

Report for: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel February 2025

Title: Social care annual performance 2023-24

Report

Authorised by: Ann Graham, Director Children's Services

Lead Officer: Dionne Thomas, Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Children's Social care

Ward(s) affected: N/A

1 Describe the issue under consideration.

1.1 This report provides an overview of safeguarding and social care activity and performance for 2023/2024.

2 Member Introduction

2.1 This report notes the progress and the consistent, effective performance with regards to safeguarding children and young people in Haringey for 2023/24.

2.2 The report identifies key developments, summarises performance activity levels and details several future priorities for vulnerable children.

3 Recommendations

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

3.1.1 The service improvement and challenges contained within the report as well as the actions taken during 2023/24 in response to local demand and the financial pressures experienced by the service in relation to placements.

3.1.2 The areas identified as priorities for 2024/25 following analysis and review of the year's performance

4. Reasons for the report

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

4.2 The annual report is intended to inform Committee of the performance of Children Social Care Services in 2023/24. Committee should be aware of the progress made against managing the safeguarding demands. The report, in addition to other measures, enables Members to assure itself that the necessary arrangements are in

place for the Council to effectively discharge its children social care obligations. In this regard, there is a distinct leadership role for the Leader, Lead Member for Children and Young People's Services, the Chief Executive and Director of Children Services; also, there is a wider corporate parenting role for all members of the Council.

5. Introduction and Background

5.1 This report provides an overview of performance for Children's Social Care Services for 2023/24. The report provides comparative data by benchmarking with our statistical neighbours and looks at how our performance has grown and developed, where this is appropriate. Haringey's statistical neighbours are a group of local authorities judged by the DfE to have the most similar demographic profile, these are:

- Croydon
- Enfield
- Greenwich
- Hackney
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Islington
- Lambeth
- Lewisham
- Southwark
- Waltham Forest

5.2 Children's Social Care provides services and support for children and young people who are:

- in need
- at risk of harm and in need of protection
- children in our care who are looked after
- care experienced young adults

5.3 These children and young people have needs which are assessed as being complex or acute and require the statutory involvement of the Local Authority within the responsibilities set out in legislation, principally the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and the Children and Families Act 2014 and various statutory guidance (including Working Together to Safeguard Children: December 2023).

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

5.4.1 Safeguarding Accountability Meetings chaired by the Leader of the Council with the Lead Member for Children, relevant Assistant Directors and, Director of Children and Young People Services in attendance. The meeting is held quarterly and allows the Leader to hold senior officers to account, to scrutinise performance related to vulnerable children, to be appraised of any concerns about the safety and welfare of children and to strategically drive improvements.

5.4.2 Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee has a dedicated focus on Children Looked After and Care Leavers and has in attendance seven elected members along with senior officers in the partnership. The Committee meets quarterly and scrutinises performance and strategic planning related to children in care and care leavers.

5.4.3 Haringey's Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) is overseen by an independent chair, the Partnership meets eight times a year, including the joint board meeting with the Adults Safeguarding Board. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 has removed the requirement for Local Authorities to establish LSCBs and replaced this with new local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Under the new legislation, the three statutory safeguarding partners - Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group - must make arrangements to work together, along with the relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. Haringey's Executive Board meets 6 times a year monitoring and reviewing Haringey's statutory safeguarding arrangements.

5.4.4 The HSCP has sub-groups which oversees the work of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership in relation to Quality Performance and Outcomes, Practice Learning Workforce and Development, Training, Missing and Exploitation (MACE). The HSCP annual report evaluates the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection in Haringey and has set the following priorities, to improve the collective effectiveness of agencies in:

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

6. National Context - National Statistical Reporting

6.1 All local authorities report to the Department of Education to inform the Child In Need Annual Census and the 903 Children in Care Return. The results of which are published every October on the DfE website. The CIN census covers early intervention, contacts and referrals to social care and the reasons, Child and Family assessments and identified factors, the nature and volume of child protection activity, the numbers of children subject to child protection conferences. The 903 return covers

children entering care and the reasons, the types of placements used, the legal status of children, how many children have left care and for what reasons (including adoption) and details about care leavers and their accommodation, employment and training outcomes and how the local authority is keeping in touch with them.

6.2 In addition, more detailed returns are submitted to the North Central London Regional Adoption board on children with an adoption plan, the timeliness of matching and placing with an adopter and the recruitment of adopters.

6.3 An annual social worker workforce survey is also submitted to the DfE about the workforce profile, recruitment, retention, and sickness rates for social workers and also caseload numbers.

6.4 The Local Authority Interactive Tool (CHAT) hosted by the DfE collates a range of data across a number of returns and can be filtered to compare and benchmark performance across a range of children's indicators.

7. Future Challenges and Operational Priorities

7.1 The future challenges and priorities can be summarised as follows (this is not an exhaustive list and the history of this type of work is that new priorities will emerge).

- The service is following the development of the new Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill and preparing for the implementation of new social care reforms as set out in the new national policy statement, 'Keeping Children safe, Helping Families Thrive', Nov 2024.
- Continuing to meet the increasing demands for children's social care services and responding to factors arising from National and International challenges.
- Expand and improve the quality and timeliness of interventions available to children with presenting mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties
- Maintaining operational effectiveness of the service in the context of new and emerging mental health and neuro-diversity support needs, the evolving and complex nature of child criminal and child sexual exploitation, the acuity of Domestic Abuse risks and needs, housing related risks and substance misuse.
- The costs associated with the placements for children in care which continue to be a significant pressure for the Council, more so given the Council current budget pressures. Additional corporate funding has already been given to the department, but as demand increases and the supply of placements comes under further pressure, the impact continues to be carefully monitored.
- The recruitment and retention of social workers continues to be a key focus and creative approaches to grow our own and recruit from overseas will continue to be explored.
- The development of permanence planning and tracking will ensure children achieve the earliest permanence

- Maximising the data provided by the newly implemented Liquid Logic system to strengthen performance dashboards and service compliance with key performance indicators.
- The priority in our Short Breaks Statement is to develop and deliver an Overnight Short Breaks provision within the borough itself, to provide children with the most complex and profound learning difficulties, respite and to mitigate against the need for these children to come into local authority care.
- Haringey Children's Academy providing learning and development opportunities for the children's workforce and supported by professors and academics, remains a central part of Children's retention and skills progression strategy. To continue to lead, jointly with our MET police colleagues, on our innovative Stop and Search work that is currently being piloted across London.

7.2 Local Background and Context

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

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

7.2.2 Alongside these challenges, Haringey as a local area continues to be a strong and thriving place for children growing up in the area. It is a place that has a rich history, strong and vibrant communities, great transport links and excellent facilities with a range of cultural events. Key strengths include:

- 98% of schools are judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.
- 98% of Early Years settings are judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.
- Diverse communities where more than 180 languages are spoken.
- Over a quarter of the borough is green space – with 25 Green Flag Parks and 120 venues where cultural activities take place.
- Residents report that they have good friendships and associations in their local area and good relations between different ethnic and religious communities.
- And we will be the Borough of Culture in 2027!

7.3 Our children and young people population

7.3.1 In Haringey, there are 54,422 children aged 0-17 years, representing 21% of the overall population (Census 2021), largely in line with statistical neighbours and London where 21% and 22% of people are aged 0-17 respectively. Notably, the ward with the highest proportion of 0-17-year-olds is South Tottenham (29%), while the ward with the lowest is Stroud Green (15.4%). The number of under 18s is not expected to change significantly in future years and will remain most concentrated in the east of the borough.

7.3.2 Almost half of the pupils in Haringey schools do not have English as a first language (47.4%). After English, Turkish, Spanish, Polish, Bulgarian, and Somalian are the most commonly spoken languages (May 22 Census)

7.3.3 One of the most significant challenges is inequality in outcomes. Poverty is a crucial determinant of poor outcomes. Childhood deprivation is unequally distributed across the borough and children in the east of the borough are substantially more likely to be affected by income deprivation. In 2023, 10,863 children in Haringey were living in relative poverty and this equates to 17.3% of all 0-16 year olds. This is the 11th highest of all London Boroughs.

7.4 Outcomes for children and young people

7.4.1 **Haringey's Children in Care have above average educational outcomes** and there are improvements evidenced in their performance overall in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2. In KS4, 34% of the cohort who sat GCSE's obtained a 4 or more in English and 26% in Maths, which is in the top quartile in England (2023-21).

7.4.2 **Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have higher educational outcomes**, with many featuring in the top quartile in England. Key Stage 4 achieving 9-4 in English and Maths for pupils with SEN Support is ranked 16th in England and KS4 SEN Pupils with EHCP going to, or remaining in, education & employment-training overall (including special schools) is ranked 19th in England (2023-24).

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

7.4.4 The percentage of children making progress across all 5 areas of their development within their '2 Year Checks' is aligned with previous years (82.8%) and is above the national average of (80.4%).

7.4.5 The levels of child obesity are worse than England for 10-11 year olds (24.4% increased from 23.6%) but similar to the national average for 4-5 year olds (9.5%, improved from 10.5%)

8. OFSTED

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

8.2 They found that since 2018 many services in Haringey have been “transformed,” with most children now receiving “good support, when they need it, from the right people” including from social workers, personal advisers, early help workers and staff in schools.”

8.3 The report also included 6 areas that could improve:

- The effectiveness of permanence planning for children in care, including the challenge brought by independent reviewing officers.
- The identification of and response to children in private fostering arrangements.
- The provision and quality of life-story work at key developmental stages in children’s lives.
- The quality of supervision in ensuring that plans for children make a positive impact.
- The understanding and knowledge of frontline workers about adoption.

8.4 The report concluded the following paragraph:

“Haringey’s diverse population is reflected in the workforce and senior leadership team. This is important to frontline staff and one of the attractions of working for this local authority. Staff and leaders are acutely aware of the enduring public perception of Haringey children’s services. At all levels, staff are proud of working for Haringey. A culture of appreciation, kindness and support is firmly embedded. Staff said their leaders care about them, listen to them and take action to address the things that need to change. In turn, staff are loyal and they care about their leaders. Staff who leave often return to Haringey. They talk about the feeling of ‘family’. This sense of emotional safety is vitally important, enabling workers to practise with the confidence and persistence needed to effect change for children and young people who are living in very challenging circumstances.”

9. Safeguarding and children in care trends

9.1 This section of the report sets out the data we monitor every month to assess our performance in supporting children in need, those who are on a child protection plan and those who are in our care. The data supports us in tracking our improvement and identifying our challenges for action and this is shown for the past three years.

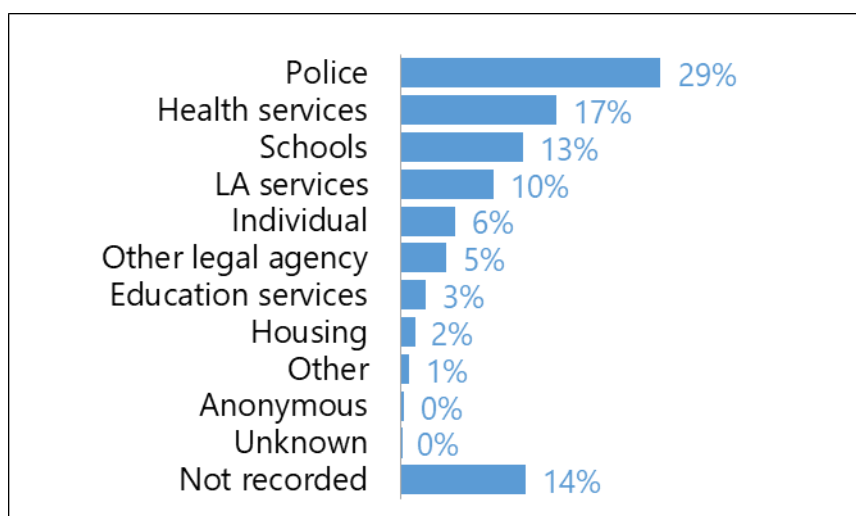
9.1.1 The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which receives contacts and referrals, is our local single point of contact for anyone who is worried about a child. The service continues to effectively collaborate with key partners and has sustained the practice and performance.

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

9.1.3 Contacts and referrals to children's social care

9.1.3.1 The communication of concerns from partner agencies or the public to children's social care is an important step in initiating a child protection response. Not all of these communications from partners and the public will meet the threshold for referral to assessment and result in a referral to social care, some will be passed to the Early Help service or signposted to universal services, others are simply one of our partner agencies ringing for some advice or support. These communications are categorised as contacts.

In the 12 months to March 2024 there were 13,826 contacts to MASH which reflects a 4% increase in last years' number. The break-down of sources is set out below:

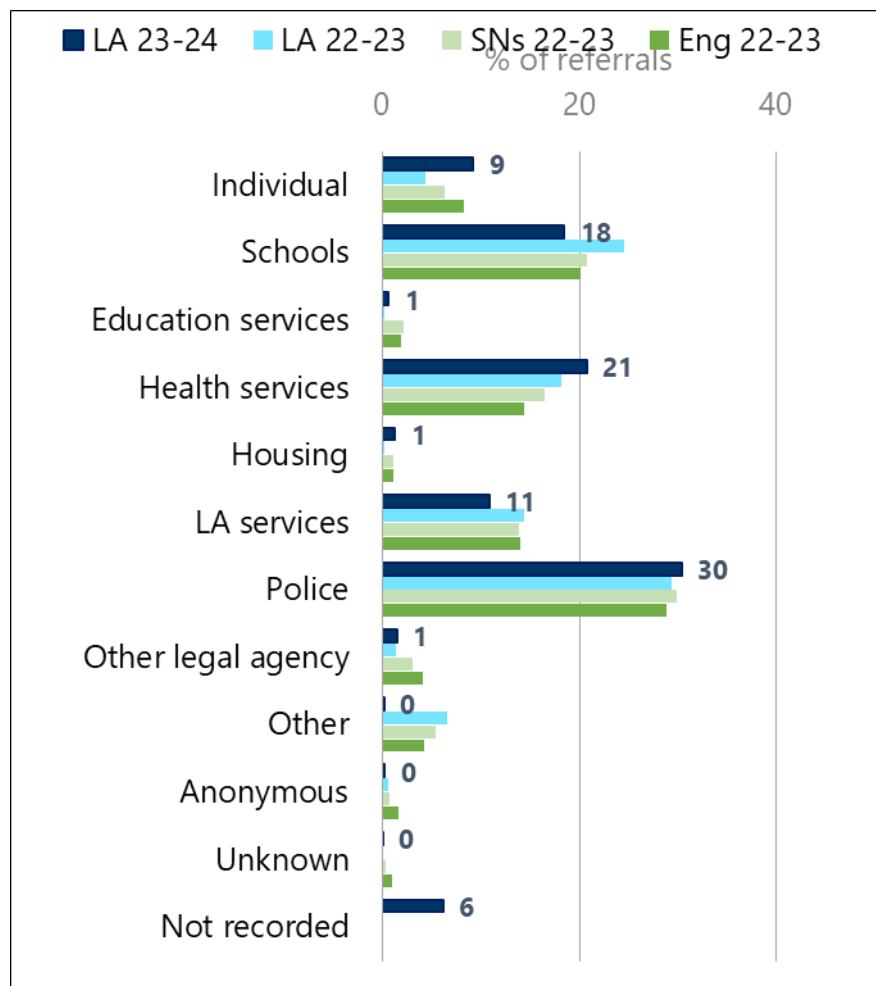


9.1.3.2 A referral is a contact that meets the threshold for services to be provided by children's social care, in respect of a child who is not currently open to the service, which meets the agreed threshold. This means that social workers in the multi-agency assessment hub (MASH) share information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

9.1.3.3 Referrals received (rate per 10,000 children) The number of referrals received was the highest since 2018/19, and is in line with our latest comparisons.

Year	Haringey Number	:	Haringey Rate	SN rate	Eng rate
2020-21	2851		480	499	494

2021-22	3379	568	580	538
2022-23	3,456	581		
2023-24	3338	619	621	661



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

9.2 Children with a Disability

9.2.1 The Disabled Children's Team (DCT) continues to meet the complex and diverse nature of the range of needs experienced by children with disabilities.

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

9.2.3 It is clear however that complexity is rising and the service has seen an unprecedented increase in court proceedings, impacting on timeliness and performance data. This is seen alongside an increase in children qualifying for CiN

support and those being received into local authority care. The percentage increase in CiN with an open episode of disability need is not however comparable to previous years, as it now reflects children in receipt of short breaks.

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

9.3 SEND Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

9.3.1 2023 saw a significant increase the number of new EHCP plans issued and an improvement in their timeliness.

9.3.2

	2020	2021	2022	2023
New EHC Plans Issued (Number)	309	260	410	454
Haringey	30%	68%	44%	97%
London	62%	64%	55%	70%
England	58%	60%	59%	50%

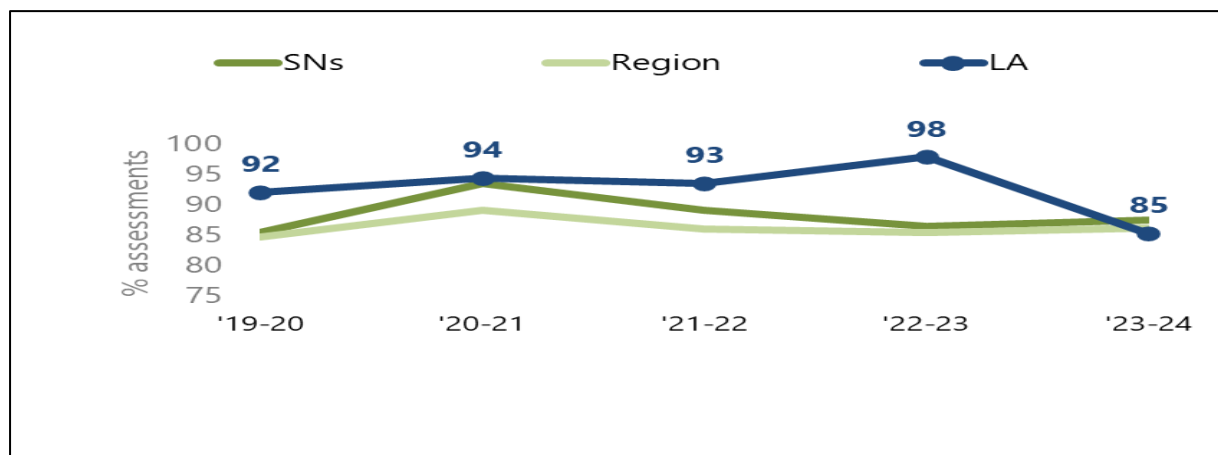
Number of open EHCP at year end				
Haringey	1820	1877	2164	2567

9.4 Assessments

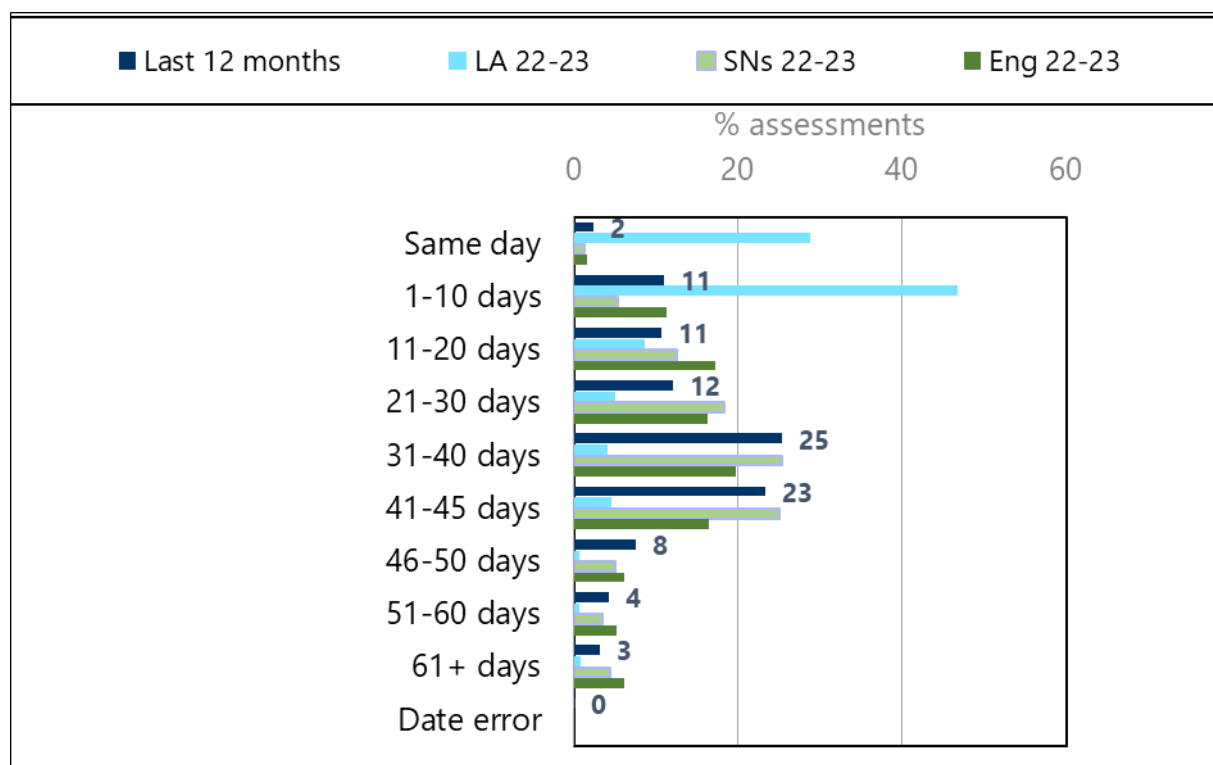
9.4.1 A referral to social care will either result in a decision to complete an assessment of the child's needs (within 45 working days) or in addition if there is a concern that immediate protection may be needed as the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, an immediate strategy discussion with police and other partners is held. At the strategy discussion it is decided whether to initiate enquires under section 47 of the Children Act 1989; which is an enquiry to decide what type of action is needed to safeguard a child and if necessary, hold an initial Child protection conference within 15 working days.

9.4.2 During 2023 there were 3,144 assessments completed at a rate of 583 per 10,000 children, up from a rate of 527 per 10,000 children in 2022/23. In each of the past 6 years, at least 85% have been completed in 45 working days, as shown in the graph below. This represents continued good performance in the completion of assessments which compare well to statistical neighbours and England but represent a decrease in the timeliness since last year (98%). Assessment audit data is more frequently good however, which might indicate that the quality of assessments is strengthening, leading to more appropriate intervention at the expense of timeliness.

Assessments completed in 45 Working Days (%)

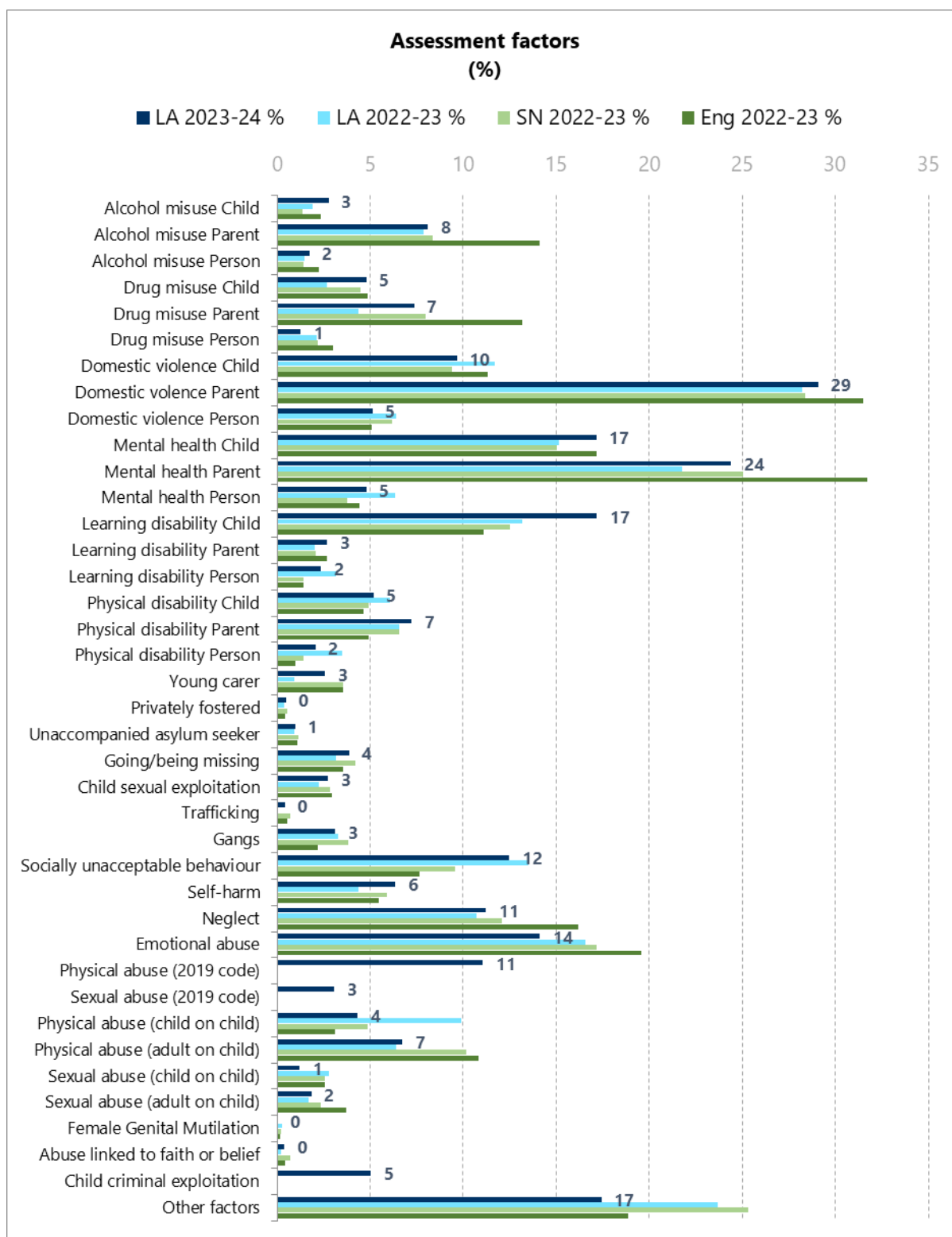


Comparing Timelines



9.4.3 Factors found at the end of assessment

- 9.4.3.1 Parental Domestic Abuse continues to be the single most common factor found at the end of assessments.
- 9.4.3.2 Other areas seeing a year-on-year increase include Learning disability and Parental and Child Mental Health
- 9.4.3.3 Area with fewer factors found include Emotional Abuse

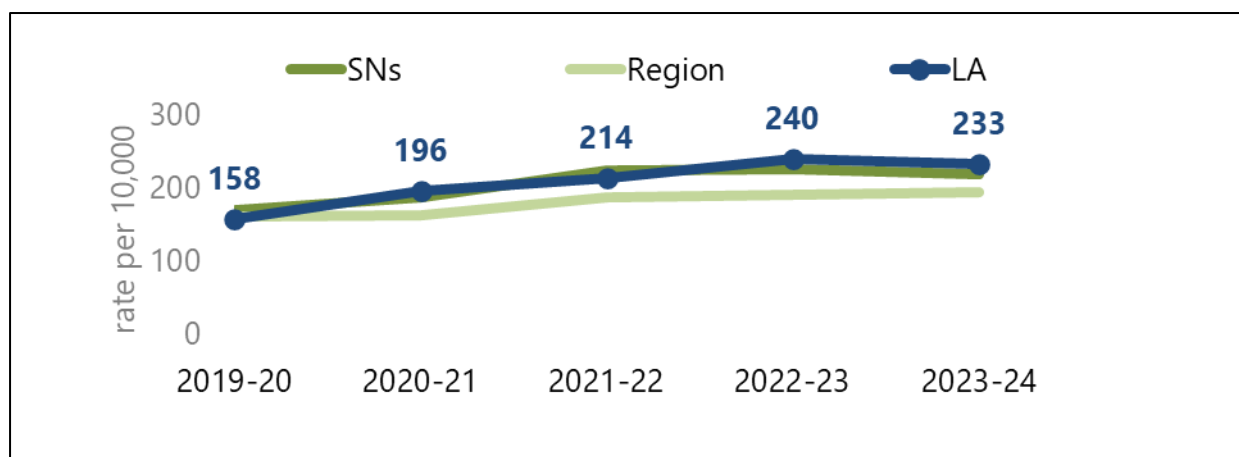


9.5 Section 47 enquiries

9.5.1 As noted above, Section 47 enquiries are carried out when there is a referral in which a child or children are reported to be at immediate risk of harm. This always follows a multi-agency strategy discussion.

9.5.2 The rate of section 47 enquiries per 10,000 children aged 0-17 decreased to a rate of 232 per 10,000 children from 239 in 2023/24 and our rate is just above the last published rate of 204 for comparator boroughs and the England average rate of 192.

Rate of s47 enquiries per 10, 000 children



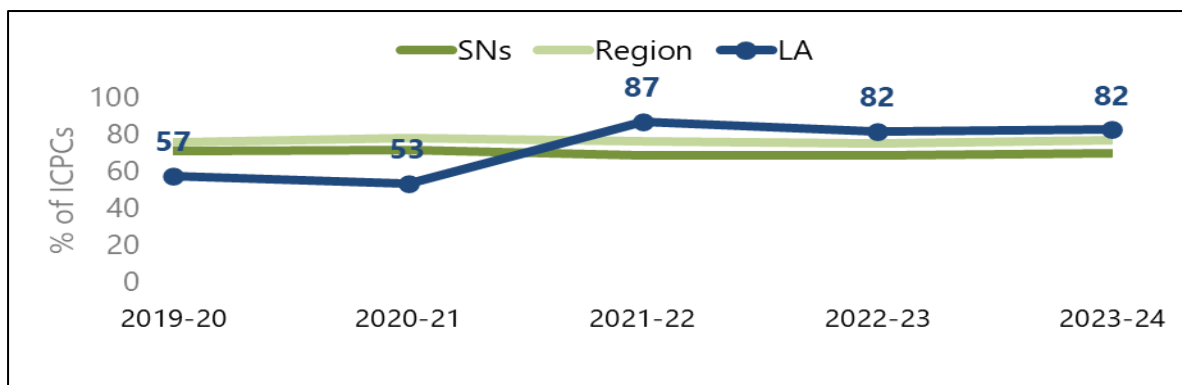
9.6 Initial Child protection conferences (ICPC)

9.6.1 Following section 47 enquiries, where needed, an initial child protection conference is held. Bringing together family members (and the child where appropriate) and all relevant information, it is the responsibility of the conference to make recommendations on how organisations will work together to safeguard the child, including the option of placing the child on a child protection plan.

9.6.2 In 2023/24 a total of 199 ICPCs were held, a reduction of 12% on the numbers from the previous year.

9.6.3 It is critical that initial child protection conferences are convened quickly. Timeliness is defined by ICPC's which take place within 15 days of a strategy discussion and this is an area where performance showed a decline up to December 2020. The graph below shows that since January 2021 a new system and tight monitoring has been in place effectively addressing this decline with an 81% completion rate, which is more or less in line with the performance data from last year.

9.6.4 Trend of ICPC Timelines

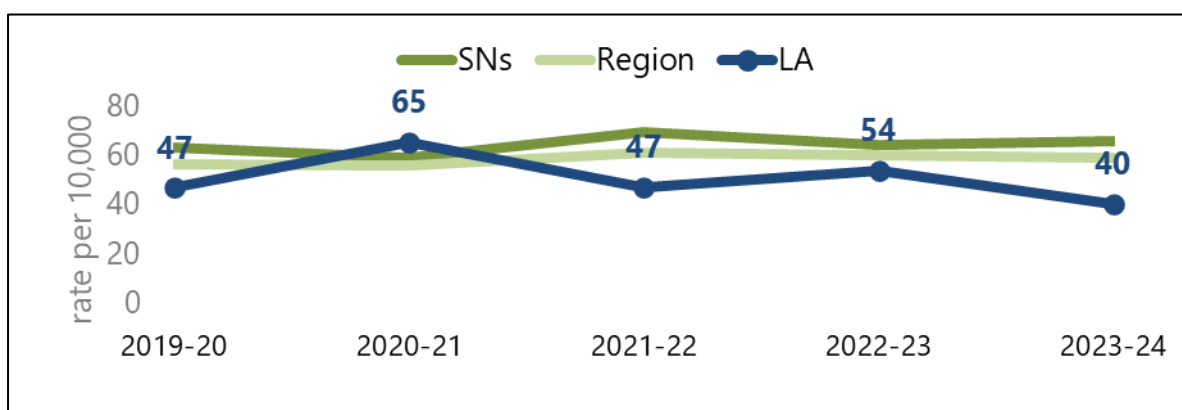


9.7 Child Protection Plans

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

9.7.2 There were 180 children on a child protection plan at the end of March 2024 or a rate of 33 per 10,000, which is below the last published statistical neighbours rate (43)

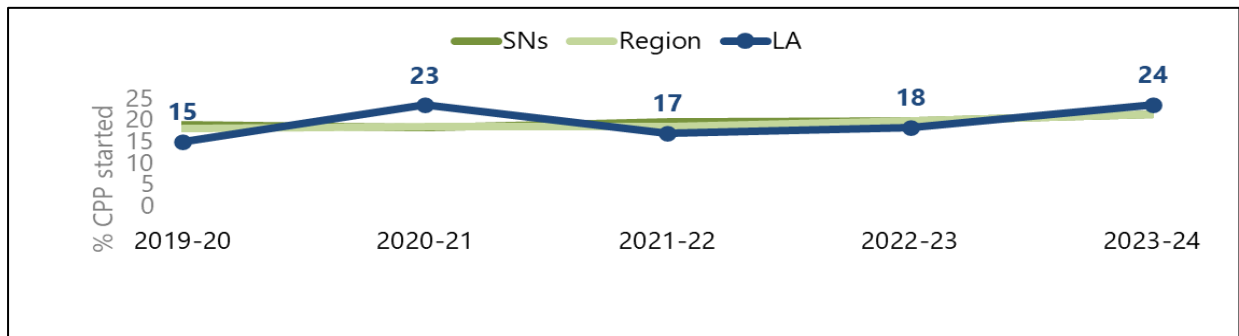
9.7.3 Rate of CP Plan per 10, 000 children



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

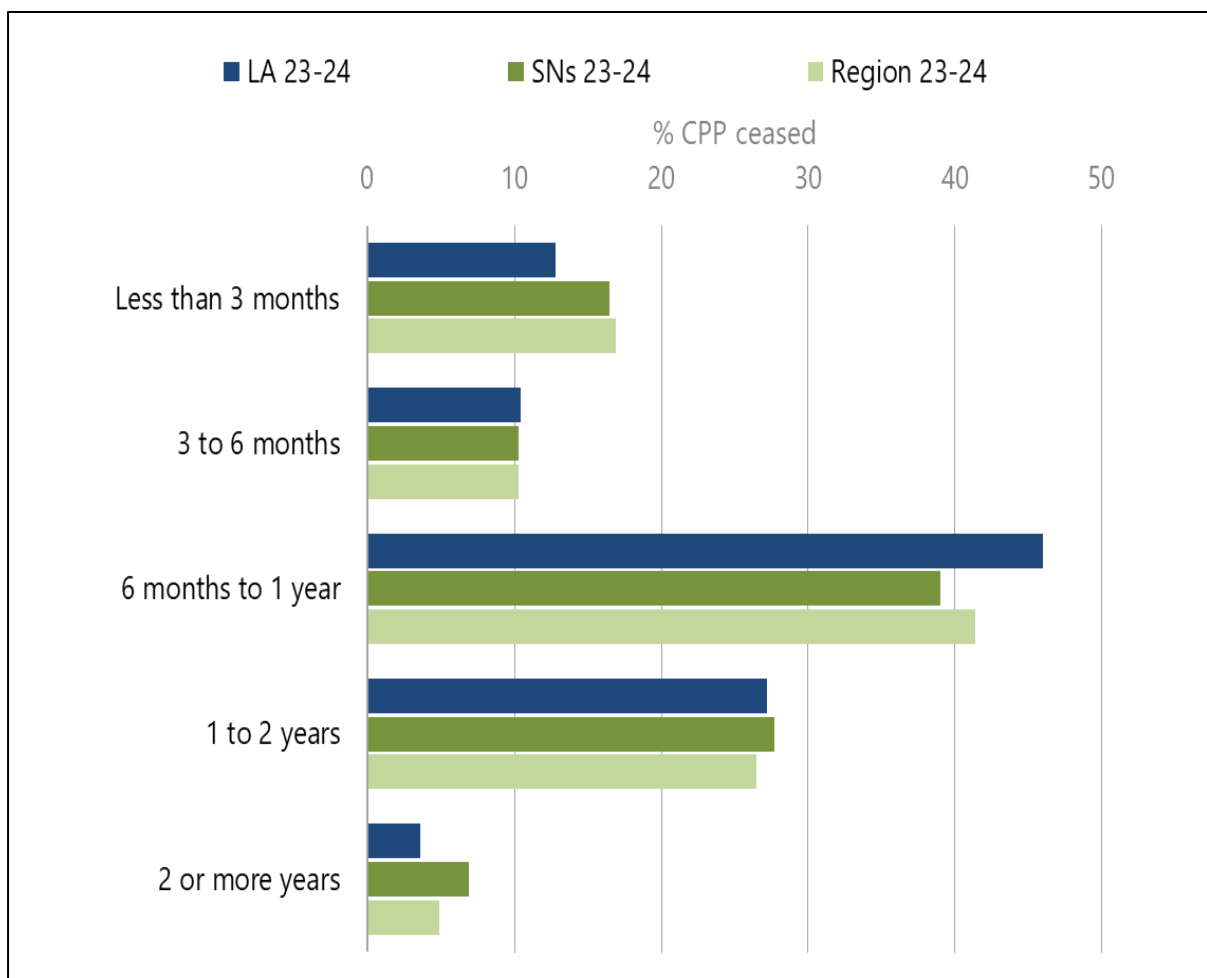
plans under review, to ensure that thresholds are applied appropriately and to see if there is any learning for the service in relation to early de-planning

9.7.4 Comparing re-registrations for Child Protection Plans



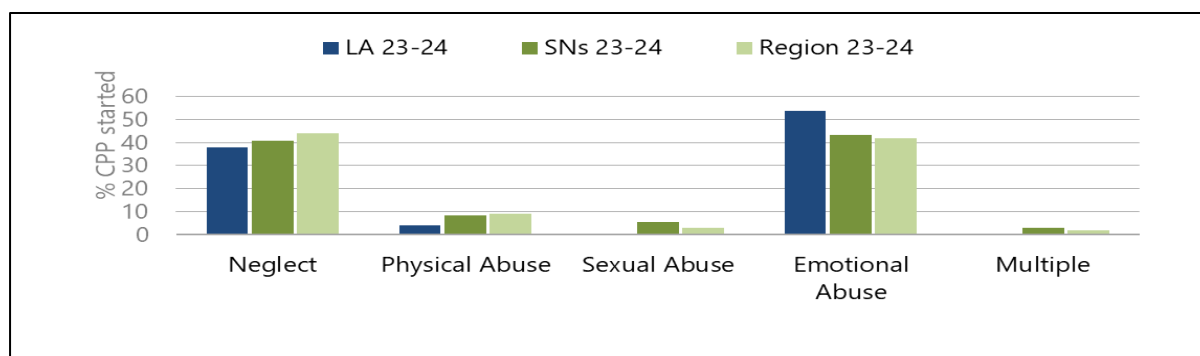
9.7.5 Most child protection plans cease within two years. At the end of March 2024 Haringey had no plans open for more than two years.

9.7.6 Comparing Duration of open CP Plans



9.7.7 In common with other local authorities, the main initial reasons for children becoming subject to a child protection plan relate to emotional abuse and neglect (37%) as shown in the chart below and our rate is higher for emotional abuse (54%) which might correspond with the high number of children known to us for Domestic Abuse.

Latest category of abuse for current CP Plans up to March 31st March 2024

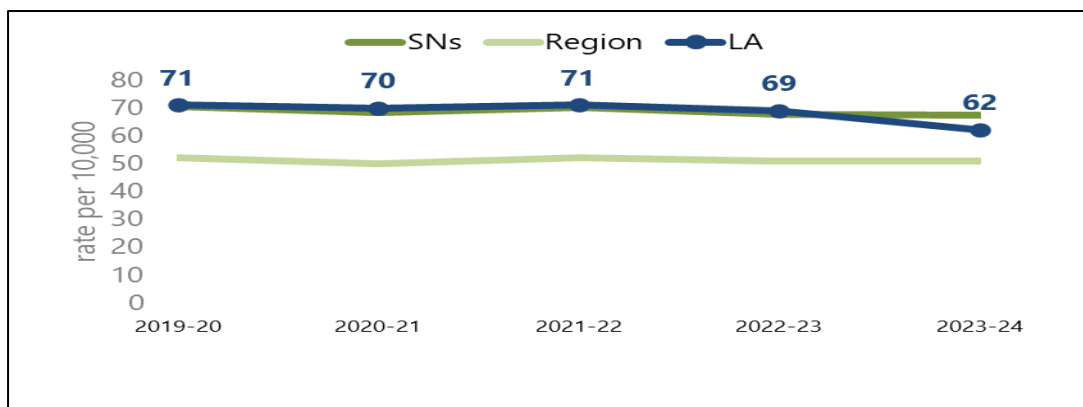


9.8 Children Looked After

9.8.1 A child who has been in the care of a local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a Child Looked After (CLA). CLA are also often referred to as children in care. Children in care in general are either living with extended family members, foster parents, in a residential children's home or living in residential settings like schools or secure units. Children come into care for a variety of reasons, including because they are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children with no responsible adult to care for them or children's services may have intervened because it was believed that the child was at significant risk of harm. A child stops being looked after when they are adopted, are made the subject of a Special Guardianship Order, return home unless there is a Care Order in place, or turn 18. However local authorities are required to support most children who leave care at 18, until they are 25 years old.

9.8.2 At the end of March 2024, 334 children were in our care. This is 36 fewer than in 2023 and is disproportionate to the increase in national data but aligned with a decrease in statistical neighbours children in care cohort.

9.8.3 Rate of CLA started per 10, 000 children



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

Placement type (open CLA)	Own LA	Private	Other	Total
Foster placement	136	83	12	231
Placed for adoption	0	0	7	7
Placed with parents	0	0	12	12
Independent living	0	0	0	0
Residential employment	0	0	0	0
Residential accommodation	4	27	14	45
Secure Children's Homes	0	0	0	0
Children's Homes	1	21	5	27
Residential Care Home	0	0	0	0
NHS/Health Trust	0	0	2	2
Family Centre	0	0	0	0
Young Offender Institution	3	1	2	6
Residential school	0	1	0	1
Other placements	0	2	0	2
Temporary placement	0	0	0	0
Total placements	144	135	54	333

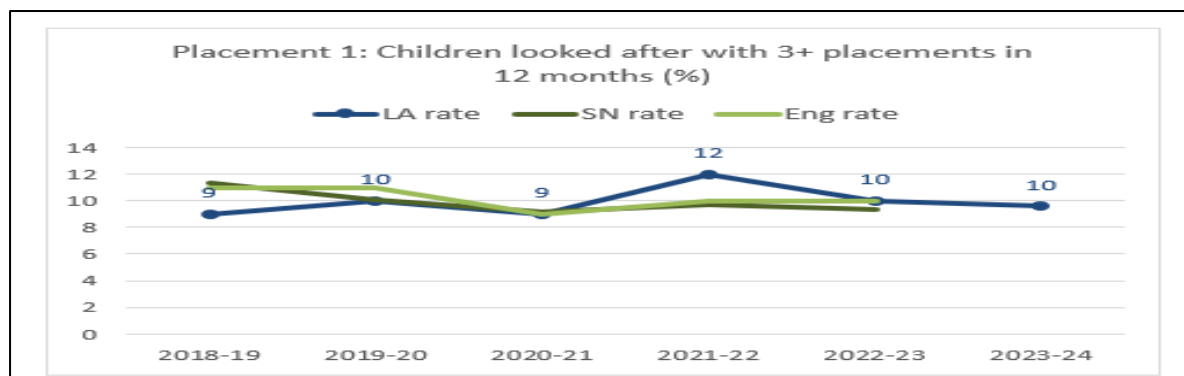
9.8.5 At the end of March 2024, 21% of children were in placements in or within 20 miles of Haringey. This is a reduction from 24% the previous year, but higher than the last known data for statistical neighbours (17%). Local provision continues to be a challenge, and we have this year opened our own residential provision, Haselmere, to mitigate national and local challenges. We also continue to build relationships with local providers and work with our regional and sub-regional partners to address sufficiency issues.

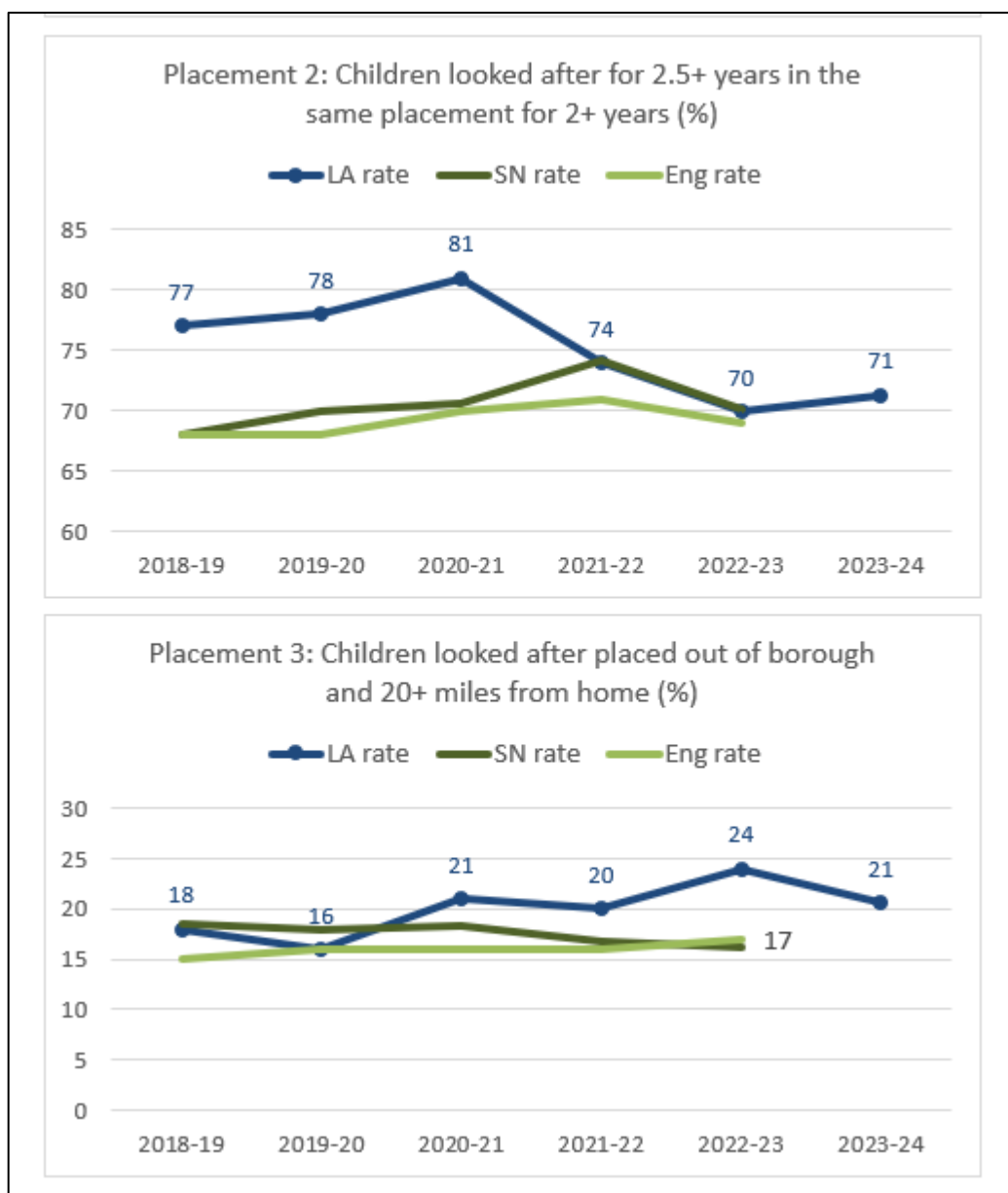
9.8.6 Placement stability is a key factor in children's wellbeing. Having the chance to settle into a foster or residential placement over a period of time, supporting our children in developing a feeling of belonging, helping them feel secure in themselves.

Stability will be achieved only by making sure that the child is in the right placement for them. There are two types of placement stability that we measure – short term stability which looks at the number of placements for children in the last 12 months, and long-term stability which considers those children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years and have been in the same placement for more than the past 2 years. It is a combination of these indicators that gives us confidence that our children in care are in a stable environment.

9.8.7 Our short-term stability performance shows that 10% of children in our care had three or more placements in the past 12 months. This is in line with the previous year, statistical neighbour data (9%) and the national average.

9.8.8 Our performance in relation to long term placement stability is improved slightly from 70% in 2023 to 71% at the end of March 2024. Permanence planning is continually being monitored and strengthened, and we ensure that Independent Reviewing officers (IROs) have sufficient information to enable expedient and timely permanence planning. Our trackers are helping us monitor children who have not been matched and we constantly check and review children's permanency plans through to permanence.





9.8.9 The data for children who go missing from care shows us that 11% of children were reported missing in the period 2023-2024 which is better than the previous average of 15%. When children do go missing from placement there is a robust and effective response from children's social care and the Police. The missing co-ordinator tracks, and risk assesses children who go missing to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent repeat occurrences and return home interviews are routinely conducted by specialist workers.

9.9 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

9.9.1 There are two means by which UASC come to Haringey. Firstly, as spontaneous arrivals, most frequently arriving at local police stations. The second

means is through the National Transfer Scheme, which aims to equitably re-distribute UASC, especially those from Kent and Croydon.

9.9.2 At the end of March 2020 there were 48 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care, this fell to 32 in March 2023 and was further reduced at the close of March 2024, to 26. This represents around 8% of the children in care cohort.

9.10 Adoption

9.10.1 There were 7 adoptions during 2023/24 which is in line with the last reported data from statistical neighbours but we remain beneath the national average. We also have 12 children matched for adoption, a similar number to the previous year.

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

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

9.11 Leaving care

9.11.1 For young people qualifying for service as Care Leavers also known as Care Experienced Young Adults, there is a requirement for Haringey to stay in touch with the young person, keep their Pathway Plans under review, continue the appointment of a Personal Adviser and provide financial assistance where the young person is employed or seeking employment to enable the young person to pursue education or training. These duties continue until the former relevant child reaches 21 or, where the child's pathway plan sets out a programme of education or training which extends beyond their 21st birthday, they continue for so long as the child pursues that programme.

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

9.11.3 At the end of March 2024 there were 764 care experienced young adults who had left care and a further 157 aged 16-17 who were preparing to leave care. This represents a 28% increase.

9.11.4 Looking at care leavers in suitable accommodation and those in employment, education or training Haringey has a higher percentage than both our statistical neighbours and the England rate

Key Leaving Care Performance Indicators	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Care Leavers aged 19-21 in Education, Employment or Training	55%	57%	65%	63%	55% (219)
Care Leavers aged 19-21 who are in suitable accommodation	89%	87%	87%	91%	89% (355)
Care Leavers aged 19-21 who are in higher education	12%	10%	8%	10%	11% (43)

10. Workforce

10.1 The service has developed several initiatives with regards to recruitment and retention, enabling the service to 'Grow our Own' and obtain a high performing culture and be an employer of choice within the external marketplace. This is enacted through many routes; student placements; recruiting cohorts of newly qualified social workers; the step up to social work programme, supporting staff to be Practice Educators; promoting within and converting agency staff to permanent contracts. We remain signed up to the London Pledge and the Framework for London in Permanent Children's Social Work Recruitment.

The organisation has successfully recruit 9 internal social work students on to the Assessed and Supported Year Programme. In addition, Haringey has commenced the roles of 5 students on to the step-up programme and they began their first placements in Adults Services in March 2024. A further 5 social work apprentices started with Haringey in February 2024 as a product of the funding we secured in the previous financial year. We are also proud of the 13 international students we have recruited from India, 7 of whom completed their first year with us.

10.2 Haringey has made significant strides towards obtaining a higher percentage of permanent qualified social workers, despite the fact that there have been national challenges recruiting and retaining permanent social workers, given the trend of

qualifying social workers who are using their training in other non-practice related disciplines.

10.3 The National Workforce Census shows us that our agency rate for social workers was 24% (September 2023) which was in line with statistical neighbours (23.9%) and inner London (14.7%). This is an improvement from the year before when the agency rate was 26% which equated to 63 social workers. This brings the agency rate back in line with the figures from 2021.

10.6 The service has reached a greater level of recruitment stability, there has been a significant focus on retention initiatives, including a contractual relationship with Family Psychology Mutual offering reflective clinical supervision, continued access to a specialist culturally appropriate therapist to reflect the needs of our black and global majority communities, building workforce resilience in working with disproportionality. Team Managers have been supported to conduct daily team check ins which take place virtually. This has led to significant improvements in the retention of social work staff which is now at 11.2%, having previously been at 22% in April 2022.

10.7 The Assistant Directors lead the weekly 'Ask the AD' sessions where key messages are communicated service wide, and the workforce can ask any questions or make service adjustment feedback.

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

10.9 The Health and Wellbeing of Children's Services workforce is of great importance and all managers have been trained on how to carry out relevant risk assessments, create awareness of providing details of the EAP and OH referral schemes and enabling their teams to adapt to the new hybrid ways of working. There also has been service specific health and wellbeing surveys leading to the implementation of key actions. The service ensures that exit interviews are carried out and feedback to the relevant management level and staying interviews also take place across the service. These platforms provide invaluable feedback on what is working well and where realistic improvements may be made.

11 Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

11.2 Finance

11.2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

11.3 Procurement

11.3.1 Not applicable

11.4 Legal

11.4.1 Under the Children Act 1989, the Council is responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in need in its area. The annual report serves to inform Committee of Children Social Care performance in 2023/24 in the discharge of the Council's children safeguarding obligations. The report is for noting and there are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

11.5 Equality

11.5.1 This report is for Committee to note Haringey Council's progress and performance with regards to safeguarding vulnerable children. As such it creates no disadvantage or inequality and the activity described serves to reduce inequality for some of the councils most vulnerable children.

12 Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services

[Directors of children's services: roles and responsibilities - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix B – Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, updated December 2023 guidance

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)