

NOTICE OF MEETING

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 2nd September, 2025, George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ, 7.00 pm - (watch the live meeting [here](#), watch the recording [here](#))

Councillors: Felicia Opoku, Zena Brabazon, Elin Weston, Lotte Collett, Cressida Johnson, Marsha Isilar-Gosling and Ibrahim Ali

Co-optees/Non Voting Members:

Quorum: 3

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Please note 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. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

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 (IF ANY)

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of late items of urgent business. Late items will be considered under the agenda item they appear. New items will be dealt with at item 9 below.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the consideration becomes apparent.

A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.

5. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 8)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2025.

6. SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE 2024/25 (PAGES 9 - 36)

7. PERMANENCY PLANNING (PAGES 37 - 52)

8. COLLABORATIVE COMMISSIONING (PAGES 53 - 58)

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Chris Liasi, Principal Committee Co-ordinator

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Fiona Alderman

Director of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ

Friday, 22 August 2025

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2025, 7:00PM – 9:27PM

PRESENT: Councillor Zena Brabazon (Chair), Councillor Cressida Johnson, Councillor Elin Weston
and Councillor Ibrahim Ali

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred to the filming of meetings and this information was noted.

2. APLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Lotte Collett and Councillor Isilar-Gosling.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 14 January 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

6. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT UPDATE

Mr Nazim Hussain, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), introduced the report.

The meeting heard:

- The Council wished to try and reduce the need to utilise the dispute/resolution process. This would provide a clear ethos that the Council wanted to work in partnership to be able to achieve the best for young people. It would be useful to have a reduction in the number of uses of alerts and escalations for administrative tasks such as social worker reports and care plans not being available in time for child in care reviews. This could cause disruption for some of the children.

- There were a number of activities and services available through the Young Adult Services that helped promote pathways to education employment and training. Education, employment and training was a focus of all children in care reviews. Independent Reviewing Officers' involvement ended at the age of 18 when the children had left care. Young Adult Services were working towards promoting engagement in education, employment and training.
- Direct feedback had been taken from children on their experience. Children enjoyed participating in their reviews. It helped empower them and have a sense of control over the direction of the care planning and the conversations within their meetings. Some of the feedback questions could be adopted to ensure that where young people chaired or co-chaired their reviews, their direct experience could be documented. This would be reported on in a future meeting.
- The dynamics of young people chairing or co-chairing their reviews resulted in professionals taking a keen ear to show more responsibility in answering directly to the young person. The dynamics of the conversation started off with what was important to the young person. Often these consisted of everyday life issues. The IRO was there to support and ensure that a range of information that helped the conversation and understand whether the care plan was right or not and how it may be enhanced for the young person.
- In relation challenging other professionals, this was never personal and was about being able to achieve the best for the young person. It was not always possible to agree on resolutions, but it was important to make attempts to steer the work in the right direction. Working through partnership decreased any possible antagonism.
- Data was reviewed regularly to monitor progress. If a young person had been with their parent for 12 months and this was going well, the Council would advocate for consideration being given to discharging the care order.
- IROs continued to work with health colleagues to be able to improve young people's access to health. IROs worked closely with its virtual school and queries were often effectively addressed. IROs also responded when social workers, team managers and service managers reached out to them for queries.
- For the next annual report, particular examples of case studies would be brought to the Committee to demonstrate the progress of young people and how things worked in practice.

RESOLVED:

To note the outcomes of the annual report for 2023/24.

7. THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Ms Jane Edwards, Assistant Director Schools & Learning Service and Ms Eghele Eyituoyo, Headteacher, Virtual Head of School, presented the report. Members welcomed the report.

The Committee heard:

- Mastery could be defined as interventions that were happening to ensure that a young person can master a skill or a particular area of what they were studying. This would be something that happened in a classroom whereas tuition would be identified as a one-to-one activity.
- In relation to attendance, meetings were held on a regular basis to discuss attendance figures. An intervention would then be planned for a young person. Attention had to be paid to attendance figures to read behind the workings of them. It may be that the school had given a young person unauthorised absence which should not be listed as an unauthorised absence because, for example, the appointment the child was out of school for had been planned. The meetings helped to understand how the figures ended up as they did. Consultations would be held with the school to provide advice and guidance. The structure of the virtual school was changing. There was an attendance and inclusion manager who would hold attendance forums to support the professionals and other people around the young person. There was a national issue with attendance. This tied into other work in terms of how a child needed to feel that they belonged in a school and working with schools to make sure that young people felt belonged. Work would also be done to mitigate issues that a young person may have in possibly preventing them from attending school.
- When a child was suspended, assurances were sought to make sure the school was not using suspensions as a behaviour management tool. This had happened in the past and what was really required were other tools to support the young person. Other solutions were actively sought and the Council, at times, acted as a negotiator to avoid the outcome of a permanent exclusion or that another arrangement was in place as an intervention so that the placement could be maintained.
- In relation to suspensions, during around 2018, exclusions and suspensions in Haringey were very high. During this time, schools would inform the Council what it could have done to prevent the issue after a child had been excluded. The Council now tried to get ahead of any such interventions. Every case was audited to make sure that best possible efforts could be made. There had always been national stories of a child who had progressed well in school only to then once come into school with a knife or leave one at the school gate. This created a blemish for the child's record that became an impossible hurdle to pass. In such cases in Haringey, discussions had been held regarding understanding why a child may have transgressed, and although teachers were not told they could not make certain decisions, they were engaged along with the families to understand what other actions could be taken and this had caused a cultural shift. The same approach had been taken towards suspensions. The Council's achievements had received attention and had also been mentioned in national reports.

- There was still a lot of work to do and the service plan and the improvement plan recognised that. One of the key priorities was improving attendance, but the Council was also aware that some cohorts had not reached their desired progress. Maintaining placements wherever possible was fundamental. Continuous school placement changes were disruptive to young people.
- The introduction of the statutory role would mean that funding would become more stable. Lewisham Council had a virtual school where the Council was trying to build their own models of monitoring. Haringey had looked at the Year 11 cohorts who were underachieving. Data was being collected on the children each term to see where they were in relation to attainment. In terms of aspiration, this would rely on knowing where the child was in relation to their personal progress to understand what needed to happen. Regular meetings would be held to make sure that the child had the right intervention to meet their target grade.
- When the ILACS inspection took place in February 2023, it was made clear that the Education Improvement Consultants (EIC) should be following the child. The EIC needed to provide constant support and a Virtual School staff member needed to follow their journey. For the children, there had been the consistency of knowing that they had the same EIC.
- In relation to NEETs (Not In Education Employment or Training), services were being commissioned and a mentor had been contacted to set up a program. A program of support would be set up for young people who were NEET. The UK social fund, which was given to lots of different organisations around London, was something that the Council was trying to access. There was support available for young people which was provided through funds. On occasion, if a young person was a parent or had any mental health challenges, they would not be able to enter the workforce, but where a child was able to progress, as much support as possible would be given to them which they felt was useful to get them back into the job market.

RESOLVED:

To note the outcomes of the Haringey Virtual School Report for 2023/24.

8. AN OVERVIEW OF THE YOUNG ADULTS SERVICES

Emma Cummergen, Head of Service for Young Adults and Children with Disabilities and Gregory Cooper, Programme Operational Lead, introduced the report.

The Committee widely commended the report.

The meeting heard:

- There were lots of young people in employment already and it was possible to learn from their experience and hear about at what stage they had discussed their experiences with a potential employer. Not all young people would share their experiences, but it was more important to consider the actual support around the young person. The little things as well as the big things made the difference. When

young people got their first job, having someone to speak to about what their first day felt like would be useful. They may need to speak to someone regarding their pay, their budgeting, or their working life arrangements. Giving young people the building blocks to working full-time was useful too such as a part-time job.

- Young people had spoken about their concerns of being judged as a care leaver. Part of planning the program was about judging whose responsibility it was to demonstrate the change of narrative of the young people from dealing with a problem to becoming an evolved, resilient individual. Some young people may not want to work for the Council, so the Council could work with other organisations further into the future.
- What had made some of the young people resilient and ambitious would have been some very difficult circumstances in their life and this sometimes could affect how they felt in certain circumstances. It would be useful for the young people to be empowered, perhaps through a coaching program, to learn how to express such issues appropriately to trusted and responsible adults.
- Young people's advisers often provided a parenting role and they also share a lot of their own personal experiences. Feedback from OFSTED in 2023 was positive about the work done by the team. It wasn't only about young people's employment, but about their relationships, how they coped with loneliness and other aspects of their lives.
- It was quite an achievement that work had been done to get the young people to be able to meet their basic needs in addition to helping them to self-actualise.
- Helping young people attain working roles involved many challenges. One action that would be taken was to go to the senior leadership team and presenting a proposal on employment related issues. This could help drive through change. Having an accompanying package around the young person to try and help address any concerns would be useful. An example would be providing mentoring to help the young person navigate any issues.
- Young people needed to be informed about electronic, financial or credit card scams.
- The Royal Free Hospital and North Middlesex Hospital could act as employers. They had held internships for young people with EHCPs. This could be revisited.
- The Capital City College could be worked with in partnership to help further qualifications of the young people.
- Work was being done to put forward a timeline for when the young people could move into the Hornsey Town Hall flats.

RESOLVED:

That the proposals outlined in the Care Leaver Programme needs and gaps analysis be agreed.

9. CARE LEAVER'S PROGRAMME

As item 8.

RESOLVED:

To note the proposals of the programme and endorse progressing with next steps of development and implementation.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair noted that Mr Keith Warren, Head of Children in Care & Placements, would be leaving Haringey. The Committee thanked Mr Warren for the hard work and commitment he had shown in his role.

Report for: CPAC 2 September 2025

Item number:

Title: Children's Social care annual performance 2024-25

Report

authorised by : Ann Graham, Corporate Director of Children's Services

Lead Officer: Dionne Thomas Director of Safeguarding & Social Care

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: For Information and Noting

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This report provides an analysis of the performance data and trends for an measures relating to Children Looked After (CLA), children on Child Protection Plans (CPP) and Children in Need (CIN).
- 1.2 This report notes the progress and the consistent, effective performance with regards to safeguarding children and young people in Haringey for 2024/25.
- 1.3 The report identifies key developments, summarises performance activity levels and details several future priorities for vulnerable children.
- 1.4 Appendix i contains performance highlights and key messages identifying areas of improvement and areas for focus. It provides an overall assessment so that Members can assess progress in key areas within the context of the Local Authority's role as Corporate Parent and duties under section 17 of the Children Act.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

3.1 That Members note the performance data as set out in appendix i.

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

- The service improvement and challenges contained within the report as well as the actions taken during 2023/24 in response to local demand and the financial pressures experienced by the service in relation to placements.
- The areas identified as priorities for 2024/25 following analysis and review of the year's performance

4. Reasons for decision

4.1 This report is for information only

5. Alternative options considered

N/A

6. Background information

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

6.2 The annual report is intended to inform Committee of the performance of Children Social Care Services in 2024/25.

6.3 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.

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes'?

N/A

8. Carbon and Climate Change

N/A

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

N/A

10. Use of Appendices

Appendix i.

Progress against key Performance indicators for Children Looked After (CLA)

11. Background papers

N/A

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Appendix I

Children's Social Care annual performance 2024-25

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 This report provides an overview of performance for Children's Social Care Services for 2024/25. The report provides comparative data by benchmarking with our statistical neighbours and looks at how our performance has grown and developed, 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 and have been revised this year to account for latest comparable demographic data. these are:

- Barnet
- Brent
- Ealing
- Enfield
- Hounslow
- Lambeth
- Lewisham
- Redbridge
- Southwark
- Waltham Forest

1.2 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 experienced young adults

1.3 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: December 2023).

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

- Safeguarding Accountability Meetings chaired by the Leader of the Council with the Lead Member for Children, relevant Assistant Directors and, Director of

Children Services in attendance. The meeting is held quarterly and allows the Leader 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.

- Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee has a dedicated focus on Children Looked After and Care Leavers and has in attendance seven elected members along with senior officers in the partnership. The Committee meets quarterly and scrutinises performance and strategic planning related to children in care and care leavers.
- Haringey's Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) meets regularly, including a joint board meeting with the Adults Safeguarding Board. In accordance with Working Together 2023, three statutory safeguarding partners - Local Authority, Police and the ICB - must make arrangements to work together, along with the relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our area. Haringey's Executive Board meets 6 times a year monitoring and reviewing Haringey's statutory safeguarding arrangements. The statutory safeguarding partners rota the chairing of the HSCP Executive and main board meeting. The HSCP is currently chaired by the Local Authority Director of Children's Services.

1.5 The HSCP has sub-groups which oversees the work of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership in relation to Quality Performance and Outcomes, Practice Learning Workforce and Development, Training, Missing and Exploitation (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:

- Children living with Mental Health issues
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Older children in need of help and protection, and
- contextual safeguarding including exploitation

2. National Context - National Statistical Reporting

2.1 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 return 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. The 903 now also include details of allocated social worker and stability.

2.2 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.

2.3 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.

2.4 Data to Insight (D2I) the sector-led service for local authority children's data professionals with support from DfE, Ofsted and ADCS hosts The Local Authority Interactive Tool (CHAT) which collates a range of data across a number of returns and can be filtered to compare and benchmark performance across children's indicators based on the Ofsted ILACS inspection annex A data set.

3. Future Challenges and Operational Priorities

3.1 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).

- Families First Partnership (FFP) programme aims to transform the whole system of help, support and protection, to ensure that every family can access the right help and support when they need it, with a strong emphasis on early intervention to prevent crisis.
- The service is following the development of the new Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill and preparing for the implementation of new social care reforms as set out in the new national policy statement, 'Keeping children safe, Helping Families Thrive', Nov 2024.
- Continuing to meet the increasing demands for children's social care services and responding to factors arising from national and international challenges.
- Expand and improve the quality and timeliness of interventions available to children with presenting mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties
- Maintaining operational effectiveness of the service in the context of new and emerging mental health and neuro-diversity support needs, the evolving and complex nature of child criminal and child sexual exploitation, the acuity of domestic abuse risks and needs, housing related risks and substance misuse.
- The costs associated with the placements for children in care which continue to be a significant pressure for the Council, more so given the Council's current budget pressures. 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 continues to be a key focus and creative approaches to grow our own will continue to be explored.
- The development of permanence planning and tracking will ensure children achieve the earliest permanence
- Maximising the data provided by our data and information systems to strengthen performance dashboards and service compliance with key performance indicators.
- The priority in our Short Breaks Statement is to develop and deliver an Overnight Short Breaks provision within the borough itself, to provide children with the most complex and profound learning difficulties, respite and to mitigate against the need for these children to come into local authority care.
- 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 Service retention and skills progression strategy.
- To continue to lead, jointly with our MET police colleagues, on our innovative Stop and Search work that is currently being piloted across London.

4. Local Background and Context

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

- In 2023, 17.3% of children in Haringey lived in relative poverty, close to the London average but lower than similar areas and the national rates (19.8%)
- Haringey has the highest alcohol sales per adult in London, with a significantly higher rate of alcohol related hospital admissions.
- 2% of Haringey's working age population claim Employment Support Allowance for mental health and behavioural disorders, the fifth highest in London
- The borough has the eighth highest rate of domestic abuse with injury in London
- Haringey ranks 8th in London for households in temporary accommodation, an improvement from 5th in the previous year

4.2 Alongside these challenges, Haringey as a local area continues to be a strong and thriving place 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:

- 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.
- And we will be the Borough of Culture in 2027

5. Our children and young people population

5.1 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.

5.2 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)

5.3 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 and children in the east of the borough are substantially more likely to be affected by income deprivation. In 2023, 10,863 children in Haringey were living in relative poverty and this equates to 17.3% of all 0-16 year olds. This is the 11th highest of all London boroughs.

6. Outcomes for children and young people

6.1 **Haringey's Children in Care have above average educational outcomes** with our KS4 Average Attainment 8 Score for 2024 of 20.6% against an England average of 18.3. Progress 8 also scored in the second top quartile.

6.2 **Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have higher educational outcomes**, 22 of 27 measures featuring in the top quartile in England.

In 2024 for pupils with SEN Support for the following measures Haringey ranked in the top15 Local Authorities:

- Attainment 8 score per pupil at end of Key Stage 4
- Progress 8 score per pupil at end of Key Stage 4
- Progress 8 score per pupil at end of Key Stage 4 for pupils with EHC Plan

- English Baccalaureate - Average Point Score
- %19 year olds qualified to Level 2 and level 3

6.3 **Haringey has fewer secondary pupils being permanently excluded** and is better than the national average (0.01%) and its percentage of NEET children, those (Not in Education Employment or Training) improved (1.7%) from 1.9% in the previous year.

7. OFSTED

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

7.2 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.”

7.3 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.

7.4 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.”

8. Safeguarding and children in care trends

8.1 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 year

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 effectively collaborate with key partners and has sustained the practice and performance.

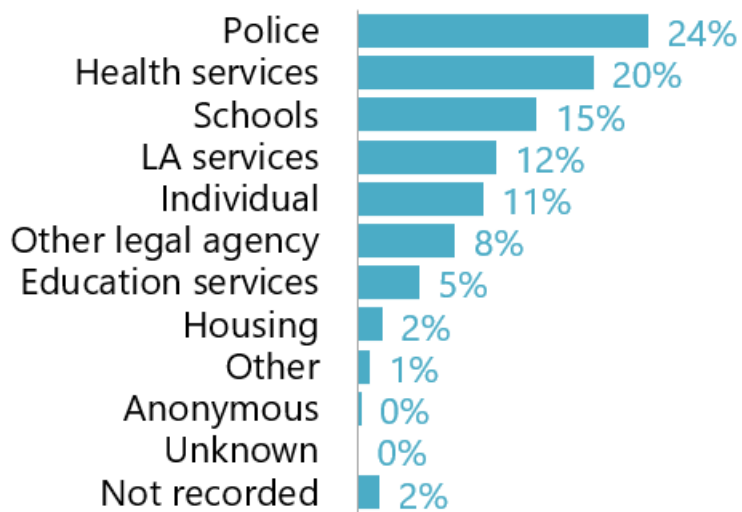
8.3 Our internal auditing process, part of our comprehensive quality assurance framework indicates that practice within the MASH is strong, we remain focused on continuing to strengthen practice and means that children receive a timely and effective response.

8.4 Contact & Referrals to social care

8.4.1 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 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.

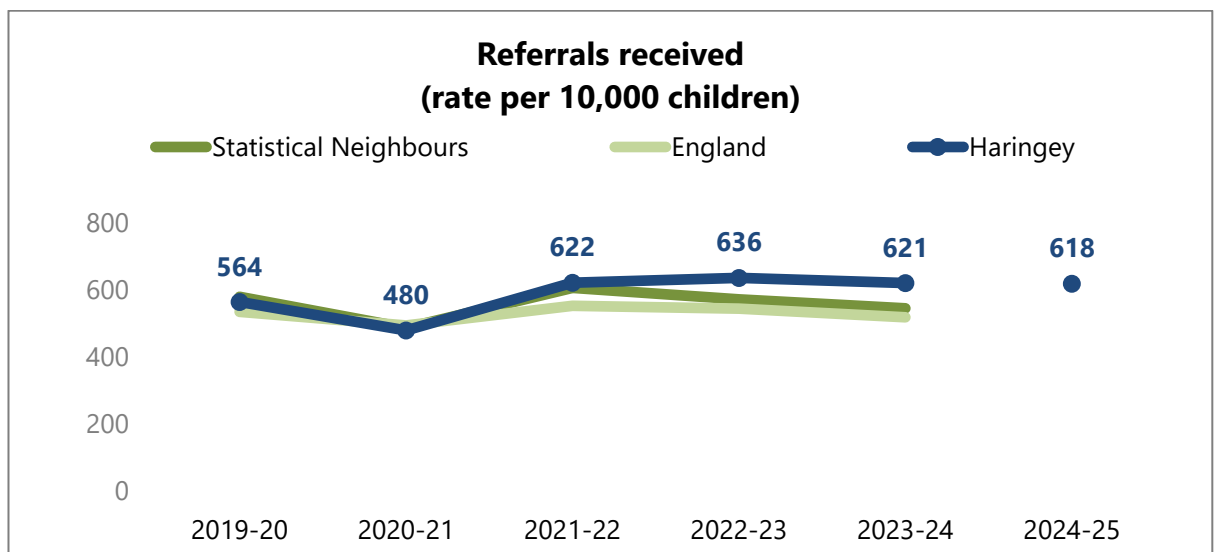
8.4.2 In the 12 months to March 2025 there were 13,958 contacts to MASH which is very similar to last years' number. The break-down of sources is set out below and shows an increase in the number from health and a fall in the number from the police (29% in 23/24)

Contact source

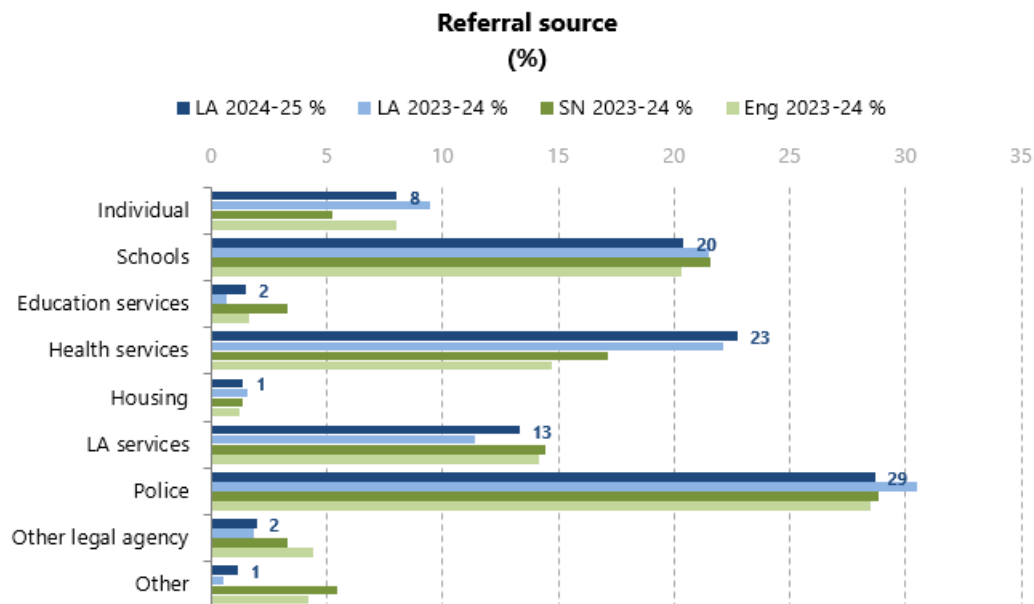


8.4.3 A referral is a contact that meets the threshold for services to be provided by children's social care, in respect of a child who is not currently open to the service. This means that social workers in the multi-agency assessment hub (MASH) share information and complete a risk analysis for the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

8.4.4 The number of referrals received was 3,312, very similar to past 3 years, but means the rate per 1000 population has moved slightly above our latest statistical neighbours.



8.4.5 The Police continue to be the largest source of referrals in common with our statistical neighbours and England. We have seen a reduction in referrals from schools and an increase in referrals from our colleagues in health.



9. Children with a Disability

9.1 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 The experience of the management team is helping to strengthen the skills, experience and expertise within the service though focus is maintained on continuing to develop and embed this across the service.

9.3 It is clear however that complexity in the nature of cases is rising and the service has seen an increase in court proceedings, impacting on timeliness and performance data. This is seen alongside an increase in children qualifying for CiN support and those being received into local authority care.

9.4 Regular multi-agency meetings take place with special schools and they continue to ensure the partnership approach to providing children with disabilities is robust and timely support.

10. SEND Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

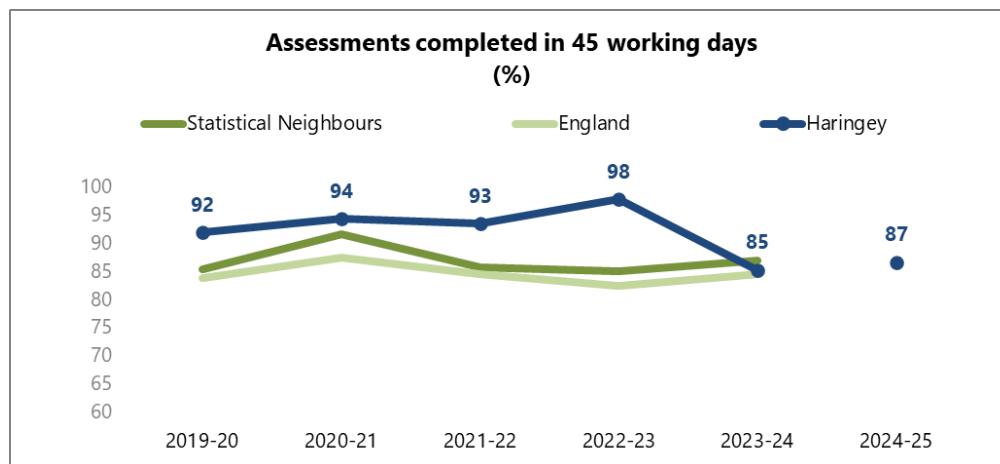
10.1 In 2024 a similar number of EHCPs were issued to the previous year, with 84% within the 20-week timescale with allowed exceptions discounted. This compares with 46.4% for England and 70% for our statistical neighbours.

11. Assessments

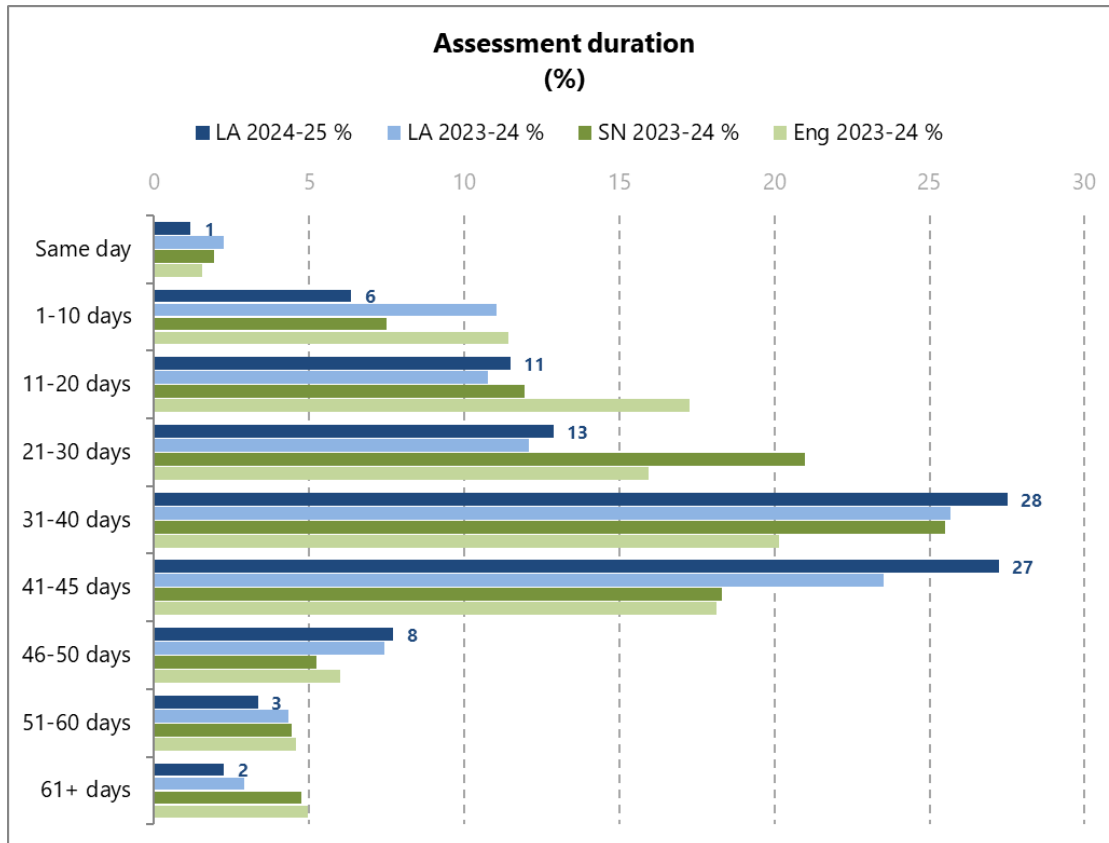
11.1 A referral to social care will normally result in a decision to complete an assessment of the child's needs (within 45 working days). In addition, if there is a concern that immediate protection may be needed as the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion with police and other partners is held immediately. 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.

11.2 During 2024/25 there were 3,540 assessments completed at a rate of 661 per 10,000 children, up from a rate of 580 per 10,000 children in 2023/24. In each of the past 6 years, at least 85% have been completed in 45 working days, as shown in the graph below. This represents continued good performance in the completion of assessments which compares well to statistical neighbours and England.

Assessments completed in 45 Working Days (%)



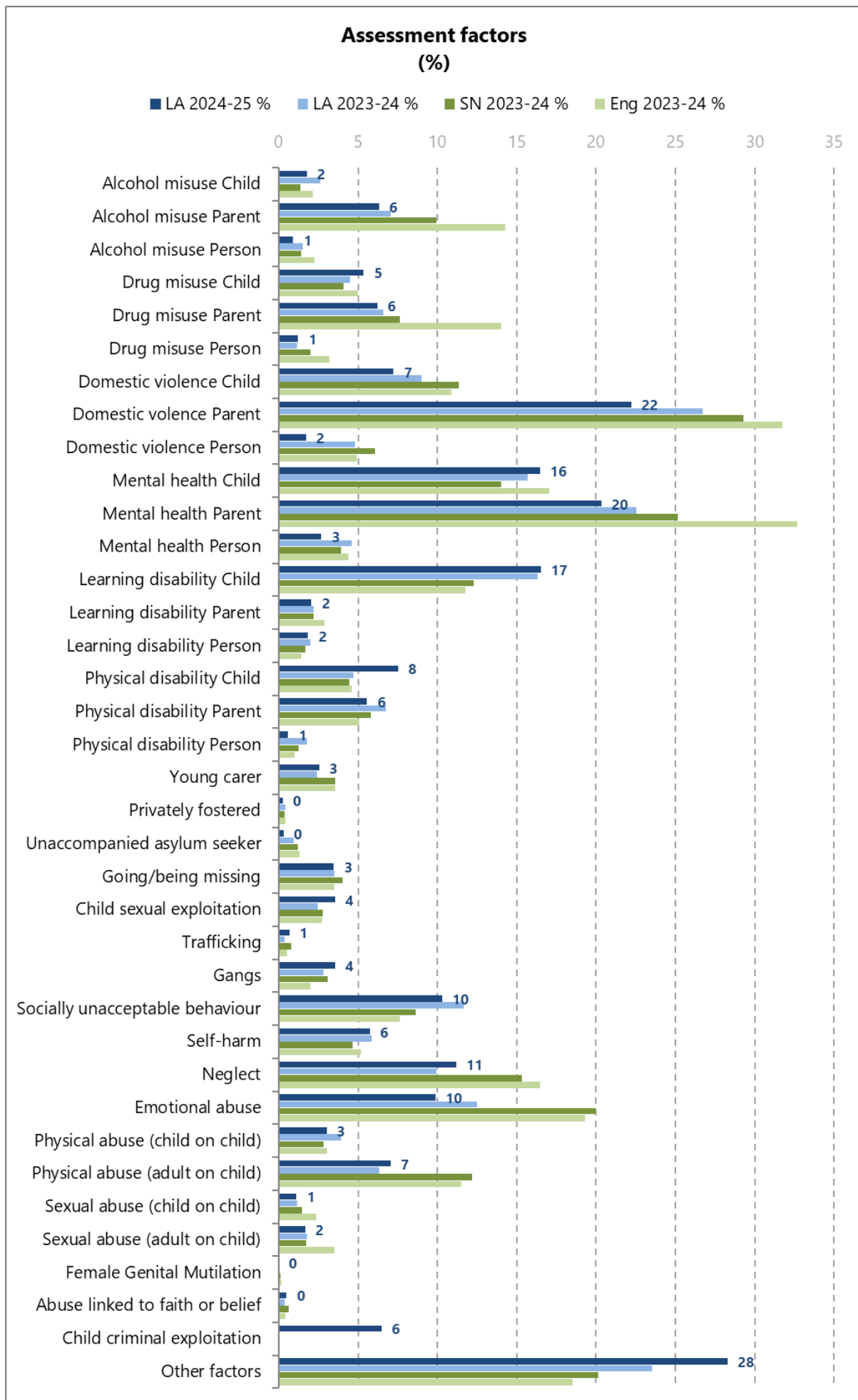
Duration of assessment



11.3 Factors found at the end of assessment

11.3.1 Despite a decrease Parental Domestic Abuse continues to be the single most common factor found at the end of assessments.

11.3.2 Other factors usually found as an addition to one of the main factors listed. Areas with fewer factors found include Mental Health and Emotional Abuse

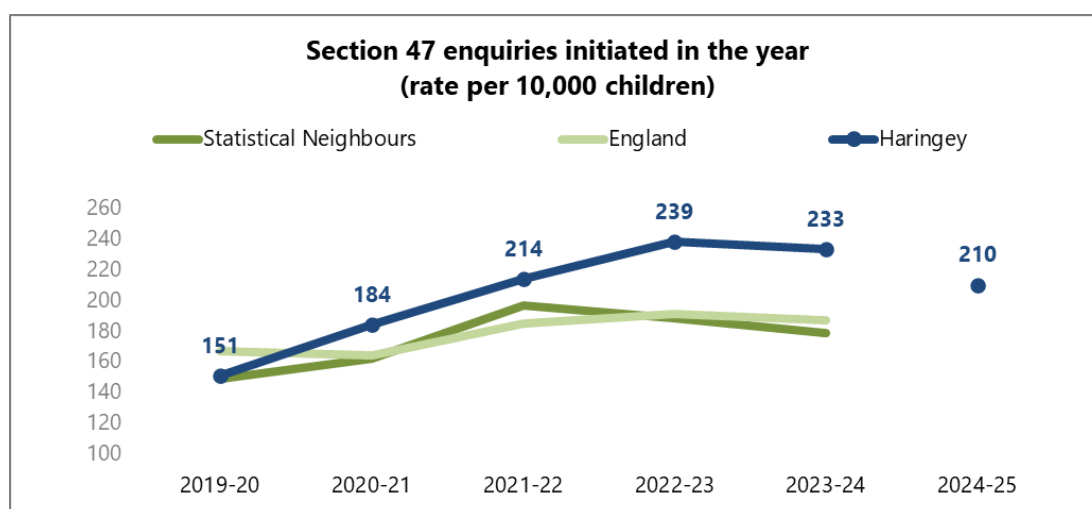


12. Section 47 enquiries

12.1 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 and is a necessary part of initiating a child protection plan.

12.2 The rate of section 47 enquiries per 10,000 children aged 0-17 decreased to a rate of 210 per 10,000 children from 233 in 2023/24 our rate is still above the last published rate of 174 for statistical neighbours and the England average rate of 187.

12.3 Rate of s47 enquiries per 10, 000 children



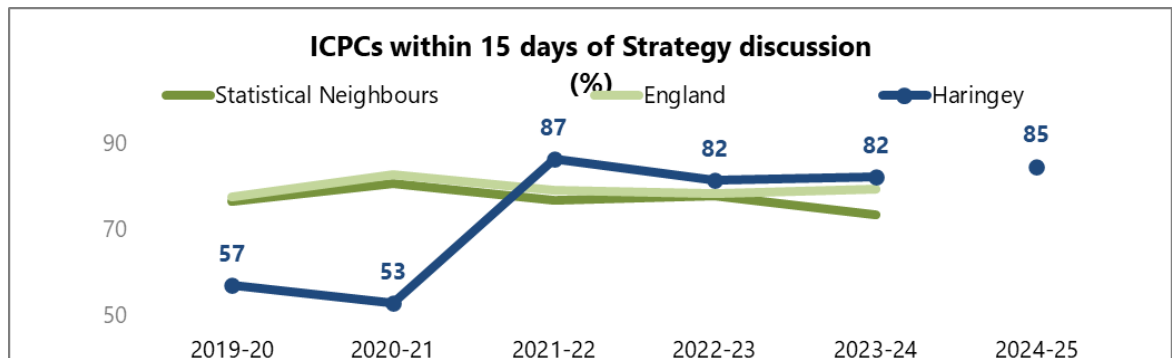
13. Initial Child protection conferences (ICPC)

13.1 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.

13.2 In 2023/24 a total of 216 ICPCs were held, this increased to 225 in 2024/25.

13.3 It is critical that initial child protection conferences are convened quickly. Timeliness is defined by ICPC's which take place within 15 days of the strategy discussion which triggered the Section 47 investigation, the 85% for 2024/25 compares well with the national figure of 80%.

Trend of ICPC Timelines

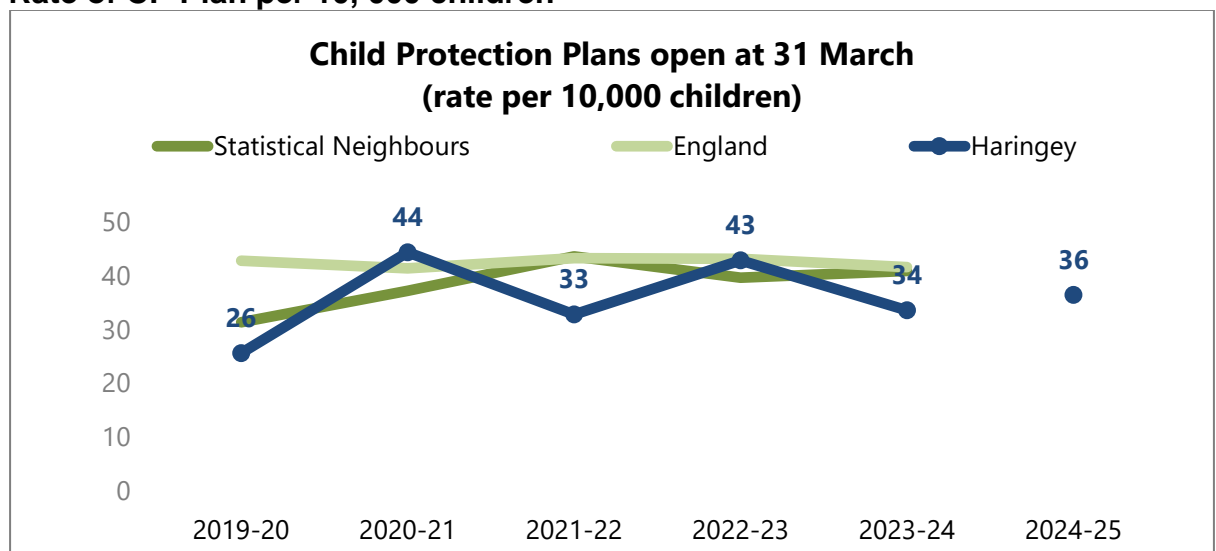


14. Child Protection Plans

14.1 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.

14.2 There were 195 children on a child protection plan at the end of March 2025 or a rate of 36 per 10,000, which is below the last published statistical neighbours rate (41)

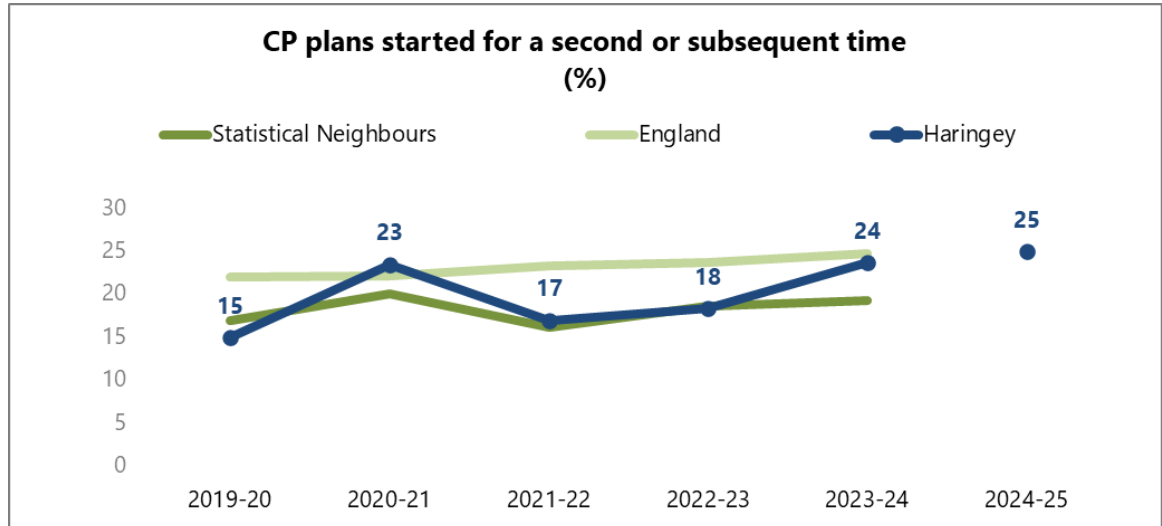
Rate of CP Plan per 10, 000 children



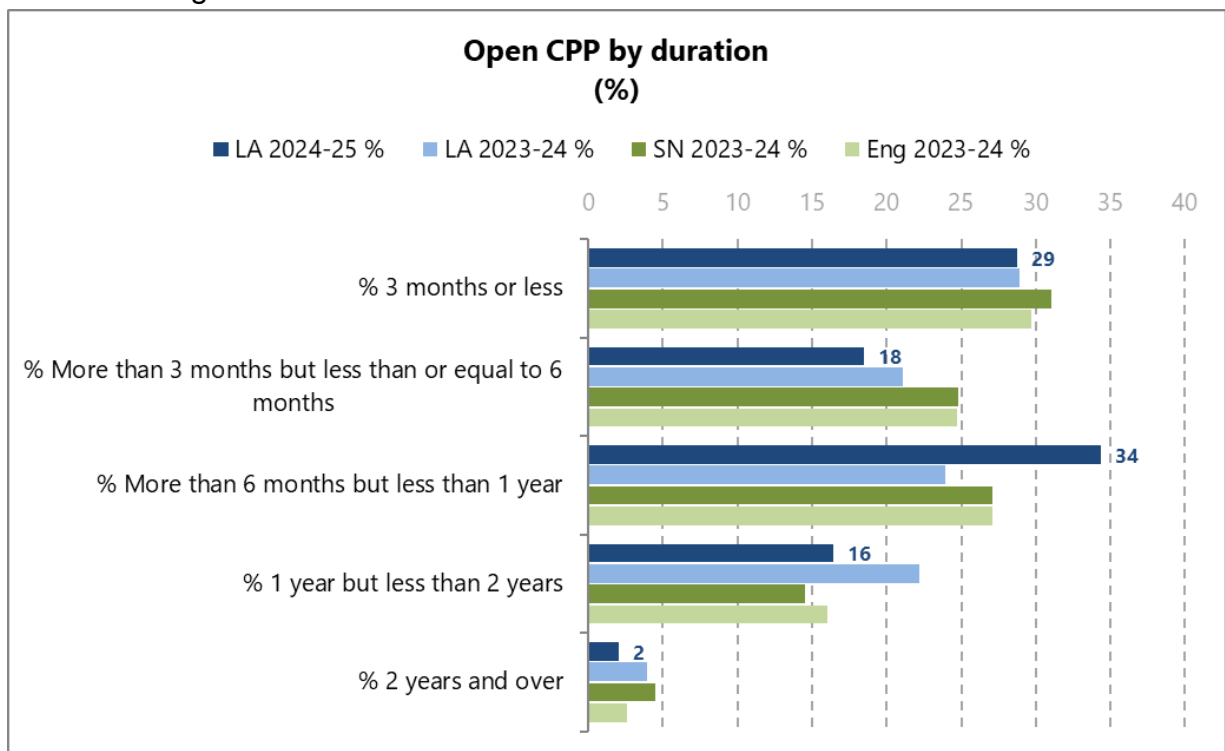
14.3 It is vital that the right children only remain subject to plans for the length of time required to bring about and demonstrate change. A simple measure for this is the rate of second and subsequent plans, if these are too high, it could be that plans are ineffectual or are not lasting long enough, too low and it could be that a degree of over caution is evident. The described percentage rate matches our statistical neighbours rate, (albeit with a minor data variance). We are keeping cases subject to subsequent

plans under review, to ensure that thresholds are applied appropriately and to see if there is any learning for the service in relation to early de-planning

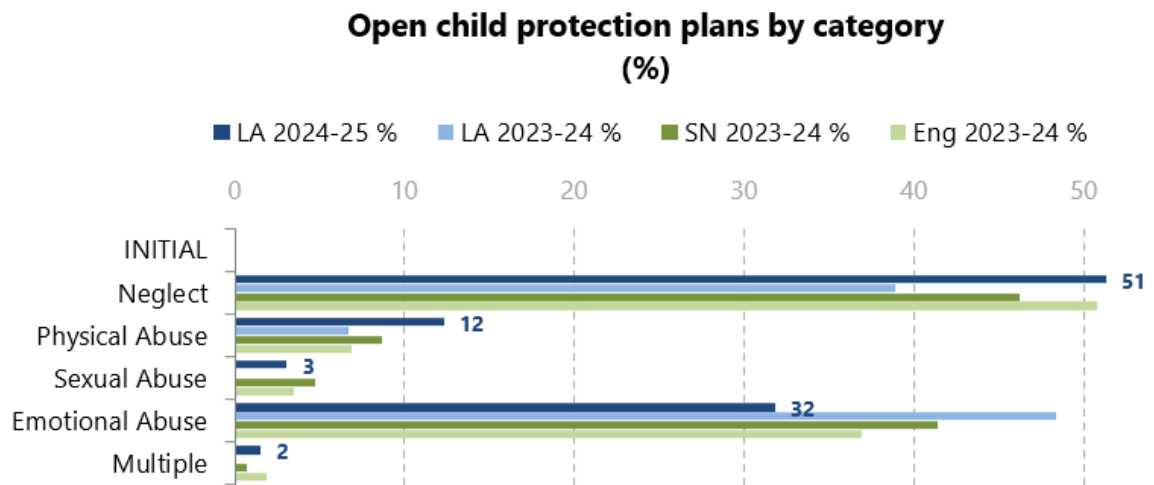
14.4 Comparing re-registrations for Child Protection Plans



14.5 Most child protection plans cease within two years. Of the 214 plans ending during 2024/25 ten were open for over two years which is the same rate as our statistical neighbours.



14.6 In common with other local authorities, the main initial reasons for children becoming subject to a child protection plan relate to emotional abuse 32% and neglect 51% as shown in the chart below

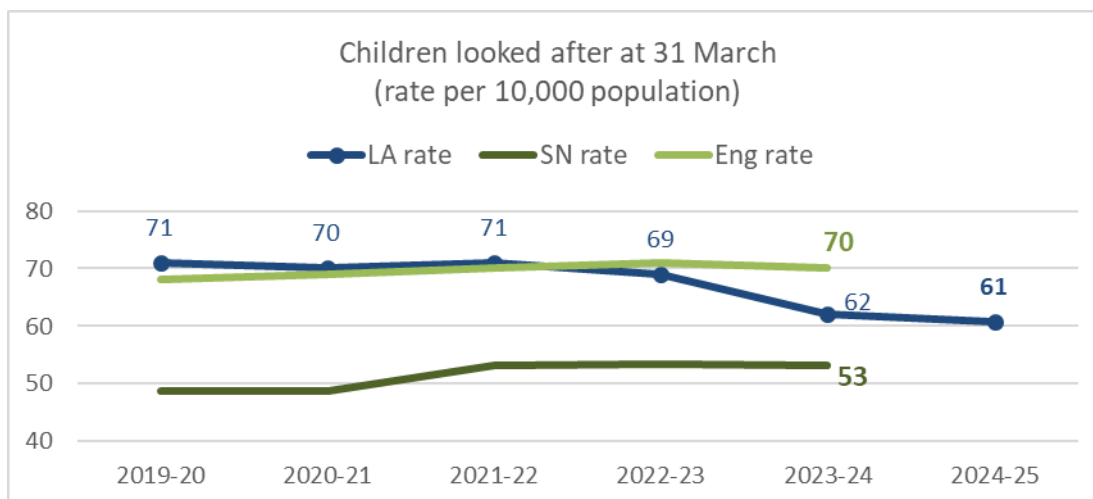


15. Children Looked After

15.1 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) also often referred to as children in care. Children in care in general are either living with extended family members, foster carers, 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 risk of significant harm. A child stops being looked after when they are adopted, are made the subject of a Special Guardianship Order, return home unless there is a Care Order in place, or turn 18. However local authorities are required to information, advice and or support most children who leave care at 18, until they are 25 years old.

15.2 At the end of March 2025, 325 children were in our care. This is slightly fewer than in 2024 and the trend is opposed to the increase in national numbers.

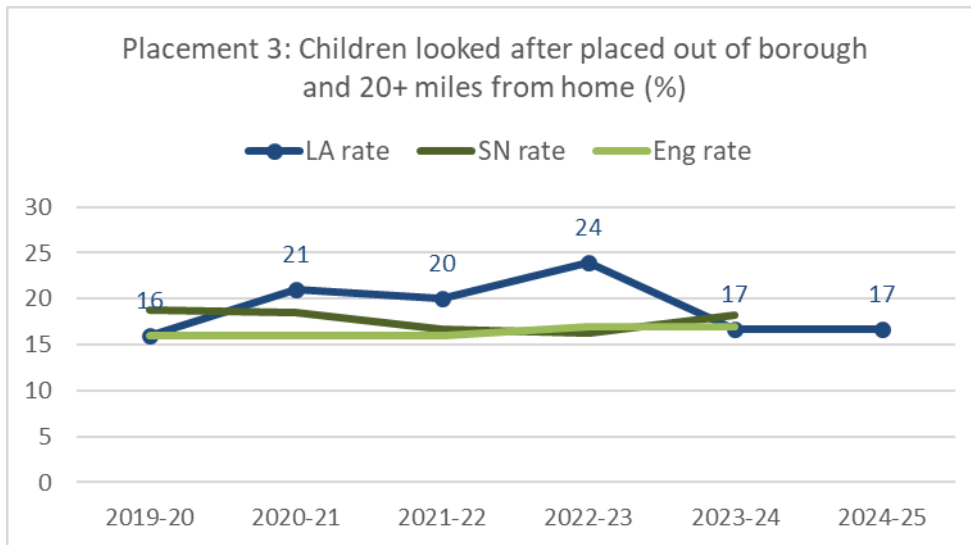
Rate of CLA started per 10, 000 children



15.3 The table below shows the children in care by placement type at the end of March 2024. Foster placements continue to be the largest proportion of placement types along with the proportion slightly higher than that of all England.

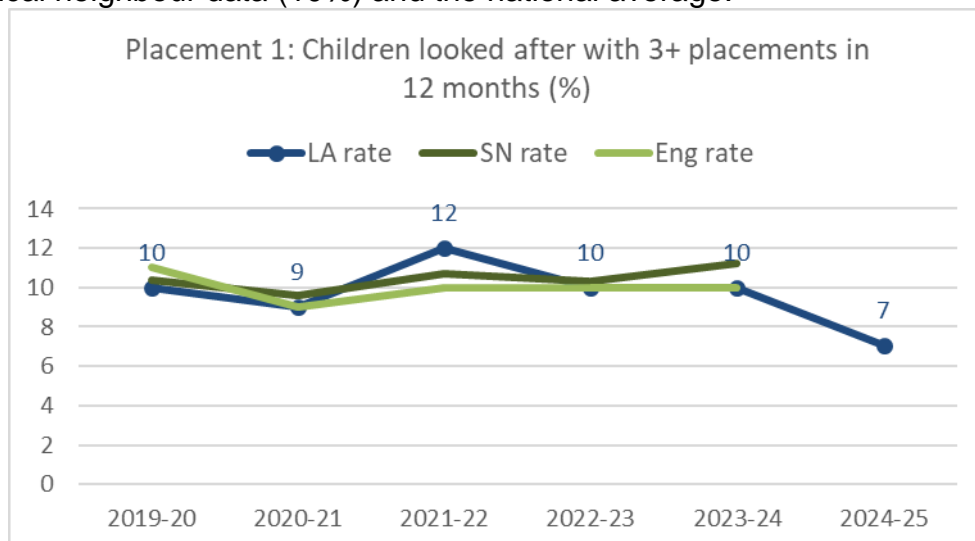
	LA 2024- 25 nos	LA 2024- 25 %	LA 2023- 24 %	SN 2023- 24 %	Eng 2023- 24 %
Foster placements	234	72%	70%	68%	67%
Placed for adoption	10	3%	2%	1%	2%
Placement with parents	7	2%	4%	4%	6%
Other placement in the community	0	0%	0%	-	-
Secure units, children's homes and hostels	34	10%	15%	-	-
Other residential settings	9	3%	2%	3%	2%
Residential schools	0	0	0	0	-
Other placements	0	0	7%	8%	5%

15.4 At the end of March 2025, 17 % of children were in placements in or within 20 miles of Haringey. This matches the previous year, and the last known data for statistical neighbours (17%). Local provision continues to be a challenge, and we continue to use our own residential provision, Haselmere Children's Home, to mitigate national and local challenges. We also continue to build relationships with local providers and work with our regional and sub-regional partners to address sufficiency issues.

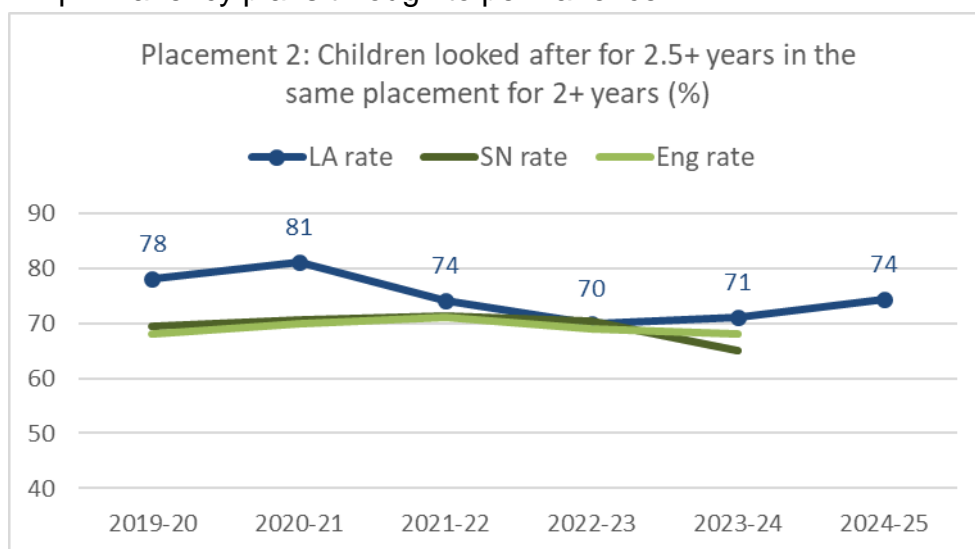


15.5 Placement stability is a key factor in children's wellbeing. Having the chance to settle into a foster or residential placement over a period of time, supporting our children in developing a feeling of belonging, helping them feel secure in themselves. Stability will be achieved only by making sure 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 for children 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.

15.6 Our short-term stability performance shows that only 7% of children in our care had three or more placements in the past 12 months. This is lower than 2023/24, statistical neighbour data (10%) and the national average.



15.7 Our performance in relation to long term placement stability is improved from a strong 71% to 74% at the end of March 2025. Permanence planning is continually being monitored and strengthened, and we ensure that Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) have sufficient information to enable expedient and timely permanence planning. Our trackers are helping us monitor children who have not been matched with a new permanent family arrangement and we constantly check and review children's permanency plans through to permanence.



15.8 The data for children who go missing from care shows us that 13% of children were reported missing in the period 2024-2025. This remains below our SN rate of 15%. 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.

16. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

16.1 There are two means by which UASC come to Haringey. Firstly, as spontaneous arrivals, most frequently arriving at local police stations. The second is through the National Transfer Scheme, which aims to equitably re-distribute UASC across the country, especially those from Kent and Croydon in recent years although there has been a sharp decrease in numbers the second of these two routes has become the most prevalent.

16.2 At the end of March 2020 there were 48 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care, this fell to 26 by March 2024 and was further reduced at the

close of March 2025, to 19. This represents around 5.8% of the children in care cohort.

17. Adoption

17.1 There were 7 adoptions during 2024/25 which is in line with the last reported data from statistical neighbours but we remain beneath the national average. 13 children were also granted Special Guardianship Orders giving them a permanent home.

17.2 Haringey and the ALN (Adopt London North) have strengthened practitioner knowledge around early permanence as a placement option for children, with ALN running a number of in person and virtual training sessions for practitioners across the directorate.

17.3 A key priority continues to be the reduction of disparity in adoption for children of global majority heritage and improve the adoption system so that more adopters of Black heritage become applicants and choose to adopt through Adopt London.

18. Leaving care

18.1 For young people qualifying for service as Care Leavers also known as Care Experienced Young Adults, 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.

18.2 The service has been continuing to work with the 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.

18.3 At the end of March 2025 there were 662 care experienced young adults who were qualified for care lever services

Eligible	~ Has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since age 14 (can be multiple periods)~ Currently looked after Age 16 or 17
Relevant	~ Age 16 or 17 ~ Has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since age 14 (can be multiple periods)~ Looked after on or after their 16th birthday ~ No longer looked after
Former Relevant	~ Aged between 18 and 25 ~ Previously an eligible or relevant child
Qualifying	~ Aged between 16 and 21 (or 25 if in education) ~ Looked after on or after their 16th birthday ~ Not looked after for at least 13 weeks since age 14 or ~ privately fostered after the age of 16 but before the age of 18 or were looked after prior to becoming subject to a SGO"

Cohort of Care Leavers and eligibility for services

Age	Eligible	Relevant	Former Relevant	Qualifying	Total
16	30	1	0	1	32
17	61	9	1	4	75
18	0	0	70	0	70
19	0	0	83	0	83
20	0	0	78	1	79
21	0	0	82	2	84
22	0	0	79	1	80
23	0	0	79	0	79
24	0	0	80	0	80
Total	91	10	552	9	662

18.4 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

19. Workforce

19.1 The Workforce Development 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. This is enacted through many routes; student placements; recruiting cohorts of newly qualified social workers; the Step Up to Social Work programme, Social Work Apprentices, supporting staff to be Practice Educators; promoting within and converting agency staff to permanent contracts. We remain signed up to the London Pledge and the Framework for London in Permanent Children's Social Work Recruitment both these approaches help with the management of agency social workers costs across London and providing staffing stability.

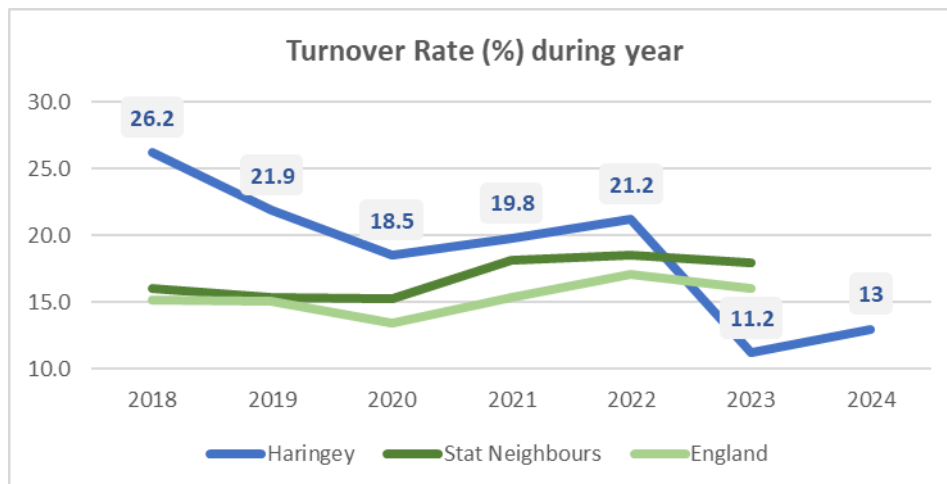
19.2 We are committed to retaining both newly qualified and experienced social workers by offering flexible secondment opportunities across different teams and service areas. These opportunities are designed to:

- Broaden professional experience
- Enhance knowledge and skills
- Support career progression within Haringey

19.3 We believe that when staff feel valued, supported, and are given room to grow, they are more likely to remain with the organisation long term. Our approach reflects our commitment to valuing our staff, to their wellbeing, development, and work satisfaction.

19.4 We are proud to share recent progress in our commitment to developing and retaining competent social workers within Haringey:

- Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Programme In 2025, we successfully recruited 6 internal social work students onto the ASYE programme, out of a cohort of 7. All 6 newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) began their ASYE journey in August 2025. Notably, 4 of these NQSWs were sponsored by Haringey through the Step Up to Social Work programme.
- Step Up to Social Work – New Cohort Haringey has committed to sponsoring 6 new students on the Step Up to Social Work programme. These students will begin their first placements in Adult Services in March 2026, continuing our investment in high-quality training and development.
- Social Work Apprenticeships Our 4 social work apprentices have successfully completed their first placement in Adult Services as of August 2025. They are now preparing for their final placements, scheduled to begin in March 2026.



19.5 The Director of Safeguarding & Social Care regularly leads the weekly “Gather and Grow” sessions where key messages are communicated service wide, and the workforce can ask any questions or make service adjustment feedback.

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

19.7 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 Employee Assistant Programme and occupational health referral schemes and enabling their teams to flourish in hybrid ways of working. There also have 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.

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Report for: CPAC 2 September 2025

Item number:

Title: Permanency planning update

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

Lead Officer: Dionne Thomas Director of Safeguarding & Social Care

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** For Information and Noting

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This report provides an update on the process of permanency planning and includes performance data for Haringey.

1.2 The report also provides an update on the progress since the Ofsted inspection in 2023.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

3.1 That Members note contents of this report.

4. Reasons for decision

4.1 This report is for information only

5. Alternative options considered

N/A

6. Background information

N/A

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes

N/A

8. Carbon and Climate Change

N/A

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

N/A

10. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Permanency planning – getting it right for children

11. Background papers

N/A



August 2025

PERMANENCY PLANNING

Getting it right for children!

Introduction

Permanency Planning

Permanency planning is the process of securing a long-term, stable living arrangement that provides children with a sense of belonging and supports their overall well-being. It aims to minimise disruptions and promote security.

Effective permanency planning considers the child's:

- Social and emotional needs
- Educational and health requirements
- Cultural and religious background
- Sense of identity and belonging

Key Aspects of Permanency

- **Legal Permanence:** Involves legal arrangements such as living with birth parents, adoption, or orders like Child Arrangements or Special Guardianship.
- **Physical Permanence:** Refers to the stability of the child's home, neighbourhood, and access to resources that support their development.
- **Psychological Permanence:** Involves forming secure attachments with caregivers, feeling loved, and experiencing a sense of belonging.

Importance of Permanency Planning

Children need stability to thrive. A safe and consistent home environment is essential for meeting their developmental needs and helping them reach their full potential. The uncertainty during care proceedings can be distressing, making it crucial to engage in direct work with children to help them understand the concerns and what steps are being taken to ensure their safety and well-being. Capturing the child's wishes and feelings is a vital part of this process.

In Haringey we carefully consider permanence planning early on, which is best practice for children who may come into our care. Permanence planning discussions are not just undertaken in a multi-agency forum, practitioners and managers discuss permanence all the time, looking at all possible options for a child.

Legal Framework

The **Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Section 8)** expanded the definition of permanence under the **Children Act 1989** to include living with parents, family members, friends of the family, adoption, and other long-term care arrangements such as foster care.

Courts are required to consider:

- The impact of any harm the child has suffered or is likely to suffer.
- The child's current and future needs.
- How the long-term care plan addresses those needs.

Social workers must also apply the principles from the **Re B-S (2013, EWCA Civ 1146)** judgment, which emphasises the need for robust evidence and thorough analysis of all care options. This judgment is particularly significant in adoption cases and in presenting care recommendations to the court.

Haringey Ofsted 2023

“Social workers are creative and committed to helping these children overcome trauma and in trying to mitigate the impact of these moves, sometimes becoming the child's most constant relationship. Recently, systems and plans have been developed to improve matching and permanency, but these are not fully embedded to ensure that all children benefit. Recent permanence planning and matching for some younger children leaving care through adoption has been more effective.”

Haringey received a positive outcome in its 2023 Ofsted inspection, moving from *Requires Improvement* to *Good* overall. At the time, the borough was in the early stages of embedding new permanency processes. Consequently, Ofsted identified permanency planning as an area requiring further improvement.

Progress in Permanency Planning

Since the inspection, Haringey has significantly strengthened and embedded its permanency processes. Key developments include:

- **Monthly Permanency Panel**
Chaired by a senior manager, these meetings monitor the progress of plans for all children for whom permanency is being sought.
- **Permanency Planning Meetings**
Held every eight weeks within respective teams, these meetings focus on

children and young people who have not yet achieved permanency. They ensure a robust and consistent approach to planning.

Purpose of Permanency Planning Meetings

The Permanency Planning Meeting (PPM) is a formal meeting convened to determine the most appropriate and permanent plan for a child who is or may in the future be unable to live with their parents, or previous carers. The child's long-term stability, security, and well-being is discussed by considering all viable options and making a timely decision. The emphasis on early consideration of permanence plans and avoidance of drift has led to the development of parallel planning for children, where efforts are made to rehabilitate children back to their birth parents as the primary plan, but the necessary information is gathered ready to put in place an alternative plan e.g. kinship care or adoption, if this fails.

Routes to Permanency

The following pathways are actively pursued:

- **Return to Parents**
- **Special Guardianship**
- **Connected Carer** – Placement with someone known to the child or family
- **Long-Term Foster Care**
- **Adoption**

Inclusion of Key Stakeholders

The views of significant individuals in the child's life are actively sought and incorporated into the planning process:

- **Birth Parents**
Where appropriate, their views are considered, particularly when a child is being matched for long-term foster care.
- **Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)**
IROs contribute their views to both the tracker and individual meetings.
- **Adopt London North (ALN)**
For children with adoption plans, ALN reports on family finding progress to the permanency panel and planning meetings.

Leadership and Oversight

A newly appointed **Service Manager for Court Service Assurance and Progression** is now in post. This role ensures that families, children, and young people are tracked from the early stages of the Public Law Outline (PLO) process through to the achievement of permanency.

Team Managers are responsible for implementing regular permanency planning meetings within their respective teams.

Service Managers for each of the service areas have oversight of all children and are responsible for presenting updates on where we are at in achieving permanency for each child in their service area at the monthly Permanency Panel.

The Permanency Panel is co-chaired by the **Director** of Children's Safeguarding and Social Care and **Head of Service** for Children in Care.

Special Guardianship

A **Special Guardianship Order (SGO)** is a formal legal order granted by the Family Court that places a child in the care of another individual—typically someone with a close relationship to the child, such as a grandparent, relative, or family friend. The order confers **parental responsibility** to the special guardian.

An SGO is a **permanence order**, intended to last until the child reaches adulthood. The Special guardian is responsible for making day-to-day decisions about the child's care. While birth parents and others with parental responsibility should be consulted on significant decisions, the special guardian has the authority to make final decisions when necessary.

This arrangement allows children to grow up **outside the care system** and within their **family network**, preserving relationships with birth parents and extended family members. It supports the child's connection to their **cultural and familial heritage**, fostering a stronger sense of identity and belonging.

Although there is currently **no conclusive research** demonstrating improved outcomes for children subject to SGOs, it is well established that children in care generally experience **poorer outcomes** than those raised outside the care system.

Special Guardianship in Haringey

Since **2020–2021**, the number of SGOs granted in Haringey has steadily increased, reaching **national levels** in **2024–2025**.

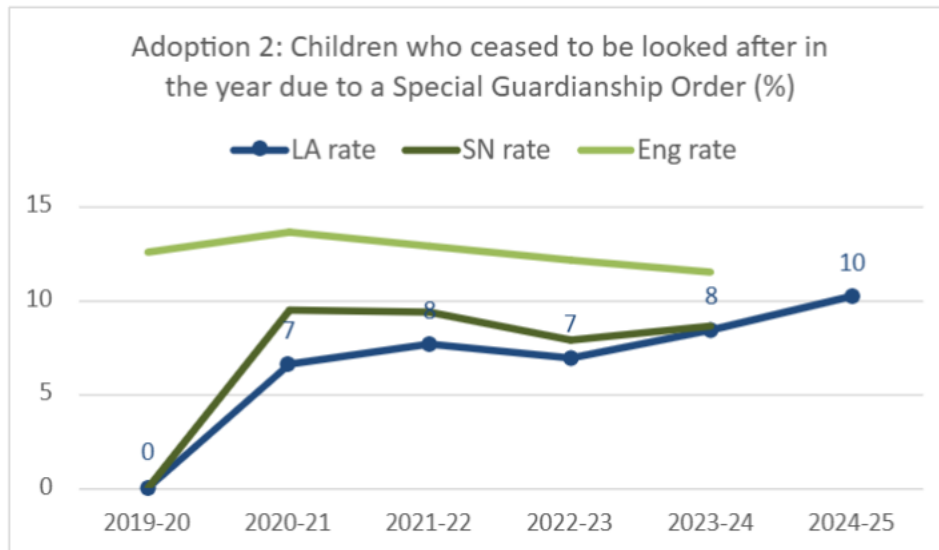
Haringey's **SGO Support Team** currently supports:

- **38 special guardians** residing within Haringey

- **84 special guardians** living in other areas
- **Total: 122 special guardian families**

This total includes families living in Haringey where the child was previously looked after by another local authority. In such cases, responsibility for post-order support transfers to Haringey after **three years**.

The table below shows the number of Special Guardianship Orders granted:



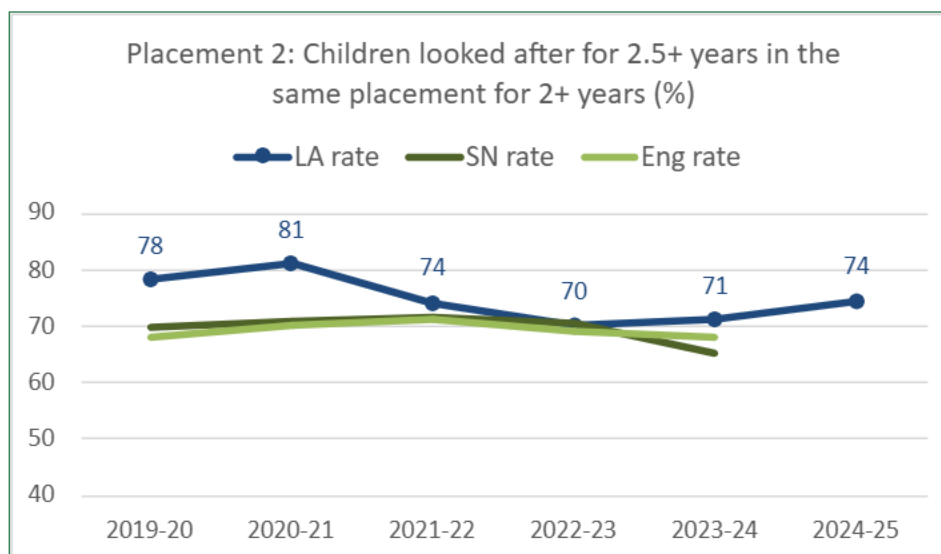
Long-Term Foster Care

Long-term foster care refers to an arrangement where a child or young person lives with a committed foster family until they reach adulthood. This pathway is typically pursued when a child cannot return to their birth family, and adoption is either not possible or not appropriate. It provides a stable, nurturing environment that promotes a sense of belonging and supports the development of healthy attachments.

Legal and Placement Process

When a care plan for long-term foster care is presented to the court and a **Care Order** is granted, it establishes the legal foundation for the child's placement. However, this does not signify that permanency has been achieved—it reflects that the permanency plan has been agreed.

The table above shows the number of children in the same placement for over 2.5 years. Initially, foster placements are short-term. Even if identified as a potential long-term option,



the child should be experiencing stability and settlement within the placement. Typically, children are

considered for **long-term matching via the fostering panel** after approximately **9 to 12 months** in placement.

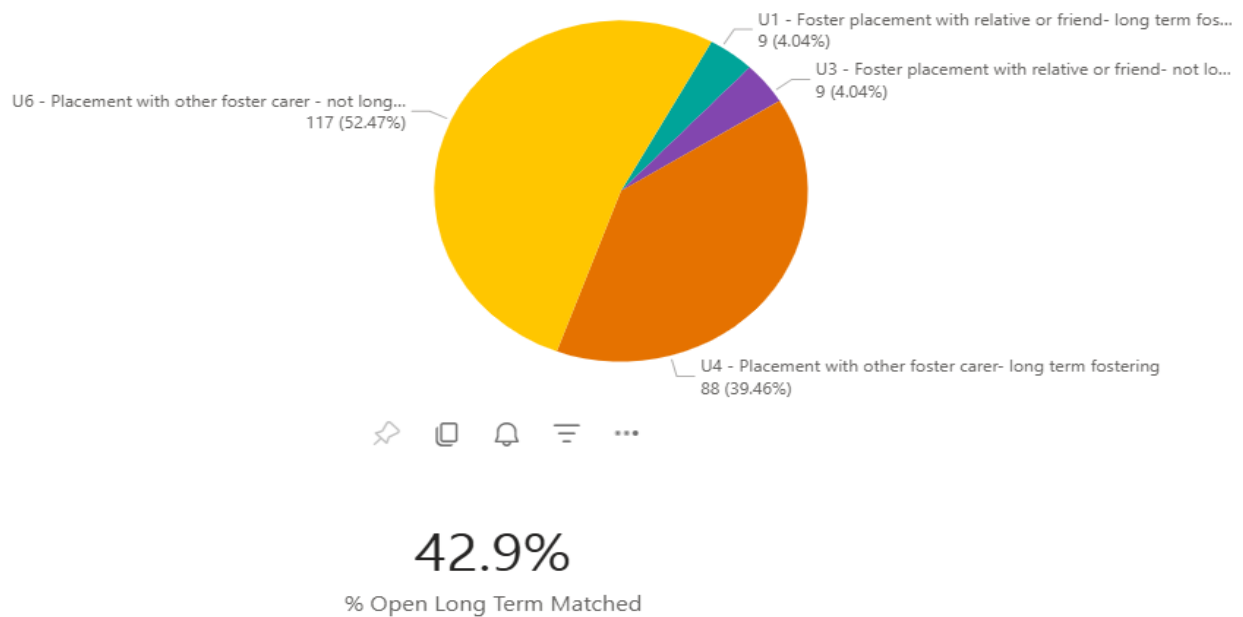
Placement Stability and Performance

Haringey has shown strong performance in placement stability compared to national averages and statistical neighbours. A **Placement Stability Panel**, comprising representatives from education, First Steps, and the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service, meets regularly to assess and support placement stability. This multi-agency approach ensures that all services are aligned in maintaining consistent and supportive placements for children.

- In **2023–2024**, **35%** of foster placements were long-term matched.
- In **2024–2025**, this increased to **40.6%**.
- Current data indicates a further rise to **42.9%**.

In Haringey we currently have **303** children in our care, with **223** of our children in care living in foster care arrangements including connected carers.

All current fostered by Current Placement Type



These figures above reflect Haringey's commitment to securing stable, long-term placements for children in care.

Considerations and Limitations

It is important to note that not all foster placements can be long-term matched immediately. Reasons include:

- Ongoing care proceedings
- Short duration in current placement
- Carers committed only to short-term fostering
- Active searches for alternative long-term carers
- Efforts to maintain school placements for continuity and stability

Connected Carer Placements

Currently, **8.08%** of Haringey's children in care are placed with **Connected Carers**—individuals within the child's extended family or social network. Although these children remain under local authority care, such placements positively impact their **identity, sense of self, and emotional well-being** by preserving familial and cultural connections.

Adoption, Including Early Permanence

Early Permanence

In some cases, it becomes evident early on that a child may require adoption. This may occur when a parent decides they are unable to care for their child, the identity of the father is unknown, or no suitable alternative carer is identified within the mother's network.

In such circumstances, **Early Permanence** placements—also referred to as *Concurrency* or *Foster for Adoption*—may be considered. These placements involve foster carers who are also approved adopters. Their foster care approval is specific to the individual child.

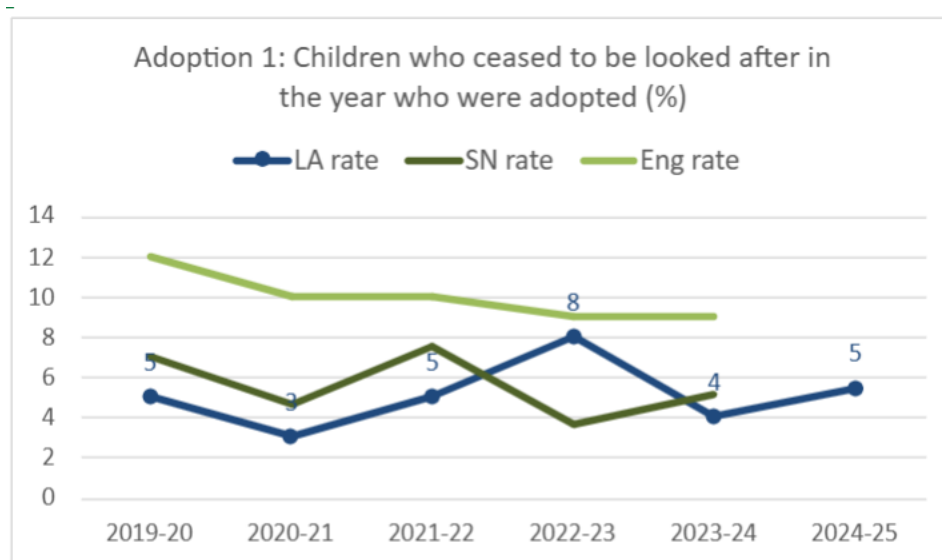
Children placed in Early Permanence arrangements are cared for in foster placements while care proceedings are ongoing. If the court ultimately approves a care plan for adoption, the foster placement transitions into a permanent adoptive home. This approach benefits the child by reducing changes in primary carers and, in many cases, allows the child to remain with the same carers throughout.

If the court grants a Placement Order, Early Permanence carers become **prospective adopters** and may apply to adopt the child in their care.

Nationally, **Adopt England** has recognised Early Permanence as a strategy to reduce delays and uncertainty for children. According to **Adoption and Special Guardianship data (October 2024)**, the average time from entry into care to adoption was **20 months**. Early Permanence placements have been shown to reduce this timeframe by **9 months**.

Adoption

Since April 2025, Haringey has had **nine Adoption Orders granted**, with **three additional hearings scheduled before December 2025**. There are **three children currently placed with prospective adopters**, whose applications can be submitted once the children have been in placement for ten weeks. Additionally, **family finding is actively underway for six more children**.



Performance Overview

Table 1 presents Haringey's adoption figures compared to national averages and statistical neighbours. Historically, Haringey has averaged **five adoptions per year**, with a peak of **eight in 2022/2023**. In 2025/2026, we are already exceeding this figure. However, this increase is partly due to delays in court hearings, which postponed the granting of Adoption Orders for children already matched.

Over the past 18 months, there has also been a noticeable rise in **applications for leave to oppose Adoption Orders by birth parents**. This trend may be linked to changes in **Legal Aid eligibility**, as only **one of the nine Adoption Orders since April 2025** has not been opposed.

Legal Aid and Adoption Proceedings

The **Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (Legal Aid: Family and Domestic Abuse) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Order 2023** introduced significant changes. Since **1 March 2023**, individuals applying for leave to oppose an Adoption Order are eligible for **non-means and non-merits tested Legal Aid**, increasing access to legal representation.

Global Majority Children and Adoption

Definition and Context

Adopt England defines **transracial adoption** as a family arrangement where adopters are of a different racial or ethnic background than the child. This includes:

- Cultural differences within Asian, Black, and White communities
- Religious heritage, such as Islamic faith, which may be considered part of a child's identity

There is ongoing debate around terminology. Recently, the term “**global majority**” has been used to describe children of Black, Asian, and mixed heritage backgrounds who have been previously racially minoritised in the UK.

Challenges and Disparities

Children from global majority backgrounds are **over-represented in the care system** and are **less likely to be adopted** compared to their peers. These children are more frequently recorded as having a change in care plan due to the reason: “*prospective adopters could not be found.*”

Initiatives and Funding

To address these disparities, **Adopt England** has funded the **Black Adoption Project**, a collaboration with **Laurelle Brown Training & Consultancy**. The project aims to:

- Explore structural and socio-economic barriers in adoption processes
- Improve the family finding journey for Black children and adopters
- Enhance retention of Black adopters during assessment
- Create peer support and educational groups for Black adopted children and young people

Call to Action

It is essential to understand and address these barriers to improve adoption outcomes for global majority children. Ensuring culturally appropriate matches and equitable access to adoption opportunities is a critical priority for our children.

Progress Since the Ofsted Inspection (2023)

Since the full Ofsted inspection in **February 2023**, Haringey has made significant strides in strengthening its approach to **permanency planning** for children in care. The introduction and refinement of **permanency planning meetings** and the **permanency panel** reflect the growing confidence of practitioners in exploring all parallel planning options and ensuring that robust contingency plans are in place.

Support for Social Workers

Haringey social workers have been supported through a range of targeted initiatives, including:

- **Workshops** on the adoption process and writing high-quality **Child Permanence Reports (CPRs)**
- **Joint training** with adoption and legal colleagues to embed understanding of legal processes
- **Revised permanency guidance** to clarify expectations and best practices
- **Process maps** outlining the adoption pathway to support timeliness and consistency
- **Consultations** with the Panel Advisor for adoption and the Kinship Team Leader to support case planning

Impact and Recognition

As evidenced by the data presented throughout this report, there has been a **notable improvement in achieving permanency** for children in Haringey. This progress was acknowledged during the **Ofsted focused visit in February 2025**, which highlighted the improvements made since the previous full inspection.

The table below shows the number of children where permanency was achieved through either Special Guardianship Orders, Long Term Matching to carers or Adoption; demonstrating the continued progress we have made in ensuring children's permanency needs are met in a timely manner:

2024/25	No. of Children	Since April 2025	No. of children
Special Guardianship Orders granted	10	Special Guardianship Orders granted	3
Long Term Matched to carers including connected carers	13	Long Term Matched to carers including connected carers	16
Adoption Orders granted	5	Adoption Orders granted	9

Permanency remains a **core priority** for Haringey, ensuring that all children in care are supported to thrive and reach their full potential in **stable, loving, and permanent homes**. In Haringey we are passionate about achieving permanency for our children and young people and we continue to prioritise permanence for the children we support and care for.

Key Priorities for 2025/26

- **Voice of the Child** - Children and young people must be listened to, respected and supported to contribute to discussions about permanence wherever possible. We in Haringey are committed to children being involved in their plans.
- **Keeping families together where safe** - Permanence starts with helping children, young people and families to live together in their communities and with their support networks. We will endeavour to look at creative solutions for children to maintain their family links.
- **Senior Management oversight** - Continue to track progress of permanency plans through the permanency panel maintaining senior management oversight.
- **Skilled Workforce** - Continuation of regular roll out of training as refresher courses for existing staff and new staff joining Haringey.

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Title: Collaborative Commissioning

Report

authorised by : Ann Graham, Corporate Director of Children's Services

Lead Officer: Dionne Thomas Director of Safeguarding & Social Care

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: For Information and Noting

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This report provides a strategic update on collaborative commissioning initiatives across North Central London (NCL) and Pan-London, with a particular focus on market management and placement sufficiency.

1.2 The report outlines key developments, emerging opportunities, and Haringey's active contributions to regional efforts aimed at improving outcomes for children in care and children with complex needs.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

3.1 That Members note contents.

4. Reasons for decision

4.1 This report is for information only.

5. Alternative options considered

N/A

6. Background information

6.1 Pan London and Sub Regional Commissioning Activity

6.1.1 Local authorities across London are under increasing pressure to meet the needs of children with complex needs amid rising demand, limited provision, and escalating costs. In response, both North Central London (NCL) sub-region and Pan-London through the wider London Integrated Improvement Alliance (LIIA) who are leading collaborative commissioning initiatives aimed at improving placement sufficiency, quality, and value for money.

6.1.2 Haringey is actively engaged in shaping and delivering these initiatives.

6.1.3 Key Pan-London (Regional) Activity projects:

- Secure Children's Home (SCH) & LARP: Development of a new Pan-London secure children's home with reintegration accommodation. A legal entity (Pan-London Vehicle) is being established to host this and future regional commissioning projects.
- London Accommodation Pathfinder: Expansion of supported accommodation across London, including recommissioning for 2026. A North London property is already operational.
- ASD/SEMH Commissioning: Five regional projects to improve early support, crisis response, short breaks, and local care options for children with autism and SEMH needs. Includes scoping for residential schools or networks.
- Parent and Child Residential Assessment Framework: Now fully operational across London, providing a consistent model for parenting assessments.
- Commissioning with Health: Development of Pan-London principles for jointly funded placements, particularly for children with complex needs.
- Capital and Market Engagement: Seven successful capital bids supported. Ongoing engagement with providers to stimulate development aligned with the London Sufficiency Plan.
- Top 330 Analysis: Regional analysis of high-cost, low-incidence placements to inform sufficiency planning and reduce reliance on expensive out-of-borough provision.
- Government Engagement: Ongoing lobbying with MoJ, DfE, and DHSC to address placement costs, funding models, and national policy reform.

6.1.4 North Central London (NCL) Sub-Regional Activity

- Joint Funded Placements Review: A task and finish group are reviewing complex care, continuing care, and Section 117 placements to identify commissioning inconsistencies and develop standardised protocols.
- Fostering Hub Development: A DfE-funded bid has been submitted to establish a North London fostering recruitment hub to increase in-house carers and reduce reliance on Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs).
- Residential Sufficiency Strategy: NCL boroughs are working to improve occupancy of in-house residential homes and shape the private market through block contracts and shared protocols.
- Data and Intelligence: A sufficiency needs assessment is underway using DfE, LIIA, and local data to inform future commissioning.
- Market Engagement: Engagement with P&V providers to align provision with local needs and improve cost-effectiveness.

6.2 Haringey Commissioning Activity

6.2.1 London Accommodation Pathway

6.2.1.1 Agreement in principle to continue to block a bed for 16–17-year-old male children in care as a direct alternative to being remanded or sentenced to custody and support resettlement. This is a pan-London project, led by Camden.

6.2.2 NCL Complex Needs Children's Home

6.2.2.1 The provision will provide additional local provision for children in care with complex mental health needs and challenging behaviours, and the aim is for the home to be ready by 2026/2027. Haringey have expressed an interest in blocking a bed to meet the needs of children in care with complex mental health.

6.3 Fostering Hub and Capital Projects

6.3.1 Haringey is strategically investing in fostering capacity through capital projects.

6.3.2 Haringey Children's Services have also looked to increase its fostering capacity through capital projects. One such project is the Fostering Families project, where children's service has worked closely with the Housing team to acquire a 4-bed property for the purposes of relocating one of Haringey's existing foster carers. By moving the foster carer to larger accommodation, this will allow them to increase their fostering capacity. This will support larger sibling groups to stay together within the borough and reduce Haringey's reliance on high-cost out-of-borough IFAs. It is anticipated that the first iteration of this scheme will be delivered in October 2025.

6.3.3 As part of Haringey's drive to recruit foster carers / increase fostering capacity, the capital projects team have aligned this priority with the Overnight Short Breaks project, which will create a 3-bed Overnight Short Breaks Centre for children with high physical or neurodevelopmental needs – target open date Spring 2026. As part of this alignment, the capital projects team are developing a package of support to foster carers of children with high needs, which will entitle them to a set number of nights to access the Overnight Short Breaks centre. It is hoped the guaranteed offer of respite will entice more prospective foster carers to be placed with children with high needs.

6.4 Market Management

6.4.1 Haringey continues to strengthen market relationships and commissioning flexibility:

- Quarterly Provider Forums to build collaborative relationships, to promote good practice, share key updates and drive improvements in quality.
- Commissioning led the development of a new Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) and Children's Residential Homes, enhancing both commissioning flexibility and provider engagement. To date, eight IFAs, including the UK's largest fostering agency, have joined the DPS.

6.4.2 We have been working collaboratively with IFAs to expand placement capacity through:

- Weekly vacancy tracking to monitor available foster placements.

- Developing bi-weekly and monthly engagement meetings with providers whom we place the most children in care with to discuss upcoming needs, enable early matching, and proactively respond to placement requests.
- Currently, Ten Ofsted-registered children's homes operate in Haringey, including the council's own provision, offering a total of thirty-eight beds. So far, four residential homes have joined the DPS.

6.4.3 Planning permission has been granted for four new children's homes in Haringey, which are now pending Ofsted registration. These homes will provide an additional sixteen beds. Commissioning is actively engaging with these new providers to secure:

- A Haringey-first offer for placement vacancies.
- Reduced placement fees

Of the four new homes:

- Three homes will be registered for Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD).
- One home will be registered for Learning Disabilities (LD).

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes

N/A

8. Carbon and Climate Change

N/A

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

N/A

10. Use of Appendices

None

11. Background papers

N/A

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