

NOTICE OF MEETING

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 25th January, 2018, 7.15 pm or on the rise of the meeting with Aspire- Civic Centre, High Road, Wood Green, N22 8LE

Members: Councillors Patrick Berryman, Bob Hare, Liz Morris, Felicia Opoku, Sheila Peacock, Anne Stennett and Elin Weston (Chair)

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 10 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 - 10)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October.

6. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING WITH ASPIRE

7. PERFORMANCE AND ADOPTION SCORE CARD. (PAGES 11 - 20)

8. LEVEL 3 AND ACCESS COURSES FOR CARE LEAVERS AND BENEFIT IMPLICATIONS (PAGES 21 - 24)

9. INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES (PAGES 25 - 44)

10. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any items admitted at item 2 above.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

20th March

Philip Slawther, Principal Committee Co-ordinator

Tel – 020 8489 2957

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Email: Philip.slawther2@haringey.gov.uk

Bernie Ryan

Assistant Director – Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer

River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8HQ

Wednesday, 17 January 2018

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2017**

Councillors Cllr Weston [Chair], Cllr Berryman, Cllr Stennett, Cllr Hare & Cllr Opoku

Apologies Cllr Morris

Also attending Margaret Dennison (Interim Director of Children's Services) Sarah Alexander (Assistant Director – Safeguarding and Social Care), Jo Moses (Interim Head of Children in Care & Placements), Fiona Smith (Virtual School Head), Emma Cummergen (Deputy Head of Safeguarding and Social Care), Annie Walker (Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care & Placements), Lynn Carrington (Designated Nurse Children in Care), Philip Slawther (Clerk), Anneke Fraser.

CPAC337. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Morris, Cllr Hare and Cllr Opoku.

Apologies were also received from Kim Holt, Margaret Gallagher and Denise Gandy.

CPAC338. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING WITH ASPIRE

NOTED: The actions listed in the notes of the meeting with Aspire.

- A schedule of available benefits be developed and included in the leaving care handbook.
- Aspire case study to be included on the next agenda.
- Consideration to be given on how to publicise the Aspire pledges.
- Initial review of Aspire pledges as a potential agenda item in March.

CPAC339. URGENT BUSINESS

NONE

CPAC340. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

CPAC341. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2017 were AGREED.

In relation to the previous action around developing a response to the cut-off for the local housing cap, officers advised that the guidance had just been released and that consideration would be given to next steps and whether a letter should be drafted to the Minister. **(Action: Sarah Alexander).**

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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An update in the Adoption scorecard to be included on the January agenda. **(Action: Margaret Gallagher).**

CPAC342. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee NOTED the Corporate Parenting Agenda Plan 2017/18.

The Chair requested that an update on the new Ofsted inspection regime be brought to the Committee meeting. **(Action: Margaret Dennison).**

CPAC343. LEAVING CARE RE-DESIGN

RECEIVED a presentation setting out a summary of findings and proposals from the leaving care re-design, which was presented by the Transformation Strategy Manager, Marc Kidson. Report included in the agenda pack (pages 11 to 26).

NOTED in response to the discussion:

- The wider context of the work was around identifying elements of future service design that provided improvements to the care leaver offer, but without requiring any additional resources.
- In response to a concerns around the statistic that 49 out of a cohort of 419 care leavers were estimated to be gang affiliated, the Committee was advised that there were no comparable data available as other boroughs did not publish the information.
- In response to a question, officers advised that there were saying put arrangements for care leavers but that there were not as many available as they might wish, given the different requirements involved with the transition in to adulthood.
- The Committee noted the high proportion of the cohort with emotional, mental health and behaviour issues, and raised concerns about the termination of CAMHS services at 18. The Chair advised the Committee that the CCG had agreed to ease the adjustment period down beyond 18 and that this should be reflected in the next iteration of the CAHMS Transformation Plan.
- In response to a question around the ratio of social workers to care leavers, the Committee were advised that the cohort of 419 were supported by 7 social workers and 14 personal advisors.
- Aspire fed back that several Aspire sessions had been focused around mental health, reflecting the level of importance in which the topic was held within the group. The Designated Nurse for CIC suggested that Aspire invite the psychologist from First Step to attend a future discussion on mental health.
- The Chair advised that a next steps report would be taken to Cabinet in February.
- The Committee thanked the officers concerned for the time and effort invested into a detailed and important piece of work.

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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AGREED to note the presentation.

CPAC343. IRO ANNUAL REPORT

RECEIVED the IRO Annual Report presented by the AD Safeguarding and Social Care, Sarah Alexander. Report included in the second dispatch agenda pack (pages 1 to 19).

NOTED in response to the discussion:

- The Committee sought assurances around the performance of the IRO function, given that it was highlighted in the 2014 Ofsted report. In response officers advised that the service had improved but that was not yet at the position that officers hoped for, particularly around escalation actions.
- In response to a query on how the IROs were perceived by the young people, officers advised that they were perceived favourably and that for some young people it was likely to be the longest running relationship that they had with Children's Services.
- In response to a question, officers advised that the current caseload for an IRO was around 70 children.

CPAC344. LAC PLACEMENTS.

In the absence of the Director of Housing Demand, HfH the Committee agreed to defer the Looked After Children Sufficiency Analysis until the next meeting.

The Committee had a brief discussion around unaccompanied asylum seeking children, including current caseloads and the reasons that Haringey was over its quota.

The Chair requested that a brief update be provided to the next meeting which focused on the reasons behind a reduction in the number of children ceasing to be looked after and the trend of an increasing number of placement moves. **(Action: Margaret Gallagher/Clerk).**

CPAC344. FOSTER CARERS

The Committee received an update from the AD Safeguarding and Social Care on the commissioning plan for the recruitment assessment of an in-house model of foster carers.

NOTED in response to the discussion:

- A dedicated communications officer had been appointed to manage the communications process for foster carer recruitment.
- The Committee were advised that the process was envisaged to take around 12 months, however this was contingent on meeting a number of tight deadlines.
- The Committee suggested that there could be some interest in the west of the borough around fostering UASC. The AD Safeguarding and Social Care agreed to send details of how residents could assist with fostering for the Chair to circulate to all ward Councillors. **(Action: Sarah Alexander).**

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- As part of the review into the previous foster care arrangements an audit was being undertaken of the NRS contract.

CPAC345. DENTAL CHECK AUDIT

The Committee noted the report.

CPAC346. CARE LEAVERS WITH NO CONTACT TO COUNCIL SERVICES

NOTED the verbal report of the Assistant Director of Safeguarding & Social Care on care leavers with no contact with Council services. Children's services undertook a data return on the birthday of 17-21 year olds in care. This took place 1 month prior to their birthday and three months after their birthday to ascertain whether they were in suitable accommodation and whether they were in education, training or employment. The definition of whether they were in touch was whether they had been in contact during that 4 month period.

The Chair requested that any further detail around care leavers with no contact with Council services be sent to the clerk to circulate with the minutes. **(Action: Emma Cummergen).**

CPAC345. SAFEGUARDING AND SEMI-INDEPENDENT LIVING PROVIDERS

NOTED the verbal report of the Assistant Director of Safeguarding & Social Care around the monitoring of safeguarding arrangements for semi-independent living providers.

The Assistant Director of Safeguarding & Social Care agreed to circulate a report on this item to the Committee. **(Action: Sarah Alexander).**

CPAC348. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

CPAC350. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there was a position available for a Councillor to sit on the Virtual Schools Management Board, alongside the Cabinet Member for Children and Families. The Board met 3 times a year, with the first meeting being 6th November at 15:30-17:00. Committee members were invited to contact the Chair if they were interested, otherwise it would be opened up to all Councillors.

Future meetings

NOTED the following provisional dates:

16th January 2018

20th March 2018

Meetings are scheduled to start at 6.30pm.

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2017**

The meeting ended at 20:40 hours.

Cllr Elin Weston
Chair

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Corporate Parenting Agenda Planning 2017/18

Corporate Parenting meeting Date	Agenda Items	Lead Officer
4 th July 2017	1. Performance inc. evaluation of dental health indicator	Margaret Gallagher
	2. CPAC and Aspire notes with update on actions	Jon Abbey
	3. Pan-London Adoption Bid	Jon Abbey
	4. Update on foster carer recruitment and future models of provision	Dominic Porter-Moore
	5. Homelessness Reduction Bill	Denise Gandy
	<u>Reports for noting</u>	
	6. Reasons behind Haringey having a higher proportion of care leavers who no longer require services	Dominic Porter-Moore/ Margaret Gallagher
	7. Adoption Paper	Sarah Alexander
	8. Supervision Orders	Sarah Alexander
	<u>Action Updates</u>	
	9. Fostering Advert on Sky	Sarah Alexander
	Draft Reports will be due with Jon Abbey on 20th June and due for publication on 23rd June	
19 th October 2017	1. LAC Placements	Margaret Gallagher
	2. CPAC and Aspire notes	Jon Abbey
	3. IRO Annual Report	Sarah Alexander

Corporate Parenting Agenda Planning 2017/18

	<p>4. Foster Carers</p> <p>5. Care Leavers with no contact to Council services</p> <p>6. Dental Check Audit</p> <p>7. Safeguarding and Semi-Independent Living Providers</p> <p><u>Main Presentation item</u></p> <p>8. Care Leavers Work</p> <p><u>Action Updates</u></p> <p>9. Adoption figures for consortium neighbours</p> <p>10. Introduction of Local Housing cap at 22</p> <p>Draft Reports will be due with Margaret Dennison on 6th October and due for publication on the 11th October.</p>	<p>Yvonne Mendes</p> <p>Sarah Alexander/Yvonne Mendes</p> <p>Lynn Carrington</p> <p>Sarah Alexander</p> <p>Mark Kidson</p> <p>Yvonne Mendes</p> <p>Denise Gandy</p>
25 Jan 2018	<p>1. Performance and Adoption Score Card.</p> <p>2. CPAC and Aspire notes</p> <p>3. Aspire case study (benefits and YAS support).</p> <p>4. Ofsted inspection regime update</p>	<p>Margaret Gallagher</p> <p>Emma Cummergen</p> <p>Margaret Dennison</p>

Corporate Parenting Agenda Planning 2017/18

	<p><u>Action Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on LAC placements. • Update on local housing cap. <p>Draft Reports will be due with Margaret Dennison on 18th December and due for publication on the 3rd January 2017</p>	
20 March 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance 2. CPAC and Aspire notes 3. Initial review of Aspire pledge <p><u>Substantive discussion item</u></p> <p><u>Reports for noting</u></p> <p><u>Action Updates</u></p> <p>Draft Reports will be due with Margaret Dennison on the 5th March and due for publication on the 12th March.</p>	


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Report for: Corporate Parent Advisory Committee: 25 January 2018

Item number:

Title: Performance for the year to December 2017

Report

Authorised by:  Interim Director, Children's Services Margaret Dennison

Lead Officer: Margaret Gallagher, Corporate Performance Manager
margaret.gallagher@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Non key

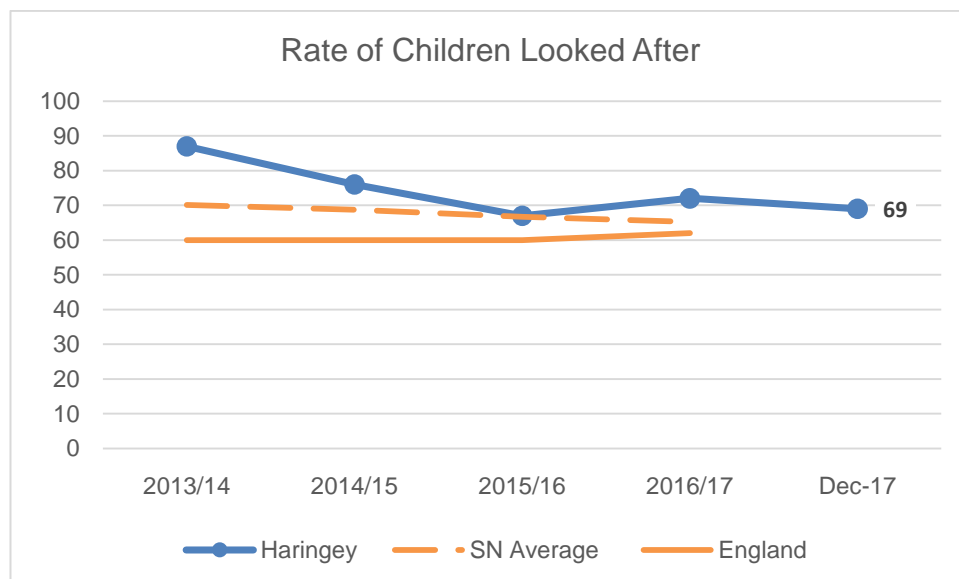
1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an analysis of the performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.
- 1.2. Section 2 and 3 contain performance highlights and key messages identifying areas of improvement and areas for focus.
- 1.3. Section 4 provides an overall assessment relating to Children in Care so that Members can assess progress in key areas within the context of the Local Authorities' role as Corporate Parent.
- 1.4. Section 5 provides an update on the latest published Adoption Scorecard and Haringey's performance against key indicators and Government thresholds, as requested by the Committee.

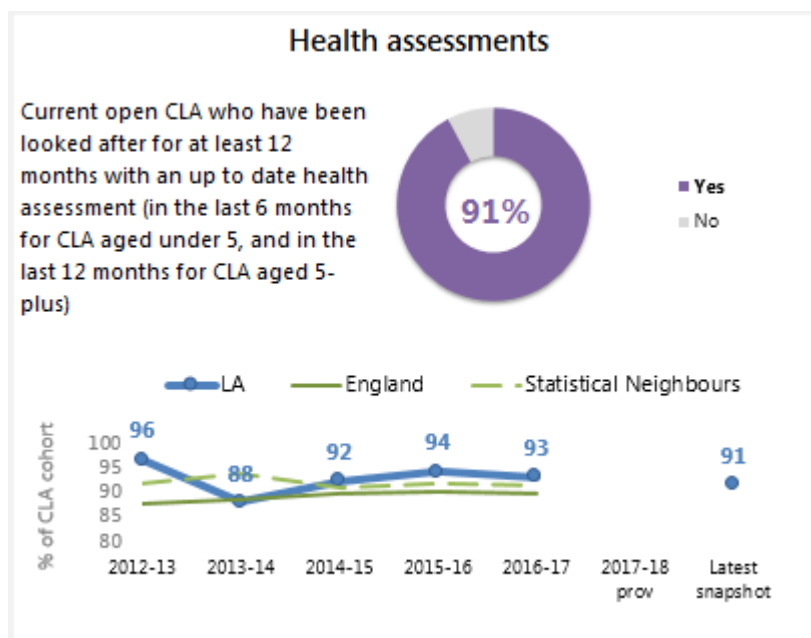
2. Positive or Improving Performance

- 2.1. 427 **children were in care** at the end of December 2017 or 69 per 10,000 population including 53 unaccompanied asylum seeker children. There has been a decrease in the number of children in care compared to the position at the end of March 2017.
- 2.2. At 31 March 2017 there were 440 children in Haringey's care, 72 per 10,000 population. Published 2016/17 CLA903 summary data confirms whilst there was an increase in our LAC rate there had been a decrease in that of our statistical neighbours (65 per 10,000 population), forming a gap in the rate

which was in line in 2015/16. Our 2016/17 position remained higher than the London (50) and national average (62) rates.



- 2.3. At the end of December 2017, 86% of looked after children had an **up to date Care Plan** and this increased to 90% for the week ending 12th January 2018 achieving the target. Good performance has been maintained in this area having improved from 84% as at April 2017. Regular weekly meetings to track activity and performance continue to be held with the Head of Service for Children in Care and team managers.
- 2.4. At the end of December 2017, 10% of **children had three or more placement moves**, just above the statistical neighbour average (7%) but in line with the last published national position (10%). 76% of children under 16 who had been in care for at least 2.5 years had been in the same placement for at least 2 years, higher than the national average (68%) and indicating positive placement stability overall for Haringey's children in care.
- 2.5. At the end of December, 296 children were looked after for at least 12 months of which 91% had an **up to date health assessment**, close to the target and continuing on a positive trend. This is a slight dip on November's performance of 94% but remains in line with statistical neighbour performance.

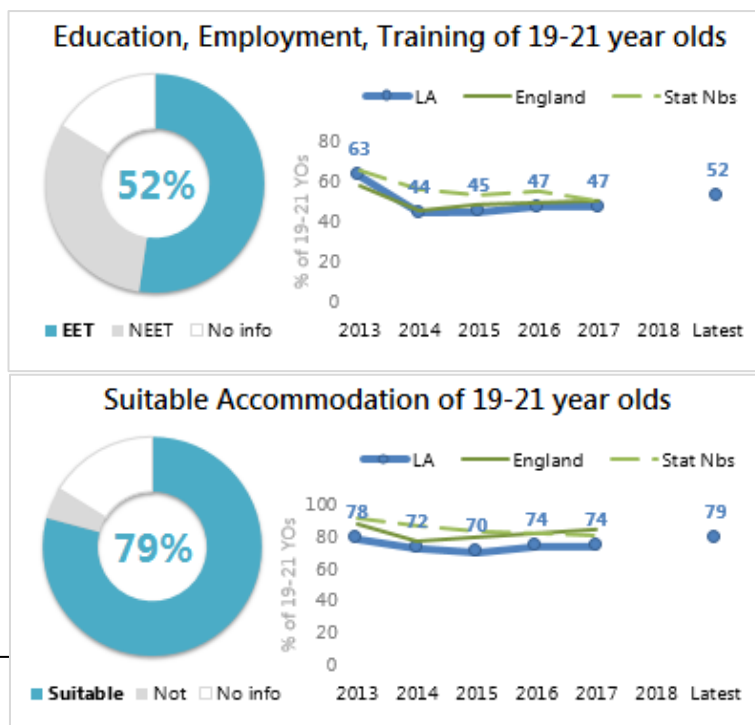


- 2.6. 64 or 17% of Looked After Children at the end of December 2017 were **placed 20 miles or more from Haringey** compared to a 16% target and 19% amongst our statistical neighbours. Fewer children are being placed 20 miles+ and there are good reasons for these placements outside the borough; many linked to complex care requirements or long term foster care arrangements. Although higher than national levels this proportion remains just slightly above the London average.
- 2.7. Data for the first 2 quarters of 2017/18 financial year confirms that the **average duration of care proceedings for concluded cases** was 28 weeks, an improvement on the 2016/17 average case duration of 32 weeks, maintaining the downward trend since the Family Justice Review in 2013. 53% of the 31 cases were concluded in less than the statutory 26 week timescale, again an improvement on the 2016/17 position of 36%. There were just 3 concluded cases of long running duration (over 40 weeks) in the first half of 2017/18.
- 2.8. It is also worthy of note that the number of **care applications** increased by 77% since 2015/16 in Haringey which reverses the downward trend maintained since 2010/2011. The rate of care proceedings per 10,000 children increased to 13.6 in 2016/17 from 7.7 in 2015/16. This means that Haringey courts are processing higher than average volumes of care proceedings compared to the national position of 12.5 per 100,000 population. The expected impact of the improvements in the use of the PLO process and introduction of the Signs of Safety model ¹ of social worker practice in January 2016 to maintain the decrease has not occurred.
- 2.9. The outcomes for 42% (25 children) of **care proceeding cases** concluded in the first half of 2017/18 were care or placement orders meaning that the children become looked after. This is slightly down on the proportion in 2016/17 (49%) which resulted in the children becoming looked after. 9 children or 15% resulted in the children being placed with family on a special guardianship order

¹ Turnell, A and Edwards, S. (1999) Signs of Safety: A Solution Oriented Approach to Child Protection Casework

and the remaining 25 children (42%) were reunified with their parents, a similar proportion to that in 2016/17.

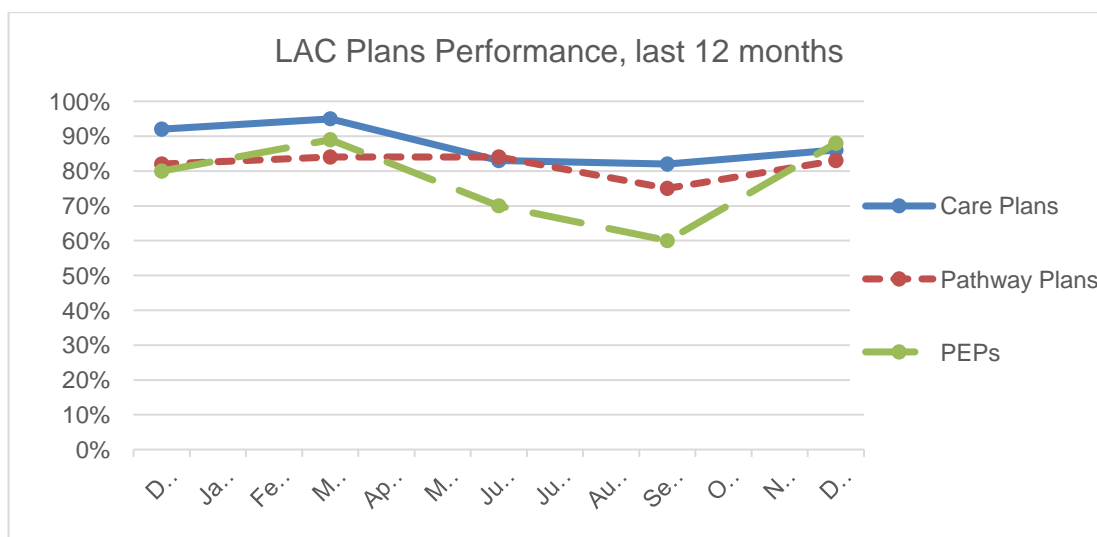
- 2.10. In 2016/17 we saw the lowest percentage of permanency being achieved for looked after children, 6% of children who ceased to be looked after compared to 14% nationally but just below our statistical neighbour position of 7%. Although the number of adoptions and SGOs granted in the year to date remains low, performance at the end of December was higher than the same period last year.
- 2.11. To date, 15 **special guardianship orders** (SGOs) have been achieved and 11 **adoptions** secured. There are an additional 5 children who have been placed for adoption so it is likely that court proceedings permitting, we will achieve at least 15 adoptions in 2017/18 compared to just 11 in 2016/17. With SGOs included, this equates to 26 permanency orders achieved – 6 more compared to December 2016. We have around 33 children waiting to be adopted and a number of SGOs in the pipeline so there is potential to convert some of these into agreed permanency orders before the financial year end.
- 2.12. In the financial year to December 2017, **children waited an average of 417 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption**. This relates to the 11 adoptions this year so caution must be exercised when averaging on relatively small numbers. Adoptions after a long period in care even in complex cases for just 1 or 2 young people can skew the average on this national indicator of timeliness. See separate update in section 5 on the Haringey's published Adoption Scorecard and comparator data. The scorecard covers a rolling 3 year period up to and including 2016/17 but progress in 2017/18 is not factored into the published scorecard results.
- 2.13. Of the 216 **care leavers** aged 19-21 in receipt of leaving care services, 84% were in touch with the local authority at the end of December 2017. Of these, 52% were in **Education Employment or Training** (EET) and 79% were in **suitable accommodation**.



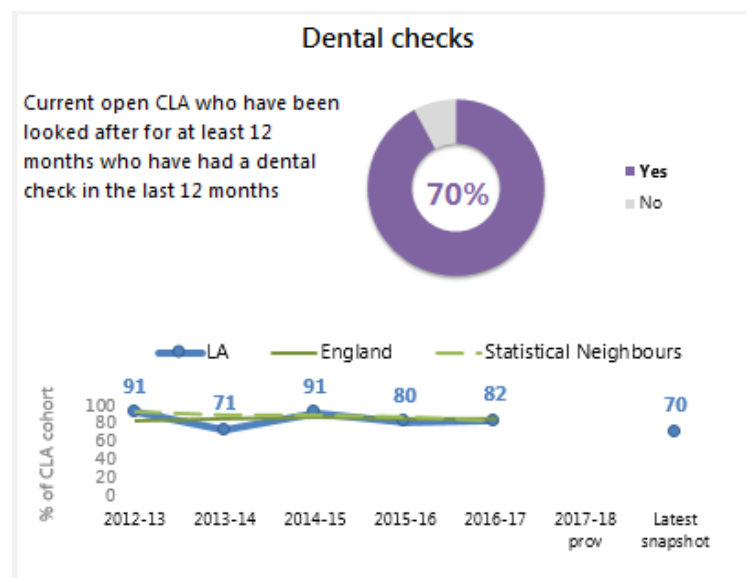
- 2.14. Latest performance figures show we have a higher proportion of care leavers in EET in comparison to our statistical neighbours and national average. The percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation is slightly below the statistical neighbour (81%) and national average (84%) but is on an improving trend.

3. Areas for Focus

- 3.1. 83% of looked after children aged 16-17 had **up to date Pathway Plans** at the end of December 2017. In the week ending 12th January this performance has dipped to 77%. Performance in this area is fairly consistent however the gap with the 90% target continues. There were 9 pathway plans not up to date at the beginning of January and a further 10 with no plan recorded. Performance has been on a downward trend since April so some additional focus is needed in this area.
- 3.2. Performance on **Personal Education Plans** has improved in recent months with current data showing that 76% of PEPs for statutory school age children having an up to date PEP within the last term. Previously data was reported on a six monthly basis so ensuring PEPs are reviewed on a termly basis has impacted with peaks and troughs in the figures as the school terms come to an end and the PEPs needing to be brought up to date. However although performance dipped to 60% at the start of the new term in January 2018, it has quickly been rectified with performance back up to 76% in 1 week giving us confidence that the 90% target is achievable.
- 3.3. The graph below shows the performance across all these areas over the last 12 months up to December 2017.



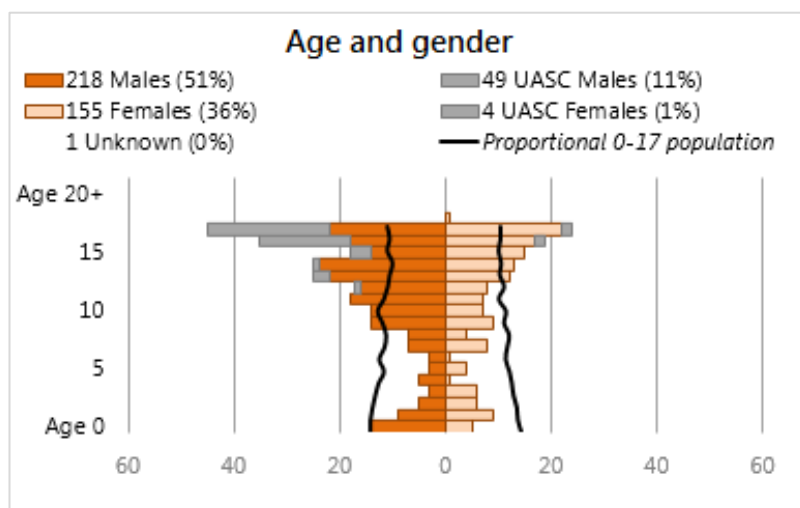
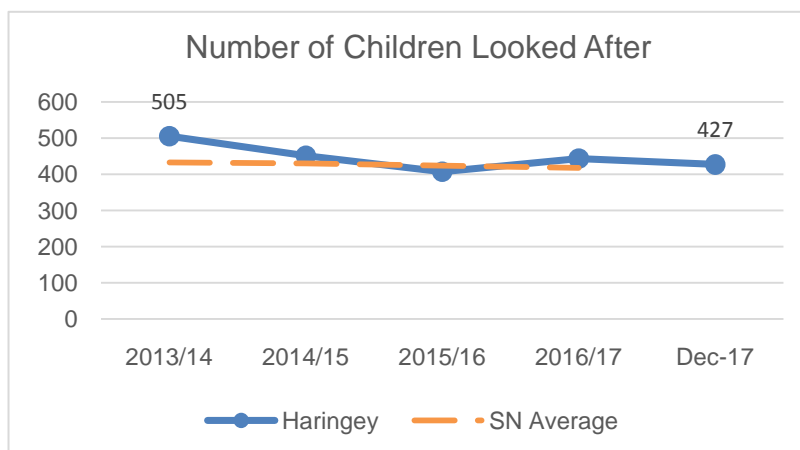
- 3.4. 76% of **visits to Children in Care** were recorded as completed in the relevant timescales in December, positioning performance below expected standards although data for the week ending 12th January shows improvement to 85% of looked after children visited within timescale. Performance on visits to looked after children continues to be tracked at performance meetings held by the Head of Service for Children in Care and along with supervision meetings continue to be actively addressed.
- 3.5. A new visit step on Mosaic to more accurately capture timely visits according to statutory requirements is due to be implemented in January 2018, it is hoped that this will provide a truer reflection of when children are seen as current recording of visits in different statutory timescales is captured in case notes and not in a way that is easy to accurately or efficiently report on.
- 3.6. 70% of the current LAC cohort (age 2 and over and in care for at least 12 months) had an **up to date dental visit** as at December 2017. 128 children are showing as due a dental visit and 65 of these have not had a dental check since coming into care. We know that the large majority are older children between the ages of 13 and 17 and the majority are in either in- house or fostering placements.
- 3.7. It might be that more can be done to ensure the foster carers adhere to their responsibilities or that dental checks could be part of the requirement for the child placement within a month of them being in care. Details of the children without a dental check and those due a medical visit have been provided to target those with outstanding visits/assessments. A small incentive payment being offered to foster carers to ensure children regularly have their teeth checked is also being considered and addressing the recording of visits on the system could also improve the reported figures as some social workers do not record the dental checks in the correct place so not all visits are captured in the reports.



Overall Assessment of Children in Care

Looked After Children

- 4.1. There has been a 15% reduction in number of children looked after in Haringey since March 2014. Whilst we saw a reduction in the number of LAC, our statistical neighbours' position remained fairly stable over the years. The gap between our LAC number and that of our comparative boroughs continued to narrow until 2015/16 where Haringey's position became in line with comparators. Haringey's LAC number and rate has since remained fairly stable.



- 4.2. In the year to December 2017, 154 children became looked after and 154 ceased to be looked after. Majority of these (53%) came into care under Section 20 (V2) whilst 22% were subject to a Police Protection Order (L1). The primary reason for children coming into care is around abuse and neglect with this accounting for nearly 50% of the cohort starting to be looked after in the last 9 months. The next most common category of need is absent parenting (c22%) or family dysfunction (c12% of LAC starters) with just under 10% of the cohort becoming looked after because of parental illness or disability.
- 4.3. 30 or 19% of all children who became looked after in the last 9 months were unaccompanied asylum seeking children and 20 or 13% of children who started to be in care in 2017/18 have previously been looked after.

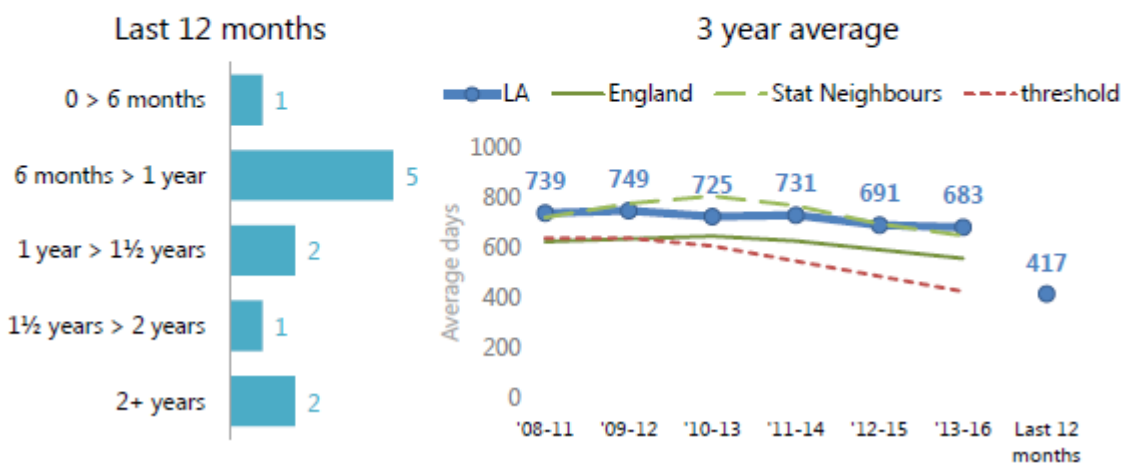
- 4.4. 166 episodes of care have ceased in the year to date. The highest proportion (48%) left care due to any other reason (note a large number of these left care as they turned 18). 30% returned home to their parents/guardians.

5. Adoption Scorecard

- 5.1. Haringey's **3 year rolling average position** against this indicator was published in the national government Adoption Scorecard in August 2017 covering the period **2013-16**. The average days between a Haringey child entering care and moving in with it's adoptive family was 683 days in that period, higher than the national threshold (distance of 257 days) and above England's improving position of 558 days (593 days for 2012-2015).
- 5.2. There is a long term improvement trend between 2012-2015 and 2013-2016 although Haringey's average days in 2016 were longer than in 2015 and Haringey like many other authorities has not yet managed to achieve the national threshold. However no new national thresholds have been set beyond 2016 and more recent data in 2017 shows that timeliness has improved with a current average days of 417 better than the national threshold. The graphs below shows Haringeys progress over time on the key adoption indicators.

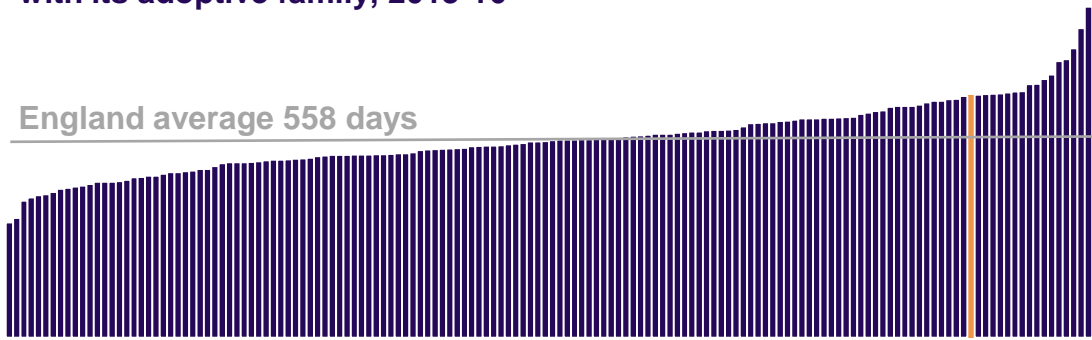
(A1) Time between entering care and placed with family for adopted children

417 days The average number of days from the date the child entered care to the date the child moved in with their adoptive family for adopted children
11 children



A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, 2013-16

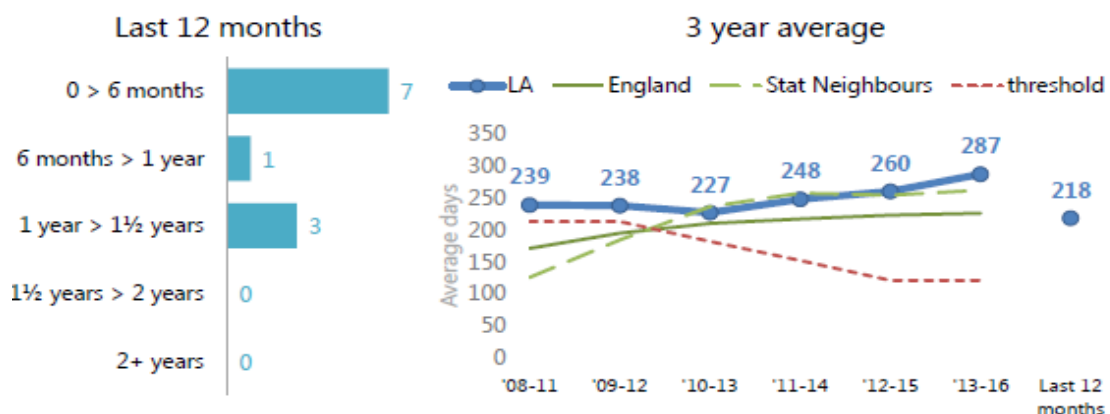
England average 558 days



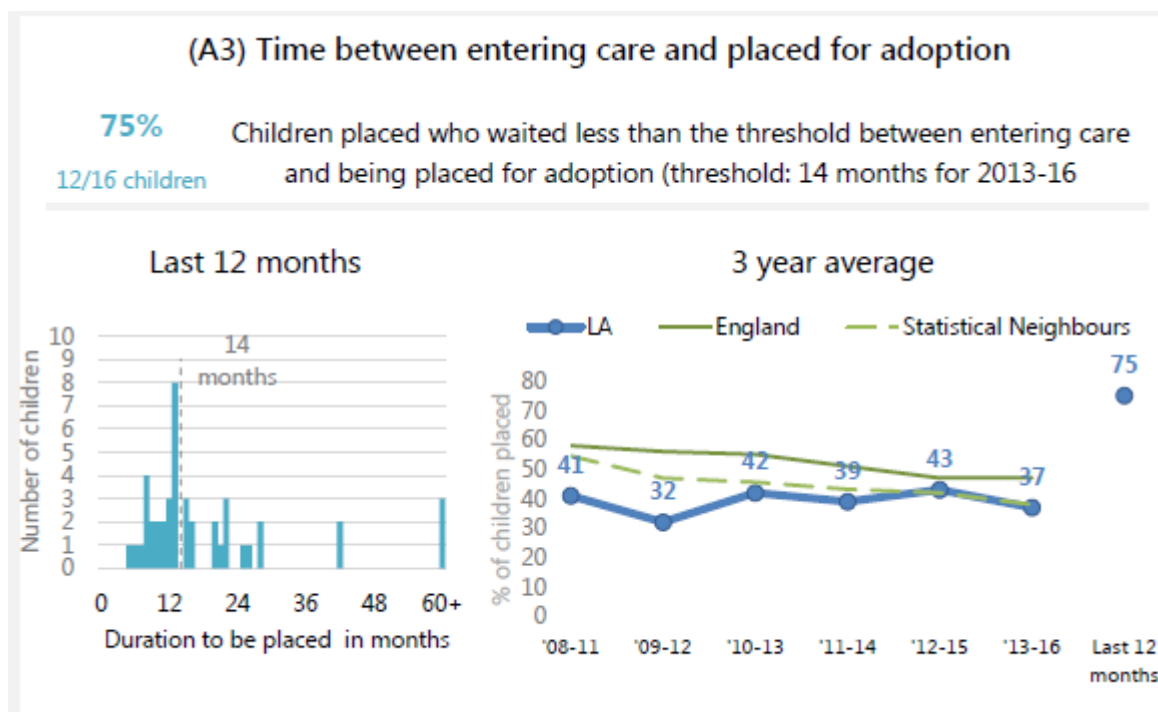
- 5.3. As can be seen from the graph above Haringey are amongst the bottom quartile nationally in terms of timeliness for placing children for adoption. However this is not out of line with our statistical neighbours who over the same period achieved an average of 649 days on this key indicator with some neighbouring authorities taking over 800 days on average to place children for adoption. Adoption scorecards are used to track national progress on adoptions and adopter related data.
- 5.4. The time between placement order and deciding on a match is also tracked and overtime shows that the average days between the date of the placement order to the date the child is matched with it's prospective adopter have been increasing. This is also true for the national picture as well as amongst our statistical neighbours and is largely influenced by decisions of the court. The graph below shows the trend over time on this adoption scorecard indicator against national thresholds and the time between placement order and match for the 11 children placed for adoption in 2017/18. As with indicator A1, the 2017/18 data shows improvement but is only based on 1 year's data. For most children placed this year, the majority (7) were matched within 6 months of the placement order.

(A2) Time between placement order and deciding on a match

218 days The average number of days from the date of the placement order to the date the child was matched to prospective adopters
11 children



- 5.5. Finally on indicator A3 where the overall time between the child entering care and being placed for adoption is assessed against a 14 month threshold, Haringey's performance in 2017/18 is showing significant improvement with 75% (12 out of 16 children) waiting less than 14 months to be placed for adoption. This compares with 37% in Haringey over the 3 year period 2013-16, 38% amongst our statistical neighbours and 47% of children placed within 14 months nationally. The graph below shows progress over time in this area and the spread of durations for the children placed in the last 12 months.



- 5.6. In March 2016, Adoption: A Vision for Change set out the Government's strategy for adoption. In order to build on the progress already made, they are keen to make better use of data to drive high performance across the system. They are currently assessing how they can develop the present Adoption Scorecards to ensure they provide meaningful data on performance in a regionalised system in conjunction with the RAA leaders group and other sector bodies.
- 5.7. In the meantime, they will continue to publish scorecards in their current form with the indicators and thresholds remaining the same. Previously, thresholds have been raised incrementally over a four-year period until they reflected levels set out in statutory guidance. As we have reached that level, the thresholds will remain the same. This means for 2014-17 the thresholds will continue to be set at 426 days (14 months) for the A1 indicator and 121 days (4 months) for the A2 indicator.

6. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 6.1. Priority 1: Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education.

Report for: Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee
25 January 2018

Item number:

Title: Level 3 and Access Courses for Care Leavers and Benefit Implications

Report

authorised by : 
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Lead Officer: Emma Cummergen, Deputy Head of Service
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Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Like any good parent, we want to help all care leavers to reach their full potential, whether that is going to college or university, taking up an apprenticeship or getting a skilled job. This requires a range of approaches, supporting those with high potential to achieve, as well as removing barriers for those who have either fallen behind or need extra support to remain in education or training.
- 1.2 There is a significant gap between the educational and employment achievements of care leavers and young people in the general population. In the year ending March 2015, 39% of 19-21 year-old care leavers were "Not in Education, Employment or Training" (NEET), an increase compared to the previous year. Of these, over a third were NEET due to either a disability, or because they were a young parent. Six percent of 19-21 year-old care leavers were in Higher Education; and a further 18% were in other types of education. Twenty-three per cent were in employment or training, an increase of three percentage points on the previous year
- 1.3 One of the key messages from Ofsted inspection reports has been that in around half of local authorities inspected, not enough support was being provided to help care leavers to find and sustain education, training or employment.
- 1.4 All 19-23 year-olds are entitled to free education and training to achieve their first full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification, and all adults are entitled to free English and maths up to Level 2. Care leavers are a priority group for financial support through the 16-19 Bursary Fund administered by FE colleges, to help with the costs of studying and to help support care leavers' retention in learning.

- 1.5 However, young people who are in further full time education (i.e. up to a level 3) and are over the age of 22 are not eligible to claim Income support as they fall outside the age criteria applied by Income Support. They are not eligible for Job Seekers Allowance as they are not looking for or available for work.
- 1.6 In turn, because they are not in receipt of benefits, they are ineligible for housing benefits or student finance for living expenses as they are not in Higher Education (HE).
- 1.7 Ineligibility for the whole range of welfare benefits requires the financial support of our Young Adults Service (YAS) so the young person will have funds for basic living and rent expenses and not incur mounting debts or leave their educational courses to seek work or sign onto benefits.
- 1.8 To remedy this the YAS is funding care leavers subsistence for the duration of their course, applying to charities to help to fund rent costs, funding rent costs where necessary and assisting the young people to seek part time work.
- 1.9 Care leavers often enter and seek higher education later in life. Unlike their peers who may still be living at home with their parents or have family support, care leavers can be at a disadvantage in terms of the financial circumstances when embarking on further education.
- 1.10 This has become more evident in the YAS as an increasing number of care leavers are entering further education after their twenty first birthday. Investigations of young people's plans and our data analysis tells us that this trend is set to increase and will place a greater financial burden on the service when the Children and Social Work Act 2017 comes into effect and our duties for all care leavers extend to 25 which explicitly sets out our duties for further and higher education support.

2. Case Studies

YAS has three care leavers directly affected by the benefit legislation:

2.1 Case Study One

- 2.1.1 This young person is aged 21 and enrolled on an access to midwifery full time course. They were working full time but gave up their job to concentrate on their studies. Unfortunately, they do not meet the criteria for Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance as they started the course after their 21st birthday. They are living in permanent accommodation and have some rent arrears due to their low income.
- 2.1.2 To manage their immediate financial needs the service are providing limited financial support whilst we work together on a solution.
- 2.1.3 The housing department are in the process of confirming eligibility for housing benefit as they started their course prior to their 22nd birthday.
- 2.1.4 Previously housing benefit would backdate payments if a positive decision is concluded, but back dates are now very time limited and the young person is finding the challenge of concluding this stressful which has resulted in them

reverting to avoidant behaviour.

2.2. Case Study Two

2.2.1 This young person is aged 24 and is currently attending Capel Manor College full-time where they study Horticulture, English and Maths (course ends in May 2018). They are unable to claim Income Support which excludes them from applying for Housing Benefit. This has resulted in rent arrears.

2.2.2 Their aspirations are to be a gardener and they have managed to access gardening work independently but because it is winter this has been sporadic – there will be more scope in the spring. In the meantime, we are supporting them to explore part time work opportunities via our employment consultant from Drive Forward Foundation.

2.2.3 The young person will turn 25 in May 2018 at which time their course finishes. They have made an application to UCAS to go on to university where, if successful, they will then be eligible to access student finance when they start in September 2018.

2.2.4 In the meantime, they will be referred for a money management course with our on-site drop in Barnardo's advisor to support financial skills.

2.2.5 The young person has been very proactive in trying to source financial assistance elsewhere and currently receives £300 every three months from a hardship fund at the college which is put towards their rent although it does not cover the total cost. YAS staff are applying to the charitable organisations for assistance from their hardship funds.

2.2.6 We are currently supporting this young person with weekly subsistence payments, and agreed to fund rent of £92 weekly whilst they seek some stable part time work. As with the previous case study, without the support from the service they will be evicted from their permanent accommodation due to increasing rent arrears.

2.3 Case Study 3

2.3.1 This young person is 22 and is currently enrolled on a full time L3 Music Performance & Production course in Brighton. Due to their age they are not eligible for benefits. At 21 their case was closed as they were not at that time in education or training and therefore did not qualify for an ongoing service. They had entered private rented accommodation at the time of the case closure as they did not wish to return to Haringey and take up their housing entitlement.

2.3.2 Following enrolment on their course the young person requested that their case be reopened in line with their legal entitlement within legislation and returned for a service.

2.3.3 They do not meet the criteria for benefits as they are over 22 years of age. We therefore began supporting them with weekly subsistence to address their immediate financial needs.

2.3.4 However, under the present circumstances unless working and earning enough to manage their rent they will be unable to meet their rental costs. The YAS will

therefore apply to charities to support and contribute to their living costs and seek to fund their rent for a short period whilst they seek stabilised part time work.

- 2.3.5 Like a lot of young people they tend only to approach when in crisis and it has been difficult to maintain consistent contact with the young person to support them to address and resolve their difficulties.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The service is committed to ensuring that all young people can meet their potential through and a good educational outcome securing long term future security and inversely costing the public purse less in the long term. Care leavers have found themselves in an unfortunate loophole due to their age where they need to reach a particular educational standard to move on to HE but cannot do so without financial means. Children are entering care later and have often had broken educational histories, unassessed special educational needs and emotional and behavioural difficulties. This results in the need for greater help for longer in every aspect of their lives including education.
- 3.2 Our analysis shows that the number of care leavers in this position is likely to increase as they return to the service for support after they are 21 which places further financial pressure on the Young Adults Service to fund subsistence living costs and cover rent if they are to complete their courses and realise their aspirations.
- 3.3 Improvement measures are in place to train staff, review policies, procedures and entitlement documents regarding further education to ensure young people are fully aware of the impact of choices and potential pitfalls are underway.
- 3.4 Whilst we will encourage care leavers in such circumstances such as those above to be fully responsible for their living costs, in all three cases above the care leavers have continuing complex emotional needs because of childhood trauma and attachment difficulties making this a challenging area of work.

Inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS)

Lisa Pascoe

Deputy director, social care policy



A system not a programme of inspections

- annual self-evaluation of social work practice
- an annual conversation with each local authority (LA)
- focused visits on a potential area of improvement or strength
- standard or short inspection of each LA, depending on what we know (once in a three year period)
- inadequate LAs continue to receive quarterly monitoring and a re-inspection through the SIF

An inspection system

- ILACS is a system, each feature informs how the other works
- This means more frequent engagement between Ofsted inspectors and LAs (not always as part of an inspection)
- We want to help 'catch LAs before they fall' – we want to help LAs avoid becoming inadequate
- We don't want to wait until inspection to find this has happened
- More frequent contact also helps us to make inspection more efficient and less burdensome

Local authority contact with Ofsted

Inadequate local authority	Requires improvement to be good local authority	Good or outstanding local authority
<p>Quarterly monitoring visits</p> <p>SIF or post-monitoring SIF</p> <p>Annual conversation</p> <p>Shared self-evaluation</p>	<p>Standard inspection (once in a three year period)</p> <p>Up to two focused visits in between inspections</p> <p>Possible JTAI (would replace a focused visit)</p> <p>Annual conversation</p> <p>Shared self-evaluation</p>	<p>Short inspection (once in a three year period)</p> <p>Up to two focused visits in between inspections</p> <p>Possible JTAI (would replace a focused visit)</p> <p>Annual conversation</p> <p>Shared self-evaluation</p>

Activity outside of inspection

Self-evaluation and annual engagement



Benefits

- Supports a more proportionate approach to inspection:
 - help Ofsted to make sure that focused visits look at the things that are most useful, for us and the LA
 - help inspectors create relevant lines of enquiry for inspections
 - help Ofsted decide on the best time for a visit/inspections
- Provides Ofsted with evidence that leaders have a grip on social work practice
- If an LA identifies weaknesses and we can see credible, clear, appropriate plans for action, this will be seen as a strength in leadership, not a weakness.

Self-evaluation

- We have worked with the ADCS, SOLACE and LGA to devise guidance
- No set format, but should be brief and answer three questions:
 - What do you know about the quality and impact of social work practice with children and families in your authority?
 - How do you know it?
 - What are your plans to maintain or improve practice?
- Should draw on existing documents and activity
- Should reflect business as usual, not created for inspection

Annual engagement meeting

- Discuss self-evaluation, data and intelligence.
- Honest and open conversation
- Consider any future focused visit and how this might support the LA's improvement plans
- No published 'outcome' – Ofsted will write to the DCS summarising the discussion
- Ideally linked to self-evaluation – this does not have to be the same time each year.
- May be part of another meeting, but should allow sufficient time to discuss children's social care

Focused visits



Focused visit scope

- Will be of a particular area of service or cohort of children
- We will usually have discussed the scope and information request with the LA at their annual engagement
- The criteria and information requested will be a 'sub-set' of what appears in the framework
- We may adjust the criteria or information request to reflect local context and the specific scope
- We will use focused visits to evaluate and highlight good practice and areas of concern

Judgements and report

- No graded judgments
- Narrative letter:

- Strengths
 - Areas for improvement
- If we identify serious concerns, we will give unequivocal areas for priority action
- Will inform our decision about when to inspect and whether to use a standard or short inspection

Standard and short inspections



Inspector deployment

- Small teams of inspectors working closely together inspect more efficiently:
 - they spend less time reporting their findings to one another
 - all inspectors know and understand findings from across the inspection
 - they can challenge one another more effectively, closing lines of enquiry and arriving at robust judgements quickly

Onsite activity

- Inspectors will spend most of their time looking at case files with social workers
- They will talk to managers if their findings indicate a strength or concern that they need to triangulate further
- They will hold regular keep-in-touch (KIT) meetings with the DCS. However.....
-they may ask the DCS to meet inspectors at the office where they are inspecting that day

Managing expectations

- To make a proportionate programme work, inspectors must target their activity carefully
- They will not be able to speak with everyone. They will focus on key lines of enquiry and where the emerging findings take them
- Onsite activity will not routinely include set-piece meetings with the same list of people that happens on a SIF
- Inspectors will prioritise activities that tell them about the quality of social work practice with children and families

Difference between a standard and a short

- A short inspection is not a standard squeezed into less time
- Short inspections happen where an LA is good or outstanding and we have no reason to believe they have declined
- There is an assumption the LA remains at least good
- Inspectors will look at whether:
 - The quality of practice has improved, been maintained or deteriorated
 - The authority's self-evaluation is accurate and can be relied on

Inspection judgements

Overall judgement		
Key judgement: The impact of leadership on social work practice with children and families	Key judgement: The experiences and progress of children in need of help and protection	Key judgement: The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers
Narrative: How good leaders are at creating an environment where social work can flourish	Narrative Early help Children in need Children on a child protection plan	Narrative How well permanence is achieved (including adoption) Care leavers Making good decisions

- Overall and key judgements made on our four-point scale: outstanding, good requires improvement to be good, inadequate

Next steps



Next:

- Starting to contact LAs about self-evaluation and annual engagement opportunities
- By end of November – publish the framework and guidance
- January – ‘launch’ events for LAs. Details tbc, but probably:
 - Mon 15 January (pm) and Friday 19 January (am) in Leeds
 - Mon 22 January (pm) and Friday 26 January (am) in London
- January – first inspections announced

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