinet Member's comments, reiterating that the service only put forward savings that achieved the balance between efficiencies and safety of the children affected. The Panel was advised that the service recognised the inherent pressures within the residential placement market and that it was aggressively pursuing an insourcing model, with a proposal for a new mother and baby residential unit. The Head of Finance set out that a collaborative approach had been taken to the budget setting process and that Finance had worked closely with services. The budget included a growth budget so that additional investment was provided around demand led growth. Work to present a final balanced budget was ongoing, but it had been a challenging budget setting process in the context of comparing it to recent years.
- b. In response to a follow up, officers advised that at present, there were no additional savings proposals expected from Children's Services.
- c. The Panel sought further assurances about the possibility of further savings being made in Children's Services, given the draft budget position of a £16.4M gap. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that there weren't many areas that could be cut in Children's Services, given the statutory responsibilities and the need to ensure the safety of the children involved. The Cabinet Member elaborated that the Service had recently achieved a Good Ofsted inspection rating and that the Council could not risk jeopardising this with cuts to social workers. The Cabinet Member suggested that there was no political will to make savings in youth centres. Similarly, there was no desire to make savings



- in Early Year's provision, particularly as the government provided a lot of funding for this. The Council was already engaged in a DfE led savings programme around SEND, the Safety Valve programme. It was commented that there was very little room for manoeuvre within the Children's budget and there were no obvious areas where additional savings could be made.
- d. The Panel sought assurances around RAAC and schools infrastructure and the extent to which the Government had committed to covering the costs of this. In response, the officers advised that discussions with the DfE were ongoing and that in essence, they had committed to covering the capital costs of these works, but that the Council had not received any money to date. Officers set out that the budget papers highlighted a risk that there were also revenue costs incurred by schools arising from RAAC and that the government had not agreed to cover all of these costs. Examples of these costs included; provision of temporary classrooms, additional IT costs and catering costs. Any costs incurred that were not directly related to the construction costs in repairing defective school buildings, could have an impact on the General Fund revenue budget if the government did not provide funding.
  - e. The Panel sought assurances that the allocated budget was enough to meet demands. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the budget was the budget, and that the reality was that there was no more money. Growth Funding for 2022/23 & 2023/24 allowed the service to eradicate the historical overspends that had previously existed and that this had made a big difference. In relation to a follow up in relation to non-statutory services, the Cabinet Member advised that she did not want to see any cuts to non-statutory services, but that she was unable to give any firmer assurances at this stage.
  - f. The Panel sought clarification about whether the new round of budget savings proposals would go out to consultation. In response, officers advised that the draft budget went out to consultation and the responses to it would help formulate the final budget. However, there was no scope for a further consultation process, given the need to agree a budget for February Cabinet. The Cabinet Member emphasised that all councils were facing similar challenges around their budgets and that this was a national issue.
  - g. The Panel sought clarification around the new revenue saving proposal in relation to development of a new transition service. The Panel requested more information on how this would work and why it was profiled so that £673k would be saved in the first year from a total saving of £4.5m. In response, officers advised that this was a dedicated service to provide support to young people with SEND as they transitioned in to adulthood. Officers advised that young people with a high level of care and intersectional needs attracted the highest fees and that this occurred within a broken market. The proposal would establish a programme of work to bring these young people in borough. The profiling reflected the amount of work that needed to be done across a number of different teams and the profiling reflected the number of cases that existed at a particular age and the knowledge that they would need support at key age points of 18, 21 & 25. Officers advised that bring forward the savings was not something that management could recommend to Members due to the work that needed to be done in the background and the potential negative impact on young people. Part of this related to trying to ensure that Children in Care could benefit from the high calibre of schools in the borough, and who continued to generate the highest amounts of spending (rather than being sent out of

borough). The capacity to accelerate these savings was limited by the details of the work required in the background from a range of areas, such as schools, Safety Valve, HEP. The whole system had to work together to achieve this. The Cabinet Member set out that by the time a child received an EHCP, it could often be too late to change outcomes. This saving was a recognition that spending money on young people to support them would generate savings in future from adult social care. The saving did not just relate to educational needs, it also supported their health, relationships, independent living and employment opportunities.

- h. In relation to a follow-up, Finance advised that the savings profile was based on the numbers of children that were known would transition to adulthood in the next six years and the same number of young people were used to profile the corresponding growth proposal for Adult Social Care. The savings were shown in the Children's budget and the investment was reflected in the Adults budget as growth.
- i. In light of the need to make further savings and the significant revenue costs accruing from the capital programme, the Members queried whether there were any proposals to review the capital programme. In response, the Head of Finance advised that following an extensive review of the capital programme, there were no plans at this stage to undertake any further amendments to it as part of the final budget setting process.
- j. The Panel determined that it would make a recommendation to Cabinet on these budget proposals around the fact that it did not want to see any further savings being extracted from the Children's service, particularly in light of recent successes such as the positive Ofsted inspection.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Panel considered and provided recommendations to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Council's draft budget and 5 year MTFs 2024-2029, relating to its remit.

### **33. HARINGEY EDUCATION RESULTS 2023**

The Panel received a report which provided an update on Haringey's educational attainment for the school year 2022/23 at all ages from Early Years through to A-Levels. The report was introduced by Cllr Brabazon, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families as set out in the published agenda pack at pages 93 – 110. Jane Edwards, AD for Schools and Learning as well as James Page, Chief Executive and Haringey Education Partnership were also present for this item.

By way of introduction, the Cabinet Member advised the Panel that the report set out the good work that was done by HEP around going into schools and working with Head Teachers to improve standards. The Cabinet Member thanked James and his team, as well as Jane and her team for the incredibly positive results achieved. The Panel was advised that in almost every single area, Haringey was performing above the national average. The Cabinet Member set out that she would like to see the work on racial equity expanded into other ethnic groups so that the learning from the work

could be expanded. The Panel was advised that Haringey had largely bucked the trend, following the resumption of the inspection regime after Covid, in that it had 98% of its schools achieving either good or outstanding.

James Page advised Members that this was the best set of results for our young people that Haringey had ever achieved, with every single primary measure scoring above the national average. The KS2 results had met the London average for the first time ever. Haringey was the fourth most deprived borough in London but its results did not reflect that. The Panel was advised that at KS4 & KS5, mathematical inflation due to Covid had been reversed and so 2023 results were directly comparable to 2019. KS4 & KS5 results had improved against 2019 in absolute terms. It was contended that given Covid and all the lost learning, that this should be seen as an astonishing achievement.

The following arose in discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Chair welcomed the report and the positive narrative that it painted about progress in educational achievement. The Chair queried how HEP had managed to achieve such a positive set of results. In response, officers advised that HEP was able to glue Haringey's schools together and form a collaborative network of schools. As a result, the schools were open to sharing and open to being challenged critically. The schools were also incredible aspirational for their pupils and they worked hard to remove barriers for challenged or challenging pupils. Officers emphasised the importance of the collaborative and collegiate work and the fact that the school leadership was also very strong, both in terms of governors and head teachers. Mr Page emphasised the fact that the support and the challenge was there and that the schools accepted being challenged. It was suggested that crucial to this was having the trust of Head Teachers, so that they were prepared to be honest about areas of concern. It was also suggested that having a real focus on practice was also important, to improve learning in the classrooms.
- b. The Panel welcomed the report and the level of educational attainment that had been achieved in Haringey. A Panel member emphasised the role that schools played in socialising children as they grew up and questioned whether there were any data that showed how well schools did in creating well rounded human beings. In response, the Cabinet Member commented that the journey began with Early Years which gave huge support to children in terms of their socialisation. The Panel was advised that Early Years provision in Haringey had achieved 98-99% of providers achieving a rating of either outstanding or good across the entire sector. Mr Page advised that the nearest thing that they had to outcomes data on this was the personal development judgment by Ofsted as part of their framework. It was acknowledged by Ofsted that it couldn't measure outcomes due to the length of time needed to measure something like this in children, but it did measure how well the schools were doing to support personal development. The Panel was advised that every school had achieved a good or outstanding rating on this metric. Mr Page also emphasised the key role that Pendarren played in personal development for some of Haringey's young people.
- c. The Panel enquired whether there was any way that the authority could capitalise on the success it had in this area, particularly given the pressure on budgets. In response, Mr Page advised that HEP was a not-for-profit and was

funded by the Council, but that it was bringing money in to subsidise the work it did with schools and to not raise prices as well as offer additional support. Officers advised that grant funding had been under significant pressure and that HEP were able to absorb funding pressures through its trading arm. It was also noted that providing support to schools helped mitigate the risk of failing schools being made academies and the local authority having to absorb any deficits.

- d. The Panel raised concerns about schools' ability to recruit and retain school governors given the workloads involved, and financial pressures schools were under. A co-opted member of the Panel suggested that there was a risk of schools having to close because of the financial pressures they faced. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that attracting school governors was difficult for the reasons outlined, but that HEP was providing support to school governors. The Cabinet Member suggested that she would like to see partners collectively invigorate school governors and making it more attractive for people to take it on. Mr Page advised that that National Governors Association acknowledged that the situation was worsening and that representation and diversity had regressed among school governing bodies. It was suggested that it was important to ensure that governing bodies felt connected to each other and that governors had the support and ability to ask questions from other governors. It was important that networks be connected up and that aspiring leaders within schools were encouraged to become school governors.

**RESOLVED**

That the update was noted.

**34. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

**RESOLVED**

That the work programme was noted.

**35. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

N/A

**36. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

20<sup>th</sup> February 2024

CHAIR: Councillor Makbule Gunes

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....

**Report for:** Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel February 2024

**Title:** **Private fostering September 2022 - 2023**

**Report authorised by :** Ann Graham, Director, Children's Services

**Lead Officer:** Keith Warren, Head of Service

**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

## **1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the private fostering notifications, assessments, and monitoring activity, and to provide a level of assurance that privately fostered children are being adequately safeguarded.

1.2 The report covers the activity between September 2022 and September 2023.

1.3 This report will set out the extent to which Haringey Children's Social Care are compliant with meeting the statutory requirements for privately fostered children, both in terms of the standards for assessment of these arrangements, and the support being provided to the children and young people in these privately fostered arrangements.

1.4 This report will share current themes, trends and any significant information that has wider implications for safeguarding, across the partnership.

1.5 This report will outline the planned developments for 2023–2024 to further reinforce good practice in identifying, assessing, and monitoring private fostering arrangements within Haringey.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members to note contents of the report.

## **3. Reasons for decision**

**N/A**

## **4. Background information**

4.1 Following the Laming Report in (2003) regulations relating to Private Fostering were amended and strengthened by Section (44) of the Children Act (2004). The following year two further documents were published; The National Minimum Standards (NMS) (2005) and the (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulation

(2005), which clearly set out the role of the Local Authority, the Parent and the Private Foster carer and related professionals.

4.2 Under Standard (7.9) of the National Minimum Standards for private fostering, local authorities are expected to effectively monitor the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering, including to provide a written report each year, for consideration by the Director of Children's Services, which includes an evaluation of the outcomes of its work in relation to privately fostered children within its area. (Supporting Criteria 7.9 NMS for Private Fostering). Section (7.10) the National Minimum Standards requires local authorities to report annually to the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board about how it satisfies itself that the health of privately fostered children in its area are satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted including how the local authority cooperates with other agencies in this connection.

### **4.3 Legal framework and relevant standards**

4.3.1 A privately fostered child is defined as 'a child who is under the age of 16, or 18 if the child has a disability, and is placed for 28 consecutive days or more with an adult who is not a relative.'

4.3.2 A relative in this situation is either a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt. The term relative also extends to include step-parents.

4.3.3 Partners of the mother or father of a child (who are unmarried) would not qualify as a relative, neither would extended family members such as great aunts, great uncles or parents cousins.

4.3.4 Examples of private fostering arrangements are:

- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their English or for educational opportunities.
- Adolescents who, having broken ties with their parents, are staying in short term arrangements with friends or other non-relatives.
- Children living with host families, arranged by language schools or other organisations.
- Children living with members of the extended family, e.g. great aunt.

4.3.5 The relevant legislative framework in relation to private fostering is outlined below:

- Children Act (1989) Guidance Private Fostering.
- Children Act 2004 (Section 44 amends Section 67 in the 1989 Act)
- The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations (2005).
- National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering.

4.3.6 In response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, the UK government launched a scheme for families to put themselves forward to welcome Ukrainian families into their homes. Since July 2022, the Home Office has been processing visa applications for some children/young people to travel to the UK without a parent or legal guardian, and without a plan to join a parent or legal guardian already here, under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

4.3.7 Where there is a Ukrainian child or young person living with a sponsor or family member in England and Wales without a parent or legal guardian, local authorities are required to assess and support arrangements as private fostering arrangements and UK government advice is to apply the private fostering framework to all children and young people travelling without a parent or legal guardian, regardless of the nature of the possible familial relationship.

## **4.4 Statutory Expectations**

4.4.1 Children who are privately fostered are amongst the most vulnerable and the local authority must be notified of these arrangements. The local authority has a duty to assess the private fostering arrangements for the child when there is a notification received or the local authority becomes aware that a private fostering arrangement already exists.

4.4.2 Under Standard 7 of the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering, the local authority is expected to effectively monitor the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering, including providing a written report each year, for consideration by the Director of Children's Services, which includes an evaluation of the outcomes of its work in relation to privately fostered children within its area.

4.4.3 Local authorities are required to promote awareness of the requirement to notify and monitor compliance, and to appoint an officer for this purpose. Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) has a duty to raise awareness about private fostering issues in the community and across the partnership.

## **4.5 Promoting the Welfare of Privately Fostered Children**

4.5.1 A qualified social worker will undertake an initial visit to the placement within 7 days of the private fostering notification. The social worker must carry out initial checks on all household members including the privately fostered child, notify all relevant agencies of the placement and ensure that necessary links are, or will be, established with other agencies. An assessment report should be completed following the outcome of this.

4.5.2 Having undertaken the initial visit, the social worker will arrange for checks to be completed including, health and school checks, carers suitability declaration, local authority checks for addresses within the last 5 years, health and safety checks on the accommodation, confirmed consent of the arrangement from the person who has legal parental responsibility, DBS checks on the private foster carer(s) and household 5 members over the age of 16 years old and also a reference to be obtained for the private foster carer(s). It may be necessary to undertake further visits to clarify matters.

4.5.3 If the arrangements are assessed as suitable, the social worker should confirm this in a letter to the private foster carer and parents. If the arrangements are unsuitable, it will be necessary to consult a senior manager, who may in turn seek legal advice, with a view to considering initiating prohibiting procedures and to review alternative plans for the child.

## **4.6 Monitoring, Support & Advice**

4.6.1 Following the initial visit, the social worker is to complete further visits: at least every 6 weeks in the first year then, at intervals of no more than 12 weeks in subsequent years, if this reduction is assessed as a safe and appropriate to do so.

4.6.2 The social worker should assess during these visits whether the private foster carers are promoting the cultural and ethnic needs of the privately fostered child. The child's overall development and emotional wellbeing should be considered, as should any educational and health issues. After each visit, the Social Worker should prepare a report.

4.6.3 The Social Worker also provides support and advice to the carer and child. This may include liaising with agencies on behalf of child/carer including health, education, and the UK Border agency, assisting them to access services, providing advice and support for example when there is a risk of breakdown of the arrangement, referrals to relevant agencies for additional support, for example CAMHS and/or other specialist services.

## **4.7 The End of a Private Fostering Arrangement**

4.7.1 Where notification is received that the private foster placement has ended, the social worker should ascertain the name and address of the person now caring for the child and his or her relationship with the child.

4.7.2 The social worker should notify the health and education agencies (as well as the new local authority where necessary) of the end of the placement in writing.

## **4.8 Private Fostering Service in Haringey**

4.8.1 Private fostering arrangements in Haringey are assessed by front line social workers who determine these arrangements in conjunction with their Team Managers and Service Managers, parents and the multi-agency networks around the child. Following the OFSTED 2023 Inspection, ( [insert link here](#) ) the Assistant Director for Safeguarding initiated through the Principal Social a support surgery for practitioners to review cases open to safeguarding where the children were not living with their biological birth parents. To date over 20 surgeries have been held and supported both the practitioners and the carers to better understand pathways to permanency for children and young people. This included identifying potential Private Fostering arrangements.

4.8.2 Haringey Children's Services has a dedicated specialist private fostering senior social worker, who regularly reviews the private fostering arrangements at the point that they are deemed to be residing in a private fostering arrangement.

4.8.3 The private fostering senior social worker will monitor and provide advice and support to the privately fostered children and carers for the first year of the arrangement through statutory visits every 6 weeks. Following the first year of a child being placed in a private fostering arrangement, the visiting frequency will reduce to 12 weekly statutory visits in line with the child's needs.



4.8.4 The Private Fostering Social Worker is based in the Fostering, Adoption and Special Guardianship Team in Children's Social Care. Children's Cases are overseen by the Team Manager and the Service Manager for Fostering, Adoption and Permanence. Private fostering arrangement assessments are authorised by the relevant Team Manager and or Service Manager.

4.8.5 This service is the lead on providing specialist advice and support regarding private fostering across Children's Services and to external agencies.

4.8.6 The Private Fostering Senior Social Worker attends training and briefings on private fostering policy and practice. In addition, the PFSW attends the Coram BAAF Private Fostering Special Interest Group.

4.8.7 The Private Fostering Social Worker also attends meetings with other local authorities, to share information and improve policy and practice.

#### 4.9 Private Fostering Notifications 2022-2023

4.9.1 From the period 01/09/2022 to 31/09/2023 Children's Social Care received 8 notifications of new private fostering arrangements in Haringey, which was a significant decrease compared with previous years.

4.9.2 In the table below, you will note assessments with Private Fostering as a factor continue at a rate in line with the national average. The graph also illustrates that there have been fewer private fostering assessments.

**Table 1: Total Number of Private Fostering Arrangements from 2020-2023**

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
8B - Privately fostered: Overseas child who intend to return	6	1	0
8C - Privately fostered: Overseas child who intend to stay	1	3	1
8D - Privately fostered: UK child in educational placements	1	0	2
8E - Privately fostered: UK child making alternative arrangement	2	10	4
8F - Privately fostered: Other	2	1	1
<b>Total number of Children Privately Fostered Per Annum</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>

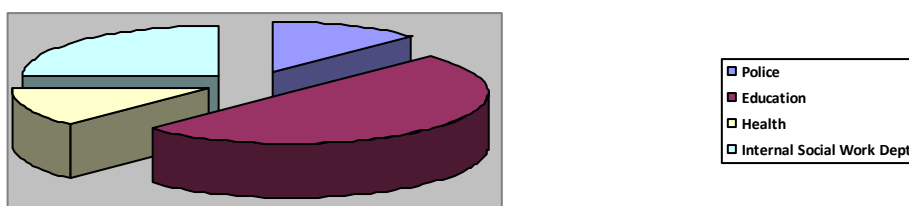
4.9.3 The decrease in the number of private fostering arrangements falls in line with the national statistics which was impacted by the Covid19 pandemic. Some families were more reluctant to agree these arrangements due to concerns about health. These decline was evidenced in the national benchmarking forums, the North London Private Fostering Forum, and CORAM BAAF.

4.9.4 The table below illustrates the breakdown of the referrals received for private fostering. Four referrals were received from our education partners, one was received from Police, one from Health Services and two from internal social work departments.

4.9.5 The demography of the children aged between 11 months to 14 years of age. With the highest age range being between 9-14 years of age.

4.9.6 In terms of the ethnicities of the cohort of children these included 3 children of White British heritage, 1 child of Jamaican Heritage, 1 child of Spanish Heritage, and 2 children of Turkish heritage.

**Table 2 | Sources of Notifications**



**4.10 Outcome of Notifications**

4.10.1 Notifications are carefully assessed to ensure they meet the criteria of private fostering and that they meet the children’s needs. In addition, as part of the assessment where any ‘child protection’ or child in need’ concerns arise, the Assessment Service is notified.

4.10.2 From 15 notifications in this period, 8 children were assessed to be private fostering arrangements. Five of these children returned to the care of parent/s, two are currently being assessed, and one child has progressed to a private fostering arrangement.

**4.11 Monitoring, Support & Advice 2022-203**

4.11.1 Throughout 2022/23 the 6 weekly and 12 weekly statutory visits monitor and support arrangements. Out of the 8 arrangements subject to 6 weekly statutory visits, 92% of the required visits were undertaken, 85% were seen 6 weekly. For the eight pre-existing arrangements requiring 12 weekly visits, 100% were undertaken, 86% were seen within timescale. The majority of statutory visits were undertaken within timescale.

4.11.2 Visits out of time do not indicate children are left unseen and not monitored. Privately fostered children are regularly seen, frequent agency checks are undertaken with the professional network and any emerging safeguarding concerns are immediately escalated and investigated where appropriate. The Private Fostering Social Worker also checks with the carer prior to the children leaving to go abroad for school holidays.

4.11.3 During each visit the child is always seen and spoken to alone (unless the child is too young or requests to have another person present), to check they are safe and remain happy in the arrangement. Specific attention is paid to address the child's religious, racial, cultural, and linguistic needs as appropriate and direct work tools to aid communication and encourage participation are used. Some visits are undertaken outside of the home, away from the carers, in a neutral environment; so children have the opportunity share their views or any worries they may have about their experience.

4.11.4 In the 'mainstream' arrangements, the private foster carers characteristically required assistance from the PFSW in accessing services such as registering the children with local GP's and making school applications.

4.11.5 To further strengthen our oversight of private fostering arrangements, annual reviews have been reintroduced. The intention is to ensure the child's voice is being heard, encourage more child focused analysis, establish the permanent plan for the child and family and guarantee all necessary safety checks are renewed. It also provides an opportunity for the carer to reflect on the year and to identify needs, concerns, and strengths within the arrangement.

#### **4.15 Promoting Private Fostering Awareness across Haringey 2022-23**

4.15.1 The service has been working with partners to raise awareness of private fostering and in the process of delivering a programme of events to raise awareness. This includes:

- Schools Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Police Response teams, the Community Safety partnership
- GP forum
- Private and Voluntary child care providers
- Faith Fora – attended an evening event at a large Mosque
- Community events such as library events, film screenings, job fairs, children's centres and our family hub
- Developing links with the Haredi community in Haringey

4.15.2 Communications are also being sent out and include private fostering flyers for schools, GP newsletters and the Haringey Fostering newsletter. In addition private fostering champions are being identified across various partnerships.

4.15.3 Frontline practitioners continue to be supported to apply Private Fostering pathways and understand regulations. The service has also introduced a panel that meets weekly where practitioners can come to discuss and seek advice about children who are not living with birth parents. The panel has been in place since July 2023 and two cases have been identified through the panel and are being assessed.

4.15.4 Our lead social worker is also visiting all frontline teams to help teams to gain better insight into the regulation and what constitutes a private fostering arrangement.

4.15.5 to the service secured a worker in the Multi Agency Hub who has specific links into this community and who is able to highlight issues associated with private fostering and to give advice and support and to determine if arrangements are needing to be assessed.

4.15.6 Briefing sessions have been held with HSCP with members from health, education and community organizations in attendance to raise awareness around private fostering.

4.15.7 Periodic awareness raising via the HSCP Newsletter, which goes out regularly across the partnership to facilitate the PFSW, providing briefings and disseminating information across Health, Education, Early years, and community organisations/faith groups.

4.15.8 Additionally, there has been a strategic group devised to focus on the issue of private fostering led by the Assistant Directors in Children's Services and in partnership with Council Members in an attempt to raise the profile of private fostering in Haringey.

**5. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

N/A

**6. Use of Appendices**

None

**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

**None**

**Report for:** Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel February 2024

**Title:** Social Care Annual Performance 2022-23

**Report**

**Authorised by:** Ann Graham, Director Children's Services

**Lead Officer:** Bev Hendricks, Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Children's Social care

**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

**1 Describe the issue under consideration.**

1.1 This report provides an overview of safeguarding and looked after children activity and performance for 2022/2023.

**2 Member Introduction**

2.1 This report notes the progress and the consistent, effective performance with regards to safeguarding children and young people in Haringey for 2022/23.

2.2 The Committee is asked to note the commitment of Children's Services officers in achieving this level of performance and the measures taken to drive the improvements across the service.

2.3 The report identifies key developments, summarises performance activity levels and details several future priorities for vulnerable children.

**3 Recommendations**

3.1 Committee is asked to note the report and, in particular:

3.1.1 The service improvement and challenges contained within the report as well as the actions taken during 2022/23 in response to local demand and the financial pressures experienced by the service in relation to placements.

3.1.2 The areas identified as priorities for 2023/24 following analysis and review of the year's performance and the Ofsted findings as published in April 2023.

[London Borough of Haringey - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#)

**4. Reasons for the report**

4.1 The welfare of Haringey's vulnerable children is one of the Council's highest priorities.

4.2 The annual report is intended to inform Committee of the performance of Children Social Care Services in 2022/23. Committee should be aware of the progress made against managing the safeguarding demands. The report, in addition to other measures, enables Members to assure itself that the necessary arrangements are in place for the Council to effectively discharge its children social care obligations. In this regard, there is a distinct leadership role for the Leader, Lead Member for Children and Young People's Services, the Chief Executive and Director of Children Services; also, there is a wider corporate parenting role for all members of the Council.

## 5. Introduction and Background

5.1 This report provides an overview of performance for Children's Social Care Services for 2022/23. The report provides comparative data by benchmarking with our statistical neighbours and looks at our performance from 2020 to 2022 where this is appropriate. Haringey's statistical neighbours are a group of local authorities judged by the DfE to have the most similar demographic profile, these are:

- Croydon
- Enfield
- Greenwich
- Hackney
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Islington
- Lambeth
- Lewisham
- Southwark
- Waltham Forest

5.2 Children's Social Care provides services and support for children and young people who are:

- in need
- at risk of harm and in need of protection
- children in our care who are looked after
- care leavers

5.3 These children and young people have needs which are assessed as being complex or acute and require the statutory involvement of the Local Authority within

the responsibilities set out in legislation, principally the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and the Children and Families Act 2014 and various statutory guidance (including Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, updated December 2020).

5.4 The governance and scrutiny of the arrangements for safeguarding children take place through this Committee and the following multi agency forums:

5.4.1 Safeguarding Accountability Meetings chaired by the Leader of the Council, Lead Member for Children, Young People and Families, Director of Children and Young People Services. The meeting is held quarterly and allows senior members to hold senior officers to account, to scrutinise performance related to vulnerable children, to be appraised of any concerns about the safety and welfare of children and to strategically drive improvements.

5.4.2 Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee for Children Looked After and Care Leavers and attended by seven elected members and senior officers in the partnership. The Committee meets quarterly and scrutinises performance and strategic planning related to children in care and care leavers.

5.4.3 Haringey's Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) is overseen by an independent chair, the Partnership meets eight times a year, including the joint board meeting with the Adults Safeguarding Board. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 has removed the requirement for Local Authorities to establish LSCBs and replaced this with new local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Under the new legislation, the three statutory safeguarding partners - Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group - must make arrangements to work together, along with the relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. Haringey's Executive Board meets 6 times a year monitoring and reviewing Haringey's statutory safeguarding arrangements.

5.4.4 The HSCP has sub-committees Quality Assurance, Training, Missing and Exploitation, Panel's, (MACE). The HSCP annual report evaluates the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection in Haringey and has set the following priorities, to improve the collective effectiveness of agencies in:

- Addressing the impact of neglect on children
- Addressing the consequences / harm suffered as a result of domestic violence
- Parental mental health and substance abuse.
- Identification and the effectiveness of intervention for children who are vulnerable to exploitation.

## 6. National Context - National Statistical Reporting

6.1 All local authorities report to the Department of Education to inform the Child In Need Annual Census and the 903 Children in Care Return. The results of which are published every October on the DfE website. The CIN census covers early intervention, contacts and referrals to social care and the reasons, Child and Family assessments and identified factors, the nature and volume of child protection activity, the numbers of children subject to child protection conferences. The 903 covers children entering care and the reasons, the types of placements used, the legal status of children, how many children have left care and for what reasons (including adoption) and details about care leavers and their accommodation, employment and training outcomes and how the local authority is keeping in touch with them.

6.2 In addition, more detailed returns are submitted to the North Central London Regional Adoption board on children with an adoption plan, the timeliness of matching and placing with an adopter and the recruitment of adopters.

6.3 An annual social worker workforce survey is also submitted to the DfE about the workforce profile, recruitment, retention, and sickness rates for social workers and also caseload numbers.

6.4 The Local Authority Interactive Tool (CHAT) hosted by the DfE collates a range of data across a number of returns and can be filtered to compare and benchmark performance across a range of children's indicators.

## 7. Future Challenges and Operational Priorities

7.1 The future challenges and priorities can be summarised as follows (this is not an exhaustive list and the history of this type of work is that new priorities will emerge).

- Continuing to meet the increasing demands for children's social care services and responding to factors arising from National and International challenges.
- Maintaining operational effectiveness of the service in the context of new emerging needs post Covid associated with mental health support needs, the acuity of Domestic Abuse risks and needs, Housing related risks and substance misuse.
- The costs associated with the placements for looked after children will continue to be a significant pressure for the Council. Additional corporate funding has already been given to the department, but as demand increases and the supply of placements comes under further pressure, the impact continues to be carefully monitored.
- The recruitment and retention of social workers will continue to be a key focus.
- A new social care IT system is being implemented following the successful procurement of the Liquidlogic system with work going on throughout 2023, this represents a change to the daily work of Social Workers and their record



keeping. This change has been delivered with relatively minimum disruption to the service in the build-up, because of the significant number of officers dedicated to working on the implementation. The new system is anticipated to deliver better, more consistent information to allow for more informed decision making and the benefits and impact of this new system will be fully reported in the 2023- 2024 Annual Report.

- Opening a new Residential Home designed to bring and keep children who need to be looked after in Haringey.
- Haringey Children's Academy providing learning and development opportunities for the children's workforce and supported by professors and academics, remains a central part of Children's retention and skills progression strategy.

## 7.2 Local Background and Context

7.2.1 The department continues to support high levels of need and complexity in families for the following reasons:

- Children living in (relative) low-income families show a decrease of 19% in the last 2 years, from 13,849 in 2019/20 to 11,341 in 2021/22, however this is the 8<sup>th</sup> highest proportion of children in poverty in London (at 19.0%). Haringey had 1,023 Hospital admissions for alcohol related conditions (2021/22, 10<sup>th</sup> highest in London, worse than the previous position of 17<sup>th</sup> in London last year).
- 2% of Haringey's 16-64-years-olds claim Employment Support Allowance for mental health and behavioural disorders, which is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all London boroughs and above the London average – however, this is largely due to the number of claimants overall. Of all ESA claimants in Haringey, 50.9% are for mental health and behavioural disorders the same as the London average (August 2022).
- Haringey has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of domestic abuse with violence out of all London boroughs and is above the London average (two year rolling average from Apr-21 to Mar-23).
- Haringey has the third-highest rate of households in temporary accommodation in London and the population outnumbers the availability of housing by approximately 12,000 (average per Quarter 2021/22).

7.2.2 Alongside these challenges, Haringey has many positives for children growing up in the area. It is a place that has a rich history, strong and vibrant communities, great transport links and excellent facilities with a range of cultural events. Key strengths include:

- 93% of schools are judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.
- 92% of Early Years settings are judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

- Diverse communities where more than 180 languages are spoken.
- Over a quarter of the borough is green space – with 25 Green Flag Parks and 120 venues where cultural activities take place.
- Residents report that they have good friendships and associations in their local area and good relations between different ethnic and religious communities.

### 7.3 Our children and young people population

7.3.1 In Haringey, there are 54,422 children aged 0-17 years, representing 21% of the overall population (Census 2021), largely in line with statistical neighbours and London where 21% and 22% of people are aged 0-17 respectively. Notably, the ward with the highest proportion of 0-17-year-olds is South Tottenham (29%), while the ward with the lowest is Stroud Green (15.4%). The number of under 18s is not expected to change significantly in future years and will remain most concentrated in the east of the borough.

7.3.2 Almost half of the pupils in Haringey schools do not have English as a first language (47.4%). After English, Turkish, Spanish, Polish, Bulgarian, and Somalian are the most commonly spoken languages (May 22 Census)

7.3.3 One of the most significant challenges is inequality in outcomes. Poverty is a crucial determinant of poor outcomes. Childhood deprivation is unequally distributed across the borough, mainly affecting the east. In 2021-22, nearly one in five Haringey children lived in poverty (19.9%) – a higher rate than in London (16.9%), meaning we are working with increasing levels of need in Haringey. Haringey's eastern wards also have more children living in poverty in workless households. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data shows the percentage of children in absolute poverty in workless households as 7.1% in West Green and 8.4% in White Hart Lane, while at the same time just 2.0% in Alexandra and Fortis Green.

### 7.4 Outcomes for children and young people

7.4.1 Haringey Looked After Children have above average educational outcomes. Looked After Children KS4 and those achieving 9-4 pass in English and Maths GCSEs are performing in the top quartile in England (2020-21).

7.4.2 Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have higher educational outcomes, with many featuring in the top quartile in England. Key Stage 4 achieving 9-4 in English and Maths for pupils with SEN Support is ranked 26<sup>th</sup> in England and KS4 SEN Pupils with EHCP going to, or remaining in, education & employment-training overall (including special schools) is ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in England (2020-21).

7.4.3 Percentage of babies with low birth weight in Haringey fell to 2.6% (2021), lower than both London (3.3%) and England (which fell to 2.8%).

7.4.4 Lower percentage of asthma-related hospital admissions among children under 19-years-old compared to the England average (NCL wide stat, 63.4 per 100,000 vs 73.1 per 100,000, 2020-21), a significant improvement upon last year’s figure (121.8 per 100,000 and 158.4 per 100,000).

7.4.5 21.1% of all Reception year pupils and 36.9% of all Year 6 pupils were recorded as overweight or obese in 2021-22. This is an increase on the previous year, though remains below the London averages (21.9% for Reception and 40.5% for year 6).

## 8. OFSTED

8.1 Ofsted inspectors visited the borough in February 2023, when they assessed the care, help and protection given to children and young people and their collective experiences of this support. They also examined what was being done by leaders to improve services.

8.2 Ofsted awarded the council a ‘Good’ rating overall for its services to children and young people – a first in the borough’s history. With the following judgments being published:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

8.3 They found that since 2018 many services in Haringey have been “transformed,” with most children now receiving “good support, when they need it, from the right people” including from social workers, personal advisers, early help workers and staff in schools.

8.4 Commenting on this improved grading for the borough, the Leader of Haringey Council, Cllr Peray Ahmet, and the LA’s Chief Executive, Andy Donald, said in a joint statement:

- “We are really pleased that Ofsted have graded our Children’s Services ‘good’. This is a watershed moment for Haringey.
- “We have worked hard over many years to build a strong team and put children and young people at the heart of what we do.

- “This judgement is testament to the hard work and professionalism shown by our dedicated staff and the positive impact they have on the lives of children and young people. It is a turnaround that we are all rightly proud of and shows we are moving in the right direction.
- “We, along with our partners, will continue to set ourselves high standards moving forward and the journey towards excellence will continue. This is a platform on which we will build, not the final destination.
- “The report highlighted a need for us to have a stronger focus on children in care to ensure we can support them to achieve the best possible outcomes. We are fully committed to doing this and will be implementing a programme of further service improvements in order to achieve this.
- “We recognise this is a significant milestone, but we are not complacent, and work will go on at pace to ensure we provide excellent services to benefit our most vulnerable children and young people.”

8.5 The report also included 6 areas that could improve:

- The effectiveness of permanence planning for children in care, including the challenge brought by independent reviewing officers.
- The identification of and response to children in private fostering arrangements.
- The provision and quality of life-story work at key developmental stages in children’s lives.
- The quality of supervision in ensuring that plans for children make a positive impact.
- The understanding and knowledge of frontline workers about adoption.

8.6 The report concluded the following paragraph:

“Haringey’s diverse population is reflected in the workforce and senior leadership team. This is important to frontline staff and one of the attractions of working for this local authority. Staff and leaders are acutely aware of the enduring public perception of Haringey children’s services. At all levels, staff are proud of working for Haringey. A culture of appreciation, kindness and support is firmly embedded. Staff said their leaders care about them, listen to them and take action to address the things that need to change. In turn, staff are loyal and they care about their leaders. Staff who leave often return to Haringey. They talk about the feeling of ‘family’. This sense of emotional safety is vitally important, enabling workers to practise with the confidence and persistence needed to effect change for children and young people who are living in very challenging circumstances.”

## 9. Safeguarding and looked after children’s trends

9.1 This section of the report sets out the data we monitor every month to assess our performance in supporting children in need, those who are on a child protection plan and those who are in our care. The data supports us in tracking our improvement and identifying our challenges for action and this is shown for the past three years.

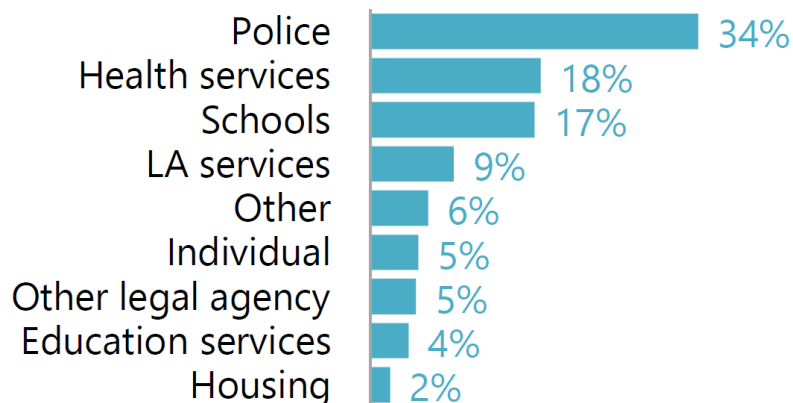
9.1.1 The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which receives contacts and referrals, is our local single point of contact for anyone who is worried about a child. The service continues to effectively collaborate with key partners and has sustained the practice and performance that Ofsted noted:

“Services for children who need help and protection in Haringey are strong. Thresholds for intervention are understood across the partnership and by practitioners in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Children and families get the right level of help and protection at the right time, making a positive difference to their day-to-day lives and reducing the risk of harm.”

### 9.1.2 Contacts and referrals to children’s social care

9.1.2.1 The communication of concerns from partner agencies or the public to children’s social care is an important step in initiating a child protection response. Not all of these communications from partners and the public will meet the threshold for referral to assessment and result in a referral to social care, some will be passed to the Early Help service or signposted to universal services, others are simply one of our partner agencies ringing for some advice or support. These communications are categorised as contacts.

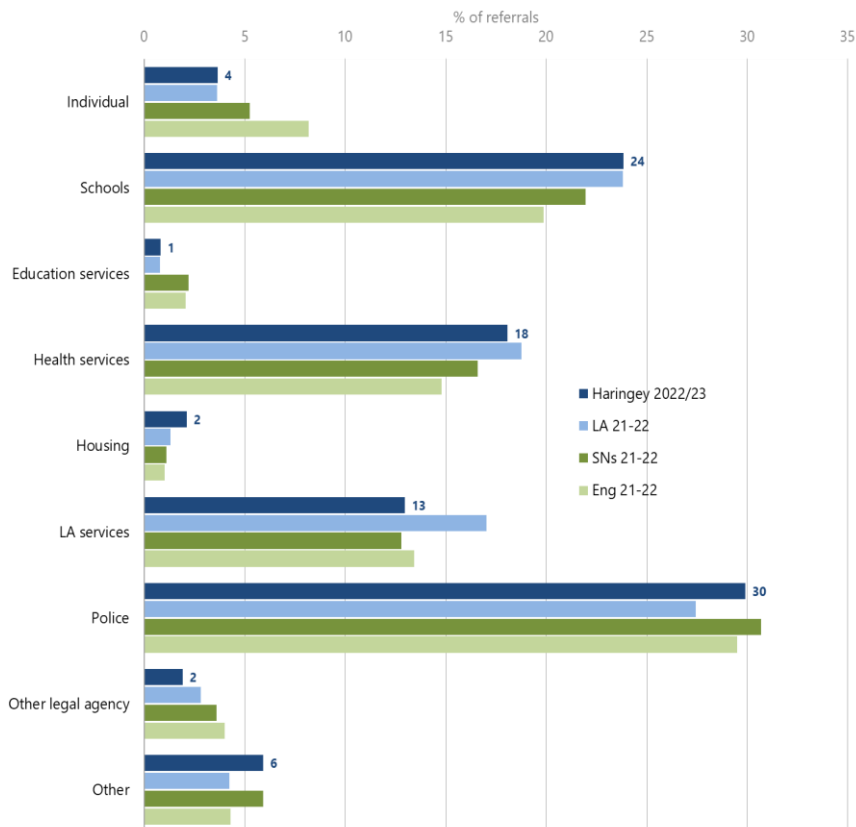
In the 12 months to March 2023 there were 12,960 contacts to MASH, the break down of sources set out below:



9.1.2.2 A referral is a contact that meets the threshold for services to be provided by children’s social care, in respect of a child who is not currently open to the service, which meets the agreed threshold. This means that social workers in the multi-agency assessment hub (MASH) share information and complete a risk analysis for the referral.

9.1.2.3 Referrals received (rate per 10,000 children) The number of referral received was the highest since 2018/19 and is line with our latest comparisons.

Year	Haringey Number	:	Haringey Rate	SN rate	Eng rate
2020-21	2851		480	499	494
2021-22	3379		568	580	538
2022-23	3,456		581		



9.1.2.4 The Police and Schools continue to be the largest source of referrals in common with our statistical neighbours and England .

## 9.2 Children with a Disability

9.2.1 The Disabled Children’s Team (DCT) continues to meet the complex and diverse nature of the range of needs experienced by children with disabilities.

9.2.2 Rigorous implementation of thresholds, effective practice and case management has reduced the number of children with a disability on child protection plans ensuring the right children are getting the right support. This in part has been achieved by embedding the partnership arrangements with the Special secondary schools in Haringey meeting fortnightly with the DCT Team managers to methodically review the welfare needs of children and intervene at the earliest opportunities to prevent needs escalating. In addition, the engagement of a dedicated Housing Safeguarding Officer has previously provided sustained support to families to

advocate for suitable housing for children with complex physical needs. This role continues to be an important role in the current Housing climate.

9.2.3 The team's improving child focus and awareness of safeguarding is further evidenced by continuing fall in numbers of Children in Need with a disability.

9.2.4 Our regular monitoring of performance data shows improvement in timeliness for visits, supervision and management oversight and completion of assessments. At the end of March 2023, 95% (63% in 2020) of DCT cases had an up-to-date visit and 95% (82% in 2020) of cases had up to date supervision and 100% management direction. Although still on an improvement journey, this reflects significant advances now above the averages for CYPS of 91% supervisions and 83% visits.

9.2.5 The 2021 recommendations from the commissioned assurance review continue to be implemented, post Covid pressures with partner agencies has impacted aspects of the delivery of the integrated model, work with partners continues.

Year	No. of CIN Children with a disability	% of CIN Children with a disability
2019/20	300	6%
2020/21	221	5%
2021/22	183	4%
2022/23	113	4%

### 9.3 SEND Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

9.3.1 2022 saw both an increase the number of new EHCP plans issued and an improvement in their timelines.

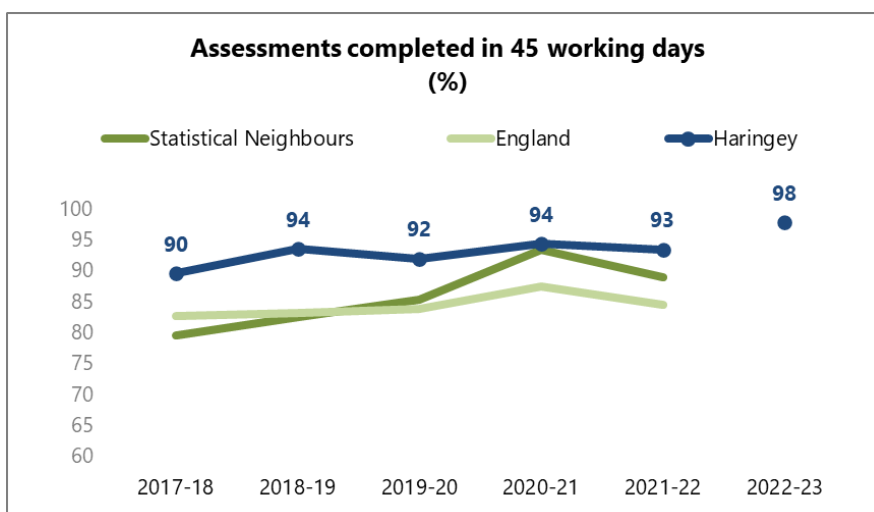
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>New EHC Plans Issued (Number)</b>	240	345	309	260	410
<b>Percentage in 20 weeks</b>					
Haringey	25%	70%	67%	30%	44%
London	58%	64%		59%	
England	60%	60%	58%	58%	

Number of open EHCP at year end					
Haringey	1537	1820	1877	2164	2567

## 9.4 Assessments

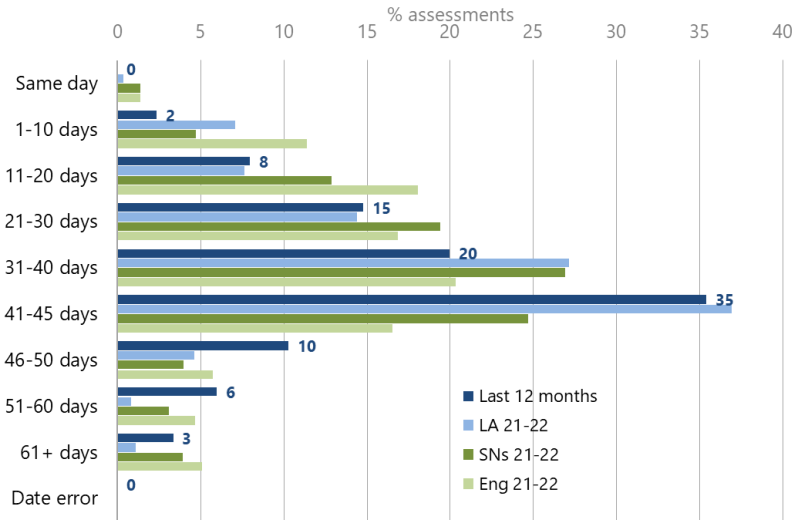
9.4.1 A referral to social care will either result in a decision to complete an assessment of the child’s needs (within 45 working days) or in addition if there is a concern that immediate protection may be needed as the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, an immediate strategy discussion with police and other partners is held. At the strategy discussion it is decided whether to initiate enquires under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 which is an enquiry to decide what type of action is needed to safeguard a child and if necessary, hold an initial Child protection conference within 15 working days.

9.4.2 During 2022/23 there were 2,919 assessments completed at a rate of 527 per 10,000 children, up from a rate of 483 per 10,000 children in 2021/22. In each of the past 6 years over 90% have been completed in 45 working days as shown in the graph below. This represents continued good performance in the completion of assessments and compare well with the average for our statistical neighbours (89% in 2021/22) and England, 84%.





9.4.3



9.4.4 Factors found at the end of assessment

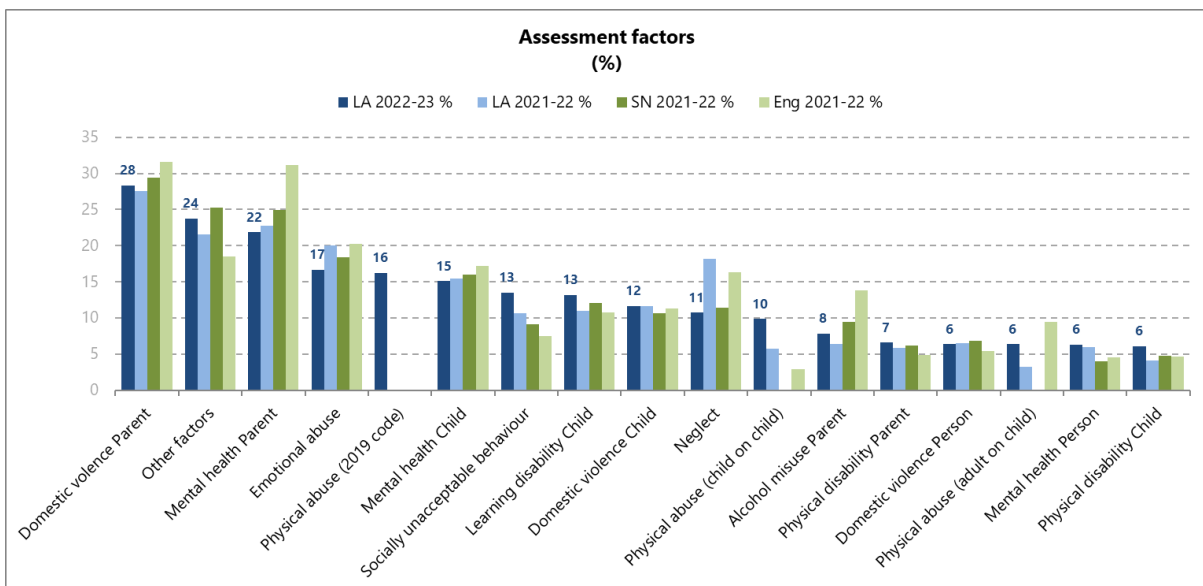
9.4.4.1 Parental Domestic Abuse continues to be the single most common factor found at the end of assessments.

9.4.4.2 Other areas seeing a year-on-year increase include:

- Learning disability.
- Parental Alcohol misuse
- Socially unacceptable behaviour

9.4.4.3 Area with fewer factors found include:

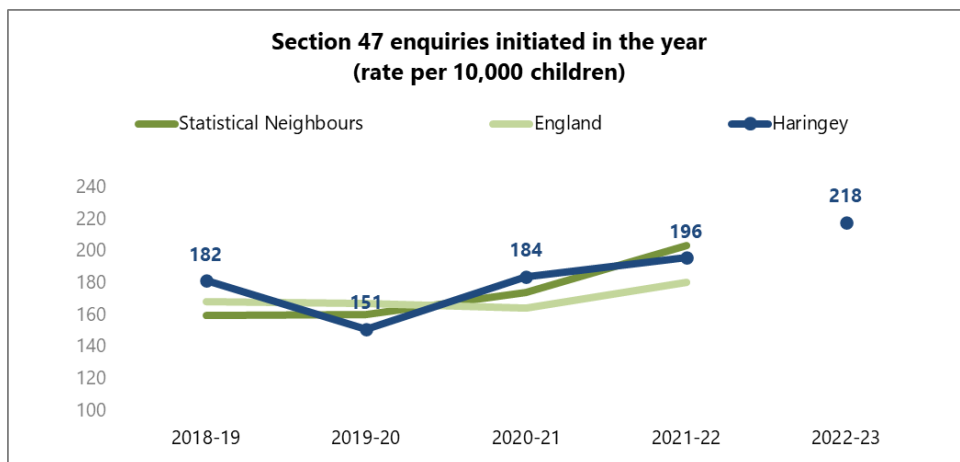
- Neglect
- Mental Health



## 9.5 Section 47 enquiries

9.5.1 As noted above, Section 47 enquiries are carried out when there is a referral in which a child or children are reported to be at immediate risk of harm. This always follows a multi-agency strategy discussion.

9.5.2 The rate of section 47 enquiries per 10,000 children aged 0-17 increased to a rate of 218 per 10,000 children from 151 in 2019/20 and our rate is just above the last published rate of 204 for comparator boroughs and the England average rate of 180.

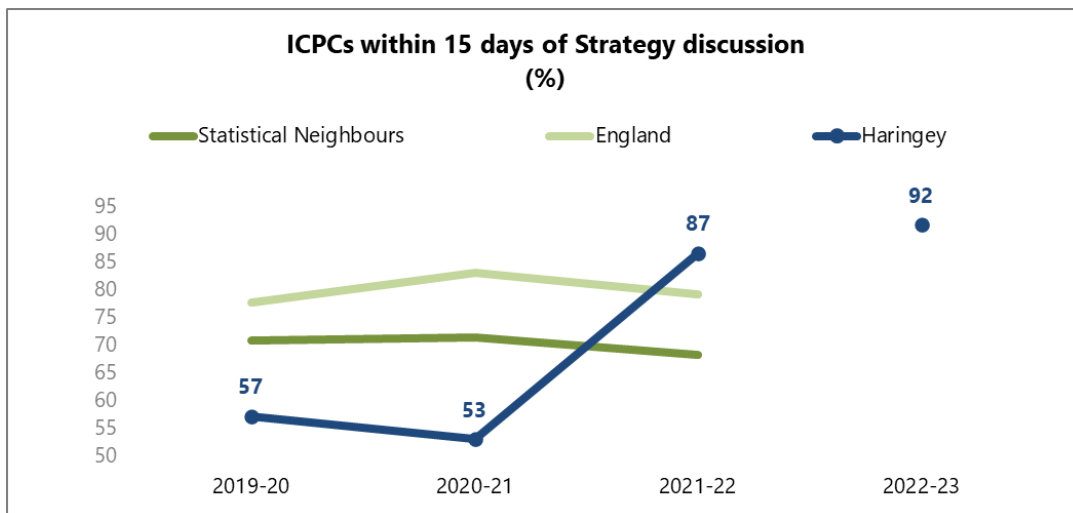


## 9.6 Initial Child protection conferences (ICPC)

9.6.1 Following section 47 enquiries, where needed, an initial child protection conference is held. Bringing together family members (and the child where appropriate) and all relevant information, it is the responsibility of the conference to make recommendations on how organisations will work together to safeguard the child including the option of placing the child on a child protection plan.

9.6.2 In 2022/23 a total of 253 ICPCs were held, an almost identical number to the previous year.

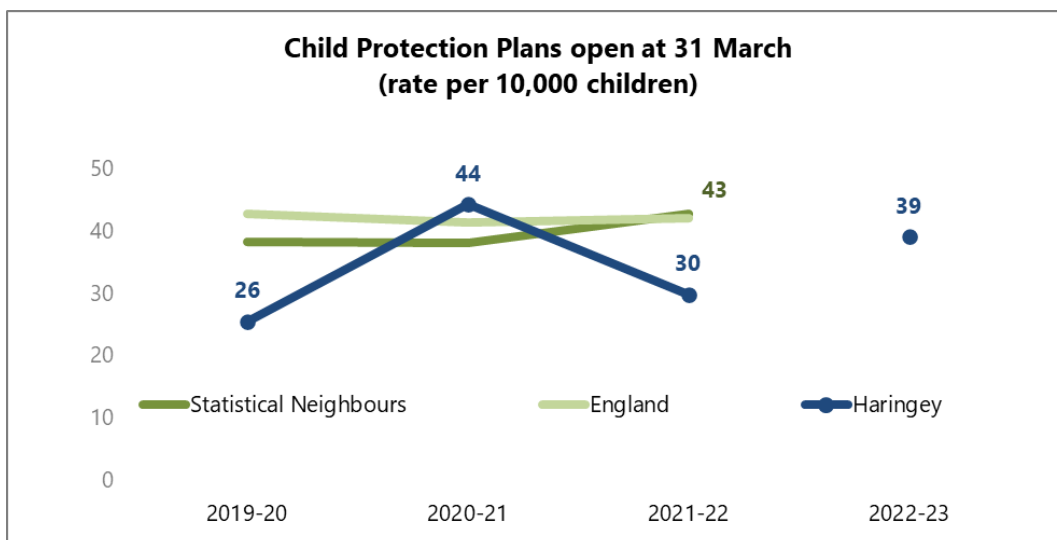
9.6.3 It is critical that initial child protection conferences are convened quickly, and this is an area where performance showed a decline up to December 2020. The graph below shows that since January 2021 a new system and tight monitoring has been in place effectively addressing this decline with a percentage of 92 on time in 2022/23 compared with 87% last year.



## 9.7 Child Protection Plans

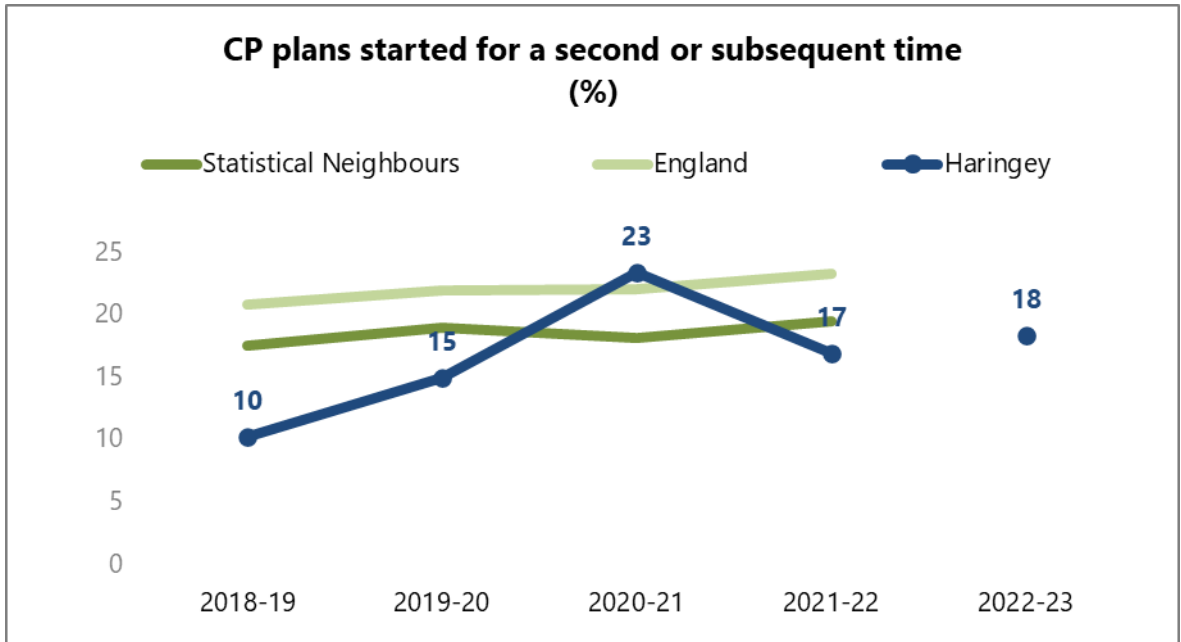
9.7.1 The aim of a child protection plan is to ensure the child is safe from harm and prevent further suffering and harm. The plan should promote the child’s health and development and support the family and wider family members to safeguard their child provided it is in the best interests of the child.

9.7.2 There were 233 children on a child protection plan at the end of March 2023 or a rate of 39 per 10,000.

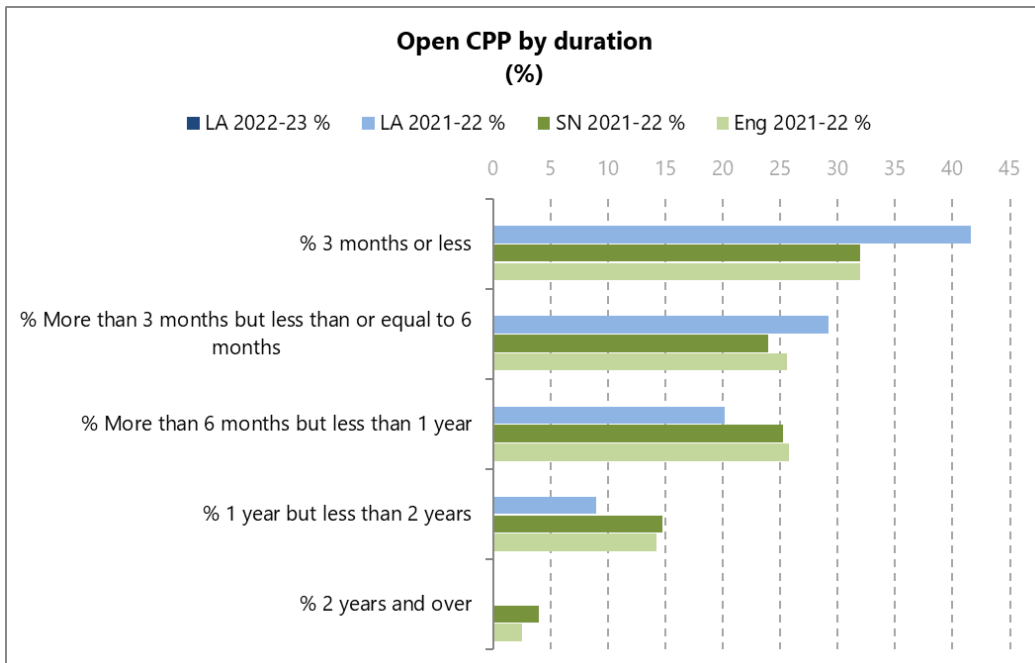


9.7.3 It is vital that the right children are being placed on plans for the correct amount of time. A simple measure of this is the is the rate of second and subsequent plans, too high and it could be the plans are ineffectual or aren’t lasting long enough, too

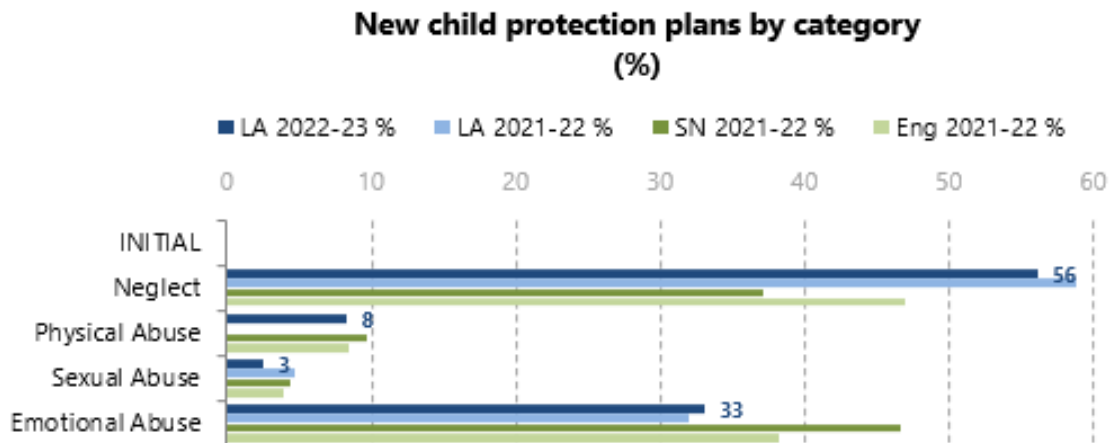
low and it could be that a degree of caution is evident. The described percentage rate, matches our statistical neighbours rate, (with a minor data variance of 18).



9.7.4 Most child protection plans cease within two years, at the end of March 2023 Haringey had no plans open for more than two years.



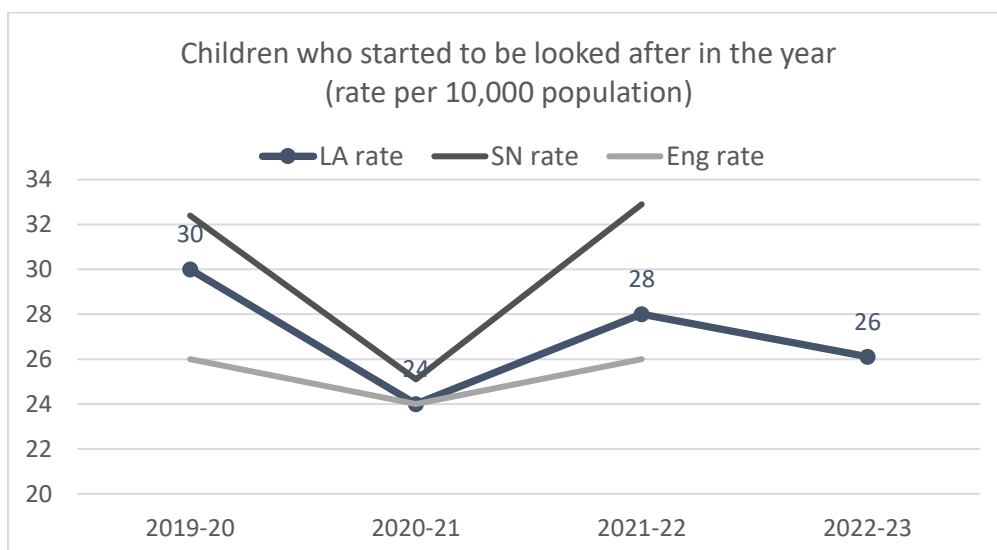
9.7.5 In common with other local authorities, the main initial reasons for children becoming subject to a child protection plan relate to emotional abuse and neglect as shown in the chart below and our rate is higher for neglect.



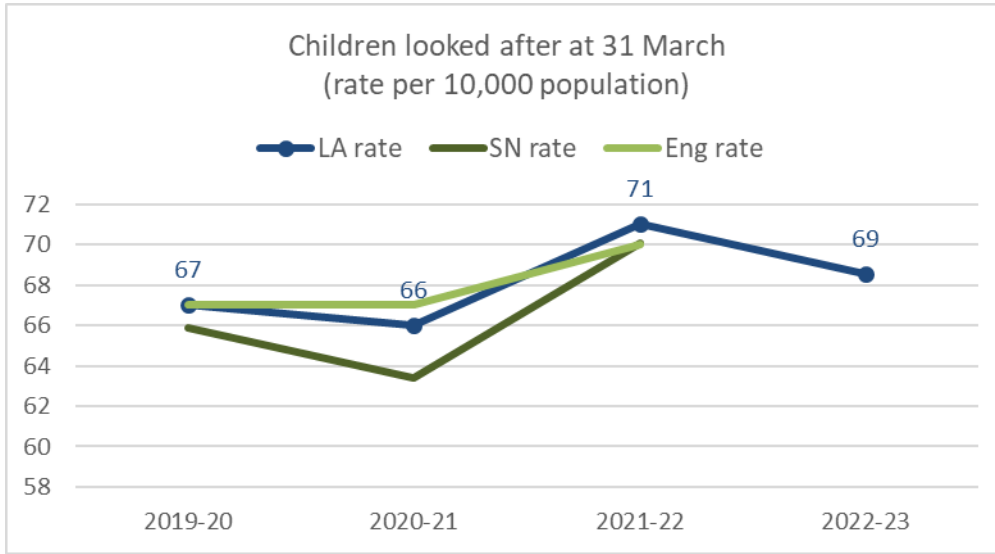
## 9.8 Children Looked After

9.8.1 A child who has been in the care of a local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a Child Looked After (CLA). CLA are also often referred to as children in care. Children in care in general are either living with foster parents, in a residential children’s home or living in residential settings like schools or secure units. Children come into care for a variety of reasons, including because they are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children with no responsible adult to care for them or children’s services may have intervened because it was believed that the child was at significant risk of harm. A child stops being looked after when they are adopted, return home, or turn 18. However local authorities are required to support most children who leave care at 18 until they are 25 years old.

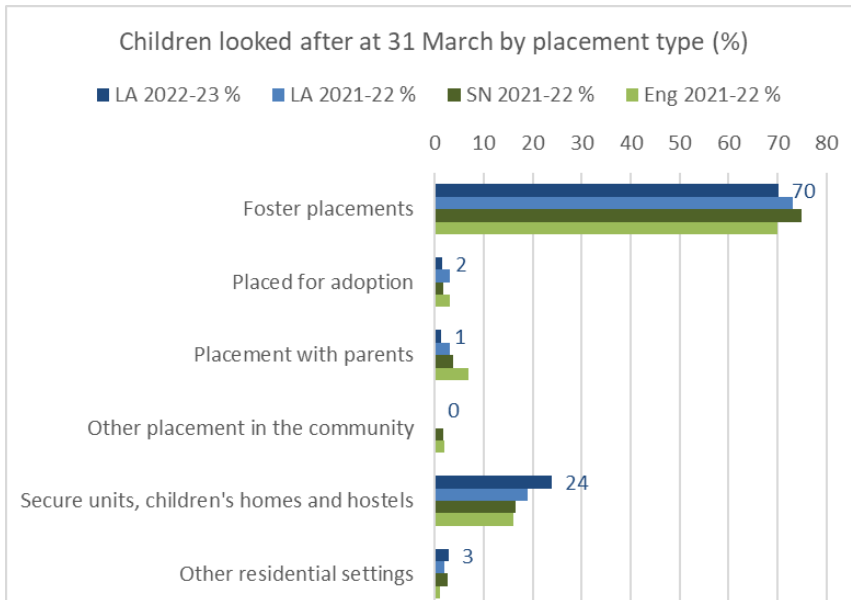
9.8.2 During the year the number of children starting to be looked after fell marginally and this is reflected in the small decrease in CLA as of the year end, but the rate remains close to the rate of all England and our Statistical neighbours, so is not a concern.



9.8.3



9.8.4 The chart below shows the children in care by placement type at the end of March 2022. Foster placements continue to be the largest proportion of placement types along with the proportion matching that of all England.



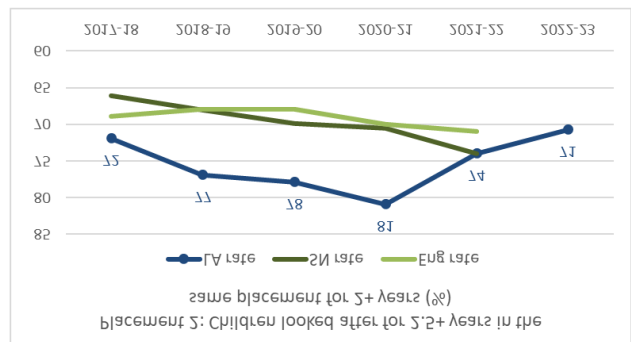
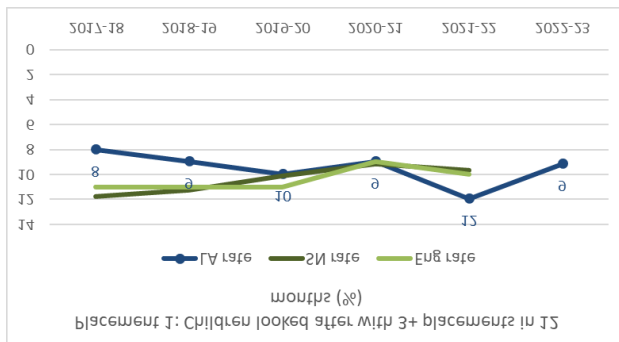
9.8.5 At the end of March 2023, 80% of children were in placements in or within 20 miles of Haringey. This is broadly in line with statistical neighbours. Local provision continues to be a challenge and we are working with our North Central London partners to develop this. When placing children out of borough along with other factors we consider the education and CAMHS provision young people will receive in their new placement and taking special note of pressures in receiving boroughs.

9.8.6 Placement stability is a key factor in children’s wellbeing. Having the chance to settle into a foster or residential placement over a period of time gives children a feeling of belonging, helping them feel secure in themselves and their identity. Stability will be achieved only by making sure that the child is in the right placement for them. There are two types of placement stability that we measure – short term stability which looks at the number of placements in the last 12 months and long-term stability which considers those children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years and have been in the same placement for more than the past 2 years. It is a combination of these indicators that gives us confidence that our children in care are in a stable environment.

9.8.7 Our short-term stability performance shows that 9% of children in our care had three or more placements in the past 12 months. This is slightly lower than last year and in line with statistical neighbour data (9%) and the national average.

9.8.8 Our performance in relation to long term placement stability is continuing to be good with 71% of children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years in the same placement for more than 2 years, as shown in the graph below.

9.8.9 This is slightly down but and now just below the last reported statistical neighbour performance but in line with the national figure.



9.8.10 The data for children who go missing from care shows a continued good picture. For our Sn 14% CLA go missing at some point in the year, in Haringey that was 10% in 2022/23. When children do go missing from placement there is a robust and effective response from children’s social care and the Police. The missing co-ordinator tracks, and risk assesses children who go missing to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent repeat occurrences and return home interviews are routinely conducted by specialist workers.

9.9 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

9.9.1 There are two means by which UASC come to Haringey. Firstly, as spontaneous arrivals, most frequently arriving at local police stations. The second means is through the National Transfer Scheme, which aims to equitably re-distribute UASC, especially those from Kent and Croydon.

9.9.2 At the end of March 2020 there were 48 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care, this fell to a low of 24 in March 2021 and was 32 in March 2023, this represents around 8.6% of the children in care cohort up from 7% last year.

## 9.10 Adoption

9.10.1 There were 13 adoptions during 2021/22 up from 8 in 2022/23 representing 8% of children leaving care during the year.

## 9.11 Leaving care

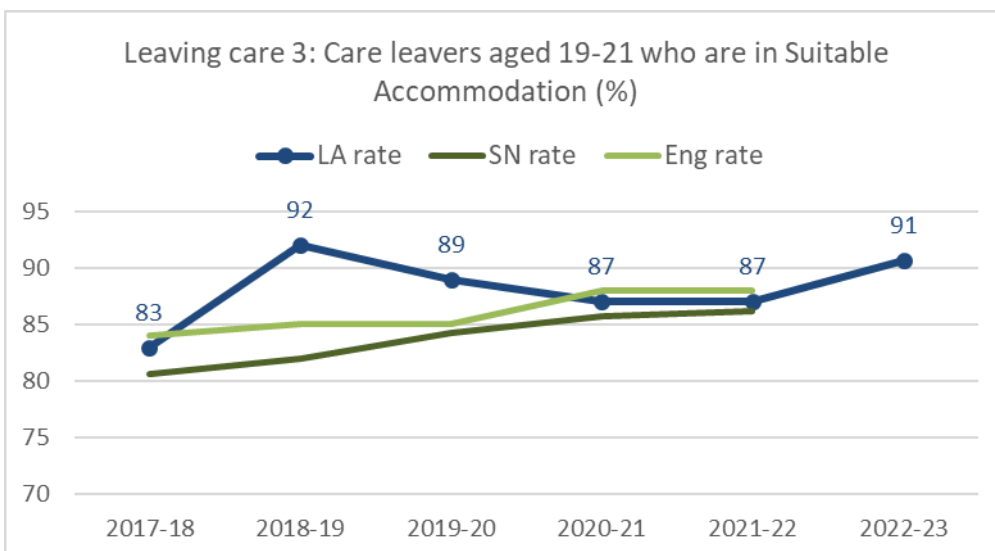
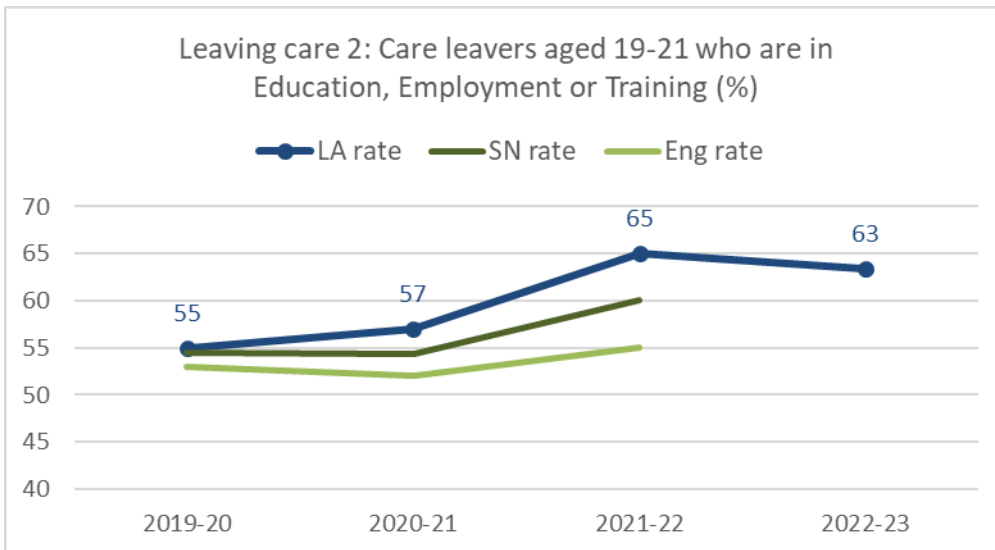
9.11.1 For young people qualifying for service as Care Leavers there is a requirement for Haringey to stay in touch with the young person, keep their Pathway Plans under review, continue the appointment of a Personal Adviser and provide financial assistance where the young person is employed or seeking employment/to enable the young person to pursue education or training. These duties continue until the former relevant child reaches 21 or, where the child's pathway plan sets out a programme of education or training which extends beyond their 21st birthday, they continue for so long as the child pursues that programme.

9.11.2 The service has been continuing to work with the new duty on local authorities to support all care leavers up to age 25 who can return to the local authority at any point after the age of 21 and request support.

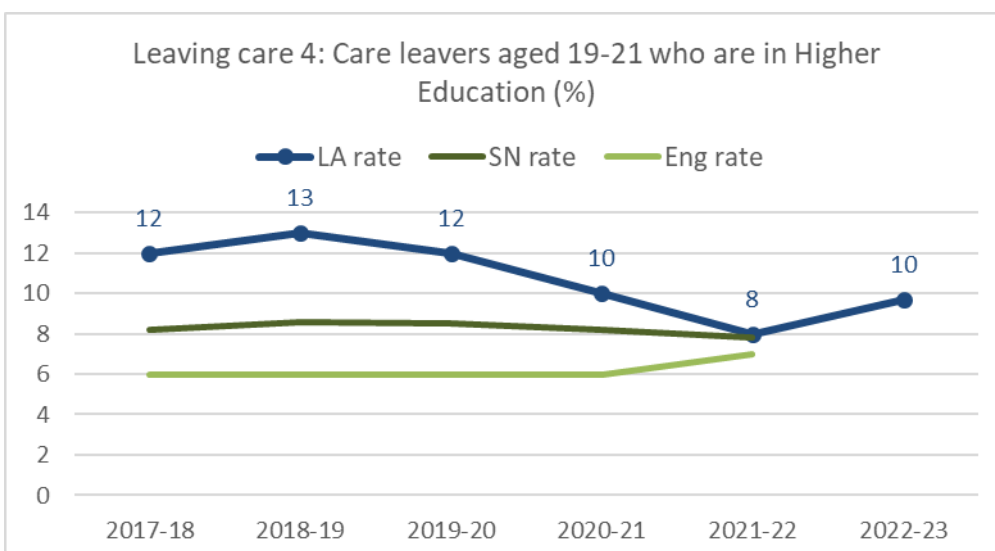
9.11.3 At the end of March 2023 there were 521 care leavers receiving leaving care support. This has increased mainly due to the increase in the eligibility age.

9.11.4 Looking at care leavers in suitable accommodation and those in employment, education or training Haringey has a higher percentage than both our statistical neighbours and the England rate





9.11.5 10% of our care leavers aged 19-21 are in Higher Education



## 10. Workforce

10.1 The service has developed several initiatives with regards to recruitment and retention enabling the service to 'Grow our Own', and obtain a high performing culture and be an employer of choice within the external marketplace. Haringey has joined the London Pledge (the London collaborative focussed on recruitment and retention for London Social workers); extended opportunities with 3 universities for newly qualifying social workers to join Haringey under the Assessed and Supported Year Programme; Secured funding to engage social work assistants; developed a discreet to Haringey recruitment campaign; and renewed the collaboration with the NCL recruitment programme.

10.2 Haringey Council has made significant strides towards obtaining a higher percentage of permanent qualified social workers, there have been national challenges recruiting and retaining permanent social workers with a trend of qualifying social workers using their training in other non-practice related disciplines.

10.3 For 2022 (September) the agency rate was 26% which equated to 63 social workers, this was a slight increase from 2021 when the rate was 24%, a significant drop from 2020 at 32% due to the impact of the pandemic.

10.4 The 2022/ 23 data of our statistical neighbours was 24% and the reported England average was 17.18%. There has been a further increase in permanent social worker stability in the workforce. This achievement should not be understated given the national picture and the fact that this was the first month whereby the agency percentage fell to under 24% since 2018.

10.5 With regards recruitment achievements during this period (March 2022 – March 2023) the service had successfully recruited 16 newly qualified social workers through an international campaign, retaining 95% of the cohort largely due to the intensive induction programme. There also has been intensive training sessions and administration support provided to managers on how to effectively recruit and support social workers and other front-line officers.

10.6 The service has reached a greater level of recruitment stability, there has been a significant focus on retention initiatives, including a contractual relationship with Family Psychology mutual offering reflective clinical supervision, continued access to a specialist culturally appropriate therapist to reflect the needs of our black and global majority communities, building workforce resilience in working with disproportionality. Team Managers have been supported to conduct daily team check ins which take place virtually.

10.7 The Assistant Directors lead the weekly 'Ask the AD' sessions where key messages are communicated service wide, and the workforce can ask any questions or make service adjustment feedback.

10.8 The Director's Roadshows have also continued, and the Director meets with the Head of Service to hear and resolve organisational challenges.

10.9 The Health and Wellbeing of Children's Services workforce is of great importance and all managers have been trained on how to carry out relevant risk assessments, create awareness of providing details of the EAP and OH referral schemes and enabling their teams to adapt to the new hybrid ways of working. There also has been service specific health and wellbeing surveys leading to the implementation of key actions. The service ensures that exit interviews are carried out and feedback to the relevant management level and staying interviews also take place across the service. These platforms provide invaluable feedback on what is working well and where realistic improvements may be made.

10.10 The qualified social worker turnover in April 2022 was 22% and in March 2023 it was 16%. The London average qualified turnover as of September 2022 was 17%.

**11. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)**

11.1 Finance

11.2 Procurement

Not applicable

11.3 Legal

Under the Children Act 1989, the Council is responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in need in its area. The annual report serves to inform Committee of Children Social Care performance in 2020/21 in the discharge of the Council's children safeguarding obligations. The report is for noting and there are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

11.4 Equality

This report is for Committee to note Haringey Council's progress and performance with regards to safeguarding vulnerable children. As such it creates no disadvantage or inequality and the activity described serves to reduce inequality for some of the councils most vulnerable children.

12 Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children’s Services and the Lead Member for Children’s Services

Appendix B – Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2028, updated December 2020 guidance

**Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel**

**Work Plan 2023 - 24**

<p><b>1. Scrutiny review projects;</b> These are dealt with through a combination of specific evidence gathering meetings, that will be arranged as and when required, and other activities, such as visits. Should there not be sufficient capacity to cover all these issues through in-depth pieces of work, they could instead be addressed through a “one-off” item at a scheduled meeting of the Panel. These issues will be subject to further detailed development and scoping.</p>		
<b>Project</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Physical Activity and Sport	To look at how the Council promotes and commissions physical activity and sporting opportunities for children and young people in all parts of the borough. This will include how their views are considered in planning provision, the impact of activities on mental health and well-being and how the needs of marginalised groups are addressed.	In progress
Housing and children	To look at how housing impacts on children and young people and, in particular those who may be vulnerable or where there might be safeguarding concerns.	1.
Listening to children and young people	To consider how the Council obtains and responds to the views of children and young people in the planning and provision of services.	2.

3. **“One-off” Items;** These will be dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Panel. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.

Date	Potential Items
<b>2023/24</b>	
<b>26 June 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Appointment of Non-Voting Co-opted Member</li> <li>• Cabinet Member Questions – Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families</li> <li>• Ofsted inspection of local authority children’s social care – outcome and action plan</li> <li>• SEND – Prevention and Early Intervention</li> <li>• Review on Child Poverty – Update on Implementation of Recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>21 September 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haringey Youth Justice Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Skills and Careers</li> <li>• Stop and Search</li> </ul>

<b>13 November 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Member Questions – Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families</li> <li>• Mental Health and Well-Being</li> <li>• Children in Care Performance update</li> </ul>
<b>4 January 2024 (Budget)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Scrutiny</li> <li>• Exam and Test Results</li> <li>• Safeguarding – Annual Performance Report</li> </ul>
<b>20 February 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Member Questions – Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families</li> <li>• Children’s Social Care; Annual Performance 2022/23</li> <li>• Private Fostering 2022/23</li> <li>• Looked After Children (LAC) Sufficiency Strategy 2022-2026: Progress report</li> </ul>

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