

Rob Mack, Principal  
Scrutiny Officer

020 8489 2921

rob.mack@haringey.gov.uk

11 November 2021

To: All Members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

Dear Member,

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel - Thursday, 18th November,  
2021

I attach a copy of the following reports for the above-mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda:

**10. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE; ANNUAL REPORT (PAGES 1 - 28)**

To consider and comment on the Annual Report for Children's Social Care.

Yours sincerely

Rob Mack, Principal Scrutiny Officer  
Principal Committee Co-Ordinator

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Children & Young People's Service Annual Performance Report
<b>REPORT LEAD Officer</b>	Bev Hendricks , AD Safeguarding & Social Care
<b>BRIEF OVERVIEW</b>	<p>This paper provides a description of the performance for C&amp;YPS for the period April 2020 – March 2021</p> <p>It also describes actions taken by Haringey Council and partners to deliver safeguarding services during the Covid 19 Pandemic.</p>

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of safeguarding and looked after children activity and performance for 2020 – 2021. The report also provides an update on the Disabled Children’s Team (DCT) following concerns raised in May 2020.

**2. Member Introduction**

- 2.1 This report notes the positive progress and continued consistently effective performance with regards to safeguarding children and young people in Haringey, during the COVID pandemic.
- 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 including children with disabilities.
- 2.3 The report identifies key developments, summarises performance activity levels and details several future priorities for vulnerable children.

**3. Recommendations**

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

- 3.1 The service improvements and challenges contained within the report as well as the actions taken during 2020/21 in response to local demand and the financial pressures experienced by the service in relation to placements.
- 3.2 The areas identified as priorities for 2021/22 following analysis and review of 2019/20.
- 3.3 The update on the work in relation to the Disabled Children’s Team.

**4. Reasons for the report**

- 4.1 The annual report is intended to inform Committee of the performance of Children’s Social Care Services in 2020/21. 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’s social care obligations. In this regard, there is a distinct leadership role for the Leader, Lead Member for Children Early Years and Families, the Chief Executive and Director of Children’s Services. Also, there is a wider corporate parent 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 2020/21. It covers the period including the COVID-19 lockdowns and the intermittent closure of schools which took place between 23 March 2020 to the end of March 2021. The report provides comparative data by benchmarking with our statistical neighbours and looks at our performance from 2018 to 2021 where this is available.

- 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 and care leavers. 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).
- 5.3 During the COVID 19 period, Ofsted initiated Assurance Visits to Local Authorities across the country. The aim of these visits focused on the 'safety and wellbeing of children and their families, examined the key decisions made about them, plans to support them as restrictions eased and the effectiveness and impact of leaders and managers'. In March 2021 Haringey Children's and Young People's Service received an Ofsted Assurance visit which was conducted over three weeks. The Ofsted findings, (published in their letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021, [Focused Visit](#)), noted that '*Leaders have a good understanding of the community they serve*' and that '*Strong, timely and effective political and corporate support for children's services has enabled leaders to respond promptly to mitigate the impact of the pandemic*' .
- 5.4 The impact of COVID 19 in the year 2020- 2021:
- 5.4.1 In May 2020, the DfE published updated guidance to inform local authorities and other children's social care providers of the temporary changes to regulations governing children's social care services. The changes were made to support the delivery of services to children and their families during the lockdown. The amendments allowed for flexibility in some circumstances, the most notable being the development and use of technology to support virtual visiting. In Haringey, statutory timescales for visits and meetings remained the same whilst using technology to see children and families through digital means.
- 5.4.2 Senior leaders developed guidance for the conduct of visits, meetings (with children and professionals), training events and greater partnership collaboration for joint visits. This enabled a near seamless switch to virtual visits, virtual conferencing, and remote working with key services such as the MASH, DCT and duty assessment teams who continued to be based in River Park House throughout the pandemic. The guidance was developed drawing on research and insight from the Tavistock Clinic and professionals across designated safeguarding partners.
- 5.4.3 The ability to respond swiftly to the changes, supporting the workforce and maintaining management grip was imperative. C&YPS did this by:
- issuing guidance promptly;
  - running training sessions on a range of communications techniques including British Sign Language;
  - holding daily senior management meetings , and morning briefs with social work teams sharing good practice from across the safeguarding partners;
  - maintaining statutory timescales monitored through weekly data reports including submissions to the DFE;
  - enhancing staff supervision and management oversight through reflective group work and weekly complex care review panels;

- using technology to carry out daily contact with children and their families and initiating twice weekly welfare calls to families;
- arranging to meet children and their carers in open spaces with social workers supported to conduct visits safely with full protective equipment;
- working closely with Health Visitors to see single parents and babies under two years old at the Maya Angelou Contact Centre and through Children's Centres;
- developing partnership agreements with the police, Homes for Haringey, and Fire Brigade to extend visiting support to families in need of food parcels and essential items, signposting concerns to the MASH & Early Help Panel. Ofsted commented on the effectiveness of the Early Help Panel, *'an early help panel was established during the COVID 19 pandemic . This has helped school leaders to navigate and access the range of services and offers to support pupils, particularly those at risk of exclusion'* (Ofsted Focused Visit, March 2021);
- continuing quality assurance work, monitoring the quality of social work practice through the Safeguarding Audit team and helping social workers to adapt and increase resilience, skills, and knowledge through additional investment by partners in the Haringey Children's Academy delivering weekly online learning opportunities;
- developing team rotas and mobilising adaptations to workspaces to allow frontline practitioners to be based in Haringey to respond to emergencies and other safeguarding needs;
- working with the commissioning team to procure COVID safe placements to accommodate UASC and negotiate with other providers to manage emergencies;
- establishing across seven secondary schools, the Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) project. The impact and effectiveness of the service was recently commended by Head Teachers, parents and students.

5.4.4 As of the end of March 2021, 66% of visits to children and families were being carried out face to face, with the continued use of PPE where necessary.

### 5.5. Future Challenges and Operational Priorities

5.5.1 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.
- Maintaining operational effectiveness of the service in the context of the COVID recovery measures.
- The costs associated with the placements for looked after children will continue to be a significant pressure for the Council. Significant 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 on costs must be carefully monitored.
- The recruitment and retention of social workers will continue to be a key focus.
- Tactical changes are planned for the current social care IT system. A new system will be implemented following the successful procurement of the Liquid Logic system, which will free up social work capacity and reduce administration. The new system is expected to be in place early 2023.
- A significant invest to save programme of projects providing £2m investment to improve outcomes for children and families. These projects such as the Maya Angelou Family Assessment Centre, PAUSE, Mockingbird and our edge of care

work through the Positive Families Partnership are now up and running and delivering results for children and families.

- The service is working with North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group to build resilience and capacity in placement options for children with more complex needs including development of the Haslemere Road 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.

5.5.2 The letter from Ofsted following the Assurance Visit in March 2021 is positive about the direction of travel regarding service improvements overall, referencing '*decisions to bring children into care are suitable and the majority of children live in safe, stable homes which are meeting their needs well. Social workers clearly understand the need to mitigate risk and visit children regularly, either virtually or in person, according to their need. Children in care have continued to make progress despite the pandemic, with timely access to health assessments and careful consideration given to meeting their physical and mental health needs. Children living out of the local authority area receive the same standard of service as those living in the borough. Independent reviewing officer oversight provides good scrutiny and challenge*'.

## 5.6 Local Context

5.6.1 It appears that as a consequence of the pandemic, Safeguarding and Social Care is supporting high levels of need and complexity in families. The reasons for the need and complexity can be seen in the following:

- Haringey has a slightly above average number and rate of children living in all out-of-work benefit claimant households compared to London (19% vs 18% for London);
- Haringey has the seventh highest alcohol-related hospital admissions out of all London Local Authorities and the largest volume of pure alcohol sold per adult through the off-trade;
- 2.5% of Haringey's 16-64 years old population claim Employment Support Allowance for mental health and behavioural disorders. This is the third highest rate of all London boroughs and above the London average, although this is largely due to the number of claimants overall. Of all ESA claimants in Haringey 50.5% are for mental health and behavioural disorders, which is the same as the London average.
- Haringey has the fifth highest rate of domestic abuse with violence out of all London Boroughs and is above the London average.
- 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.

5.6.2 Alongside these challenges for children, 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:

- 97% of schools that are good and outstanding.

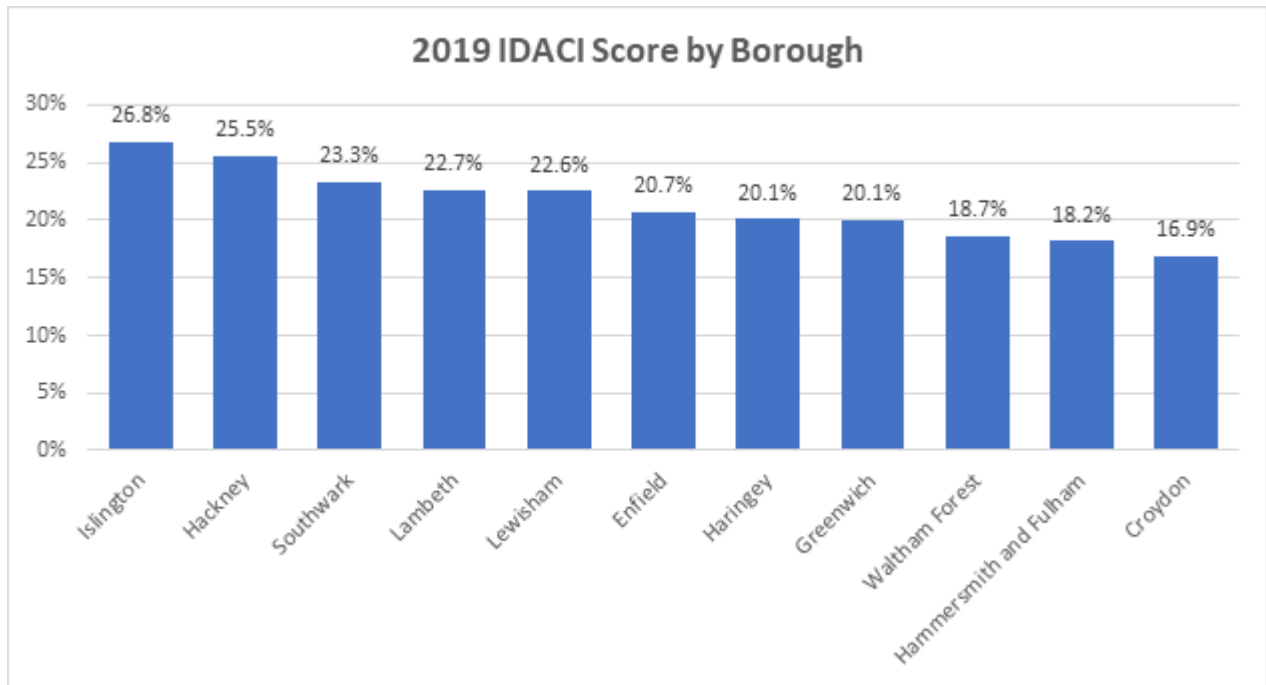
- 99% of early years settings are judged as good or outstanding.
- The majority of our children's centres are judged good (5 out of 8) with all having good or outstanding childcare.
- Diverse communities where more than 180 languages are spoken.
- Over a quarter of the borough is green space – with 25 Green Flag Parks and 120 venues where cultural activity takes place;
- Resident's report that they have good friendships and associations in their local area and good relations between different ethnic and religious communities; and
- Residents report higher levels of life satisfaction than other London boroughs (average score of 7.66 in 2019/20 compared to London average of 7.54)

### 5.7 Our children and young people population

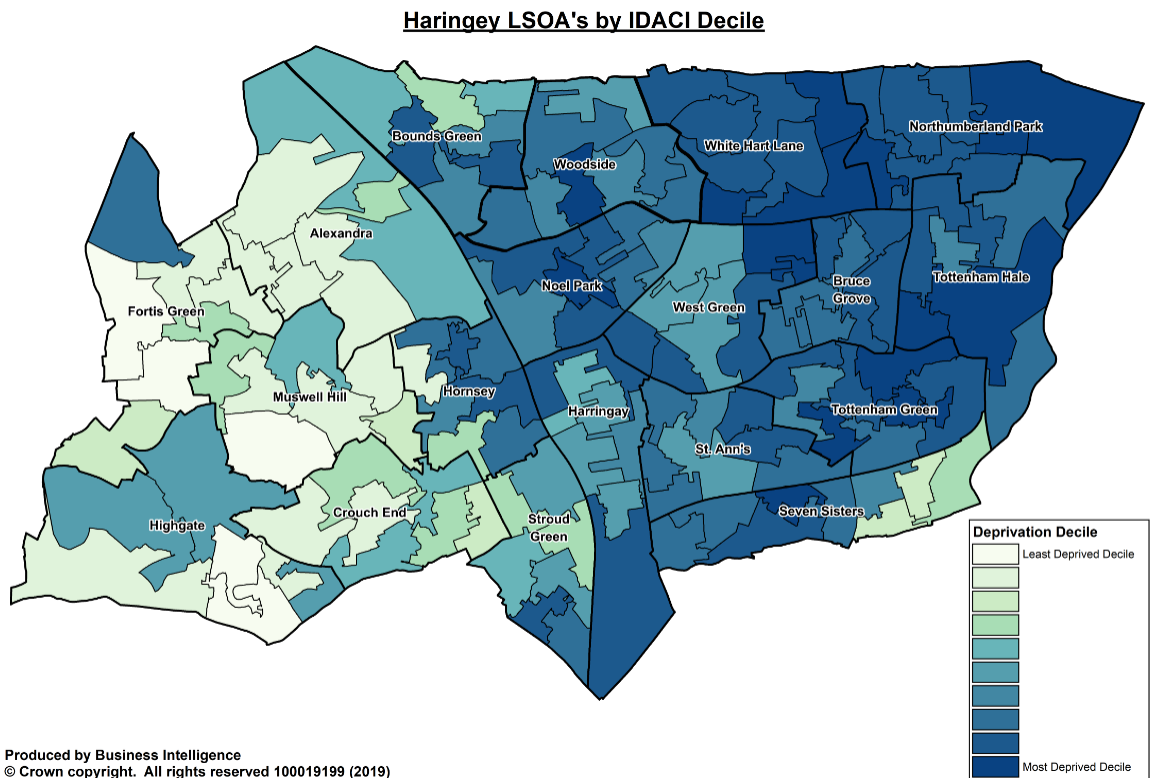
- 5.7.1 In Haringey there are 59,458 children aged 0-17 years, representing 22% of the overall population (ONS 2020 Mid-Year Estimates). This is largely in line with statistical neighbours and London where 21% and 22% of the population are aged 0-17 respectively. Children are not evenly spread across Haringey – eastern parts of the borough contain a large number and proportion of children, whilst many areas in the western parts of the borough have relatively fewer young people. Whilst in terms of overall population the East of the borough has 22.6% children and the West 21.3%, there can be significant variation between wards. Notably the ward with the highest proportion of 0-17-year-olds is Seven Sisters (31%), whilst the ward with the lowest is Harringay (17%). The percentage of the population that is under 18 is not expected to change significantly in future years and will remain most concentrated in the East of the Borough.
- 5.7.2 Almost half of pupils in Haringey schools do not have English as a first language (48.4%). After English, Turkish, Polish, Somali, Spanish and Bulgarian are the most commonly languages spoken.
- 5.7.3 One of our greatest challenges is inequality in outcomes. Poverty is a key determinant of poor outcomes. Childhood deprivation is unequally distributed across the borough mostly affecting those in the East. In 2019/20, nearly 1 in 5 Haringey children were living in poverty (18%), a higher rate than in London (16.6%). Haringey's eastern wards also have a larger number of children living in all out-of-work benefit claimant households compared to the west of the borough. Department for Work and Pensions' data shows the percentage of children in absolute poverty in workless households as 7.4% in White Hart Lane, 7.3% in Northumberland Park, whilst at the same time just 1.3% in Highgate and 1.4% in Alexandra.
- 5.7.4 Latest provisional DWP data on children living in low-income families shows an increase of over 20% in families living in relative low income from 10,663 families in 2015/16 to 13,380 in 2019/20. Relative low-income is defined as a family whose equivalised income is below 60 per cent of contemporary median income. Gross income measure is Before Housing Costs (BHC) and includes contributions from earnings, state support and pensions.
- 5.7.5 Haringey's 2019 IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) score which measures deprivation of children in the area is the 9th highest in London at 20.1%. London's overall average score is 17.2%.



5.7.6 See graph below showing how Haringey compares to statistical neighbours:



5.7.7 Of Haringey's 145 smaller geographic areas (Lower Super Output Areas – LSOAs), 52 are in the top 20% most deprived in the country for IDACI. These are almost all in the East of the borough.



5.7.8 The table below shows how Haringey ranks in the top 10 in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019) in London:

	National districts rank of ranks (out of 317 districts)	London IMD 2019 rank of rank
Barking and Dagenham	5	1
Hackney	7	2
Newham	12	3
Tower Hamlets	27	4
Islington	28	5
Lewisham	35	6
Haringey	37	7
Lambeth	42	8
Southwark	43	9
Waltham Forest	45	10

5.7.9 It is widely accepted that poverty correlates positively with child abuse and neglect\*, meaning that those in the east of the borough are more vulnerable to these issues. (\*see [Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report: "The Relationship between Poverty, Child Abuse and Neglect", 2016.](#))

## 5.8 Safeguarding and looked after children trends

- 5.8.1 This section of the report sets out the data we monitor every month to assess our performance in supporting children 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.
- 5.8.2 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 collaborate effectively with key partners and has sustained the practice and performance that Ofsted noted in their last visit in December 2019. The March 2021 Assurance Visit found that, *'the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) makes effective decisions to safeguard children. Children and families receive a timely and appropriate response that is proportionate to their level of need. Consistency in decision-making is achieved by reference to the threshold guidance and use of Haringey's chosen social work methodology'*. (Ofsted focused visit – letter published May 2021).
- 5.8.3 In 2019, Ofsted noted that an early help hub embedded in the MASH was a *'significant strength'* as the co-location of a social work-qualified early help team manager and dedicated family support worker means that children *'benefit from the immediate help given and this is preventing concerns from escalating'*. It *'is an important improvement, as some children requiring early help had previously waited too long'*. (Focused Visit, Ofsted 2019). During the COVID 19 lockdown measures the MASH and the Early Help Hub, supported the Councils co-ordination and delivery of food parcels, emergency payments and support to school aged vulnerable children,

aligning the service delivering times to weekend operations to support the Emergency Duty Team and schools at the height of the pandemic.

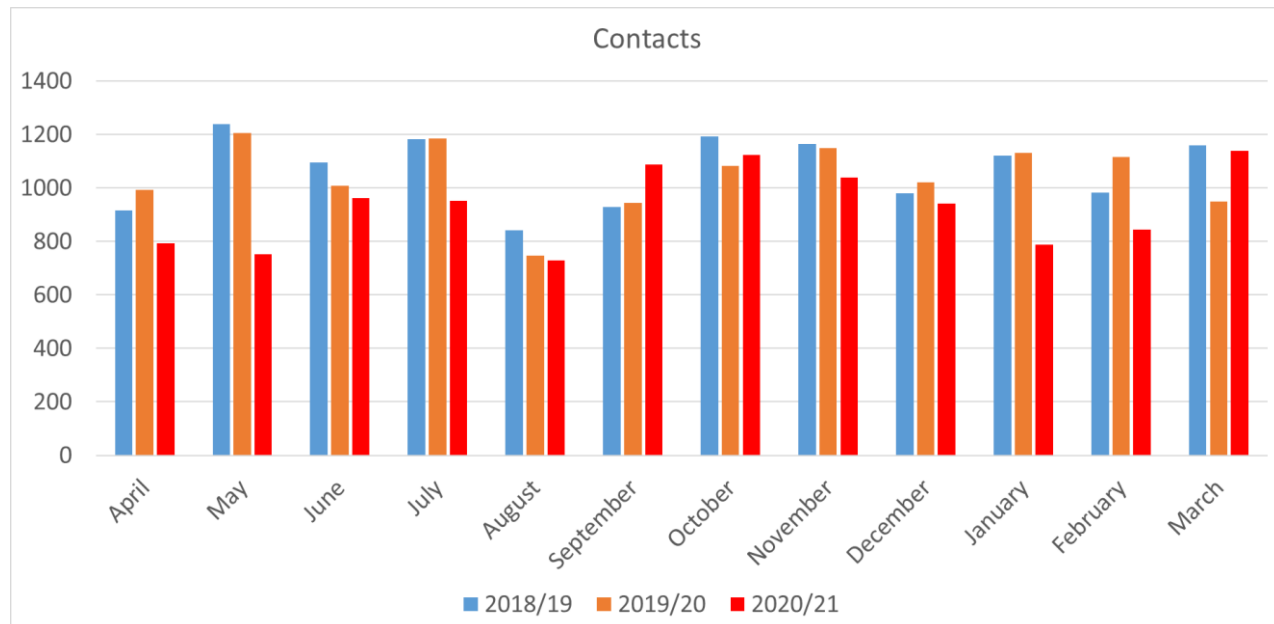
5.8.4 Our performance data continues to show us that the MASH is a safe service providing an appropriate and timely response to contacts and referrals to safeguard children. Cases are prioritised, tracked and monitored through the MASH process with clear pathways and timescales for consistency. We check our decision making in the MASH through routine management oversight and the requirements for the transfer of cases.

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

5.9.1 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 these communications from partners and the public result in a referral to social care as they may not meet the threshold for referral to assessment or they are simply one of our partner agencies ringing for some advice or support. These are categorised as **contacts**.

5.9.2 A referral is a contact for services to be provided by children’s social care, in respect of a child who is not currently open to the service, who 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.

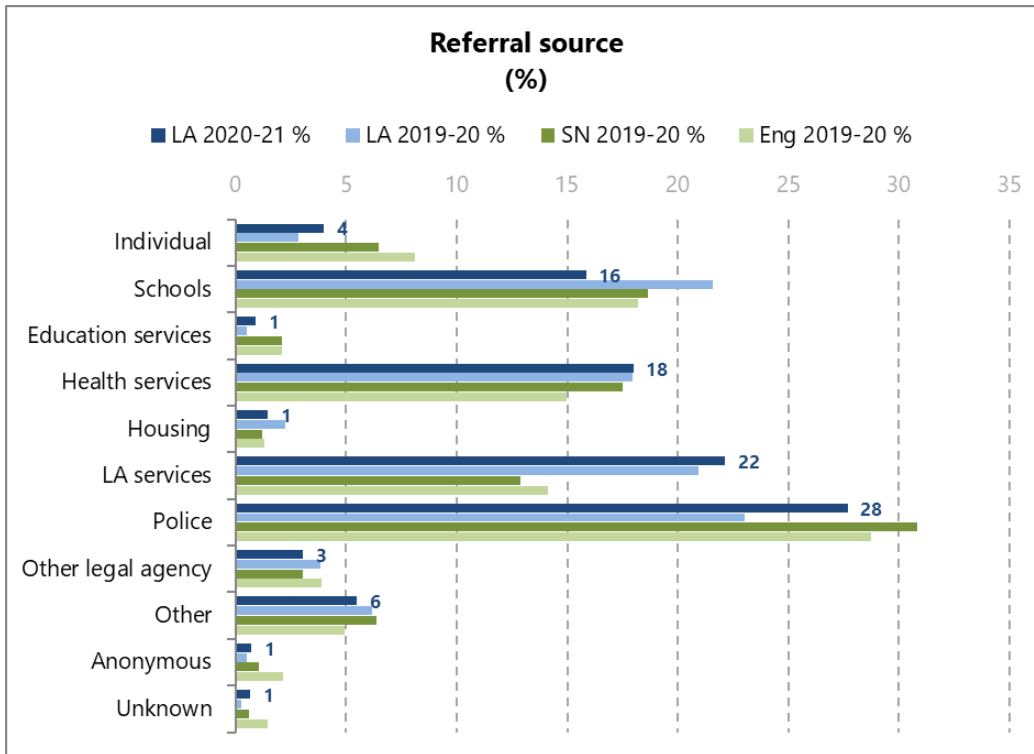
5.9.3 In 2020-21, the total number of contacts made to the MASH was 11,149. This is over 1400 or 12% fewer contacts this year compared to 2019/20



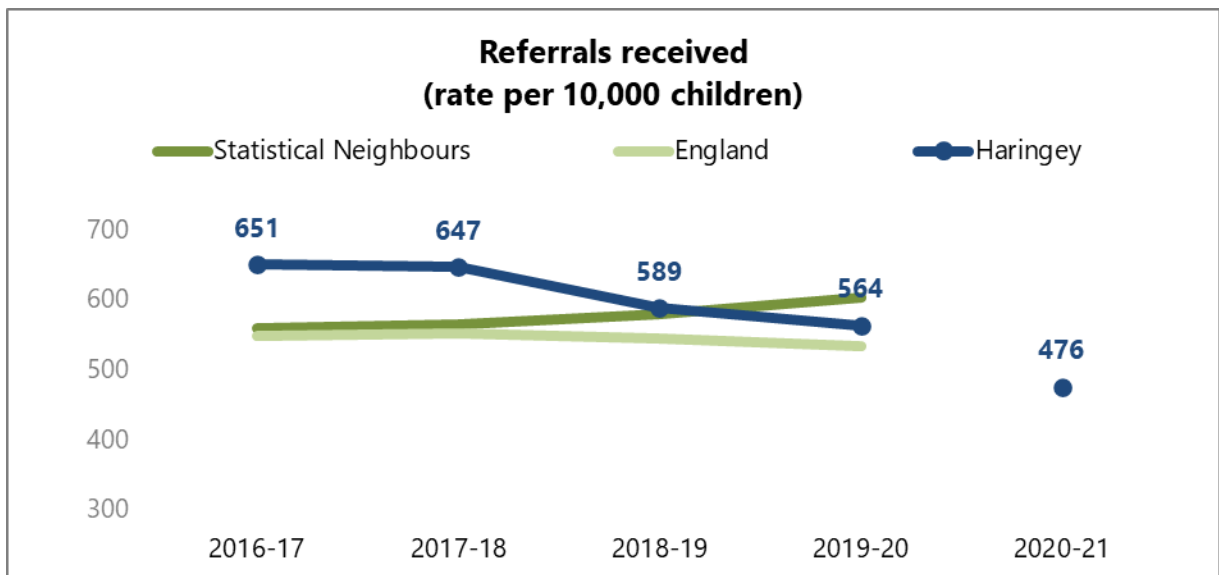
5.9.4 As can be seen in the chart above the fall in the volume of contacts was concentrated in the months of April to July 2020 and January & February 2021.

5.9.5 25% of these contacts resulted in a referral to social care, and 19% to Early help, the majority of the remainder are signposted to universal services.

5.9.6 With school closures throughout the year, as expected the number and proportion of referrals from schools fell and the proportion from the Police increased.

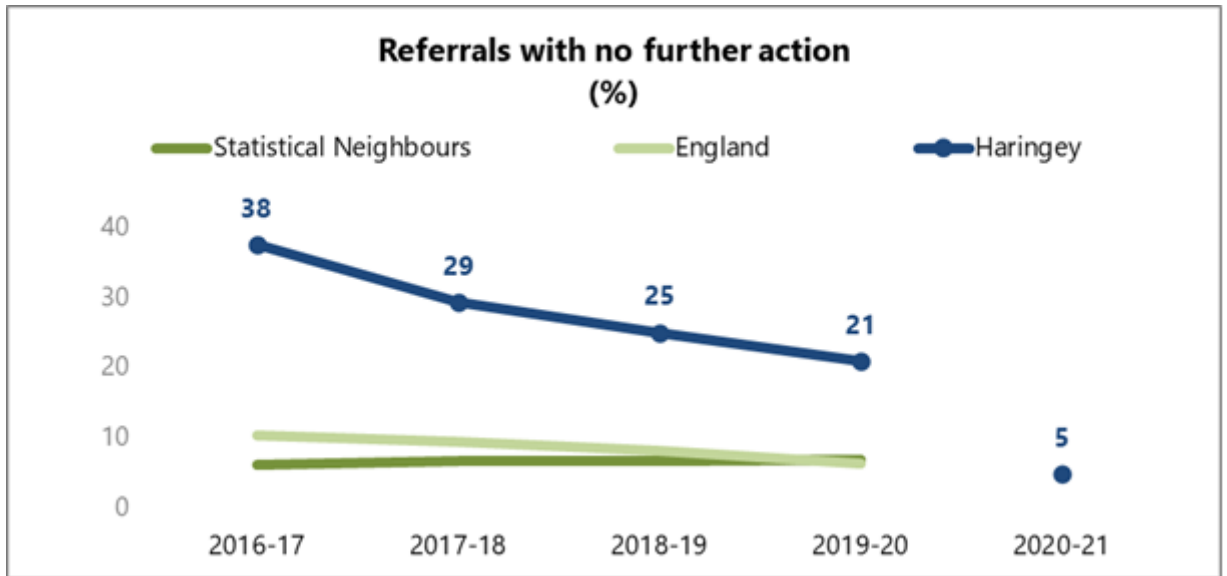


5.9.7 At the end of March 2021, the rate of referrals was 476 per 10,000 children aged 0-17 which was a decrease on the rate at the end of 2019/20 (564 per 10,000) and is below the last published rate (2019/20) for statistical neighbours of 604 and the England rate of 535. The graph below shows the change in the rate of referrals over time.

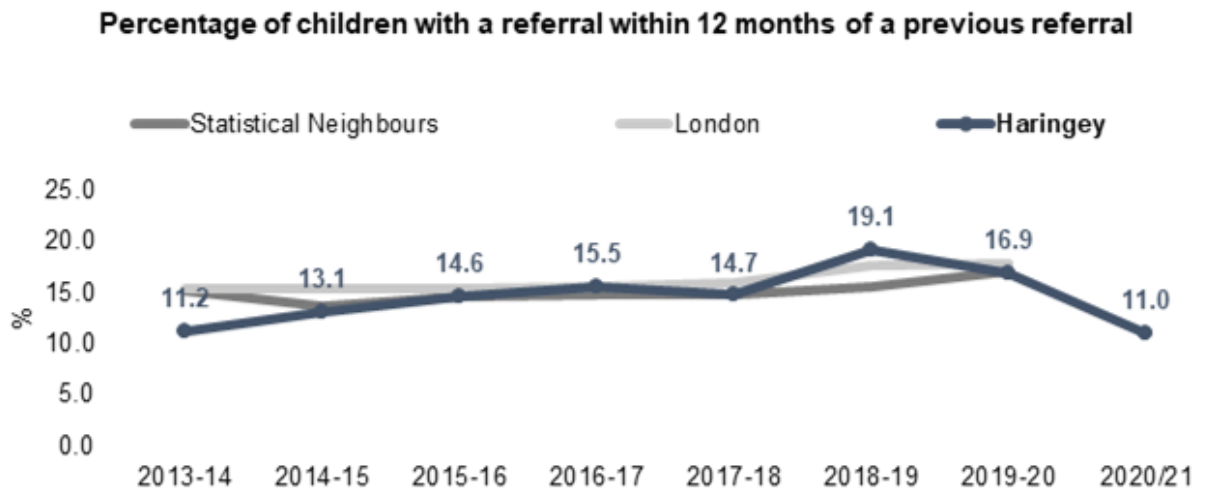


5.9.8 The rate of referrals to children’s social care that result in ‘no further action’ has fallen to just below the statistical neighbours’ and national rates as shown in the graph below. Following the significant reduction since the end of 2016/17. This improvement in performance is down to our work with partners to improve the quality of referrals

and their understanding of thresholds and a revised MASH screening process ensuring that the correct decision is made earlier in the workflow.



5.9.9 Performance in relation to re-referrals is good with fewer than 11% of children with more than one referral in the 12 months prior to the reporting date, down from 19% at the end of 2018/19. As shown in the graph below, this is broadly in line with statistical neighbours and below the national average which was 21% at the time of last publication. A lower re referral rate suggests that work to support families is effective and sustained through the developed partnership work.



## 5.10 Children with a disability

5.10.1 The Disabled Children’s Team (DCT) has continued to be a priority for service development to meet the complex and diverse nature of the range of needs experienced by children with disabilities.

- 5.10.2 The team's improving child focus and awareness of safeguarding is evidenced by a significant increase in the percentage of children on a child protection plan with a disability since 2017/18 – from 1% to 8%.

Year	No. of Children on a CP Plan with a disability	% of Children on a CP Plan with a disability
2017/18	4	1%
2018/19	7	4%
2019/20	12	7%
2020/21	20	8%

- 5.10.3 Regular monitoring of performance data shows improvement in timeliness for visits, supervision and management oversight and completion of assessments. At the end of March 2021, 97% (63% in 2020) of children's 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.

- 5.10.4 During the lockdown periods the team made twice weekly calls to all families open to the service to provide welfare support and worked with special schools to share information and respond to needs more broadly mitigating the impact of COVID 19.

- 5.10.5 The commissioned assurance work involving an independently managed learning review and a Partners in Practice review from Islington presented their findings to the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership in December 2020, both reviews made recommendations for an integrated model of service for Children with disability and provided assurance that no systemic or practice issues had been identified.

## 5.11 SEND Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

Along with national and London wide trends the number of Education, Care and Health Plans (EHCPs) issued over the past four years has increased each calendar year up to 2020 where Haringey saw a lower number issued (latest published data for comparisons is 2019), which was expected as a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic as the vast majority of requests for EHCPs are made by schools.

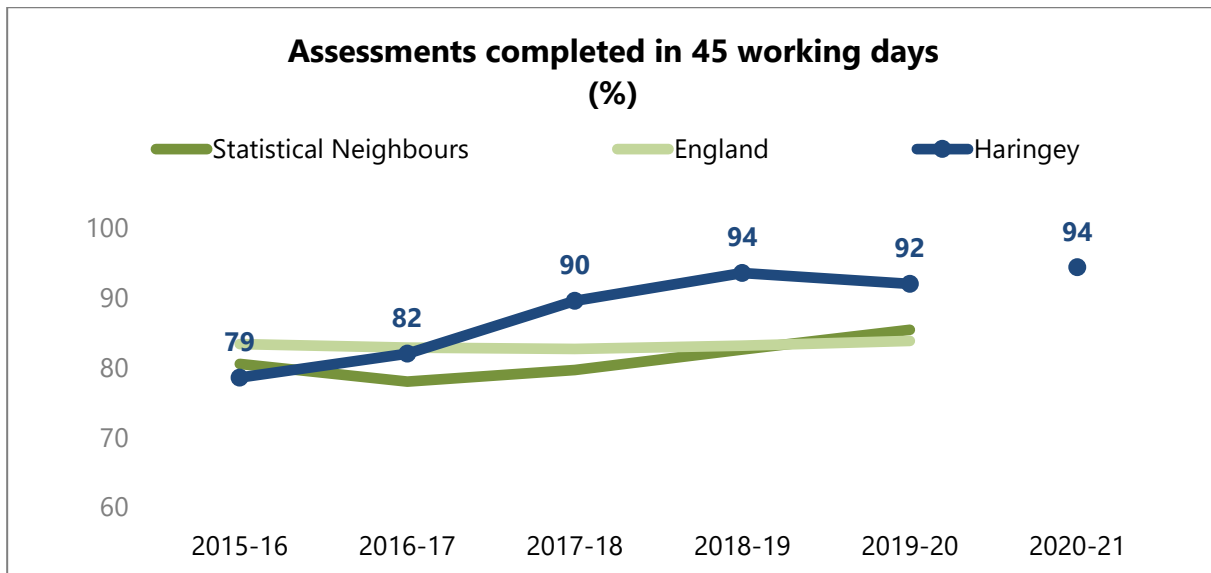
	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>New EHC Plans Issued (Number)</b>	185	240	345	309
<b>% in 20 Weeks</b>				
Haringey	23%	25%	70%	67%
London	58%	58%	64%	
England	65%	60%	60%	

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

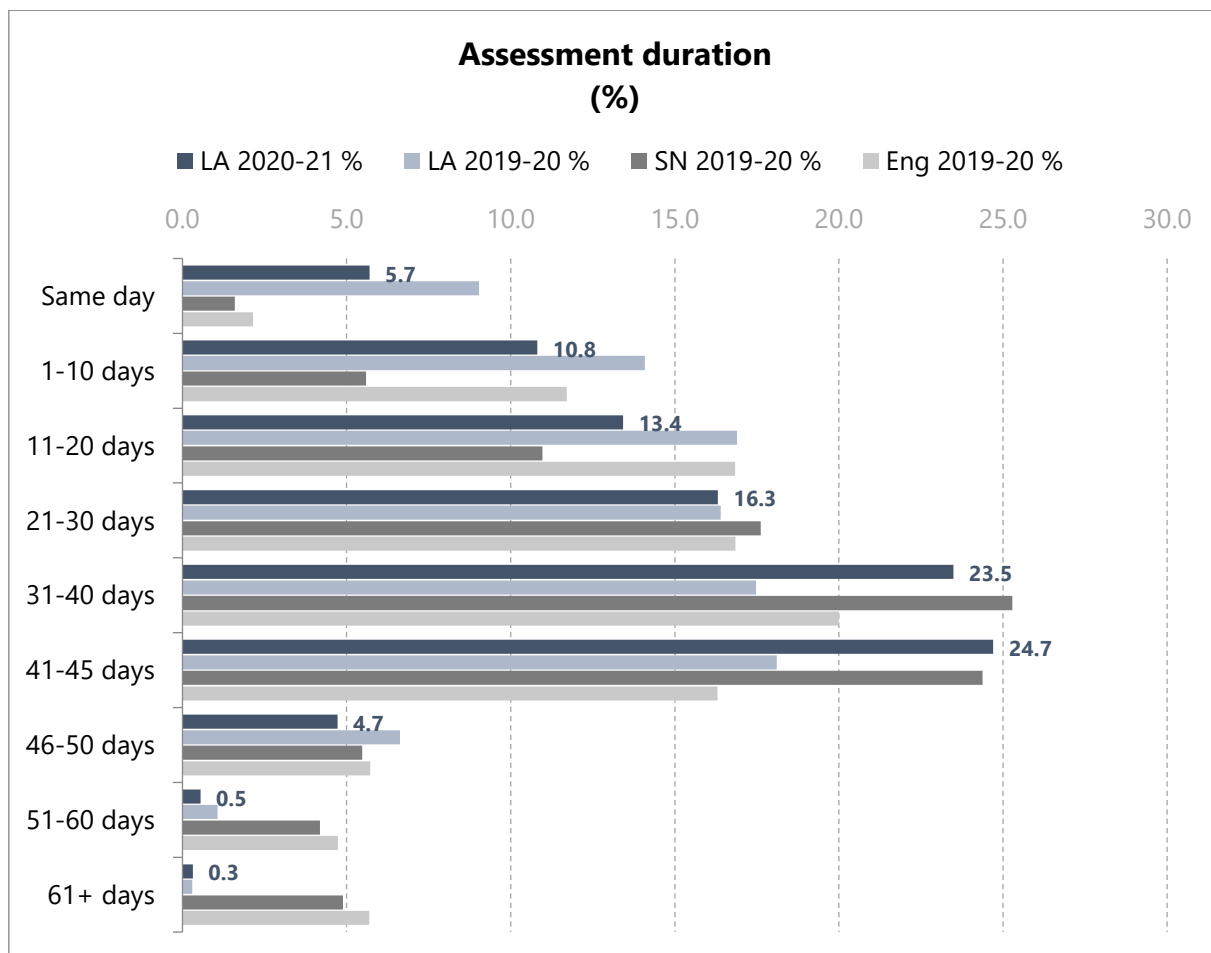
## 5.12 Assessments

- 5.12.1 A referral to social care will then either result in a decision to complete an assessment of the child's needs (within 45 working days) or, 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.
- 5.12.2 During 2020/21 there were 2,563 assessments completed at a rate of 428 per 10,000 children, down from a rate of 499 per 10,000 children in 2019/20 with over 90% completed in 45 working days as shown in the graph below. This represents continued good performance in the completion of assessments and remains better than the average for our statistical neighbours (84% in 2019/20).

**Assessments completed in 45 working days**



5.12.3 As shown in the chart below almost half of the assessments were completed in under 30 working days this year. This is very good performance and is better than statistical neighbours and national averages as shown in the graph below. Whilst a few are completed outside of the timescales this is usually as a result of the complexity of the issues and is a lower percentage than our comparators.





#### 5.12.4 Factors found at the end of assessment

5.12.4.1 Another indicator of the increasing complexity of cases are the factors found at the end of assessment. In 2019/20 an average of 2.1 factors were found at the end of each assessment, this increased to 2.7 in 2020/21.

5.12.4.2 The areas with the biggest increases were:

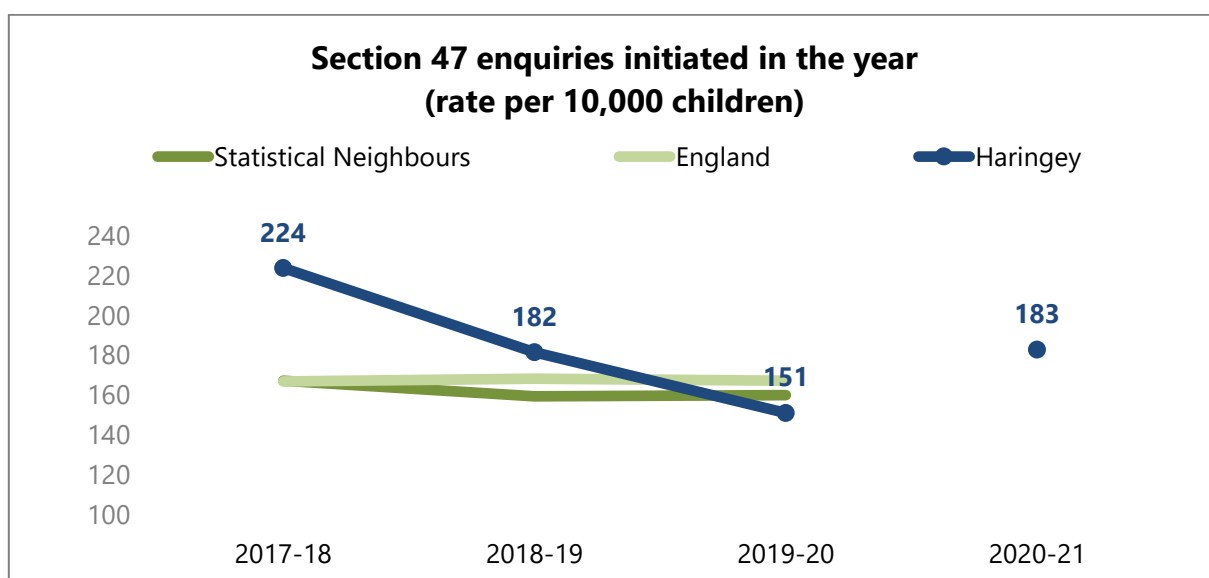
- Parental Alcohol misuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Parental Mental Health
- Socially unacceptable behaviour

#### 5.13 Section 47 enquiries

5.13.1 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 follows a multi-agency strategy discussion.

5.13.2 The rate of section 47 enquiries per 10,000 children aged 0-17 increased to a rate of 183 per 10,000 children from 151 in 2019/20 and our rate is above the last published rate of 160 for comparator boroughs and the England average rate of 167.

#### Rate of Section 47 enquiries per 10,000 children aged 0-17



#### 5.14 Initial Child protection conferences

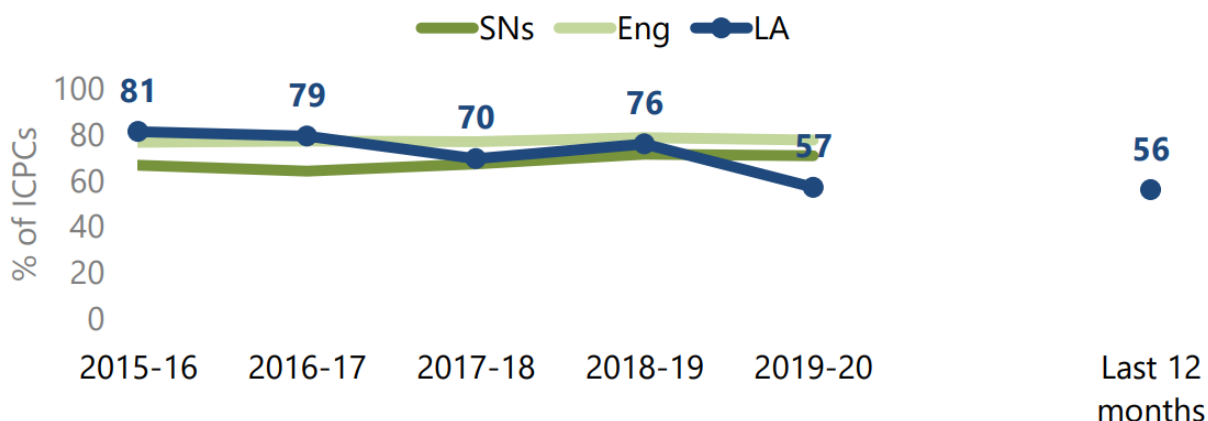
5.14.1 Following section 47 enquiries, where needed, an initial child protection conference brings together family members (and the child where appropriate) with appropriate support, and practitioners involved with the child and family to make decisions about the child's future safety, health, and development. This conference brings together all relevant information and it is the responsibility of the conference to make

recommendations on how organisations will work together to safeguard the child.

5.14.2 32% of all Section 47 investigations led to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) this year up from 17% last year.

5.14.3 We work to ensure that initial child protection conferences are convened quickly. This is an area where performance showed a decline up to December 2020. The graph below shows that in the last 12 months (April 2020 to March 2021) 56% of ICPCs were held within 15 working days in Haringey compared to last year's 76% and the statistical neighbours average of 72%. However, since January a new system has been in place effectively addressing the identified challenge.

**Trend of ICPC timeliness (within 15 days of S47 start)**

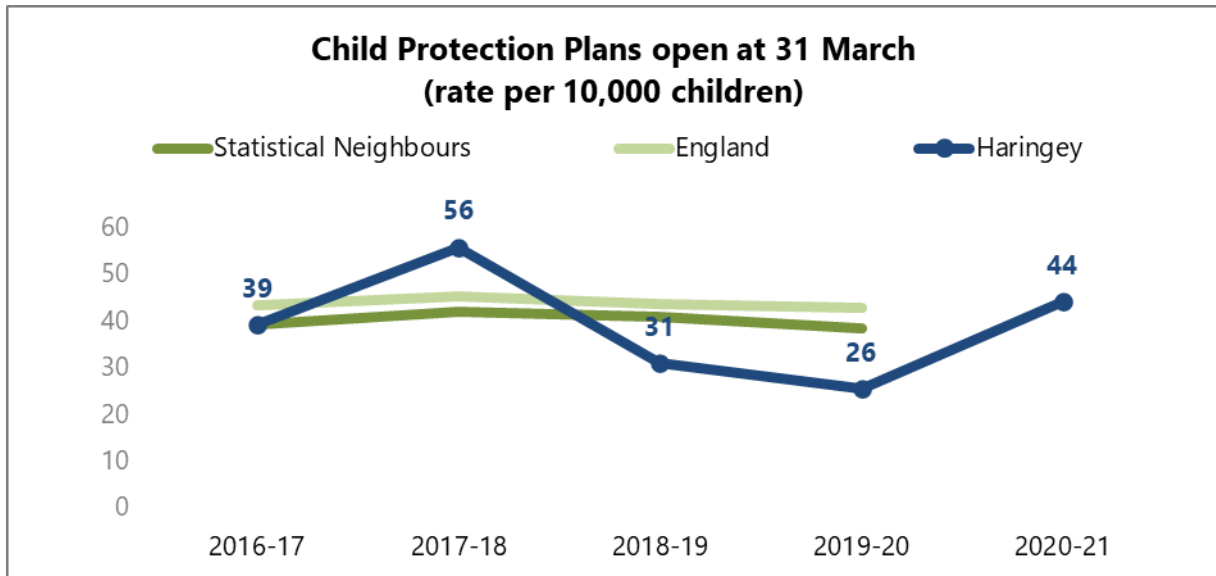


**5.15 Child protection**

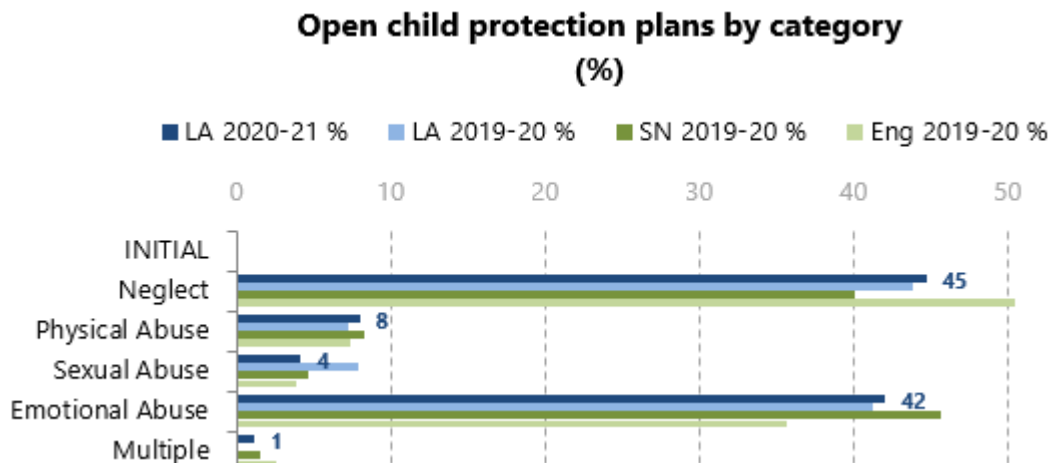
5.15.1 The aim of a child protection plan is to ensure the child is safe from harm and prevent further suffering and harm. The plan should promote the child's health and development and support the family and wider family members to safeguard their child provided it is in the best interests of the child.

5.15.2 Of the investigations that progressed to ICPC just over 97% progressed to a Child Protection Plan up from 77% in 209/20. This along with rate of S47 to ICPCs mentioned above indicates that the correct decisions are being made earlier in the process.

5.15.3 There were 153 children on a child protection plan at the end of March 2020. This rose to 264 by March 2021 or a rate of 44 per 10,000



5.15.4 In common with other local authorities, the main child protection issues relate to emotional abuse and neglect as shown in the table below and our rates are largely in line with statistical neighbours. This shows that 45% of open child protection plans were as a result of neglect and 42% were because of emotional abuse, only a small shift from last year.

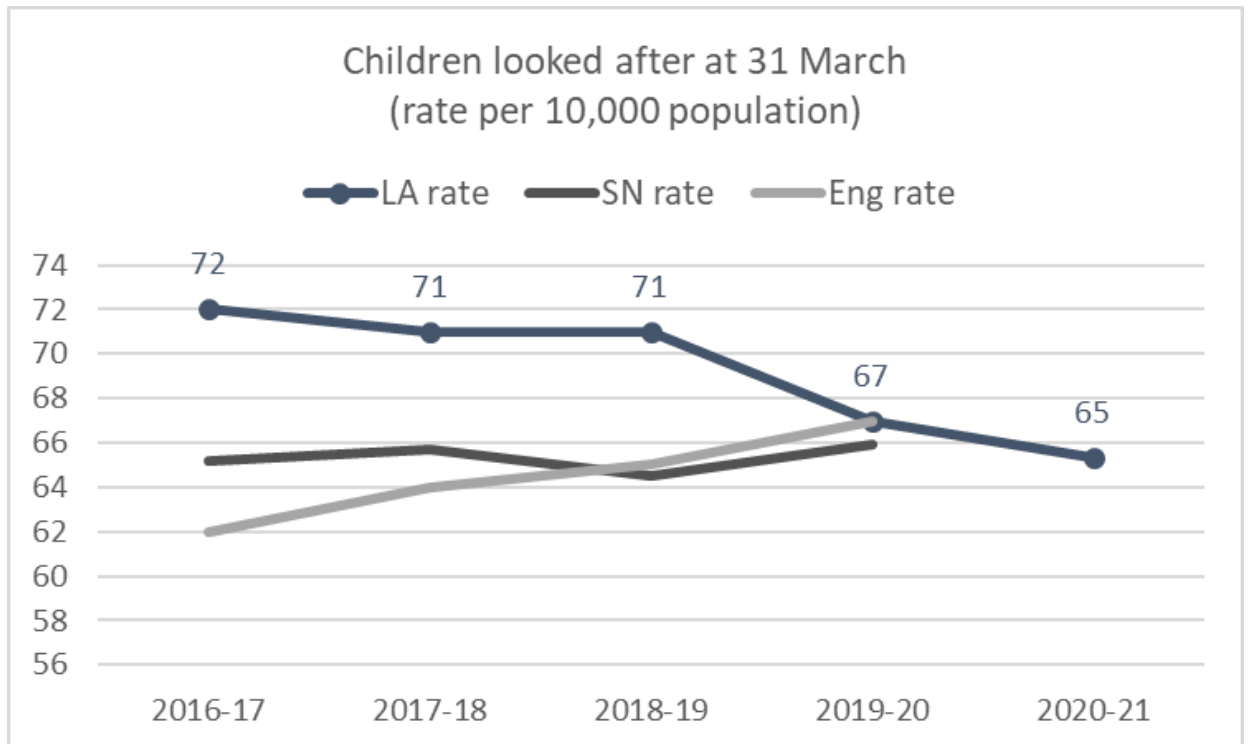


### 5.16 Children in care

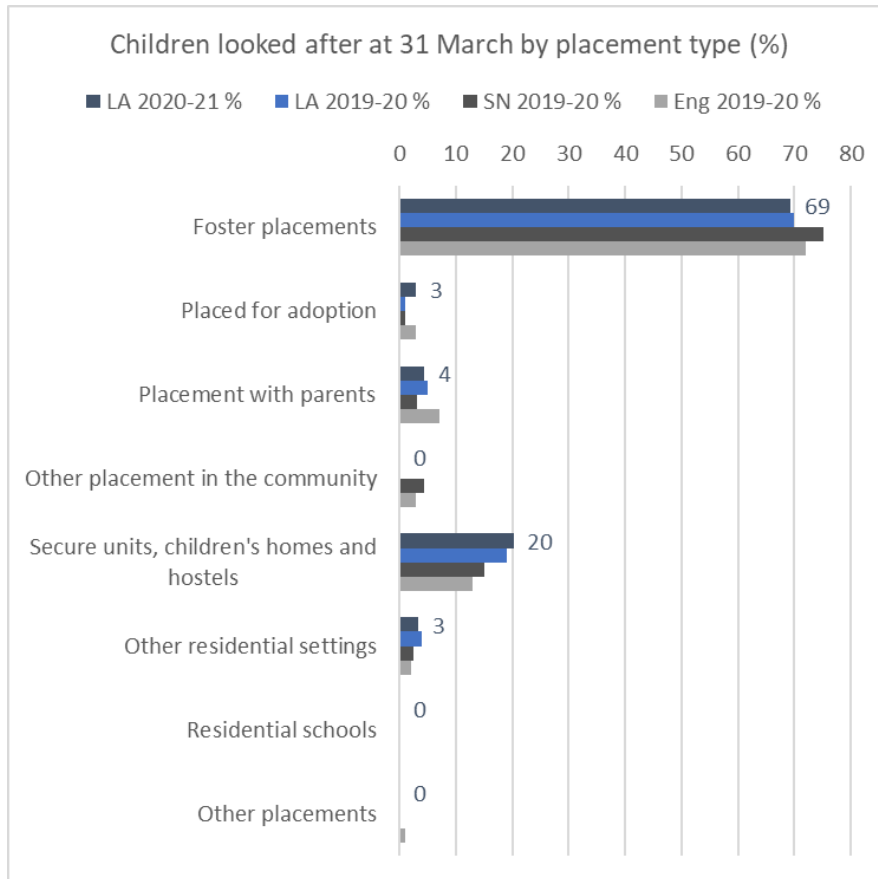
5.16.1 A child who has been in the care of a local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked after child. Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care. Looked after children in general are either living with foster parents, in a residential children’s home or living 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 leaving care at 18 until they are 25.

5.16.2 During 20/21 both the number of children starting to be looked after and those ceasing fell.

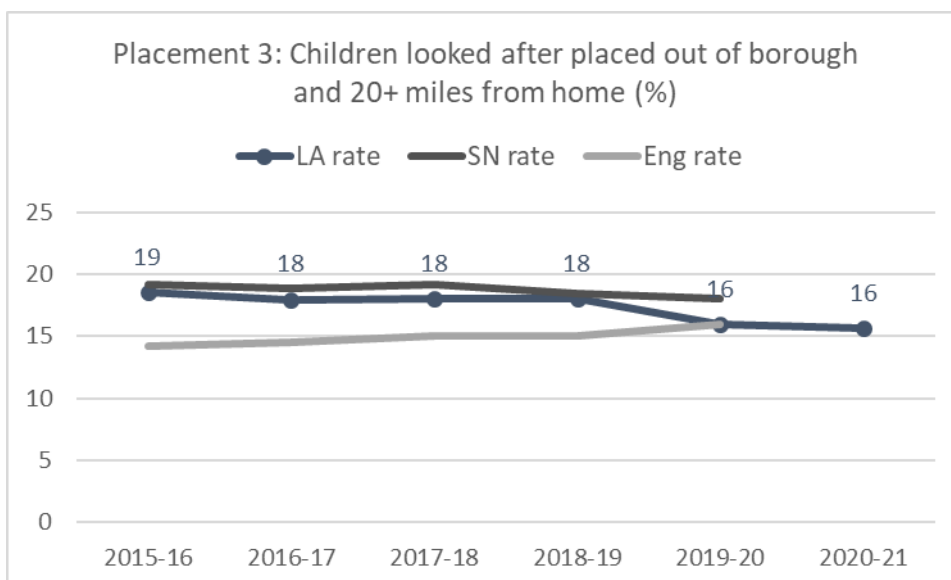
5.16.2 The net result of this was that at the end of March 2021 the number of children in our care reduced slightly to 391. This is a rate of 65 children in care per 10,000 children and is close to our statistical neighbours and England rates of around 67.



5.16.3 Many of our children in care were in foster placements (69%) and 20% were in residential accommodation, slightly up from at the end of March 2020. The chart below shows the children in care by placement type at the end of March 2021.

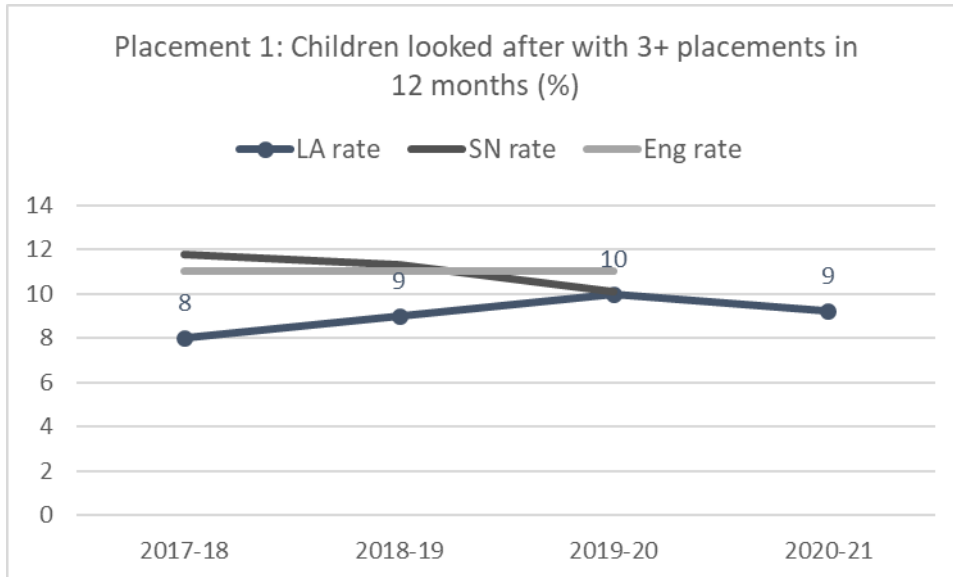


5.16.4 At the end of March 2021, 16% of children were in placements out of borough and more than 20 miles from home as shown in the graph below. This matches the national average and is broadly in line with statistical neighbours (18%). Local provision continues to be a challenge and we are working with 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, taking note of pressures in receiving boroughs.

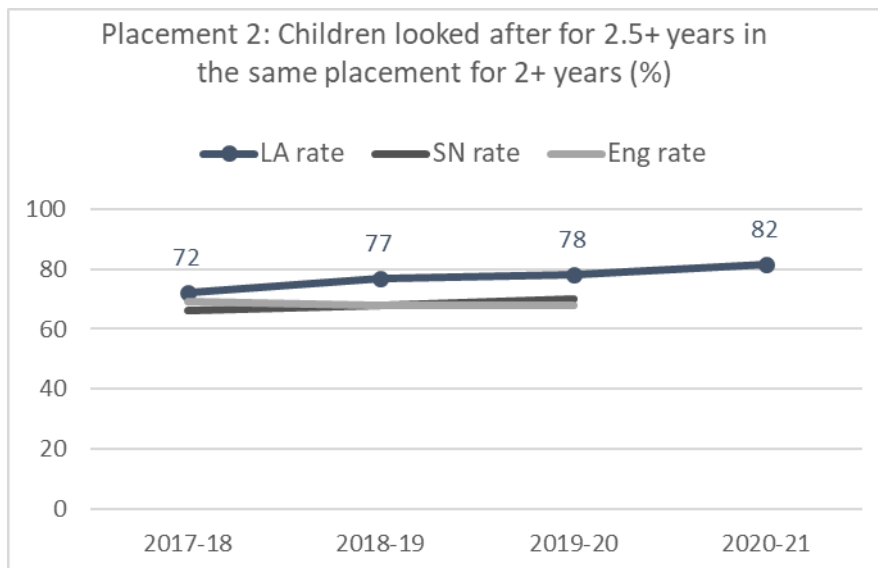


5.16.5 Placement stability is a key factor in children’s wellbeing. Having the chance to settle into a foster or residential placement over a period of time gives children a feeling of belonging, helping them feel secure in themselves and their identity. Stability will be achieved only by making sure 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 2 years.

5.16.6 Our short-term stability performance shows that 9% of children in our care had three or more placements in 12 months. This is slightly better than last reported statistical neighbour data (10%) and better than the national average.



5.16.7 Our performance in relation to long term placement stability is continuing to be very good and 82% of children who have been looked after for more than two and a half years have been in the same placement for more than two years as shown in the graph below. This is better than the last reported national and statistical neighbour performance of 69%.

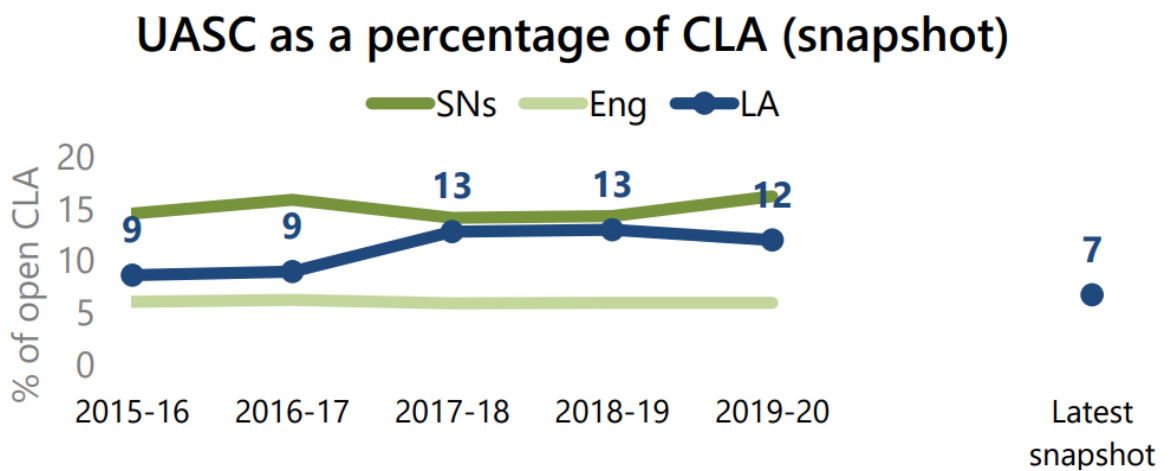


5.16.8 The new Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation service has also been developed in response to the challenges faced by young people in Haringey. Exploitation support workers work directly with children who are looked after, on a child protection plan or who are a child in need. The service has put in place robust operational practice and systems and runs a multi-agency panel to offer services and recommendations to children and families at risk of exploitation. The panel utilises the VOLT (victim/offender/local/themes) application to consider what disruption, intervention or protection is needed. Children who go missing, especially those who go missing repeatedly, have benefited from the consistent approach from the dedicated return home interview officer.

5.16.9 The latest available data for children who go missing in Haringey, from home or for those in care, shows a continued improving position. Fewer children are going missing and when they do, there is a robust and effective response from children’s social care and the Metropolitan Police. The missing co-ordinator tracks, and risk assesses children who go missing to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent repeat occurrences.

5.16.10 There are two means by which Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (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 re-distribute UASC equitably from Kent and Croydon. The Government has set a target of 0.07% child population. The scheme is voluntary, and Haringey has been one of the strongest supporters of the scheme.

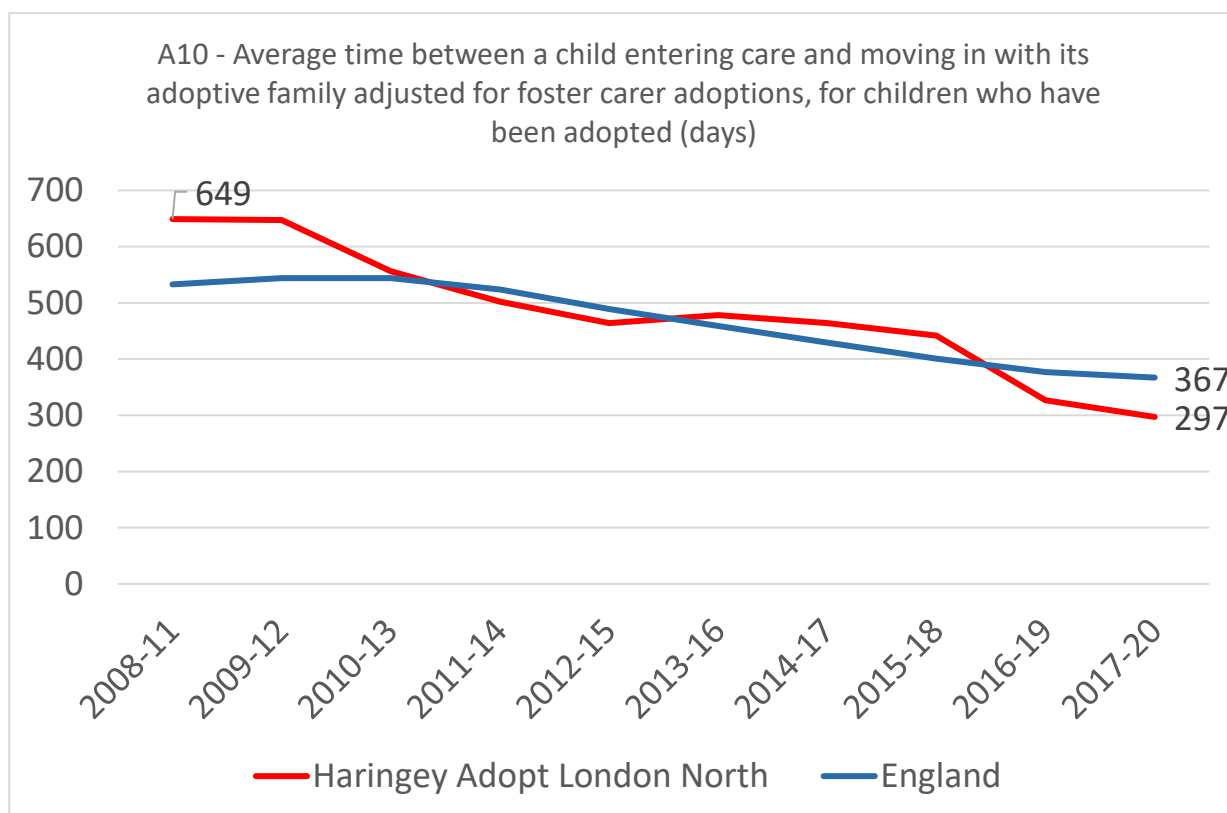
5.16.11 At the end of March 2020 there were 48 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care which fell to 24 by March 2021 which is approximately 7% of the children in care cohort. This is now below statistical neighbours but in line with the national average as shown in the graph below. The reasons for the reduction in numbers relate to movement patterns related to Covid 19. Are numbers are increasing through the NTS.



## 5.17 Adoption

5.17.1 There were five adoptions during 2020/21 half the number in 2019/20. This equates to 3% of children who ceased to be looked after and as few children ceased to be looked after is only a decline from 4% the previous year.

5.17.2 One of the key measures is the timeliness of adoptions over a three-year period. Haringey has now improved to below the national average number of days from a child first being taken into care to being finally placed with their eventual adoptive parents



## 5.18 Leaving care

5.18.1 For young people qualifying for a service as Care Leavers there is a requirement to stay in touch with the young person, keep the Pathway Plan 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.

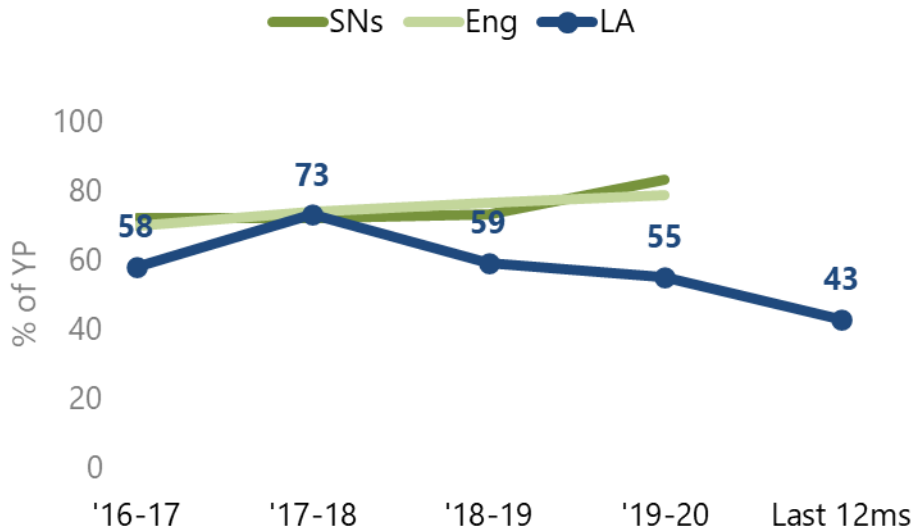
5.18.2 The service has this year been continuing to work with the new duty on local authorities to support all care leavers up to age 25 who can return to the local authority at any point after the age of 21 and request support.



5.18.3 At the end of March 2021 there were 438 care leavers receiving leaving care support. The number of care leavers being supported has increased by 31 since March 2020 following significant yearly increases since 2017.

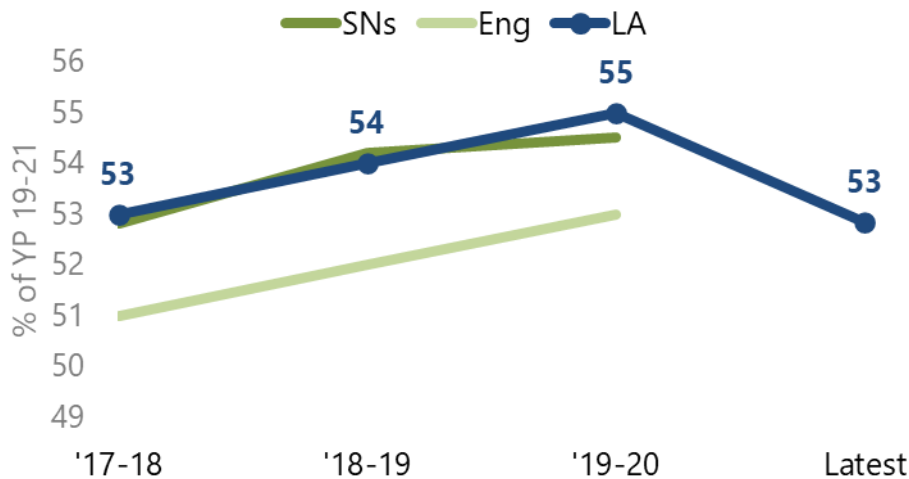
5.18.4 The graph below shows that falling proportions of young people are remaining in care until they are aged 18. In the 12 months to March 2021, 43% of young people who ceased to be looked after aged 16 plus were looked after until their 18th birthday although this from a smaller cohort this year as fewer young people left care.

5.18.5 Young people are remaining in care until they are aged 18.



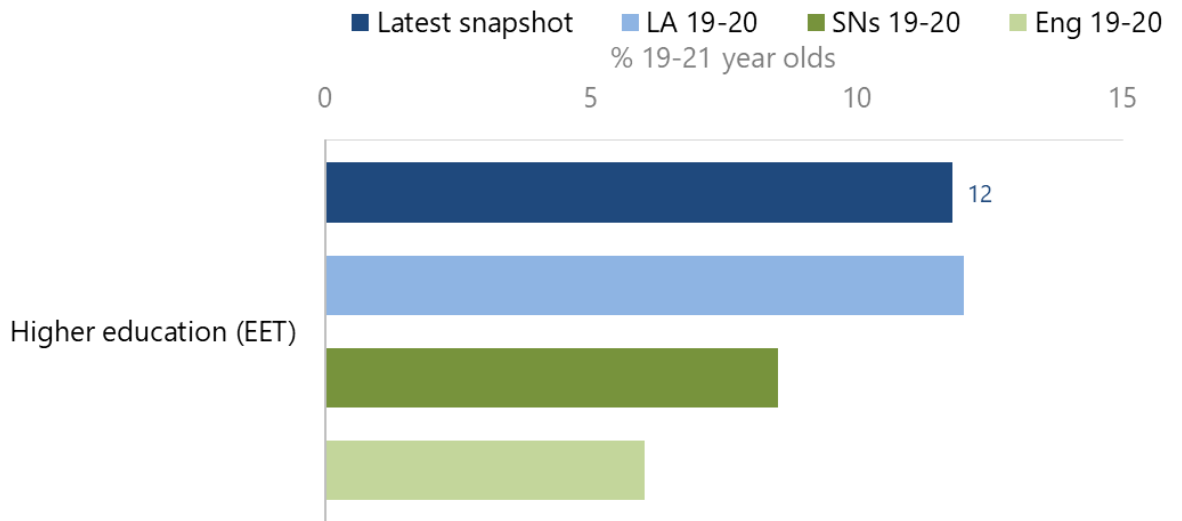
5.18.6 The percentage of care leavers aged 17-18 in education, employment and training fell slightly from 80% in 2019/20 to 76% last year. There has also been a slight fall for older care leavers aged 19-21 where 53% are in education, employment and training this year compared to 55% in 2018/19 and 54% average for our statistical neighbours.

5.18.7 Education, Employment or Training of 19-21-year-olds



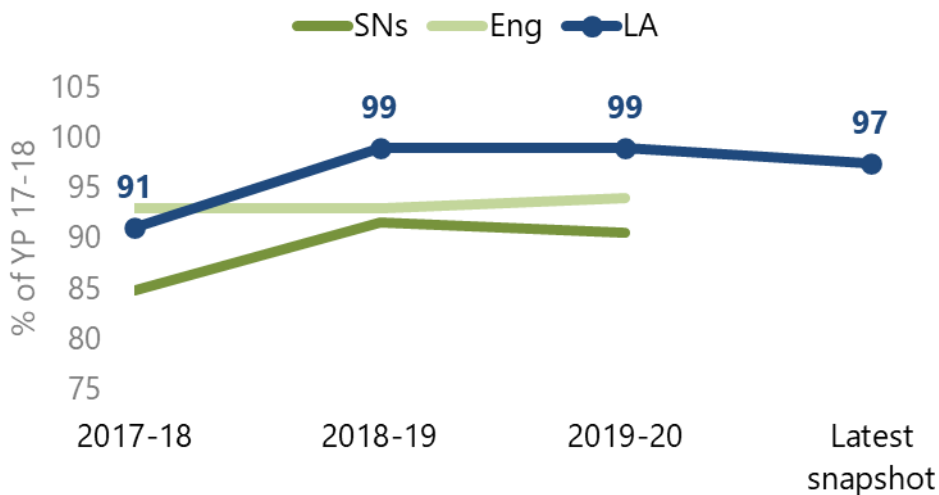
5.18.8 Haringey also continues to perform extremely well on care leavers aged 19-21 in higher education and at 12% is double the national rate and higher than our statistical neighbours.

5.18.9 Care Leavers 19-21 year olds who are in Higher Education



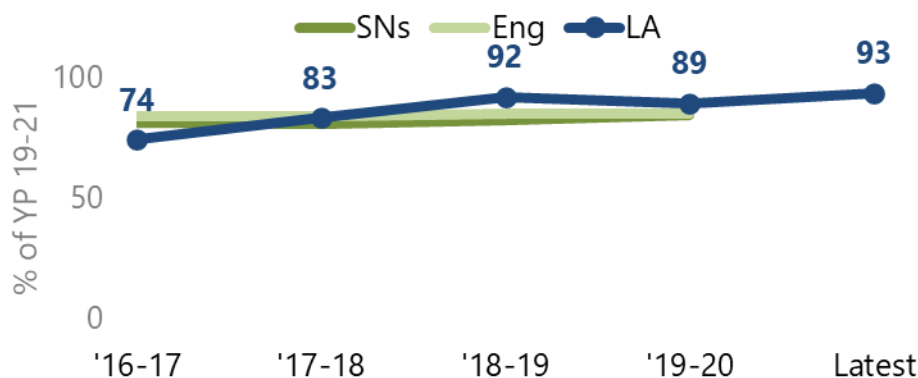
5.18.10 In Haringey, 97% of care leavers aged 17-18 and 98% aged 19-21 are in touch with the service representing continued good performance compared to statistical neighbours and England as shown in the graphs below.

Local authority in touch with 17-18 year olds



5.18.11 Over the past four years there has been a significant improvement in the percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation at 93%. The percentage of care leavers aged 17-18 in suitable accommodation has remained stable at 92% and is in line with last reported data nationally (90%) and slightly better than statistical neighbours (86%).

## Accommodation suitability of 19-21-year olds



## 7. Workforce

- 7.1 The service has put several initiatives in place with regards to recruitment and retention since March 2019 that has enabled the service to 'Grow our Own', obtain a high performing culture and be an employer of choice within the external marketplace. Although Haringey Council has made significant strides towards obtaining a high percentage of permanent qualified social workers, along with other councils around the country there have been challenges recruiting and retaining permanent social workers particularly during the COVID-19 period.
- 7.2 At the end of March 2021, the rate of agency workers declined to 23.4% of the social care workforce from 29% at the end of March 2020. This further increase in permanent social worker stability in the workforce was a significant achievement as this was the first month whereby the agency percentage fell to under 25% since 2018. With regards recruitment achievements during this period (March 2020 – March 2021), the service had successfully recruited nine newly qualified social workers, retained 90% of the previous cohort of newly qualified social workers and provided an intensive induction for the internationally recruited social workers from South Africa. 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 during the COVID period.
- 7.3 Due to the unprecedented situation which COVID-19 presented and recognising the additional stresses which the frontline key workers faced, the service recruited additional "COVID19" qualified social workers and differently qualified employees to support with service delivery. As delivering positive and impactful outcomes for children, young people and families is at the heart of Children's Services, this additional workforce was critical. As of August 2021, there are seven COVID -19 qualified social workers within the service who continue to provide the necessary support for service delivery.
- 7.4 As the service has reached a greater level of recruitment stability, there has been a significant focus on retention initiatives since March 2020. The service has put several interventions in place with regards retention initiatives and a strong focus on supporting the workforce during the COVID-19 period. One of the interventions which was put in place during COVID-19 and continues is the implementation of the Thursday Therapist

sessions. The Thursday Therapist sessions allow a safe place for the workforce to come and speak confidentially about their own resilience and emotional needs. There are daily service team check-ins which take place virtually. Additionally, all Assistant Directors take part in a weekly 'Ask the AD' session where key messages are communicated service wide, and the workforce can ask any questions or make service adjustment feedback. The Director's Roadshows have also continued on a quarterly basis. In these roadshows, key updates are shared as well as good news stories celebrated. The Schwartz Rounds have continued which enable the workforce to share their stories and reflect with one another based on the theme of the sessions.

7.5 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, issue PPE, create awareness of providing details of the EAP and OH referral schemes and enable their teams to adapt to the new ways of working. There have also 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. The qualified social worker turnover in March 2021 was 9.4% and in August 2021, it was 10.2%. The London average qualified turnover for 2020/2021 was 14%.

7.6 Other key retention initiatives which have continued include the embedding of the Children's Services Learning Academy, the recruitment of apprentices for non-qualified social worker roles and the benchmarking of workforce benefits in comparison to other Local Authorities. A current piece of work has been initiated to identify if Haringey's Children's Services benefits package could be further enhanced. The outcome of this benchmarking information is aimed to be completed shortly.

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

### **8.1 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.

### **8.2 Equality**

8.2.1 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.

## **9 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

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](#), 2018, updated December 2020 guidance

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