



Haringey Council

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| Report for: | Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee | Item Number: | |
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| Title: | Corporate Parenting Performance Assessment - for the year 2012/13 |
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| Report Authorised by: | Marion Wheeler / Libby Blake |
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| Lead Officer: | Margaret Gallagher |
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| Ward(s) affected: All | Report for Key/Non Key Decision: NA |
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1. Introduction

1.1. This report sets out performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children. Section 2 provides an overall assessment of performance in the service and performance highlights. Appendix 1 provides a series of tables and graphs for each of these measures, grouped by topic, showing monthly data, performance against target, long term trends and benchmarking where applicable. It also contains performance and service comments for each area to provide context.

2. Performance Highlights

- There has been a 5.5% reduction in the number of **children in care** since the end of March 2012. 541 children were in care on the last day of March or 94 per 10,000 population, which remains higher than the level in similar boroughs, although a significant reduction on this point last year (rate 100). The 541 includes 29 unaccompanied asylum seeking children.
- We fell slightly short of the 15 adoptions target in 2012/13 with 14 **adoptions** in the year to March 2013; There have been 31 **special guardianship orders** in the year, a total of 45 legally permanent orders this year.
- In 2012/13, **children waited an average of 661 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption**. This is higher than the 639 day national threshold but an improvement over Haringey's three year average for 2009/12 (749) and our 2011/12 position of 715 days.



- The proportion of **children placed in Haringey** is 26% and 74% are placed outside Haringey. 80% were placed within 20 miles of Haringey.
- 12 children were **missing from care** during the month of March, 7 for over 24 hours but overall numbers of children reported missing are reducing.
- Targets for **care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training** were not achieved and performance in these areas has remained at a similar level to 2011/12 and to levels achieved by our statistical neighbours.
- 73.6% of children in care for more than 1 year had up to date **health and dental checks** in 2012/13 slightly down on 83.4% achieved in 2011/12
- 82.3% of children in care for over 1 month had an up to date **health assessment** at the end of March 2013 around the same level as in 2011/12 but up from 70% in 2010/11.
- The proportion of children with up to date **dental checks** in the last 12 months has fluctuated with an average of 54% having up to date checks in 2012/13.

2.1. The **number of children in care** have reduced steadily although there was an increase of 11 children between February and March, 541 children as at the end of March from 573 at the end of March 2012, a 5.5% reduction and a 50% decrease in short term admissions. The 541 includes 29 unaccompanied asylum seeking children. This equates to a rate of 94 per 10,000 population, a significant reduction compared to this time last year (100). Haringey's rate remains significantly higher than the statistical neighbour average (74 as at March 2012).

2.2. In the year to March 202 children have become looked after and 236 have ceased to be looked after meaning that the cohort has decreased by 34 children in the year to date. There has been a slight increase in numbers of asylum seeking young people, as they are allocated to Haringey on a London rota basis from Croydon and we now have an additional pressure of Youth Detention Accommodations (YDA) although the majority of these are short term. These will be monitored as part of our children in care reporting for 2013/14. Southwark judgement accommodations are low but there are situations where young people are so vulnerable that they need the additional security of LAC status. The joint work with Families First project should help to reduce the need for accommodation. It is hoped that this project will gradually impact too on some of the YOS cases which result in YDA.

2.3. Of the **children becoming looked after** in March 7 children (30%) were **previously subject to a child protection plan** (7 out of 23). A larger proportion than last year, 39% (66 out of 170) in the year to date compared to 23% (59 out of 257) in 2011/12. The increase in children being looked after who were previously subject to a child protection plan is an indication that families have had an increased opportunity to work with statutory agencies to improve their parenting and reduce risk prior to instituting proceedings to remove the child from the family. The Tri-Borough Court Project will support close monitoring of the factors which lead us to go into proceedings. The project will have a strong focus on analysing



pre court work with families and thereby tracking the effectiveness of early interventions in terms of later issuing proceedings. We should be able to observe an upward trajectory in numbers of those previously subject to a plan.

- 2.4. The proportion of **children placed in Haringey** is 26% and 74% are **placed outside Haringey** as at March 2013 remaining fairly stable. 80% were placed within 20 miles of Haringey. There is great emphasis on placing children closer to Haringey where at all possible. The placements service is working to acquire a higher proportion of placements in borough from independent providers, both for foster care and residential placements. A piece of work to review the factors which will achieve a significantly higher proportion of "closer to home" placements is about to commence. The aim is to increase numbers of local placements to enable young people to stay in a familiar area, to access education and a range of support services from Haringey. This is pertinent for older young people who will benefit from being linked in to projects such as Tottenham Hotspur Foundation and important for family contact (where appropriate) and education arrangements for all children in care.
- 2.5. **Foster care (in house) placements** including those placed for adoption are showing a reducing trend. As at the end of March 244 (including unaccompanied minors) were placed with agency foster carers (45%), this includes 6 placed for adoption and 61 placed with relatives/ friends (35.6%). An external review of Haringey Fostering Services has been commissioned to help us understand the trend and take appropriate action.
- 2.6. The percentage of up to date **children in care visits** continues to exceed the 95% target.
- 2.7. 12 children were **missing from care** during the month of March, 7 were missing for over 24 hours and 6 were still missing at the end of the month. The number of missing children has reduced and some regular absconders have settled better in their placements. We have been making full use of the return to care interviews and these have provided helpful feedback. The Youth Service is now introducing review meetings for young people to take place a month after the original missing interview. These should assist in tracking progress and picking up any new issues.
- 2.8. Careful plans are in place with regard to **missing children**. Weekly reporting arrangements continue. We are still experiencing some issues with young people who need to be recorded as missing because they are not in their placements but we do know where they are. This usually applies to young people of 16 and 17 who are spending large amounts of time with their partners. In such situations we have had some measure of success with moving them to semi independent accommodation where they can live with some more freedoms but have control if they wish to spend time on their own in their own place. We have recently moved a few of our younger LAC to more suitable placements and this has stopped their absconding as they are happier and more settled.



- 2.9. At the end of March 83.3% of **children in care cases** were **reviewed within required timescales**. Whilst below target this is a significant improvement on levels achieved in 2011/12 and tracking where reviews have been missed is in place with IROs monitoring on a monthly basis. The target for children in care reviews in timescale was 92% for 2012/13. All Looked After Children have an IRO allocated to them at the point of referral to the service, they are responsible for scheduling reviews according to the timescales laid down in the legislation. All of the cases where the Review was reported as being held late at some point in the year have been looked at and it can be confirmed that the review has now taken place.
- 2.10. Indicators around **stability of placements** are in line with statistical neighbours. The proportion with 3 or more placements is at 7.2%. Increased monitoring of placements and the permanent, settled staff group is proving to be a valuable resource in achieving this low percentage of moves. There are now processes in place to underpin the achievements in this area and to ensure that this level of stability is maintained. The number of children with 2 placements is also tracked and appears to be increasing (102 as at March or 18.8%).
- 2.11. 71% of **children under 16 who have been in care for 2.5 years have been in the same placement for at least 2 years** similar to statistical neighbour average and close to the 72% target. There have been a few placement disruptions this month for difficult reasons but some of the other reasons for moves are much more positive. For example, moves to a long term foster placement or a pre adoptive placement. A few older young people have moved to accommodation that will better meet their transitions needs when they become 18.
- 2.12. Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation** is below the target of 95% but monthly numbers pertain to small cohorts of young people. Where we have one young person who is not in touch with us or in prison, this reflects in the figures reported and detracts from achieving the 95% target. 83% (54 out of 65) of the cohort in the year were in suitable accommodation. In the 903 return (Children Looked After) 2011/12 92% of Haringey's care leavers were in suitable accommodation, higher than the England figure of 88% (2011/12) but proportions of young people in suitable accommodation have declined in 2012/13 and are below levels being achieved by our statistical neighbours.
- 2.13. **Care leavers in education, training and employment (ETE)** is below target. 64% of Haringey care leavers were in ETE in 2011/12 and 61.5% (40 out of 65) were in ETE this year. This is in line with our statistical neighbours and at a similar level to that reported in 2011/12.
- 2.14. There have been 14 **adoptions** in the year to March; the end of year target was 15 and despite the fact that a further 7 applications have been lodged with the courts, the target was not reached. We should have achieved 16 but there was a last minute application from the birth parent of two children, who had hearing dates booked, which meant that those final hearing dates could not proceed as planned.



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The matter will be dealt with but there is legal process to complete before the final orders can be achieved. Targeted work is being undertaken by both the Adoption and Children in Care Service to minimise delay.

- 2.15. There have been 31 **special guardianship orders** (SGO) in the year to March, against a target of 25 by end of year. This compares with 14 adoptions and 13 SGOs (27 legally permanent orders) at this time last year and indeed at the end of year 2011/12 and with 45 **legally permanent orders** in 2012/13. The graph below shows the increase in adoptions, SGOs and residence orders over the last 3 years.



- 2.16. The 903 comparative data for 2011/12 showed that of the children who ceased to be looked after in the year 5% were adopted, this compares to 8% in London and 9% in our comparator authorities, the highest being Hackney at 17%. Of the 239 children that have ceased to be looked after this year **45 (19%) have moved on to a legally permanent placement of which 6% have been adopted.** We have an unprecedented number of children now placed in pre adoptive placements awaiting orders. This will really boost potential for adoption orders during 2013-14 and secures the permanency plans for around 30 children in care. As the volume of adoption orders increase in 2013/14 and the looked after numbers decrease, the percentage of children ceasing to be looked after through adoption will correspondingly increase. The target for 2013/14 is to complete 25 adoptions and 35 special guardianship orders and to increase the percentage of children looked after who are adopted to 9%.

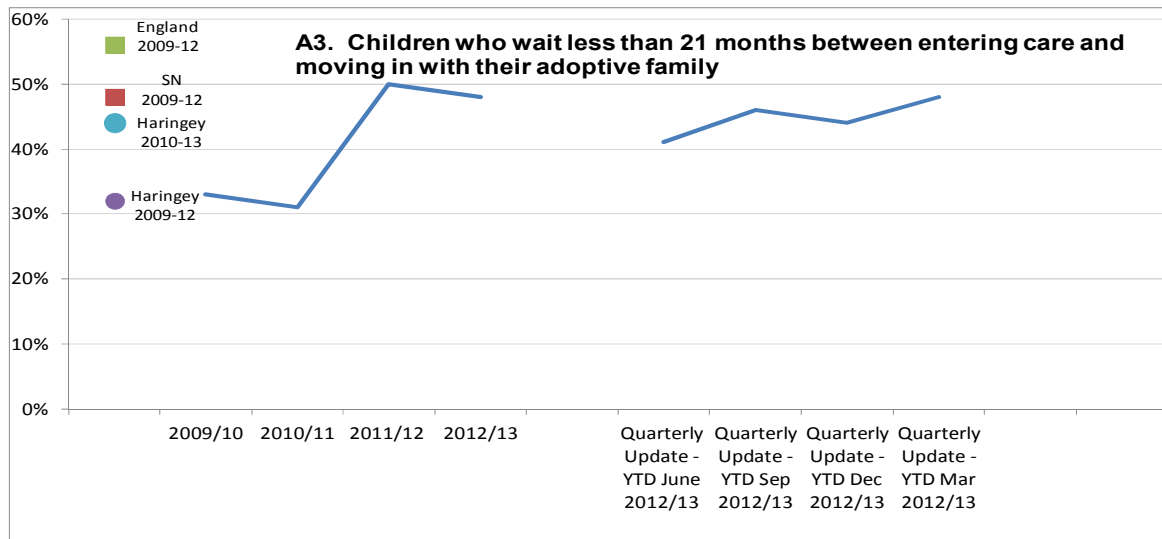
- 2.17. In 2012/13, **children waited an average of 661 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption.** This is higher than the 639 day national threshold but an improvement over Haringey's three year average for 2009/12 (749) and the 2011/12 position of 715 days.

- 2.18. In 2012/13, **children waited an average of 436 days from entering care to moving in with adoptive parents** (including foster parents who subsequently adopt), a considerable improvement on 647 days in 2009/12.



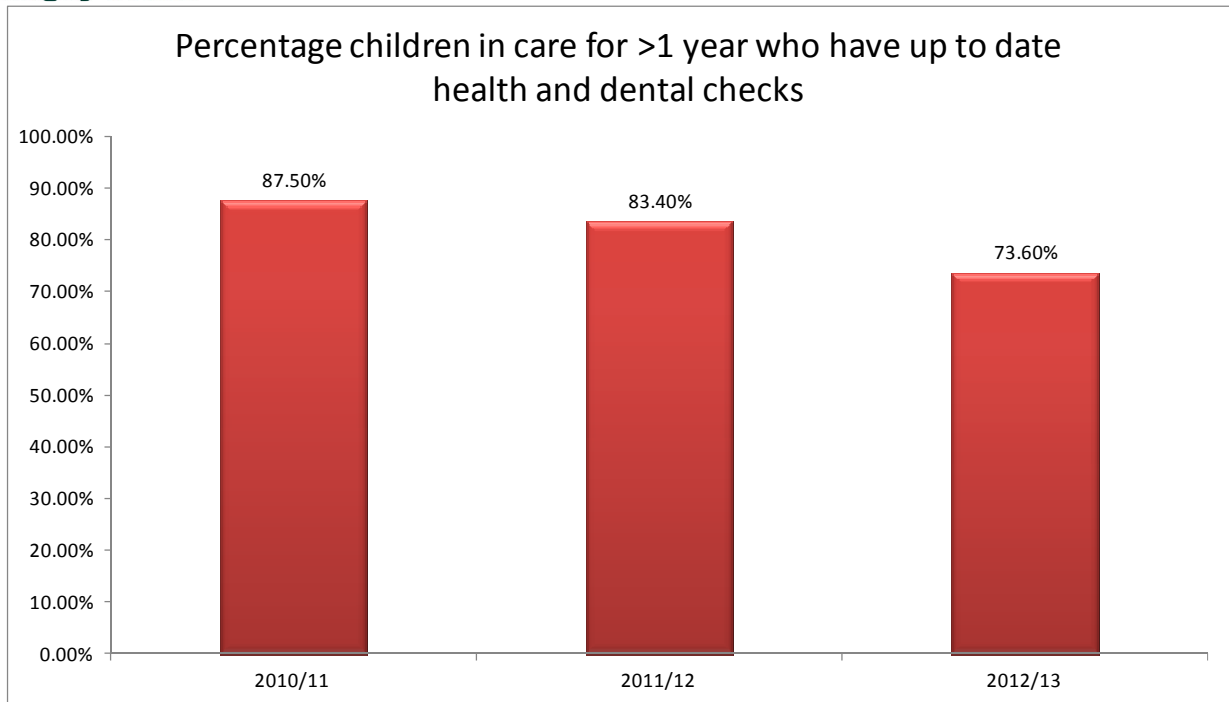
2.19. The graph below shows progress in terms of timeliness where in 2009/12 Haringey had 32% of children waiting less than 21 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family, well below the statistical neighbour position of 48% and England position of 56% for the same period. We have monitored progress on this measure throughout the year and in quarter 4 the percentage waiting less than 21 months increased to 48% (19 out of 40 children). Overall for 2012/13 the percentage who waited less than 21 months was 44% (31 out of 70 children) and for adopted children only the percentage increases to 57% (8 out of 14 children). Good progress has been made in securing permanent placements for children in care, either through adoption or special guardianship orders but focus needs to be maintained to ensure that national thresholds are met.

2.20. Further detail of progress made over the year on adoptions is contained in the adoption scorecard attached at Appendix 2.

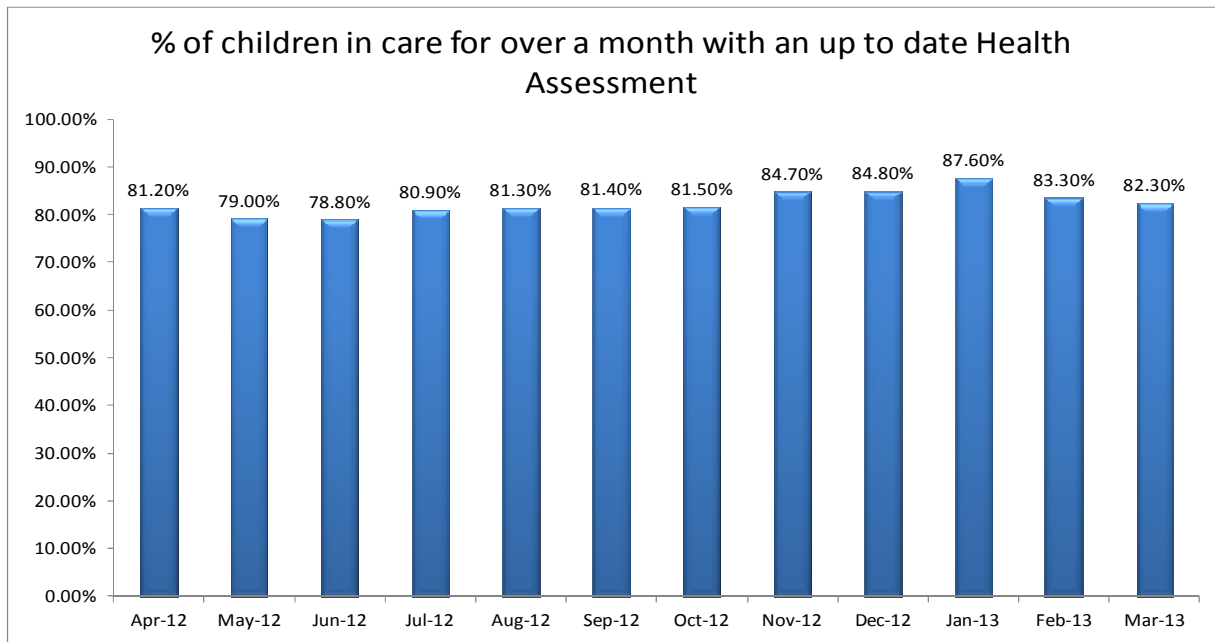


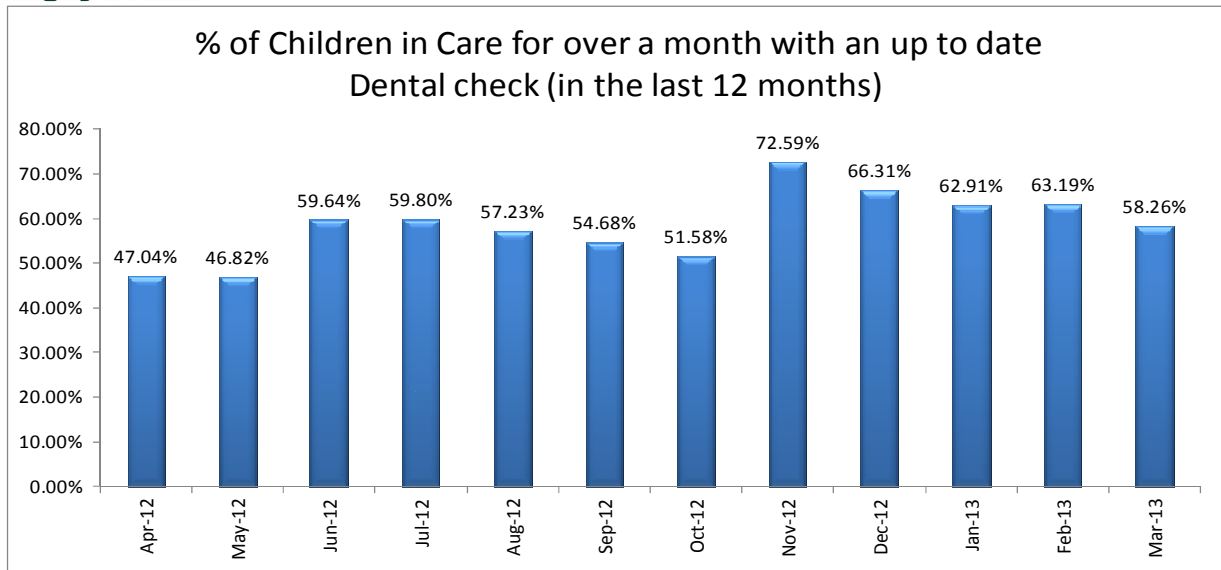
2.21. The Council has undertaken a range of activities to improve its performance on adoption and a Permanency Policy has been developed and approved. The service is also recruiting and approving significantly higher numbers of adopters (27 approved in 2012/13, compared to 9 in 2011/12).

2.22. There has been a slight decline in children in care who had both health and dental checks with 73.6% as at the end of March 2013. The graph below shows the proportion with up to date health and dental checks over the last 3 years.



2.23. The proportion with up to date health assessments has improved but children with up to date dental checks have fluctuated with an average of 54% in 2012/13 and brought the combined average for health and dental checks down. See graphs below.





3. Appendices

- Appendix 1: Performance Analysis and Benchmarking
- Appendix 2: Adoption Scorecard