



Haringey Council

Report for:	Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee 6 July 2015	Item Number:	
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Title:	Performance for the year to May 2015 including summary of 2014/15 End of Year Performance
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Report Authorised by:	Jon Abbey Interim Director, Children's Services
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Lead Officer:	Margaret Gallagher Corporate Performance Manager
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Ward(s) affected: All	Non Key Decision:
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an analysis of the performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.
- 1.2. Section 2 contains performance highlights and key messages identifying areas of improvement and Section 3 indicates areas for focus.
- 1.3. Section 4 provides an overall assessment of performance in the service as relating to Children in Care so that Members can assess progress in key areas within the context of the Local Authorities role as Corporate Parent.
- 1.4. Section 5 (appendix) provides detailed key data in relation to children becoming looked after, and our performance on fostering and adoption in Haringey.

Performance Highlights/ Key Messages

2. Positive or Improving Performance

- 453 **children were in care** on the last day of May 2015 or 77 per 10,000 population including 29 unaccompanied asylum seeker children. This is 24 fewer than at the end of January 2015 and equates to a 10.6% reduction since March 2014. However although we have closed the gap with our statistical neighbour rate (70), Haringey remains above the national average rate of 60 per 10,000 population.
- There were 54 **adoptions and special guardianship orders (SGOs)** in 2014/15. The target was exceeded and permanency was secured for 22% of children who ceased to be looked after. In April and May 2015 there have been 6 adoptions and 2 SGOs.
- In 2014/15, **children waited an average of 589 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption**. This is a significant improvement on 2013/14 although higher than the national threshold (487 day average for 2012-15). Haringey's three year average (2011/14) of 725 days is better than our statistical neighbour position of 769 days. The average days for the 6 adoptions to May 2015 is 468 days.
- In 2014/15 we had fewer recorded episodes of **looked after children going missing**, 22 down from 36 the previous year. Numbers of children missing from care remain low. A task and finish group is working on bringing together multi-agency datasets on children missing from home, care and education for matching and learning so that analysis and activity can be reported to the LSCB. A Haringey Runaway and Missing from Home and Care Protocol is being completed by all agencies which will strengthen our approach to supporting all children who run away or go missing in the area.

Indicators around **stability of placements for looked after children remain in line** with statistical neighbours and targets. In 2014/15, 7.5% of children had 3 or more placement moves. This has reduced to 6% at the end of May.

- 77 children or 18% were **placed 20 miles or more from Haringey** at the end of March 2015, slightly more than the 16% target but on an improving trajectory. At the end of May there was a further reduction with 73 out of 422 (17%) children placed 20 miles or more.
- In 2014/15, 92% (326 out of 355 children) of LAC children had an **up to date health assessment**, an improvement from the 88% reported last year, now in line with the 2013/14 London average and above the England position of 88%.
- 91% of LAC children had an **up to date dental visit** as at 31 March 2015, a significant improvement from the 71% achieved the previous year and exceeding the 2013/14 London average of 88% and national position of 84%.

- Haringey's performance for **care leavers aged 19-21 in higher education (16%)** compares very favourably with the national position of 6%.

3. Areas for Focus

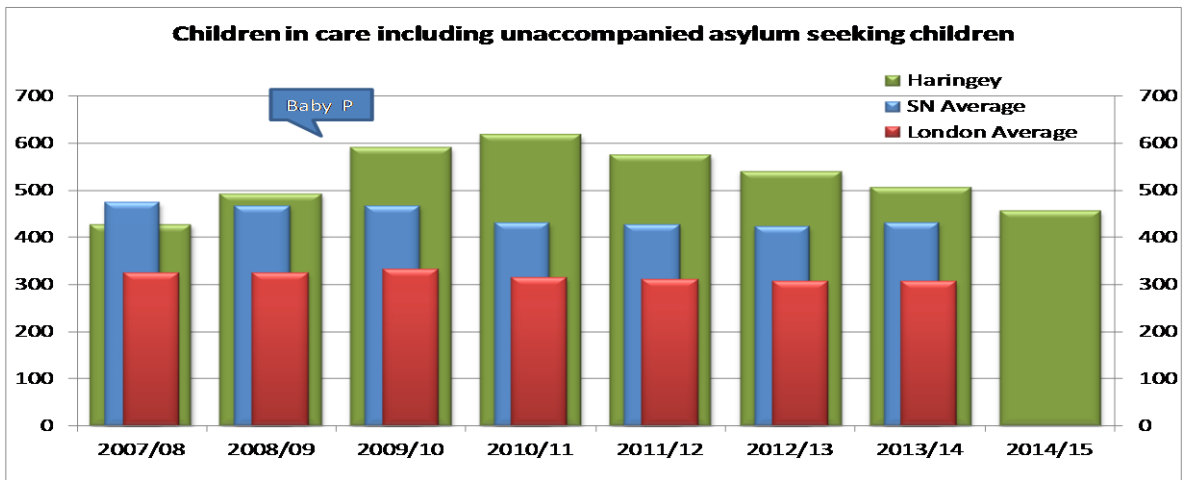
- Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training** is below levels achieved last year albeit that the variation between Haringey and published national performance levels for 2013/14 in these areas is not significant. However benchmarking data around care leavers in education, employment and training shows that Haringey's position of 40% is below average for London in 2014/15 (57%).
- Despite exceptional educational achievement for our looked after children, only 37% of school age children have a completed and up to date **Personal Education Plans (PEP)**. This is a decline on recent months and remains below the expected level. An action plan to prioritise completion of PEPs is being implemented and is expected to yield improved results in the next 7 weeks before the schools break up.

49% of looked after children have an **up to date Care Plan** at the end of May, down from the position of 67% at the end of February and remaining below the expected level. This area continues to remain a challenge with staffing pressures having an impact on both the consistency and timely completion of plans.

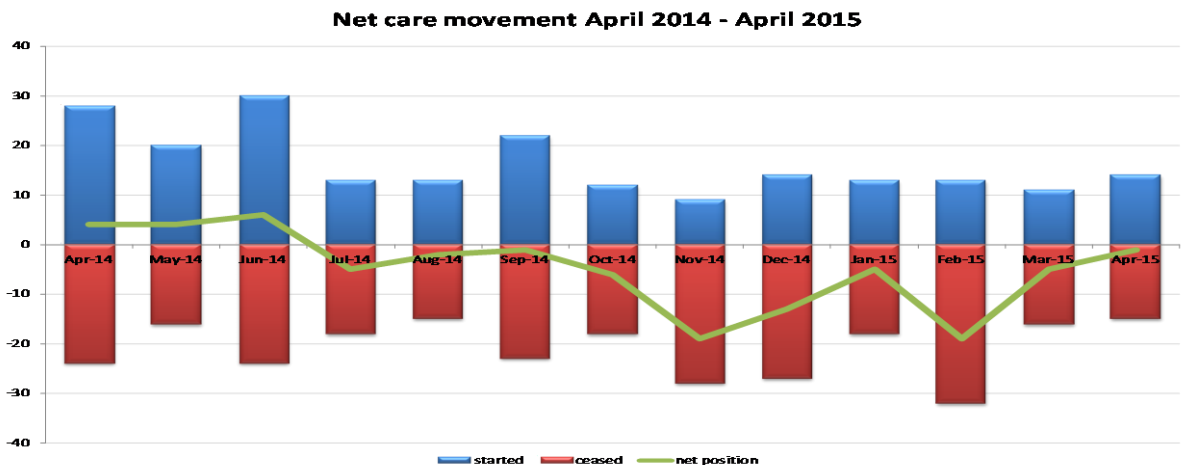
- 78% of **Children in Care visits** were recorded as completed in the relevant timescales in May. Performance in this area has dipped from levels of 95% achieved in previous years. However, it is understood that this is predominantly a recording issue and with visits taking place in a timely way.
- The average **care proceedings duration** in 2014/15 was 34 weeks (including cases commenced in 2013/14) with trends towards cases of longer duration than the 26 weeks statutory minimum. 66% of 77 cases relating to 132 children were concluded in over 26 weeks. Although the average case duration is lower than at January 2013 (71 weeks) and it reduced to 26 weeks in the period between June 13 and May 14, it remains higher than the latest national comparator data which shows an average case duration of 30 weeks.
- 21(8.4%) of looked after children (aged 10 and over) were **convicted or subject to a final warning** during the year 2014/15, a small increase on our 2013/14 figure. In 2012/13 Haringey had a comparatively high proportion of looked after children with convictions (11.1%). This remains higher than the latest published England average rate of 5.6%.

4. Children Looked After

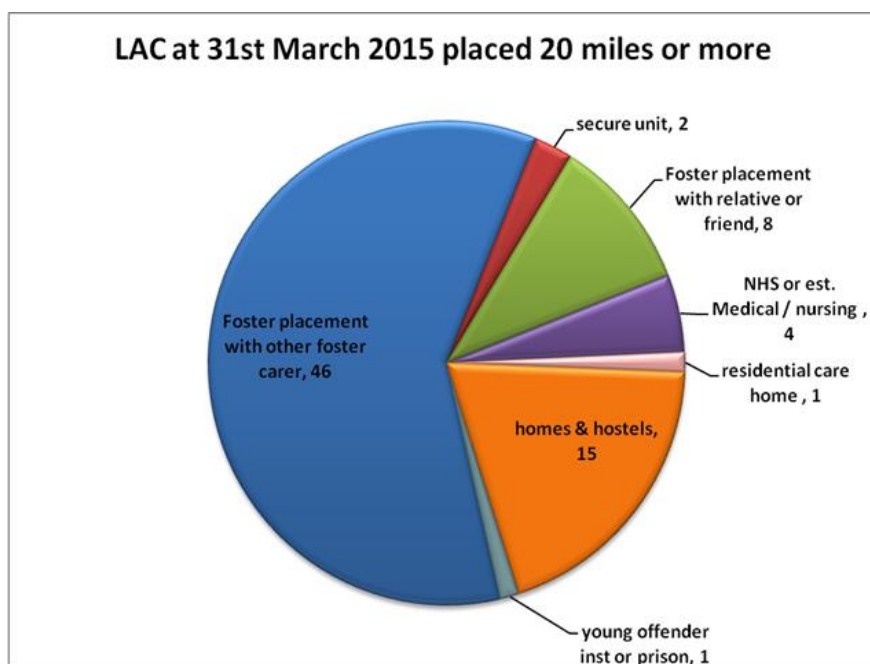
- 4.1. There has been a 10.6% reduction in the number of **children in care** since the end of March 2014. This progress and steady downward trajectory over the last 3 years means we are moving towards alignment with the level in similar boroughs. Our rate of 77 children in care per 10,000 population compares with our statistical neighbour average rate of 70 per 10,000 and 60 nationally.
- 4.2. The graph below depicts the decrease in Haringey's children in care numbers over the past 5 years and illustrates our comparative position with statistical neighbour and London averages over a 7 year period. Comparator data for 2014/15 will be available later in the year.



- 4.3. In 2014/15 195 children **become looked after**, a 16% decrease on the 2013/14 position (38 fewer children) compared with the previous year. 249 children **ceased to be looked after** in 2014/15 a **net decrease** in the cohort of 51 children. The graph below shows the net care movement in 2014/15 and shows a net reduction in the looked after children population month on month since July 2014. However the rate of decrease is slowing and the number of children in care has not decreased any further as at May 2015, with numbers in June showing a slight increase.



- 4.4. There has been an increase in the number of **young people who started to be looked after under police protection**; 63 in 2014/15 (31%). (54 children, 23% in 2013/14) There was a decrease in the **number of children becoming looked after on remand** from 29 to 15 in 2014/15.
- 4.5. There was a 55% reduction in the **number of children becoming looked after on an interim care order** from 42 to 19. All placements are monitored carefully and reviewed at Resources Panel regularly. Numbers of **children becoming looked after under section 20** (voluntary arrangement with parental consent) have remained relatively stable with 102 children becoming looked after on section 20 in 2014/15, 50% of the total number of children that became looked after in 2014/15. A programme of work around permanency continues to ensure that edge of care services are optimised to prevent children becoming looked after where appropriate.
- 4.6. The **proportion of looked after children placed 20 miles or more from Haringey** reduced in 2014/15 to 18% (77 children) and fewer children are placed outside the local authority boundary. Some of this improvement is attributable to an increase in carers in the borough and some to the Edge of Care panel who review all placements for new children coming into care and where preferable divert children away from care through more acute packages of support.. Targeted recruitment of carers in the borough is progressing with 24 foster carers approved and recruited in 2014/15, 22 of these through a new contract with NRS. A continued focus on recruitment of carers for young people age 11+ and long term carers is part of the new sufficiency and permanency policy planning.
- 4.7. As at the end of May 2015 17% (73 out of 422) looked after children were **placed 20 miles or more from Haringey**.
- 4.8. The pie chart below shows the breakdown of placements 20 miles plus at 31 March 2015.



- 4.9 **We are improving our approach to placements and working actively with Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) foster carers.** At the end of March 342 children were in Fostering placements, 52 of these placed with relatives or friends, a reduction of 39 fostering placements since 1 April 2014. In line with the reduction of looked after children in 2014/15 there has been a net reduction across all types of paid provision.
- 4.10 Four children were **missing from care** during the month of May and no children were away from their placement without authorisation. The Lead Member and DCS are briefed on missing looked after children at a weekly meeting, which includes the review of the return to care interviews to ensure themes and pertinent issues are picked up and addressed immediately.
- 4.11 **Visits to looked after children** are at their lowest level for some time performance at the end of May shows that 78% of children have been seen in accordance with the required frequency in their care plan, down on levels achieved in 2014/15 and earlier years. However managers are undertaking line by line checks to ensure that all visits showing as outstanding are completed, properly recorded and reasons for any visits that have not taken place are understood.
- 4.12 At the end of March 2015, 34 children or 7.5% had **3 or more placements** and 74% of children under 16 who had been in care for at least 2.5 years had **been in the same placement for at least 2 years**, similar to our statistical neighbour average. Together these measures of stability suggest quality matching of the child's needs and can be associated with better outcomes. The proportion with **three or more placements** at the end of May is 6.4% (29 out of 453 children) and 74% of those looked after for 2.5 years or more had been in the same placement for at least 2 years.

Personal Education Plans

- 4.13 As at 1 June 2015, **37% of school age children had completed and up to date Personal Education Plans (PEP)**. This area has seen significant decline in recent months. However the Children in Care service and the Virtual School are working together closely to examine the barriers and challenges and develop a strengthened approach to ensuring PEPs are completed.
- 4.14 5% of children have no PEP and nearly 50% of children have PEPs which are older than 6 months and need to be updated. Approximately a quarter of these are between 6-8 months old but around 30% are between 10 months and over a year old. An action plan to prioritise completion of PEPs is being implemented and is expected to yield improved results before the schools break up. Agreed remedial actions include:
- The Head of Virtual School has organised a lunchtime seminar on 12 June with social workers to look at outstanding and out of date PEPs for pupils in year 6. Future sessions will focus on the completion of PEPs for year 10 and year 11 pupils where analysis shows have the largest proportion of out of date PEPs.

- Cleansing the PEP cases which appear to be incomplete on Mosaic- this equates to about 30 PEPs which have been initiated but are sitting as incomplete on the system perhaps because of duplication or because the case was re-assigned.
- All PEPs which are not up to date to be time-banded with management information provided weekly prioritising the most out of date PEPs.
- The workflow on Mosaic is being amended to enable task reminders.
- Identify a PEP champion from the service and establish regular surgeries to support staff in completing quality PEPs.
- Look at ways to reduce bureaucracy in the system and make the task of completing the PEP as simple as possible.

Care Leavers

- 4.15 There has been an increase across all three age groups for care leavers in 14/15. Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation** has declined and is below levels achieved in previous years. 70% (55 out of 79) of the 19 year old cohort in 2014/15 were in suitable accommodation down from 78% in 2013/14. 65% of the 20 year old cohort and 61% of 21 year old cohort were in suitable accommodation this year. Across the 3 age groups, 65% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation, down from the 72% achieved in 2013/14 and below the national average of 78%.
- 4.16 **Care leavers in Education, Training and Employment (ETE)** also reduced at all age groups and is below levels achieved in previous years although the 19 and 21 year old cohorts appear to have increased by over a third this year compared to 2013/14. In 2014/15 46% (36 out of 79) of the 19 year old cohort were in ETE, 35% of the 20 year old cohort and 39% of the 21 year old cohort. Across the 3 age groups this equates to 40% of the cohort in Education, Employment and Training which is below the 2014/15 average for London 57% (based on 10 returns) and national published levels achieved in 2013/14 of 44%.

Care Proceedings

- 4.17 An ambitious measure around 26 week care proceedings was introduced to cut delays in the court process so that children could be found a permanent home more quickly, minimizing uncertainty and the potential harm that can do to their development. The North London Tri-Borough Care Proceedings Project (NLCPP) was set up to reduce avoidable delay and to improve decision making for children subject to care proceedings. The work of this pilot should ensure that proceedings are only issued in circumstances where the child is likely to need a permanence plan and that pre proceedings work to engage parents is done beforehand.
- 4.18 Performance suggests an overall trend of increasing **care proceedings case duration** and the consortium's aim to complete the majority (70%) of cases within the 26 week timescale was not achieved. Of the completed cases in the year to the

end of March 2015 34% were completed within 26 weeks. The Government has admitted that the 26-week target to decide whether a child is taken into care is “highly unlikely” to ever be met for all cases.

- 4.19 Part of the reason the target was not achieved is that Haringey is deemed to have a larger proportion of complex cases which are determined to be ‘exceptional’ and therefore unlikely to be concluded in the 26 week timescale.
- 4.20 The outcome of only 42% of care proceedings was for children to be placed in alternate permanent care through adoption or long term fostering. For 37% the outcome was to remain or return to their parents’ care raising the question of whether this was the necessary route to achieve this outcome. 21% of children remained in their family of origin by special guardianship order.
- 4.21 However there has been a significant reduction in the number of current care proceedings, 27 cases compared with 56 in October 2014 and the reduction in the number of applications suggests improvement in social work practice pre care proceedings. It is expected that the improved pre-care proceedings work being undertaken will begin to impact on the duration of care proceedings and will evidence that all alternate placement options have been explored rigorously at the point of application.

Adoption and Permanency

- 4.22 In 2014/15 there were 22 **adoptions** and 32 **special guardianship orders (SGO)** although 10 fewer than achieved in 2013/14. Focused and targeted work to achieve adoption for children with adoption plans in 2013 and 2014 was successful with Haringey’s adoption numbers significantly higher than the average for our statistical neighbours (38 against SN average of 23). Since then, and in line with national changes in case law and the adoption landscape, more children are achieving permanency with connected persons in special guardianship placements.
- 4.23 There was an increase particularly in special guardianship orders in the last quarter of 2014/15 with 14 orders going through, taking the total for the year to 32, 6 more than in 2013/14. **Adoption and special guardianship targets were exceeded** and 8.8% of children who ceased to be looked after were adopted. When SGOs are included **22% achieved a form of legal permanency**. Over a 3 year period 2011-14 Haringey’s proportion of children adopted (8%) remains below that of our statistical neighbours (9.8%) and the national position (14%) although a substantial work programme is in place to improve on this via the Sufficiency agenda.
- 4.24 In April and May 2015 there have been 6 adoptions and 2 special guardianship orders, a similar level to this point in 2014/15. It is agreed that a sustainable volume of adoptions going forward is 20 per year.
- 4.25 The average number of **days taken for looked after children to be placed for adoption** for those children adopted in the period reduced to 589 days for the year from 778 days in 2013/14. This is a positive direction of travel although performance remains 102 days above the national threshold (487 day average for 2012-15 Current

performance compares favourably with the latest available comparator data for England of 628 days for the three year rolling average (2011-14) and 769 days for our statistical neighbours. In the year to May 2015 the average number of days for a child to be placed for adoption has further reduced to 468 days.

- 4.26 In 2014/15 where times for **children who are adopted by their foster family** are stopped at the date the child moved in with the foster family, the average wait reduced to 415 days, an improvement of 100 days compared with the previous year. These figures relate to the timeliness for 22 adoptions in 2014/15 but Haringey's performance remains better than the 3 year average (2011-14) of 521 days for our statistical neighbours.
- 4.27 Work to ensure a whole systems approach to fostering, to develop a foster to adopt scheme for Haringey led by senior practitioners is planned. The service are progressing contractual arrangements with Coram to undertake recruitment and the assessment function of adopters including a fast track assessment process for second time adopters. 20 adopters were approved in 2014/15.