



# **Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy**

**2018 – 2021**



# Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-21

## Foreword

The Borough Plan sets out our vision for children and young people in Haringey. In the first few years of life, children should have the long term foundations to thrive and then be able to grow up feeling safe and secure in their family and community. Young people, whatever their background, should have a pathway to success for their future.

In our work with children, young people and families we want to be able to offer help early and to prevent needs escalating. We aim to support children and young people to grow up in their own families and communities when it is in their best interests and safe enough to do so.

When children and young people do come in to care we are keen to support work for reunification or, where this is not possible, to make long term plans for permanency with another family, always seeking to ensure they achieve the best outcomes possible. Children in care should have every opportunity to thrive, feel safe and secure and have a pathway for future success. This is at the heart of our intentions to fulfill our role as Corporate Parents and the strategy for looked after children and leaving care sets out our plans to do this.

*‘Being a corporate parent means doing everything we can for every child in the council’s care – and every care leaver – to give them the opportunities that other children get. This covers everything from keeping an eye on their progress at school, to looking after their health and wellbeing, to preparing them for life as independent adults – and supporting them when they get there. We need to be ambitious for the children in our care, encouraging them to dream big’ (Local Government Association 2017).*

We are very pleased to have also set out our aspirations for the children and young people for whom we have responsibilities in our Corporate Parenting Pledge. This was agreed in February 2018 and has a clear set of objectives and actions which we know can make a difference. Importantly, the Pledge was made with the involvement of children and young people through Aspire, which is the Children in Care Council in Haringey, and presented to the full Council. Through consultation and participation we ensure that we listen to the voice of children and young people about their lived experienced.

Councillor Joseph Ejiofor  
Leader of Haringey Council

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# Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-21

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## Shaping the Strategy

1. The **Borough Plan** sets the scene for Haringey's vision and aspirations for all children and young people .To fulfil the Council's responsibilities as Corporate Parent, we should ensure that children in care have every opportunity to thrive, feel safe and secure and have a pathway for future success.
2. Building on this foundation , the strategy for looked after children and leaving care will be further shaped and influenced by
  - a) Listening to the voice of children and young people
  - a) Our principles for high quality practice
  - b) The needs analysis of our looked after children and care leaver population
  - c) Reference to key local strategies
  - d) The requirements set out by national legislation and guidance

## The voice of children and young people

3. The children and young people who are in our care or who are leaving care have opportunity to express their **wishes and feelings as individuals** through their relationship with their carer and social worker or personal adviser.
4. Views about their experiences, the services they receive and quality of practice are supported through **consultation with Aspire** which is the Children in Care Council and involved in advising the **Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee** (CPAC) of Elected Members . The Young Adult Service also works with groups of young people who are care leavers to shape, influence and improve practice.
5. Working over a two year period, Aspire has consulted with children and young people to then advise CPAC and influence the **Corporate Parenting Pledge**. The children and young people have told us what is important to them. This has then been collated into a number of themes with actions to address these and improve

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outcomes and are closely aligned to the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy:

- a) **Staying safe** : recognising the importance of stability in placement, relationship with social worker and supporting their sense of safety and wellbeing
  - b) **Inclusion and identity** : help to understand their journey through care, learn about their culture and develop a positive sense of identity.
  - c) **Health and well being** : to make sure that their physical, mental and emotional health needs are assessed and understood whilst arrangements are in place to promote and support good health
  - d) **Wishes and feelings**: ensuring that their voice is listened to and we are child centred in our practice
  - e) **Education**: always trying to arrange for children and young people to go to a good or outstanding school and supporting them in their education, training and employment opportunities for a successful future.
  - f) **Rights and entitlements**: making rights and entitlements clear whilst in care and on leaving care and providing support to live independently
6. These themes are set out in the Corporate Parenting Pledge – see attached as Appendix A. Each theme has a set of actions. In turn we have ensured that the actions are to be taken as part of our looked after children and care leavers strategy and plans for service improvement.

### Principles for high quality practice

7. We will work to **prevent** admissions of children and young people to care wherever safe and appropriate. If a child or young person does come into care we will act quickly and **reunite** them with their family if possible. We will work closely with their families to understand the difficulties they have in looking after their children and identify solutions.
8. **Relationships** are at the heart of our work with families and we look to build on their strengths. We use '**Signs of Safety**' as our strengths based practice framework and means of engaging with the people we are trying to help. In this we will carefully consider the help that is available from us to enable them to make the necessary changes so that their children can return home if it is safe and in their best interests to do so.
9. Where this is not possible we will make long term plans for **permanency** with another family. Children, who are not able to live with their families, might be looked after in care for a very short or a longer period. During these times, we work very closely with families and children because we believe this will help everyone to come to the right decision about what to do next. We prioritise the making of a permanent care arrangement for children in the shortest time possible and our most senior managers oversee how well this is working for every child. We will support the families and carers of children and young people living with a disability to remain fully involved where this is in the best interests of the child or young person.

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10. We want children who are looked after to understand the long term plan for them as soon as possible. We will work hard to **understand their experiences, their wishes and feelings and their hopes** for the future. We will listen to children and young people in supporting and caring for them in their individual plans. We will promote **consultation and participation** with children and young people about improving the quality of our practice and how services are delivered. We will be creative and use tools which help different ways of communicating with children who have special educational needs or are living with a disability.
11. Our looked after children and care leavers will have social workers and personal advisors who spend time with them, understand their needs, build **positive and respectful relationships** with them and ensure they have opportunities and the required support in order to succeed. These relationships will focus on our looked after children and care leavers understanding the decisions that are being made, why they are being made and, when they disagree, they will be able to express their views and have a clear response which they understand.
12. Acting as the **corporate parent**, we have a duty to look after children in care, to keep them safe and to promote their well-being, always seeking to ensure they achieve the **best outcomes** possible. We will work hard to make sure that they are not further disadvantaged. Our role as corporate parents is significant and far reaching and we will exercise this with commitment and full accountability. We will aim high, share children's aspirations and support them for as long as they need and benefit from our care.
13. We expect everyone working with looked after children and care leavers, in every agency and every part of our service, to **expect the best** and go the extra mile to safeguard a looked after child and care leaver and to promote their wellbeing.
14. We will provide **high quality care** in a foster family or where necessary, a high quality residential setting. We expect to make these alternative care arrangements as geographically close as possible to children's families and communities.
15. Having suitable placements available is key to our **Sufficiency Strategy** for looked after children and care leavers. **Staying Put** is a policy and delivery priority for us so that looked after children have the same longer term opportunities to live within families as all children and beyond the age of eighteen.
16. As any good parent would, we want the children and young people we look after to have the same nurturing experiences as other children. We want them to have healthy and happy childhoods, to be safe and to feel secure. We will make every effort to ensure that they are able to grow up in a **stable and supportive** environment with a sense of belonging and identity, able to follow their chosen religion and customs wherever they are living. We will offer to support carers who are caring for children living with a disability through short breaks to provide respite.

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17. Children and young people in our care and leaving care will have access to services to promote and support their physical and emotional **health** needs. This includes opportunities for regular health checks, appointments for dental care, psychological screening and age appropriate health advice and education.
18. We will prioritise **education, training and employment** for looked after children and care leavers. Our senior managers in partnership with our **Virtual School** Head Teacher will oversee the progress children and young people make and the support they are offered to catch up if they have fallen behind. Our social workers will prioritise relationships with the schools their children attend and are expected to keep a close watching brief on progress and attainment, intervening where necessary to offer support and guidance. We will work to ensure that children with special educational needs or disability have their needs matched with a school place.
19. Our looked after children will grow and develop into young adults who have a good education, emerging skills to be independent, feel confident about themselves and are able to reach their full potential. The transition between being a looked after child and a young care leaver will begin early and have good quality assessment and a pathway plan with support in place. When they leave our care, our children will be able to **live independently**, accepting support from personal advisors who have meaningful relationships with them, so that they are able to have stable, secure lives and hopeful futures. Plans for young people who have special educational needs or are living with a disability will continue until the age of twenty five to support transition to employment and/or further/higher education and give a pathway for their future.

### Needs analysis of our looked after children and care leavers

20. Analysis of the cohort of our looked after children and care leavers as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 identifies a number of key findings :
  - The total number of looked after children reduced from 505 at end of the 2013-14 period to 429 at end of 2017-19 period. This figure has stabilised over the past three years and is similar to our statistical neighbours.
  - The primary reason for children coming into care is abuse or neglect, accounting for 51% of children entering care in the 2018-19 period. This trend is echoed in the children in need cohort, whereby the most common primary factors at the end of assessment were domestic abuse in the home, the mental health of parents and substance misuse issues. Children with these experiences are likely to have emotional wellbeing and mental health needs arising from poor attachment and trauma in the child's home.
  - Our looked after children cohort includes a disproportionate number of males and this gap has increased from 57% of the cohort being male in 2013-14 to 60% male in March 2018. The greatest proportion of the looked after children population (38%) are now aged over 15. The proportion aged between 10-14 years old has fallen to 34% from 44% in 2018.

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- Haringey has a disproportionate number of children in care of Black ethnicity when compared to the wider population. 47% of the looked after children cohort is Black, compared to 25% of the under-18 population of the borough.
- Children of White and Asian ethnicity are under-represented in our looked after children cohort as they comprise 29% and 3% respectively of Haringey's looked after children population, but 48% and 8% of the local 0-17 population.
- As of March 2019 53 looked after children (12% of the looked after children population) were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and a large majority (90%) of this cohort were male and all over the age of 10.
- 3% of looked after children were children with disabilities and out of this cohort the primary reason for being looked after was because their parents were unable to meet the levels of care needed.
- The number of young people who were aged between 18 and 24 and receiving a leaving care service as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 was 507. This number of care leavers is has increased as young people are now eligible, and ask for, support from a personal adviser up to the age of 25 through the implementation of additional responsibilities in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

21. A more detailed analysis of the needs of looked after children and care leavers is attached as Appendix B.

### Reference to local strategies

22. A **Participation Strategy** for 2018 onwards is being put in place to set out the range of initiatives and actions which will harness the views of service users, including looked after children and care leavers, and influence practice and service delivery.

23. The **Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy** for 2018-21 has been drawn up based on the analysis of needs of our looked after children and care leavers as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018-21 and will continue to be reviewed over this period.

24. The Sufficiency Strategy sets out five objectives which will support the overall aims for children and young people in care , or leaving care, to live in stable, high quality settings where their needs can be met and outcomes improved and enable them to return home when this is in their best interests. Each objective has a set of actions which are detailed in the strategy. The objectives are :

- a) Objective 1: strengthen our '**edge of care**' offer.
- b) Objective 2: grow our **in house fostering** provision
- c) Objective 3 :improve how we **commission placements** from the market focusing on specialist and therapeutic placements
- d) Objective 4 : build **pathways to adulthood** in semi-independent and supported living



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### e) Objective 5 :strengthen **legal permanency options**

25. The strategy for looked after children and leaving care also sits alongside the work involved through other important strategies :

- a) **Early Help** – Haringey's Early Help strategy and service offer is intended to ensure that families are given the best possible chance of remaining together and reflects the council's belief that most children are likely to thrive and achieve good outcomes if they are cared for within their own families. This is being reviewed as part of the work in the Borough Plan and developing a delivery plan for early help.
- b) **Joint Commissioning Strategy for SEND** – Formulated to ensure integrated planning and commissioning for individuals with special educational needs and disabilities between Haringey Council and Haringey NHS Clinical Commissioning Group.
- c) **Housing Strategy 2017- 2022** – The strategy pledges to help young people, including care leavers, to secure and maintain independent housing and provides vulnerable children and young people with services to learn and develop independent living skills.

### **National guidance and legislation**

26. There is significant guidance and legislation which also has to be taken into account in developing the strategy for looked after children and leaving care. Most recently these are :

- a) **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018:** This guidance focuses on the core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals, organisations and agencies must and should do to keep children safe. In doing so, it seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding is achieved by putting children at the centre of the system and by every individual and agency playing their full part. This child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.

All practitioners should follow the principles of the **Children Acts 1989 and 2004** that the welfare of children is paramount and that they are best looked after within their families, with their parents playing a full part in their lives, unless compulsory intervention in family life is necessary.

- b) **'Keep on Caring'** : the strategy was published in July 2016 and is about supporting young people from care to independence. This promotes the embedding of a corporate parenting culture and young people experiencing stability and feeling safe and secure, including staying put.



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- c) **The Children and Social Work Act 2017:** this outlines the seven principles of corporate parenting which local authorities must abide by for looked after children and care leavers. Significantly, the Act extends the personal advisor role to care leavers up to the age of 25 years, irrespective of their educational status. There is also a requirement to publish our local offer of services for care leavers.

The **corporate parenting principles** are to have regard to:

- I. the need to act in the best interests of, and to promote the health and wellbeing of relevant children and young people;
- II. the need to encourage relevant children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- III. the need to take account of a relevant child or young person's views, wishes and feelings;
- IV. the need to help relevant children and young people to gain access to and get the best use of the services provided by the local authority and its partners;
- V. the need to promote high aspirations amongst relevant children and young people and the need to secure the best outcomes;
- VI. the need for relevant children and young people to be safe and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- VII. and the need to prepare relevant children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

### **The strategy and priority outcomes**

27. We are taking in to account the views of children and young people, the analysis of their needs, and links to local strategies and legislation and national guidance. We also have a clear view about the principles which underpin our practice. From these we can identify a number of **priority outcomes** which we want the strategy to achieve for children and young people.

#### **28. Stability and feeling safe**

Children and young people are in good placements where they feel safe and supported, and can remain for as long as they need to. They have the opportunity to experience stability in their placement. They receive information about their placement in advance and are listened to if they have concerns about it at any time. The placement feels like home and provides them with a positive experience of family life or residential care. Placements are as close to family as possible if that is in the child or young person's best interests. We will also promote arrangements to support Connected people where this meets a child or young person's best interests.

#### **29. Respect and Involvement**

All those involved with children and young people treat them with respect, listen to their views and are reliable and trustworthy. Children and young people are involved in, and understand, the decisions made about their lives. They know their rights and entitlements, how to get the information, advice and support they need, and how to complain.

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### **30. Identity**

Children and young people know who they are, why they are looked after and understand their heritage. They feel valued by others, and their individual needs arising from race, culture, religion, sexual orientation or disability are understood and met.

### **31. Relationships**

Children and young people are supported to maintain, build and sustain positive relationships with others, including their birth families, siblings in care, carers and their peers.

### **32. Education**

Children and young people receive a planned and stable education which enables them to fulfil their educational, social and emotional potential, and to have high aspirations for their future.

### **33. Health and Wellbeing**

The health needs of children and young people are assessed and planned for, and they have appropriate access to all the health services they require. They are well and happy, and choosing healthy and active lifestyles. Children and young people have any need for additional emotional support and mental health needs recognised and addressed, and have the knowledge and skills to achieve emotional stability, resilience and self-confidence.

### **34. Moving to Independence and Adulthood**

Children and young people enter adulthood in a planned way, with a home to live in, the skills to look after themselves and the ability to earn a living or continue in education. They feel confident about the future.

### **35. The children's voice**

Through consultation with, and listening to children and young people. We want to ensure that their voice has an impact and influence on practice and service delivery

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### Plans

36. The actions to achieve the strategy and outcomes for looked after children and care leavers, and commitments made in the Corporate Parenting Pledge, are incorporated in the Children's Services Improvement Plan which has a number of work streams and activities.
37. **High quality practice:** to drive and support quality of practice for our work with children, young people and families which includes looked after children and care leavers. This work stream is overseen through the Quality and Performance Network meeting of managers in the Children and Young People's Service.

High Quality Practice	
Work stream	Activity
Model and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Embed values and vision</li><li>• Set of expectations in place and further develop practice standards</li><li>• Model of practice</li><li>• Practice tools, policies and procedures and quality of recording</li><li>• Recruit Principal Social Worker to support and develop best practice</li></ul>
Management oversight ,performance and quality assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put in place set of expectations for managers</li><li>• Scheme of delegation checked, in place and communicated</li><li>• Refresh and communicate supervision policy, including training for managers</li><li>• Review and relaunch the Quality Assurance framework</li><li>• Annual programme of audits in place with reports for the Directorate Management Team and Quality + Performance Network and practice ensures completion of actions</li><li>• Integrated performance framework in place and being monitored and reported at all levels</li><li>• Improve feedback and learning from children and families for quality of practice and service design and points of handover</li><li>• Ensure practice is shaped by learning from serious case reviews, complaints and feedback, audits, learning reviews and Ofsted inspections</li><li>• Ensure practice recognises cultural needs and diversity in the borough</li><li>• Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and Child Protection chair challenge with protocol and escalation policy in place and embedded</li><li>• Clear schedule of annual reports in place (e.g. Local Authority Designated Officer , IRO and complaints)</li></ul>

38. **Improve outcomes for looked after children and care leavers :** focusing on issues which are specifically related to making a difference for looked

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after children and care leavers. There will be regard for the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs or are living with a disability throughout the activities in the plans. The work involved in the work streams will be overseen by a multi agency working group for this purpose.

<b>Improve Outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers</b>	
<b>Work Stream</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Corporate Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pledge for children in care and care leavers is published, communicated to staff, carers and partners and provided for children and young people</li> <li>• Looked After Children and Care Leavers strategy in place</li> <li>• Celebrate the achievements of children and young people</li> <li>• Ensuring rights and entitlements for children in care and care leavers is made clear</li> <li>• ASPIRE as the children in care council are supported to represent the voice of children in shaping and influencing practice</li> </ul>
Permanency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanency planning embedded in practice and Panel in place</li> <li>• Plans progress in a timely way</li> <li>• Legal tracking meetings in place</li> <li>• Review plans for children accommodated through section 20</li> <li>• Special Guardianship Orders reviewed to ensure plans in place that meet requirements</li> <li>• Model of life story work further developed</li> <li>• Opportunities for children to be adopted in a timely way</li> <li>• Specialist age assessments for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and appropriate provision of placements</li> </ul>
Placement matching and sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver and monitor the looked after children sufficiency implementation plan – strengthen edge of care, increase in-house fostering, specialist and therapeutic placements, pathways to adulthood in semi-independent and supported living, strengthen legal permanency options</li> </ul>
Education, Health, Wellbeing and Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children in care attend good/outstanding schools</li> <li>• Ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) in place and good quality</li> <li>• Introduce attendance action plans</li> <li>• Put in place plans to identify children at risk of exclusion and reduce risk</li> <li>• Identify needs regarding cohorts of children for priority action</li> <li>• Review post 16 access to education and address gaps</li> <li>• Supporting children and young people to learn about their culture and identity</li> <li>• Help children and young people to access leisure and sports activities, school holiday and weekend activities</li> </ul>

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Leaving Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathway plans in place and reviewed in required timescales</li> <li>• Manage leaving care transitions sensitively, from social worker to personal advisor</li> <li>• More care leavers are supported into education, employment and training and including career planning</li> <li>• Support to young people who go to University</li> <li>• Young people leaving care have opportunities to stay put in foster placements</li> <li>• Implementation of Section 3 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to provide support through personal adviser up to the age of 25</li> <li>• Local offer for care leavers to be agreed and published including website and app</li> </ul>
Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review protocol for transitions planning</li> <li>• Develop and deliver transition plans so young people are supported and prepared for adulthood</li> </ul>

### Governance

39. The Children's Services Improvement Plan is being overseen through the **Children's Improvement Board** and programme of work streams and activities.
40. A **Looked After Children and Care Leavers group** of Children and Young People's Service staff and relevant professionals from other agencies is being re-established as a working group which will report to the Children's Improvement Board and the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee about progress being made in the strategy, the Sufficiency Strategy and the Corporate Parenting Pledge.
41. The existing **Quality Performance Network** meeting of senior managers in the Children and Young People's Service will progress the range of actions which concern high quality practice and performance in our work with children, young people and their families.
42. The **Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee** (CPAC) will receive reports regarding the outcomes for looked after children and care leavers and scrutinise particular areas of work concerning these. The terms of reference for CPAC are attached as Appendix C .

## **Appendix A : Corporate Parenting Pledge**

### **Corporate Parenting Pledge**

**We, the Council as  
Corporate Parent , pledge:**

#### **Staying Safe**

- ✎ We will make sure that your social worker visits you once during the first week of your placement and then at least every 6 weeks after.
- ✎ We will only change your social worker if absolutely necessary and informing you of these changes and outlining the reasons why it has happened will be a priority.
- ✎ We will raise awareness of issues that place children and young people at risk so they can make choices about how to keep themselves safe.
- ✎ If we feel that you are not safe, we will speak to you and make appropriate decisions for your safety and wellbeing.
- ✎ We will try our best to place you as close to your family as possible if that is what you want and it is in your best interests.
- ✎ We will place you in a welcoming home.



DREAM, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE



#### **Inclusion & Your Identity**

- ✎ We will make sure that you are able to request to 'Stay Put' with your existing foster carers, if you wish, up to the age of 21 and we will try our best to make that happen.
- ✎ We will make sure you are up to date about local activities for children and young people.
- ✎ We will help you to get a passport, NI number and all other forms of identification when you are

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legally allowed obtain them.

- ✎ We will give you the opportunity to learn about your culture.
- ✎ We will support you in identifying/expressing all elements of your identity.
- ✎ We will help you understand your journey through care.

### Health & Well Being

- ✎ We will make sure that you receive a health assessment once a year (Under 5's will be assessed every six months) and support you in accessing all health services that you need.
- ✎ We will help you understand your own health needs, physical, mental and emotional.
- ✎ We will help you access leisure and sports activities, school holiday activities and weekend activities and trips.
- ✎ We will ensure that you receive regular dentist appointments.
- ✎ We will encourage you to access age-appropriate help with your mental and emotional wellbeing, including CAMHS/mental health services and/or counselling.

### Wishes and Feelings

- ✎ We will ensure that your voice is listened to at all stages of your time in care and leaving care, including through our Children in Care council.
- ✎ We will ensure that your social worker operates in a child centred way, puts your needs first, and listens to your wishes and feelings.
- ✎ We will celebrate your achievements and provide opportunities for you to share those achievements with others.
- ✎ We will manage your leaving care transition sensitively, ensuring your social worker and personal advisor work closely together.
- ✎ We will make sure there are various channels in which you can communicate your thoughts and feelings; this could be through your social worker/ personal advisor (PA), through consultations/questionnaires, an advocate or Aspire. We will make sure you can meet with your Independent Reviewing Officer before your review to share your thoughts and feelings.

### Education

- ✎ We will provide support from Haringey Virtual School so that you can achieve the best results overall, including access to equipment and resources that are essential to your success.
- ✎ We will ensure that you have access to advice and guidance in order to help you plan your future career.
- ✎ We will support you post-16 into further education, university, training or employment.
- ✎ We will make sure that you have accommodation available during holidays if you decide to go to university outside London.



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- ✎ We will always try to help you to go to good/outstanding schools where you live.

### Rights & Entitlement for Children in Care & Care Leavers

- ✎ We will explain what it means to be in care and what to expect throughout your time in care. When you leave care we will help you understand how to look after yourself. Your social worker should explain what a pathway / care plan / PPG / PEP meeting is and revisit regularly, checking your understanding.
- ✎ We will make clear to you your rights and entitlements, and your social worker or PA will help you to understand what is available at each stage.
- ✎ We will help you become more independent and empower you to learn skills that will help you in future, for instance workshops on housing and money management.
- ✎
- ✎ We will work with you to find suitable/safe accommodation and help you to maintain your tenancy when you leave care.

### Complaints Procedure

- ✎ We will provide or let you nominate someone neutral to speak to about any concerns you have and ensure you have the information you need to contact them.
- ✎ If you are not happy with your social worker / PA, you or an adult you trust will be able to contact their manager easily and arrange a meeting with them if you want.
- ✎ The manager will get back to you within 2 working days and give a time frame for responding to the issues you have raised.

### **Appendix B :**

#### **Sufficiency and the needs profile of Haringey's children in care as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**

The primary reasons for children entering care in Haringey are abuse and neglect, followed by absent parenting. According to data from Haringey's Children in Need (CIN) census, domestic violence was the most prevalent factor identified, which indicates that a large proportion of looked after children – who are likely to have been Children in Need at one time – may have emotional support needs, stemming from past traumas in the home environment. This is echoed by Haringey's March 2018 Looked After Children Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) results, in which a third of looked after children had an SDQ score that was a 'cause for concern', highlighting the prevalence of emotional or behavioural disorders within this cohort.

In addition to this, as alluded to by the SDQ scores, at least 10% of Haringey's looked after children cohort of 429 children (March 2018) have significant behavioural or conduct difficulties and are at risk of involvement in criminal activities. In 2016/17 9% had at least one exclusion from school, 7% of looked after children aged 10 and above had been convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year and 9% were detained on youth justice legal statuses.

A small proportion of Haringey's looked after children cohort have extremely complex needs and are highly vulnerable. According to 2017 looked after children reviews, 7.5% of our children in care are at risk of involvement in gangs and 2-3% percent are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Furthermore, 2% of looked after children who had been looked after for at least 12 months have been identified as having a substance misuse problem. Although the percentages are small, these statistics reflect incredibly complex young people in need of a range of tailored, highly specialist services to ensure that they overcome any difficulties and are no longer at risk.

The needs which arise from experiences of neglect and trauma are often manifest in poor emotional wellbeing and increased levels of mental illness in looked after children in Haringey. This is echoed by national statistics which estimate that approximately 45% of looked after children in the UK suffer from some form of mental ill health compared to 10% of children in the general population. Whilst we have commissioned targeted mental health services for looked after children, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing issues remain significant.

In addition, we know that whilst national statistics show children aged 11 to 16 years from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups may have a higher prevalence of mental health problems than other groups, they are less likely to approach local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for support and interventions. As 48% of looked after children are from a BAME group this cohort constitutes a significant proportion of the looked after children profile.

A distinct group within the BAME population is the cohort of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). This group comprise 23% of looked after children entrants between March 2018 and March 2019, of which the majority are male and within the 16-17 years age range. Many of these young people may have experienced good parenting and a

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secure upbringing, but will need culturally appropriate support to successfully integrate into Haringey's communities.

The composition of Haringey's looked after cohort and the proportion of children with complex needs is reflected in the council's current placement mix and the increasing demand for specialist and therapeutic placements. These are key areas of focus for this strategy as we need to develop capacity to respond to the increasingly complex needs and behaviours being displayed by some children and young people. At the same time, we are developing a wider vision (as described earlier) for children and young people which should ensure that some of these needs are addressed earlier, in family settings and in the community rather than through services at the edge of or in care.

Haringey's Early Help offer seeks to deliver preventative support through a variety of mechanisms including the provision of parenting and strengthening family programmes and approaches to prevent crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. We are also working to ensure appropriate access at an earlier stage to services for children's and parents' mental health and wellbeing, substance misuse and domestic violence to avoid family breakdown.

### **The desired outcomes and achievements for Haringey's children in care**

A fundamental element of delivering this Strategy, is ensuring that all children in care are given sturdy foundations to ensure that they have the best start in life and achieve positive outcomes. A recent study conducted by Coram Voice and the University of Bristol highlighted the positive impact that care can have upon a child, with 83% of looked after children across 16 local authority areas stating that being in care has improved their lives. Haringey aims to ensure that all children experience an improvement to their wellbeing, attainment and quality of life whilst being looked after by the authority.

Through the improvement of placement stability and the provision of the highest-quality packages of care and support to all looked after children, Haringey aims to ensure that looked after children's educational achievement continues to improve, reaching the same levels as in the wider 0-17 population. Currently Haringey's educational attainment rates for looked after children are ranked among the best of our statistical neighbours, and we will seek to further improve on these levels. The average looked after children attainment 8 score is 34.2 but in the future the improved confidence and emotional and mental wellbeing of looked after children will see attainment levels increase and move closer to the average for Haringey's 0-17 population (46.5).

The Council strives to guarantee that within each placement, the physical and emotional wellbeing of looked after children is improved, that they positively use their time and develop the skills necessary for the transition to independence. Ultimately, the high quality support and care that all children will receive whilst being looked after should translate into positive outcomes and destinations for young people when they become care leavers. Currently 53% of care leavers (aged 19-21) are in Education, Employment or Training (EET), which is above our statistical neighbour average. We will continue to encourage and support, from an appropriate age, more looked after children to be able to undertake education, employment and training upon transition to adulthood and therefore become more financially independent. Achieving these improved outcomes for our looked after children is directly connected to the council's strategy for commissioning a range of high-quality placements, which are able to meet the needs of each individual child.

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To contribute to achieving the desired outcomes for looked after children, Haringey will ensure that placement providers are effectively linked into the wider network of services available for children and young people through establishing new communication forums for children and young people's provision. This will help to ensure that placement providers work collaboratively with education, health, wellbeing, welfare and leisure services to improve outcomes for children and young people in their care.

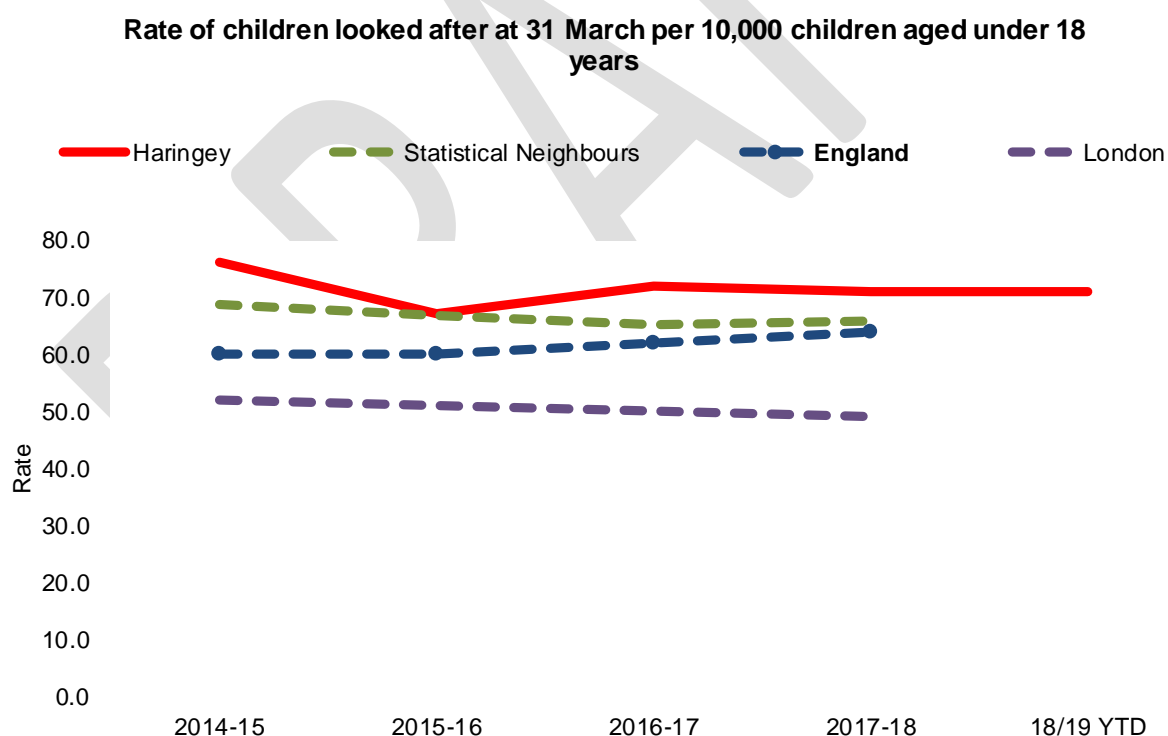
### Demographics of Haringey's looked after children population

Over the period of the previous Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy 2014-17 Haringey significantly reduced its numbers of looked after children from 505 in 2013/14 to 429 in March 2018. Haringey's looked after children population per 10,000 is now similar to our statistical neighbour average.

### Number of looked after children by year – March 2019

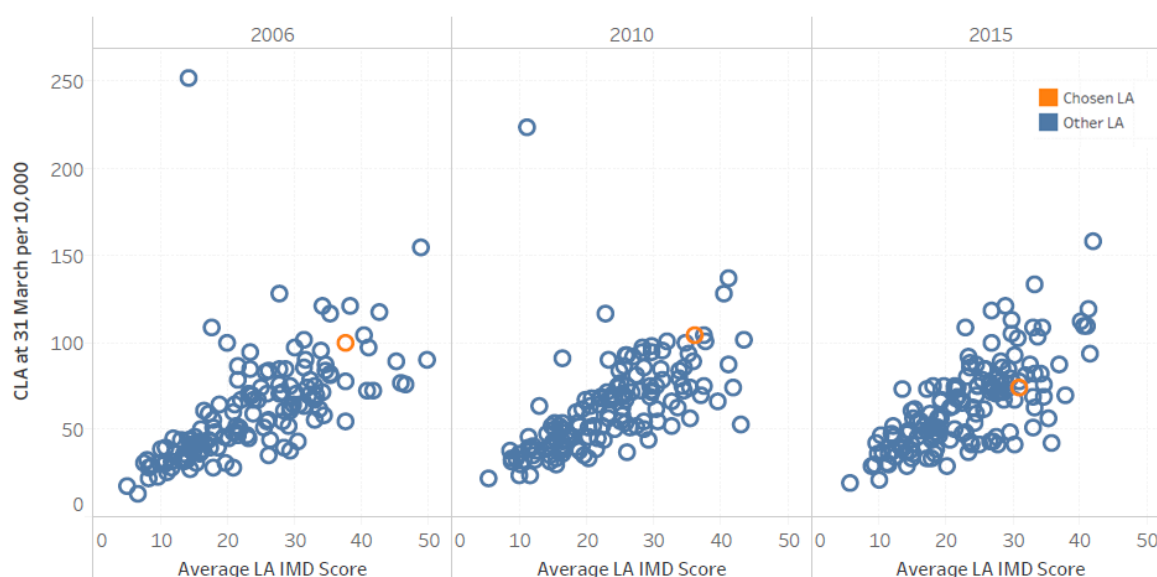
Research has highlighted that there is a correlation between a council's levels of deprivation and the size of their looked after children populations. Based on comparator

data gathered from other local authorities, it is indicated that the current size of Haringey's looked after children cohort is within an appropriate range, considering the borough's average Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score.



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### Exploring the relationship between deprivation and need - 2015



### Number of looked after children by age – March 2018

- Our looked after children cohort includes a disproportionate number of males and this gap has increased from 57% of the cohort being male in 2013-14 to 60% male in March 2018. The greatest proportion of the looked after children population (38%) are now aged over 15. The proportion aged between 10-14 years old has fallen to 34% from 44% in 2018.
- Haringey has a disproportionate number of children in care of Black ethnicity when compared to the wider population. 47% of the looked after children cohort is Black, compared to 25% of the under-18 population of the borough.
- Children of White and Asian ethnicity are under-represented in our looked after children cohort as they comprise 29% and 3% respectively of Haringey's looked after children population, but 48% and 8% of the local 0-17 population.
- As of March 2019 53 looked after children (12% of the looked after children population) were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and a large majority (90%) of this cohort were male and all over the age of 10.
- As of March 2019 3% of looked after children were children with disabilities and out of this cohort the primary reason for being looked after was because their parents were unable to meet the levels of care needed.

### Demographics of looked after children – as at March 2018

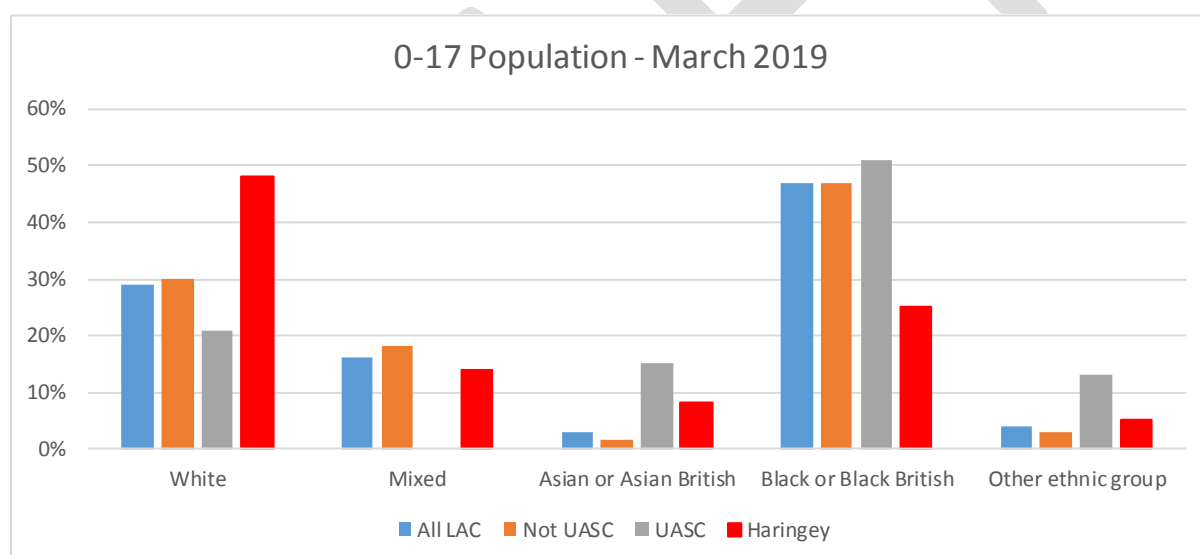
The disproportionality of boys in the looked after children cohort is reflected marginally in the data regarding Children in Need and children with a Child Protection Plan where there are higher numbers than would be expected from the general population. However, for ethnicity, there are markedly higher proportions of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) children in both the Children in Need and Child Protection Plan cohorts: 46% of CIN are from a BAME background compared to 28% of the Haringey under-18 population and 41% of those with an open CPP are of BAME origin.

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Whilst there is an interrelationship with the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children becoming looked after, who are predominantly male and of BAME origin, this is not the sole contributing factor to the over-representation of BAME groups in the looked after children cohort. If all UASC were separated from the looked after children cohort data, there would still be an overrepresentation of BAME children, males and adolescents in comparison to Haringey's under-18 population.

### Ethnic background of looked after children – March 2019

0-17 population				
	All Looked after Children	LAC (excluding UASC)	UASC	Haringey Population
White	29%	30%	21%	48%
Mixed	16%	18%	0%	14%
Asian or Asian British	3%	2%	15%	8%
Black or Black British	47%	47%	51%	25%
Other ethnic group	4%	3%	13%	5%



The over-representation of BAME children in the looked after children cohort is a trend evident throughout the country. The phenomenon has been questioned widely but is yet to be fully understood. Deprivation levels are likely to play a role, particularly given the correlation between deprivation and looked after children rates (as demonstrated earlier), as well as the correlation between deprivation and ethnicity. Anecdotally, too, many factors are thought to contribute, from an overall lower number of BAME foster carers and the impact this has on the ethnic identity of BAME children in care<sup>1</sup>, to single parent families being more

<sup>1</sup> Community Care, <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2011/08/23/successful-fostering-of-black-and-ethnic-minority-children/>

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common in Black and Mixed ethnicity households, which can lead to greater vulnerability and instability at home<sup>23</sup>

### **Haringey's placement mix**

Since 2013/14 Haringey's placement mix has changed in a number of ways.

- The fostering mix has moved to a majority of in-house compared to Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) carers as the numbers of looked after children overall have decreased.
- Increasing numbers of children are supported to remain at home as indicated by the significant rise in the number of placements where the child is legally looked after by the local authority but is placed with parents. Having access to high quality and effective universal and targeted services to meet their needs will be particularly important for this cohort.
- Semi-independent and residential placements remain consistent in use. This is in part due to the high numbers of looked after children becoming care leavers and because the needs profile of those requiring a residential placement remains stable.
- The location of placements remains similar to the previous period. Whilst it is positive that 82% of looked after children are placed within 20 miles, there continues to be a lower number of placements within the borough (34%) than outside the borough (66%). However, this is a fairly typical spread of placements and mirrors trends seen in other London boroughs, where on average 72% of placements are made outside of the local authority area.

### **Looked after children by placement type 2013-14-March 2018**

- Placement stability will generally reflect that a child or young person is in a placement which can meet their needs and improve their outcomes, offering a safe place for them to develop. Stability is measured by tracking those looked after children who experience three or more placement moves – and a lower rate of moves is preferable for this statistic. 10% of looked after children in Haringey have three or more placement moves, this is small increase from last year.

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<sup>2</sup> Census 2011, <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/ethnicity-in-the-uk/ethnicity-and-type-of-family-or-household>

<sup>3</sup> The Voice Online, <http://www.voice-online.co.uk/article/how-care-system-letting-down-black-children>



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### **Appendix C : Haringey Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee (CPAC)**

The Council's commitment to our looked after children is overseen by the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee (CPAC) and is the body with responsibility for facilitating the Council's role as corporate parent for children and young people in care.

CPAC seeks to ensure that the health, education and access to employment of children in care is maximised, monitor the quality of care provided, and also ensure that children leaving care have sustainable arrangements for their future.

These responsibilities are enshrined within the **Terms of Reference**:

- a) To be responsible for the Council's role as Corporate parent for those children and young people who are in care;
- b) To ensure the views of children in care are heard;
- c) To seek to ensure that the life chances of children in care are maximized in terms of health, educational attainment and access to training and employment to aid the transition to a secure and fulfilling adulthood;
- d) To ensure that the voice and needs of disabled children are identified and provided for;
- e) To monitor the quality of care provided by the Council to Children in Care;
- f) To ensure that children leaving care have sustainable arrangements for their future wellbeing; and
- g) To make recommendations on these matters to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member for Children and Director of Children and Young People's Service.