

IRO CPAC Briefing

June 2023

Key Issues arising from the IRO Annual Report 2022/23 (draft expected June 23)

- Planning around young people experiencing several moves has been strengthened – IROs report directly to ESQA and CLA HoS to help promote stability as well as cases being discussed at PS panel
- IROs continue to improve monitoring of EHCP's within reviews
- Recognising some parents do not attend CLA review:- IRO's actively encourage parental attendance and contributions to reviews
- IROs continue to embed Language that Cares, which continues to improve the quality of minutes and case recording.
- *IROs need to evidence better oversight and challenge around achieving earlier permanency* – IROs continue to embed midway reviews to help monitor the progression of permanency plans for CLA.
- IROs routinely identify children lifestory work for all CLA, which supports improved outcomes for children.
- *PEPs some gaps identified regarding educational history or careers advice:-* The IRO service have increased monitoring of PEP quality through CLA reviews and will provide support to eliminate gaps previously identified during inspection.

Midway Reviews & Themes

- The Midway Review process was reviewed with a new template implemented - Oct 2022
- From Feb 2023 to date - 40% increase midway reviews being held - This now being one of the IRO practice obsessions

Themes:

- Improvement in CLA access to NHS dentists – IRO's are liaising with the designated CLA Nurse to ensure access
- Challenges in accessing EHCPs for children placed Out of Borough – IRO's continue to encourage and when necessary challenge SEN in other LA's to help progress implementation of EHCP's for CLA.
- Challenges in finding the right homes for our most vulnerable young people – IRO's will support CLA through liaising with Housing colleagues to ensure CLA needs are prioritised.
- There are challenges for children with additional need accessing the right schools in a timely way – IRO's liaise with the virtual school to challenge relevant agencies to progress education access.
- Staying Put is explored within reviews – increase from 29 to 35%
- IRO's continue to promote placements closer to home to counter the impact of children experiencing challenging commutes when placed outside of the LA.

Quarter 4 Review Data

Of 190 IRO Monitoring forms completed between Jan – Mar 2023:

Types of Reviews:

Physical reviews	74
Hybrid reviews	76
Virtual reviews	37

Child / Young Person Chaired Review	26
Child / Young Person Co-Chaired Review	21
Offered support but declined	19
Not appropriate	124



Dispute Resolution

Formal Escalations 23 formal escalations raised - Most resolved at Stage 1

- IROs driving for better quality information was reason for most escalations
- Through challenge and collaboration, IROs have supported more timely progression of assessments for CLA placed with parents.
- IRO's supported children accessing School Transport where appropriate
- IRO initiated actions to improve safeguarding arrangements for a vulnerable through being presented to the Exploitation Panel where the multi-agency plan was reviewed.
- Helped overcome obstacles created via bureaucracy to support a young person's needs being progressed.

Informal Escalations (Alerts) 58 informal escalations raised

- IROs driving for better quality information has attracted the most alerts
- IROs have had greater liaison with Team Managers to help maintain review timescales
- IROs have collaborated with others to help keep plans on track
- IROs have been raising the profile and importance of midway reviews to support progression of plans for CLA
- IROs evidence greater vigilance regarding children's circumstances where they are CLA but living with parents

Post Ofsted Action Plan

Strengthen the impact of the IRO service on early permanence planning by:

- Seeking the support of those that are best in class and others who do this successfully, such as SLIP, to support IRO practice improvement
- The IRO service will develop and provide regular reports, including feedback from children, families, partners, setting out issues relating to systems, timeliness and early permanency
- Greater triangulation and scrutiny to evidence the impact of the IROs

IRO's will support various aspects of the Post Ofsted Action Plan with particular focus on the elements outline below:-

IRO's will support progress regarding Life story workshops (to begin over the summer 2023) through the HCA

IRO SM and CLA HoS have begun QA dip sampling of Care Plans with feedback to practitioners, Team Managers and IROs to help strengthen practice

IRO's will further improve midway reviews rates to help embed a higher level of scrutiny

IROs are promoting earlier permanence planning - evidence on child's file that promotes permanence planning at the earliest stages

IROs have significantly strengthened collaborative practice to help increase results for achieving permanence through long term fostering – 13 CLA matched in last 3 months and 20 scheduled by August

Feedback

Professionals and parents are consistently asked for feedback and consultation forms are sent together with invitations to reviews

We are working with other service areas to help improve feedback loops

Exploring ways in which the Participation Officer may play a role in improving feedback returns and systems

Examples of feedback received in the past 3 months:

- *'I have attended many "LAC" meetings in my time and your focus and clarity, and effective use of the time I appreciated and welcomed'* – Residential Manager
- *'It was my first CLA review as a SW. IRO was very supportive as a professional and that made things easy for me'* – social worker
- *'This was helpful to recap and update all professionals'. - carer*
- What would you keep the same about the CLA Review: *'I would keep everything the same since we resolved our doubts and we feel very supported by Haringey'* – Parent

Sector Led Improvement Partners / Partners in Practice

The IRO Service is excited to be working with our Partners in Practice to:

- Enhance our policies, procedures and IRO practice standards
- Explore ways in which permanence planning and achieving permanency is better embedded
- Strengthen the IRO service by empowering them to exercise their role and authority effectively , including appropriate challenges
- Midway monitoring for all children and young people who are looked after.
- Work is already underway to develop some proposals with the first iteration of the Annual Report expected by August 2023