

Report for: Corporate Parent Advisory Committee: 4 April 2016

Item number:

Title: Performance for the year to February 2016

Report

Authorised by:  Jon Abbey, Director, Children's Services

Lead Officer: Margaret Gallagher, Corporate Performance Manager  
[margaret.gallagher@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.gallagher@haringey.gov.uk) 020 8489 2971

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision: Non key

## 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. Sections 2 and 3 contain performance highlights and key messages identifying areas of improvement and 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.

## 2. Positive or Improving Performance

- 2.1. 414 children were in care on the last day of February 2016 or 70 per 10,000 population including 32 unaccompanied asylum seeker children. There has been a gradual decrease in the level of children in care in comparison to the position at the end of March 2015 - 37 fewer children. The reduction in Haringey's rate of looked after children places us comfortably within the inter-quartile range of our statistical neighbours (431 children or a rate of 69 per 10,000 population) although the rate remains above the London (52) and national average (60) rates.
- 2.2. A performance review system put in place by the Head of Service for Children in Care in October 2015 has yielded some excellent performance improvements. The meetings with team managers are continuing and now focus on new challenges such as the recording of pathway plans and visits to

children in care. At the end of February 2016, 92% of looked after children had an **up to date Care Plan**, a significant improvement from a low level of 49% at the end of May 2015 and now exceeding the 90% target.

- 2.3. 87% of school aged children had completed and **up to date Personal Education Plans (PEP)** at the end of February. This is a step change in performance and only 3% short of the expected target. The results from the weekly meeting review on 17 March showed that the 90% target had been achieved. Completion of PEPs will continue to be a priority.
- 2.4. At the end of February, 85% of looked after children aged 16-17 had **up to date Pathway Plans**. Performance in this area is at an all time high having increased significantly compared to the low level (20%) reported in June. There has been continuous focus to ensure completion of plans in a timely manner with compliance monitored through the weekly meetings. Although performance remains short of the 90% target, it is hoped that with further effort from the 16+ children in care team, the 90% target will be achieved soon. A fortnightly meeting with the young people in care team has been established to drive improvement in performance across all service areas.
- 2.5. Indicators around **stability of placements** for looked after children remain in line with statistical neighbours and targets. In the year to February 2016, 8.5% of children had three or more placement moves, below the statistical neighbour average (13%). 77% of children under 16 who had been in care for at least two and a half years had been in the same placement for at least two years, slightly above our statistical neighbour average (70%).
- 2.6. 93% of LAC had an **up to date review** at the end of February above the 90% target.
- 2.7. 85% of **Children in Care visits** were recorded as completed in the relevant timescales in this period, February. Performance in this area has improved in recent months and is now just 5% below the 90% target.
- 2.8. At the end of February, 91% (362 out of 399) of children in care for over a month had an **up to date health assessment**, a dip from the 97% achieved at the end of January but still above target. The dip in February performance was due to a backlog and a lack of resources as two nurses were off sick during February. Some of these children have now been seen. The service will do their utmost to bring levels back on track and it is expected that health assessments performance will better the 2014/15 outturn of 94%.
- 2.9. Quarter 3 data reveals that the **care proceedings** trend towards cases of shorter duration has been maintained with an average duration of 28 weeks and, a considerable achievement of 78% cases concluded in less than the 26 weeks statutory timescale, improved from 35% in Quarters 1 & 2.
- 2.10. The number of current care proceedings 25 cases (49 children) also maintains the trend of a significant reduction in the number of proceedings initiated since a peak of 56 cases in October 2014.

2.11. Cafcass data shows that the number of care proceedings application per 10,000 child population in Haringey has decreased from 22.6 ( in 2010 – 11) to 9.3 (in 2014 – 15) with a decrease in applications in each year.

### 3. Areas for Focus

- 3.1. 85 children or 21% were placed 20 miles or more from Haringey at the end of February 2016, an additional 11 children since the position at end of January 2016. Performance is worse than the 16% target and the March 2015 end of year performance (18%) when 77 children were placed more than 20 miles from Haringey. Although higher than national levels this proportion is only slightly above the average for London and our Statistical Neighbours (18%).
- 3.2. A list and map of all children placed 20 miles or more at the end of February was sent to the service to review and to add the reasons why the child was placed outside Haringey. For those where we have recorded reasons, the majority are kinship placements, children with complex needs placed with specialist foster carers or long term settled placements. Interestingly 10 of our looked after children are currently placed with in house carers 20 miles or more from Haringey. Volumes of looked after children and those placed 20 miles or more are now incorporate in the monthly scorecard produced for CYPS Quality and Performance network for regular review.
- 3.3. In the year to February 2016 there have been 35 legal permanency orders, 19 adoptions and 16 special guardianship orders (SGO). This equates to permanency being secured for 17% of children that ceased to be looked after but is 18 fewer legal orders achieved compared with the same period last year and behind track by 14 orders against our combined (adoption and SGO) target of 54 for 2015-16.
- 3.4. However with three known adoption orders in March, we will meet our end of year adoption target. 24 adoption orders are expected by the end of the financial year and 22 special guardianship orders putting us just 11 permanency orders, behind the levels achieved in 2014/15. The length of adoption proceedings has increased as a result of a higher number of leave to oppose decisions being made by the courts. The referrals for special guardianship assessments has been far less than in past years and less than expected.
- 3.5. In the year to February, children waited an average of 483 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption. This is higher than the national threshold (426 day average for 2013-16) but remains an improvement on the 589 days in 2014/15. However the three children adopted in March were placed for adoption two years after they became looked after and are not included in the 483 days. As this measure only counts days for children adopted, when these days are added in it will increase the average days reported for our year end 2015/16 figure.
- 3.6. Work is being undertaken to improve permanency planning and to relaunch a more robust policy and set of procedures which will impact on planning.

Coram have undertaken an adoption process mapping exercise with the adoption and court team service from which recommendations for reducing delay in the system will be made and implemented. Haringey are part of a trial of the Coram permanence tracking tool that will further assist in reducing the number of days from LAC to being placed for adoption. In addition Haringey has taken the lead with First4Adoption in a recruitment of adopters for children with complex needs which will lead to a greater number of adopters for children who are more challenging to place and whose placements reflect the largest number of days.

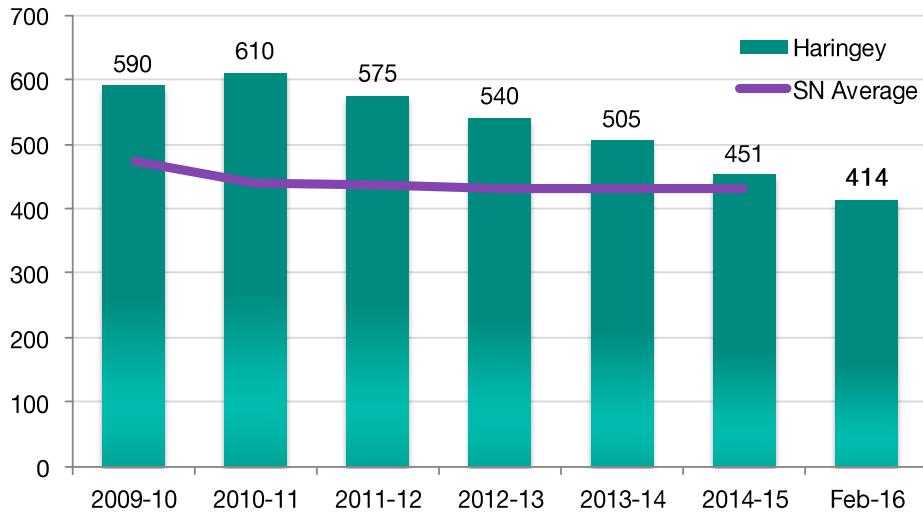
- 3.7. 91% of LAC children had an **up to date dental visit** as at 31 March 2015 but, as at February 2016, 81% of the current LAC cohort had up to date dental checks. Performance has been on an improving trajectory with 88% of children in care with up to date checks at the end of January but performance remains below the 90% target. Of the 71 children who did not have an up to date dental check, the majority (51%) were aged 16 and 17. Focused effort to ensure all children in care for over 12 months with an outstanding dental check is in place ahead of the CLA 903 government return due at the end of June.
- 3.8. Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training** is below levels achieved last year. The performance team are working with the service to improve recording in preparation of the SSSDA903 return. However, the following has been actioned/achieved in order to strengthen performance:
- employment consultant and DWP work coach based within Young Adults Service
  - six-weekly NEET panel with partners to discuss as a network those hard to reach/engage
  - challenge in tracking some NEETs (i.e. Albanian cohort) and further work to be undertaken to identify ways of tracking and engaging these groups
  - 61 care leavers are in sustained university places
  - fortnightly tracking has now started to improve accuracy of data and timely updates.
- 3.9. Children missing numbers have been relatively stable in 2015/16 with a recent spike in January 2016. In February 13 children were recorded as either **missing from care at any point during the month**. 3 children were away from placement without authorisation and 15 children were recorded as **missing from home**, a reduction in the number reported missing from home compared to the end of January (31). A more systematic way to capture data on missing children in real time is being progressed with work underway to get the recording incorporated into workflow steps on the Mosaic social care system.
- 3.10. A Haringey Runaway and Missing from Home and Care Protocol has been completed by all agencies and is the basis for dealing with children who run away or go missing in the area. Work to capture outcomes from return to care interviews also needs to be expedited.

## Overall Assessment of Performance

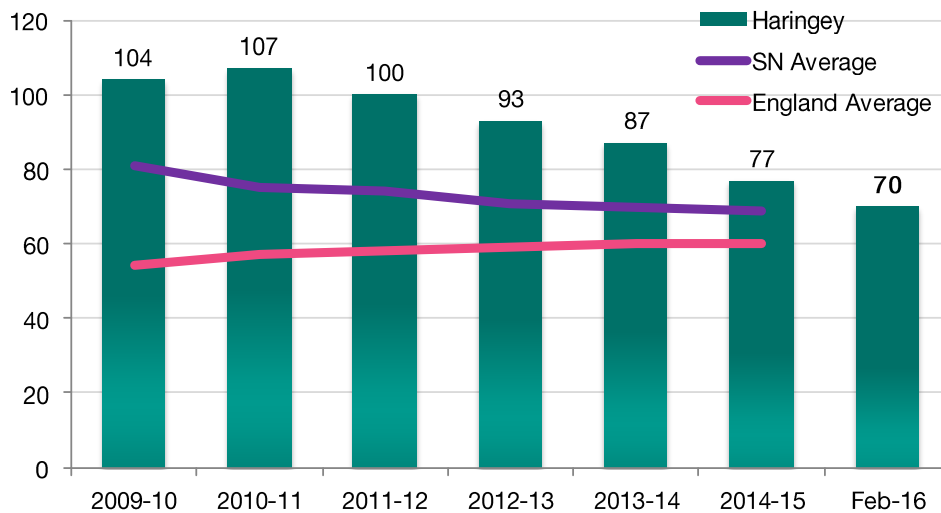
### Looked After Children

4.1. There has been a 30% reduction in Haringey's rate of looked after children since 2011 compared with a 10% reduction in London and a 3% increase nationally. The graphs below shows the five year trend to Feb 2016 in comparison with the number and rate of our statistical neighbours.

**Number of Looked After Children**



**Children Looked After rate per 10,000**



4.2. A new Sufficiency Development scorecard has been implemented to measure outcomes for looked after children in conjunction with agreed workstreams and objectives. This will include tracking foster placements by type, permanency, recruitment of carers, reviews, stability, placement unit costs and care leaver outcomes. The five workstreams that are part of the Sufficiency Development Plan are:

1. support for children on the edge of care
  2. cost effective brokerage of individual placements based on outcomes
  3. the right range of services commissioned to meet needs
  4. efficient, high quality social work practice and
  5. transitions and leaving care.
- 4.3. The scorecard will be prepared monthly and reported to the Sufficiency Development Board.

## **5. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- 5.1. Priority 1: Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education.