

Overview & Scrutiny

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows

Tuesday, 29th October, 2019

7.00 pm

Room 102, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

Contact:

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Tim Shields

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair), Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Ajay Chauhan, Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Katie Hanson, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr James Peters, Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Caroline Woodley

Co-optees: Graham Hunter, Jo Macleod, Ernell Watson, Shuja Shaikh, Michael Lobenstein, Aleigha Reeves, Clive Kandza and Raivene Walters

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
- 3 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
- 4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (19.05)** (Pages 1 - 26)
- 5 Cabinet Member Questions - Cllr Anntionette Bramble (19.10)** (Pages 27 - 28)
- 6 Recruitment & Retention of Foster Carers - Review Update (19.55)** (Pages 29 - 48)
- 7 Children's Social Care Annual Report 2018/19 (20.20)** (Pages 49 - 100)

- 8 Support for LGBT+ children at school - Cabinet Response (21.10)** (Pages 101 - 108)
- 9 Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission - 2018/19 Work Programme (21.15)** (Pages 109 - 126)
- 10 Outcome of School Exclusions - Update (21.20)** (Pages 127 - 128)
- 11 Any Other Business (21.30)**

Access and Information

Getting to the Town Hall

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Further Information about the Commission

If you would like any more information about the Scrutiny Commission, including the membership details, meeting dates and previous reviews, please visit the website or use this QR Code (accessible via phone or tablet 'app')

<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/individual-scrutiny-commissions-children-and-young-people.htm>



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If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the press and public then in order to consider confidential or exempt information, all recording must cease and all recording equipment must be removed from the meeting room. The press and public are not permitted to use any means which might enable them to see or hear the proceedings whilst they are excluded from a meeting and confidential or exempt information is under consideration.

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.



Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 29th October 2019 Item 4 – Minutes of the previous meeting	Item No 4
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Outline

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th September 2019 are attached for members to review and agree.

There was one action point from the meeting which required the provision of additional information from HLT:

- 1) Further data on off-rolling - this is attached for information.

Action

To note actions, and to review and agree minutes.


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London Borough of Hackney
Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2018/19
Date of Meeting Monday, 9th September, 2019

Minutes of the proceedings of the
Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission held at
Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street,
London E8 1EA

Chair	Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice Chair)
Councillors in Attendance	Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Ajay Chauhan, Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Katie Hanson, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr James Peters, Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Caroline Woodley
Apologies:	Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair)
Co-optees	Jo Macleod, Ernell Watson, Michael Lobenstein, Maariyah Patel and Aleigha Reeves
In Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Anne Canning, Group Director, Children Adults and Community Health- Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser, City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board- Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of Hackney Learning Trust- Andrew Lee, Assistant Director, Hackney Learning Trust- Simone Vibert, Office of Children's Commission- Mike Sheridan, Regional Director, HMI Ofsted- Kiran Gill, Chief Executive, The Difference
Other Members in Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Families and Play
Members of the Public	There were 8 members of the public in attendance, which include representatives of local SEND reference group, Hackney Independent Parents and Carers Group (HiP), School governors and School Governors Service.

Martin Bradford

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In the Chair - Cllr Margaret Gordon

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from:

- Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair)
- Cllr Humaira Garasia
- Graham Hunter
- Shuja Shaikh
- Cllr Anntionette Bramble

1.2 In the absence of Cllr Sophie Conway, the meeting was chaired by Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice Chair).

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

2.1 The Commission agreed that an urgent question on the possible impact (and preparation for) a no-deal Brexit on children's social care and education services in Hackney would be tabled under 'Any Other Business'.

2.2 The remainder of the agenda was as published.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 The following declarations were received by members of the Commission:

- Cllr Chauhan was a teacher at secondary school in another London borough and a member of the NEU;
- Cllr Peters was a governor at special school in Hackney;
- Jo McLeod was a governor at a local school in Hackney.

4 New arrangements for Local Safeguarding Children Board (19.00)

4.1 Under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017), Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) set up by local authorities are to be replaced. Under this new legislation, three safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police and clinical commissioning groups) must make arrangements to work together with 'relevant agencies' to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area. Local Authorities are required to establish new safeguarding arrangements by 29th September 2019.

4.2 An officer from the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Group Director for Children, Adults and Community Health presented a report which set out the main changes to local safeguarding arrangements for Hackney. The key points of this presentation are summarised below:

- The new safeguarding partnership will comprise of three partners, the local authority police and local clinical commissioning group (CCG) and will be called the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP).
- As the geographic boundary of the existing City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) will be maintained this meant that local safeguarding partners were Hackney Council, City of London, City and Hackney CCG, Metropolitan Police and City of London Police.

Monday, 9th September, 2019

- The new safeguarding partnership will work with 'relevant agencies' which are expected to comply with safeguarding arrangements. Relevant agencies include health services, schools and other educational and childcare settings and all those local groups and charities that work with children including out of school settings (sports clubs and religious groups such as Yeshiva, Madrassa and Sunday schools). Relevant agencies that need to be included in local safeguarding arrangements are set out in national guidance and a full list of relevant agencies will be published locally.
- Independent scrutiny is a key part of local safeguarding and this will be retained within the new safeguarding arrangements. The current independent Chair of CHSCB will continue in the role of the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner (ICSC). The ICSC will continue to provide both independent scrutiny of safeguarding partners but also provide independent leadership for local safeguarding.
- In terms of governance, a Senior Leadership Team of safeguarding partners will meet three times per year. There will be one Executive body for both Hackney and City under the new arrangements which is scheduled to meet bi-monthly. Both these meetings will be chaired and led by the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner.
- Current funding arrangements for the new safeguarding partnership will continue for the year (2019/20). Hackney Council's current financial contribution makes up a significant proportion of the CHSCB. Statutory guidance expects funding of the new arrangements to be equitable and proportionate across safeguarding partners and this will be subject to discussion later in 2019/20.
- A number of safeguarding proposals are still being finalised, including how the voice of children and young people can be better included and represented within the new CHSCP structure and processes. This will be a key objective in the first year of the partnership.
- Similarly, given the number of 'relevant agencies' the CHSCP will need to ensure safeguarding processes were working effectively and offering support as appropriate to ensure compliance with safeguarding standards of the CHSCP.

Questions

4.3 The Commission asked the Senior Professional Adviser if he had any comments on off-rolling from schools from a safeguarding perspective.

- It was noted that off-rolling and school exclusions were an active line of enquiry within the local safeguarding partnership. It was recognised that off-rolling and school exclusions create additional vulnerabilities for children particularly when a child may be at home and unsupervised. It was suggested that some of the risks associated with exclusion could be mitigated through improved local policies and practices and the CHSCP would continue to work with local agencies to support this. The Commission noted that schools and other educational settings provided protection for children and on the whole were safer if they were in such a setting where responsible adults were present.

4.4 The Commission enquired about examples of 'relevant agencies' and sought to ascertain what approach to enforcement the CHSCP would take with those agencies that failed to comply with new safeguarding arrangements?

- Relevant agencies include current partners such as the Homerton Hospital, East London Foundation Trust, schools and HCVS. Other 'relevant agencies' will include those from a wider range of organisations working with children, including out of school settings such youth clubs, sports clubs and other community organisations.
- The requirement for agencies to share information with the CHSCB are set out in the previous statutory guidance, Working Together 2015. This requirement continues in the new arrangements for the CHSCP. There is generally good cooperation amongst local agencies in the provision of information, which included serious case reviews (SCR), multi-agency case audits (MACA) and individual safeguarding self-assessments. This has helped the local safeguarding partnership to develop assurance with regards to local safeguarding.
- It was noted that there are likely to be challenges in the new system, particularly for newly named 'relevant agencies' as they will need to understand the safeguarding obligations and expectations placed upon them by the CHSCP. The CHSCP will engage all such agencies to ensure they are aware of safeguarding responsibilities and that minimum standards of safeguarding practices were in place.
- It was understood that it was not the role of CHSCP to police relevant agencies to ensure compliance. Where individual agencies refuse to cooperate or comply with requests, the CHSCP is likely to seek redress through relevant accountable bodies (e.g. Ofsted, Charity Commission) if local negotiation and offers of support / collaboration fail.

4.5 In terms of out of school settings, the Commission wanted to know what safeguarding information would be required, how this would be shared and what support would be available via the CHSCP?

- The CHSCP would adopt a supportive and cooperative approach to such settings to help them understand safeguarding obligations and the processes they need to adopt to bring them into compliance. The CHSCP will be sensitive to the nature of such organisations and ensure that information provided was appropriate and accessible.
- Soon after the new partnership is due come into effect, a health check will take place of the safeguarding system in which all agencies will be required to complete a self-assessment. The new self-assurance system will be on-line and replace the current process. The outcome of this health check will be used to develop local priorities, determine priority areas for focus and check compliance with simple safeguarding standards and procedures (e.g. requirement for all staff to have safeguarding training / a named person as a lead and operational safeguarding policy in place).

4.6 The Commission sought to understand if there had been any research into the quality of safeguarding practice among local voluntary agencies?

- It was suggested that the quality of safeguarding practice in the voluntary sector generally was variable. It was noted that the size of the agency provided no indicator of good practice, given that Oxfam had recently been found wanting in a recent safeguarding inspection. In contrast, there were a number of small voluntary agencies which had very good safeguarding

policies and procedures. The voluntary sector setting was however diverse and ever changing which required ongoing engagement to fully understand the nature and scope of its work with children and the possible risks involved.

4.7 CHSCP would be invited back to the Commission in January 2020 to present its annual review. This would present a further opportunity to assess how the new safeguarding arrangements were being implemented. The Chair thanked officers for attending, presenting the report and responding to member questions.

5 Off-rolling in schools (19.20)

5.1 In February 2019, the Children's Commissioner published research into off-rolling in schools; *Skipping School: missing children*. This report highlighted a number of ways in which children can 'go missing' from the school roll each year, including off-rolling. Off-rolling is the practice of removing a pupil from school roll (without using a permanent exclusion) when the removal is in the best interests of the school and not the child. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from school.

5.2 At a subsequent meeting of the Commission in April 2019, it was agreed that a more in-depth analysis of off-rolling from school would be undertaken within the 2019/20 work programme with the following objectives:

- To define off-rolling, how it relates to home schooling but differs from exclusion;
- To assess the nature and scale of off-rolling (both nationally and locally);
- To determine how off-rolling is identified, and how best to work with schools to prevent this from occurring;
- To assess what support children and parents may need to prevent off-rolling;
- To identify the role of the local authority to prevent off-rolling, and how best it can work with schools and other partners in this process.

5.3 An expert panel was invited to give evidence to the Commission to assist in its investigation of this issue. The following contributors attended to support member discussions:

- Simone Vibert, Senior Public Affairs & Policy Analyst, Office of the Children Commissioner;
- Mike Sheridan HMI, London Regional Director, Ofsted;
- Kiran Gill, Chief Executive, The Difference;
- Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of Hackney Learning Trust;
- Andrew Lee, Assistant Director, Hackney Learning Trust.

5.4 Prior to this meeting, a number of key documents were circulated to the Commission to guide and inform discussions. These were:

1. [Skipping school: invisible children](#) - Office of the Children's Commissioner
2. [Off-rolling in English schools](#) - House of Commons Briefing
3. [Off-rolling in Schools](#) - LGiU Briefing
4. [Exploring the issue of off-rolling](#) – Ofsted/YouGov
5. [Unexplained pupil exits from schools: a growing problem?](#) – Education Policy Institute

Defining Off-rolling

5.5 Ofsted provided the legal definition of off-rolling which was stated as:

'Off-rolling is when a school removes a student from its roll without formal permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child

when the removal is primarily in the interest of the school or other provider rather than in the best interest of the child.'

5.6 The Commission understood that the key issues were whether a school move was in the interest of the child *and* if parents had been encouraged or coerced into removing their child from school. This created a number of grey areas in defining and identifying off-rolling which could encompass other school moves such as Elective Home Education (EHE) and managed moves (MM). As a consequence, it would also be very difficult to accurately identify the true scale of off-rolling in schools.

5.7 HLT reported that it had visited a number of schools and scrutinised the circumstances of those children that had come off the school roll. In many cases there appeared to be genuine and positive reasons for them to be removed from roll (e.g. the child wants to go to another school or the family have moved). It was acknowledged that a child's move to alternative provision could also be incorporated in to discussions about off-rolling. Whilst in some cases a move to alternative provision could be in the best interests of the child to enable them to access a more suitable curriculum, it was not clear if this was always the case however, particularly given the quality of some alternative provision.

Children Commissioner

5.8 The Children's Commissioner is a statutory role to ensure that those services which work with children adhere to the rights of children and ensure that the voice of children was heard in planning and delivering services. The Children's Commissioner speaks on behalf of all children, with particular reference to those in care. The Children's Commissioner has a number of statutory powers including the ability to request information from public bodies and the authority to visit and speak to children in any non-private dwellings.

5.9 The Children's Commissioner had focused recent work on vulnerable children, in particular those children outside mainstream education settings, including EHE. The numbers of children being EHE had grown significantly over the past few years, where at the end of March 2018, the School Adjudicator estimated that there were 58,000 children in EHE. The Commission understood that the actual number was difficult to determine, because at present parents are not required to notify the Local Authority (LA) and thus no centralised and accurate record exists.

5.10 The Children's Commissioner selected 11 LA's as case studies to further assess off-rolling, in particular, those children that move from mainstream settings to EHE. This was undertaken school by school where in total 1,400 schools submitted data. The key points from this data for 2017/18 were:

- Across these schools 2.74 children per 1,000 had moved from mainstream education to EHE, in Hackney the rate was 2.78 and Newham 1.91;
- Generally, there was a significant increase in the number of EHE referrals in the period 2015/16 to 2017/18 – 48% in the case study areas. It was acknowledged that this was a small but growing problem. Both the participating London boroughs saw a significant increase in the same period; 94% in Hackney and 174% in Newham.
- It would appear that children moving to EHE was concentrated in a small number of schools, across all the case study areas it was found that 50% of all EHE referrals came from just 10% of schools;

- The EHE referral rate for academies was higher than maintained schools, though the rate is increasing faster among the latter;
- Similarly, whilst the rate of EHE referrals from secondary is higher than primary, it is increasing in both settings.

5.11 In terms of solutions to this issue, the Children's Commissioner welcomed the new Ofsted inspection framework which would penalise a school found to be off-rolling. It had also passed over all its data to Ofsted and highlighted those schools where high rates of off-rolling were suspected. It was noted that EHE was used as a proxy indicator for off-rolling, as not all EHE cases would be off-rolled students and some would undoubtedly be genuine.

5.12 The Children's Commission would be repeating this data collection exercise amongst all schools which would be reported on toward the end of the year. This data would also be passed to Ofsted.

5.13 The Children Commission also welcomed the decision by the Department of Education that 'outstanding' rated schools would not be exempt from robust inspections. Such high performing schools could have been using off-rolling to maintain their level of academic performance so it was positive that they remained open for inspection. The DfE had also agreed to the establishment of an EHE register as this will help to know where children were being educated, particularly those who have never been to school.

5.14 SEND was acknowledged to be a factor in off-rolling as it is well established that this group of children were strongly associated with all pupil moves. Whilst new additional funding of £700m was welcomed, this would not be enough to meet the funding gap identified by the identified by Local Government Association (this suggested a £1.8 billion gap would emerge for SEND service by 2021/22). A new review into SEND was anticipated and the Children's Commissioner wanted this to incorporate off-rolling.

5.15 A final point was that there needed to be improved accountability for schools, particularly what happened to that child after they left school and their data and performance trail.

5.16 A key development to prevent off-rolling was the need to provide independent advice and guidance to families who plan to or have taken the decision to move their child to EHE. This needed to be provided at the point of or prior to that decision. The LA should also visit families to explain what was involved in EHE and other education options available. This should be followed up 6 weeks later to reflect on the new EHE environment and to ascertain if this is working for the family and the child.

5.17 Aside from EHE and managed moves, the Children's Commission was also concerned about internal exclusions in school, where children were kept in some form of exclusion from classes and not in receipt of education. It was believed that there was a link between those schools that were adopting these kinds of practices, and those that may be off-rolling pupils. The common trait was those schools that appeared to be adopt a zero-tolerance approach to misbehaviour.

Questions

5.18 The Commission wanted to know if there were any commonalities to those children which may be EHE - does research show any association with behaviour or low attainment?

- Whilst the Children's Commission had not done this research itself, it was clear that there were such associations with free school meal entitlement, English as an additional language and SEND. The common features were (i) those children who were not having their needs met in the classroom and (ii) those children who are interacting with other statutory services such as social care or mental health. It should be remembered however, that many EHE children were in EHE for positive reasons and received a well-balanced education, and thus it was difficult to draw out the characteristics of children who were off-rolled. These children were not the focus of the work of the Children's Commission.

5.19 The Commission sought to understand if parents were aware of their rights in respect of off-rolling and other ways in which they may be encouraged to leave the school roll?

- The Children's Commission found that in numerous cases, parents did not know their rights where some did not even recognise how consent had been obtained for their child to be removed to EHE. The Commission also found, in some cases, EHE template letters 'I _____ choose to home educate my child for the reasons set out below' which raised serious questions.
- The Children's Commission found that in their view, teachers did need to understand more about behaviour of children, the reasons why children can exhibit poor behaviour and be disruptive. Teachers also needed to understand the positive approaches that could be taken to address such challenging behaviour in an inclusive way. Schools also needed to adopt better ways to manage the behaviour of children, this could be improved by better training for staff and more awareness and resources for children with SEND.

Hackney Learning Trust

5.20 HLT had been aware of the issue of children moving off-roll for some time and although local figures suggest that this was in line with national average, the authority had not been complacent. It was emphasised that children do move off-roll for genuine and positive reasons such as a family move or where a child needs to change schools. The Commission noted that if schools were trying to influence results then off-rolling would be most likely between years 9 and 11.

5.21 In talking to local schools where there has been a high rate of schools moves, HLT found that whilst there was some queries about a small number of children's moves, most moves were planned and support a good reason to move the child off-roll.

5.22 HLT provided a number of case studies to explain some of the circumstances and decision making that took place to move a child to EHE:

- A child had been very anxious about attending school and despite the involvement of multiple agencies, the child was reluctant to attend. When the School Attendance Service put pressure on the family for the child to attend, the parents decided to EHE rather than be taken to court and fined. This was clearly a simplistic account, but demonstrated the complexity issues and decision making involved.

- There were two other examples of where a child was removed from mainstream education to EHE to avoid the prospect of a permanent exclusion (one for drugs and one for incitement to violence).

5.23 HLT also suggested that a move to AP could also be considered as off-rolling, particularly when that child may be considered to be a risk to the overall academic performance of the school. In some circumstances, a move to AP could be very positive and in the best interests of that child and offer a more suitable curriculum for them to study. It was acknowledged however, that parents and children may dispute this and that there were some quality assurance issues with some AP.

5.24 It was noted that schools faced a number of pressures in recent years which may have had an impact on the incidence of off-rolling:

- There had been reduced funding per pupil which may have restricted the level of support available to children in school;
- Funding pressures and changes to performance measures had also contributed to a restriction in the number of subjects that may be offered through school curricula. This had disproportionality affected the provision of vocational courses to children in year 10 and 11 which may have impacted on a number of children being able to fully engage with the curriculum;
- The establishment of Progress 8 had meant that the performance of every child has to be counted within a score for the School which meant that there was a possible incentive to off-roll to improve performance.

5.25 HLT had visited and questioned all those schools where there a high level of child movement between year 9 and 11 was recorded in 2018/19. It was noted that the HLT planned to repeat this exercise this year (2019/20).

5.26 It was reiterated that off-rolling was probably not confined to secondary schools and that this was also taking place in primary schools. Given the nature of the curriculum, it was suggested that parents may feel it was easier to EHE a child of primary age than secondary.

5.27 Staff training was important to help reduce the incidence of school moves, particularly those that may have a negative impact on the child. HLT had offered training in Adverse Childhood Experiences and the impact that this may have on a child's behaviour. It was hoped that this may counter some of the decisions to move children and provide additional in-school support. Training would be directed to promote an inclusive school which was the HLT's favoured approach to this issue and other unnecessary school moves.

5.28 HLT welcomed the initial definition of off-rolling, but suggested that a tighter legal definition was needed. The 'best interests of the child' was too vague and was susceptible to challenge from the school. The school itself was still in a very influential position to determine what that 'best interests of the child' might be.

5.29 A key reason why children were moving to EHE was that the relationship between the school and the family had broken down. For many families however, the move to EHE was a positive statement which was backed up by action plan from parents, though in other cases it was accepted that this may not be the case. For some children that have Asperger's or other anxiety related issue, EHE or AP could be a positive outcome.

5.30 The key decision for the parent in such cases where the child was being considered for EHE, was whether the school could meet the education *and* welfare needs of their child? If the parents assessed that the school couldn't meet their needs, then they might choose to EHE their child as they feel that they can do this better at home.

5.31 The EHE register in Hackney is quite skewed given the number of OJC community that chose to do so. This is not a statutory recording however, so registration remains voluntary. The local register does not and cannot currently take into account those children who have never been into the state education system, as these are simply not known to the LA. In this context, HLT would welcome the establishment of a compulsory EHE register.

5.32. Most male children from the OJC that were being EHE were probably being educated for part of their time at least, through a local Yeshiva. The HLT was in ongoing dialogue to the OJC to build trust with local Yeshiva and to ensure that there was an effective EHE notification process.

5.33 HLT would welcome the opportunity to provide advice and support to children and families in particular drop-in advice surgeries and advice on the different teaching materials available to their children. All this however would take additional resource. The service currently had 0.5 WTE to support EHE at present but the demands from this had increased substantially in recent years. Parents were far more aware of EHE, and increasingly more were taking up this option to educate their children.

5.34 HLT had held two drop-in sessions to provide advice children and their families about their rights. The number of families that attended this year had doubled from last year, which would indicate that there was a growing demand for this type of support. The sessions were also to remind parents of their responsibilities in respect of EHE.

5.35 If the LA do not know which children are EHE, then it does not have oversight or know the whereabouts of such children. In this context, the LA cannot discharge its responsibility to ensure that such children are safe and in receipt of an appropriate education. To support the monitoring and enforcement role of LA, much tighter legal definitions are needed for full time education, suitable education and efficient education. Without improved regulatory framework it is difficult to hold people to account.

Questions

5.36 The Commission was concerned that EHE in Hackney was supported by just 0.5 WTE. If a parent of a child with SEND decided to EHE their child, what investigations would be made into the parental circumstances and what support would be available.

- HLT maintained that the 0.5 WTE was adequate for the current level of provision for the initial phone call, visit and for administrative support.
- It was noted that a 'cooling off' period of 6 weeks had been in place for a number of years where parents had a reflective window to consider their decision to EHE. In this context, the child would not immediately come off-roll, but parent and child would be given the opportunity to experience EHE and reflect what was required and if they wished to continue (or not). EHE

was very complex and time consuming on those parents that delivered it, and not all parents might handle such unique demands.

- The LA had no right to make such enquiries of parents who EHE their child, therefore the degree to which a parent engaged with the HLT very much depended on the attitude of the parent and their willingness to communicate and involve the LA. The LA cannot make enquiries about what provision parents put into place and had no right to receive or request reports off parents.
- Whilst the HLT along with other LA's would welcome additional responsibilities and duties to better able them to track and support children who were EHE, this needed to come with additional resourcing. Such services were already under severe financial constraint, so they could not be expected to deliver more services from the same budget.

5.37 The Commission was keen to understand what happens to those children who are removed from mainstream education into EHE, what were their level of achievement and other outcomes. It was suggested that many parents who EHE their child were looking for support but for many reasons, were not able to access this.

- The EHE service at HLT, if notified by the school that a child was moving to EHE, would make a phone call or offer help and to visit the parents. It was not possible to do any further follow up from this within the current resource.
- Any parent that wanted their child to return to school (where perhaps the parent has changed their mind about EHE for their child) would be dealt with by the Admissions Team. The local agreement was, that in the first instance, the child would be returned to the school from which they have left. If the relationship had broken down between the school and the child/family, then the request would be dealt with by the Fair Access Panel (FAP) and the child would be placed in another school or possibly AP. Children do not have to stay in EHE if they do not want to, it is the duty of the LA to find a place for them if they wish to return to mainstream education.

5.38 The Commission noted that HLT visited schools at which there was a high level of school moves and questioned head teachers on reasons behind such moves. Did HLT attempt to speak to parents and or children to validate the schools position? If not, would the HLT instigate this in the future?

- In terms of parental voice, the HLT had not talked to parents whilst visiting schools about suspected off-rolling. In looking at children's move to AP however, the HLT had developed a number of case studies which involved parents and children. It was found that parents were very unclear about the process and their rights in the exclusion process and the removal of their child to AP.
- The HLT had written to schools to highlight this concern, but it was acknowledged that this was an area which required further improvement. The voice of the child was important in all such transfers and school processes needed to reflect this.

Ofsted

5.39 At the outset a number of key points were made by the London Regional Inspector:

- There was a need to improve data in this area as the current level of information did have limitations. Such data and intelligence was necessary to guide and inform school inspections.

- In seeking to redress off-rolling, agencies must be careful not to vilify certain practices across schools generically, for example, internal exclusions can be used very positively for some children. Similarly, there should not be a rush to condemn the process of managed moves as there were circumstances when this was also clearly in the best interests of the child;
- LA clearly had a role in developing awareness of parental rights around EHE. There was also a role for LA to guide support those parents (at the point of decision and further down the line) who may be reluctantly EHE their child and to make them aware of routes back to mainstream education or other educational settings;
- Nationally there had been a pull-back from Early Help services, which has placed additional expectations on schools to support vulnerable children. When such wider support services were not available this may restrict the schools ability to support that child in the school setting. This needed to be recognised more widely including the need for additional resources to support prevention;
- Legal definitions were important as this was a very complex area which was often subject to legal challenge, so improvement would be welcomed;
- It was clear that LA's were responding to the challenge of off-rolling in different ways and that there was a wealth of opportunity to share best practice in how this could be tackled locally. A new system for sharing such different approaches was required among LA's.

5.40 It was made clear that when off-rolling was uncovered by Ofsted, there would be a likely judgement of 'inadequate' for the assessment of the 'leadership and management' component within the new inspection framework.

5.41 Ofsted had inspected approximately 100 of the 300 schools identified by the Children's Commissioner as having abnormally high rates of children moving to EHE. Ofsted has been able to identify about 5% of these schools as off-rolling children. This was low, partly because children were not always being off-rolled, but also because schools had developed a clear narrative when this had taken place which proved difficult to challenge. It was hoped that the new inspection system would help to identify those schools which may be off-rolling children.

5.42 It was difficult for Ofsted to talk to parents of children who had left the school, unless that parent approaches Ofsted directly with their concerns. Increasing parental intelligence to Ofsted was something that should be encourage by the LA, as this would ensure that Ofsted develop local intelligence that might inform a school inspection.

5.43 The Governing Body should also hold the school and head teachers to account for their decisions. Some additional work needed to be done to support school governing bodies to make sure that they understood what off-rolling was and their duties and responsibilities in such matters.

5.44 LA's should also ensure that the Regional Schools Commissioner had open and frank conversations with Academies and Multi Academy Trust to ensure that appropriate action is being taken to prevent off-rolling.

5.45 Ofsted had written to each LA in London in respect of the 300 schools which had been identified (nationally) as having high rates of movement to EHE (and possible off-rolling). Whilst every LA had responded, very few had indicated that

they had identified any specific issues or that these had been dealt with. If this was the case, Ofsted indicated that this would be encouraging as LA's were taking a proactive approach.

The Difference (Kiran Gill)

5.46 The Difference worked with a number of LA across London to support the most vulnerable learners. Supporting vulnerable learners was very challenging for teachers and schools and The Difference helped to counter this deficit in 3 ways:

- Training people, especially leaders in local schools and AP's;
- Sharing good practice between LA's and schools – what is effective in best supporting vulnerable children;
- Lobbying local policies and practices that better support vulnerable children;

5.47 The Difference worked with 9 different authorities across London. From next year the organisation would also work with authorities outside of London in the North East and North West. It hoped to work with Hackney in 2020.

5.48 It was suggested that managed moves should also be brought into line-of-sight of the Commission when it considered off-rolling, particularly as the Education Policy Institute had included managed moves within its research on unexplained school moves. Research has also demonstrated that managed moves did not lead to better outcomes. This is further complicated by the issue of subcontracting, where education services to support a child in a managed move may be deferred to another provider.

5.49 Because managed moves were undertaken with parental consent, there was no right to appeal within this process. Given the pressures that parents may be put under, it was suggested that HLT may wish to develop awareness of the rights of parents in the managed moves process, and to create an additional independent check within the process to ensure that parental consent had been obtained and to offer independent expert advice.

5.50 Whilst figures for managed moves suggested that Hackney was in line with the national average, it was suggested that a number of schools had been named as outliers with much higher rate of managed moves.

5.51 Another concern of the managed move process highlighted to the Commission was that in this process, children may experience a number of moves which may heighten the disruption to their education and adversely impact on their educational outcomes. In addition, multiple moves often meant that children were more distant from qualified teachers and from linkage with wider support of other statutory services (e.g. mental health, SEND).

5.52 An illustrative example was provided to the Commission where a child was transferred from a local high performing school to a lower performing school under the managed moves process. This school then moved the child to one of the boroughs AP's and from there was moved to individual tuition but both tragically and sadly this child died through knife crime. It was suggested that subcontracting education in this way removed the child from the continuity of care of a maintained school which knew and had good relationship with that child.

5.53 Off-rolling can occur when a child may be temporarily placed in another school or provider, but can end up being deleted from the schools register and only registered in the alternative education provider.

5.54 The outcomes of children moved to AP is significantly lower. Nationally 59% of children achieved a pass in maths and English, though the pass rate among those in AP is just 4%. Whilst Hackney does perform better than the national average at 5.4%, this was well behind Newham, the top ranking London borough, where 20% of AP attenders achieved a maths and English GCSE.

5.55 Similarly, there were discrepancies in the number of children in AP being entered into Maths & English qualifications. Although nationally 89.6% of children were entered in to maths and English qualification, just 40.1% of children in AP were entered in to Maths and English qualification. Neighbouring boroughs of Tower Hamlets (51%) and Newham (40%) achieve much higher rates of exam entry for these subjects than Hackney (20%).

5.56 Off-rolling can happen without the knowledge of the AP knowledge as there is no way that an AP provider can check if that child is still on the school roll. There was anecdotal evidence that some AP's in other LA's were marketing themselves to mainstream schools to allow them to off-roll into AP and therefore no need to worry about their safeguarding concerns or GCSE results.

5.57 It was recommended that the borough should undertake an audit of AP quality in the area by results, the longer term outcomes and number of qualified teachers present.

5.58 Governors provide oversight to school decision making and should be given training to improve awareness of the school responsibility in relation to managed moves, exclusions and when off-rolling might be occurring. Governors should be encouraged to use the FFT Datalab tool to identify when children from their school had left the school roll.

5.59 Hackney was unusual in the way that it Commissioned AP. In many other LA's, AP is commissioned by the PRU which is operated by the Council. This allowed the PRU to commission AP which complements its own provision. The head of the PRU would have different sets of skills to mainstream heads. In Hackney the PRU is run by the head of a mainstream school as executive head teacher, and who commissions local AP. It was suggested that this was a conflict of interest which the Commission should look into.

5.60 In Hackney, KS4 has not been provided through the council and PRU for some time, though the new provision due to open in September 2019, represented a positive and welcome return as this should increase in quality provision. This may also help to improve the level of entry and passes of KS4 exams.

5.61 In year Fair Access Panels were operated very differently across boroughs. It should be borne in mind that some managed moves do not happen through the in-year Fair Access Panel process. In some circumstances, decisions may not be made in the best interest of the child as other members of the FAP are other local head teachers and not necessarily independent scrutineers (e.g. connected

Academies). There is much best practice to share about what was effective and ineffective in relation to operation of FAP.

5.62 Empowering parents was important and there should be a campaign to let parents know about their rights in relation to managed moves, exclusions and AP. There were lots of good organisations that work with parents in the borough (e.g. Hackney Quest who act as parental advocates). The power of parents can be used to influence and change school ethos and provision to make them more inclusive.

Questions

5.63 The Commission sought to understand what the Council was doing to address children's behaviour at an early stage which may prevent them from being off-rolled? Was the council making best use of Educational Psychologists?

- A key element in prevention was the maintenance of a strong and positive relationship between the school and parents. It was noted that one Academy had visited every single year 6 child in their home to help build relationships with the family.
- Parents valued strong and effective behaviour systems in schools, and those with most strict behaviour policies were those with the highest number of applications.
- Head teachers had to balance a number of factors to achieve the best outcomes for individual children and for the school overall.
- To ensure that children with diverse needs can be adequately supported in school there was a need for early help and support as well as appropriate and timely SEND provision. Both these services were under pressure locally.
- Ofsted was clearly influential in shaping the inclusivity of schools and the LA was supportive of the impact that this could have through the new inspection process.

5.64 The HLT wrote to schools about off-rolling and met with a number which had higher levels (5%+) of children moving between years 9-11. What were the outcomes of those visits? What plans were there to include children and their parents?

- Interview with schools suggested that all knew where the children had gone to which was encouraging. Where a child had moved, these appeared to be for good reasons, though it was acknowledged that children and parents might accept that these were 'good reasons'.
- HLT would repeat this exercise this year, and using the learning from this year, there would be deeper and more rigorous questioning.
- HLT have asked all the Head Teachers to report to Governors termly about changes in the school roll.
- In respect of exclusions some case studies were used, which incorporated parents and children, and this was something that the HLT would consider using again.
- It was reiterated that HLT did not come away from these meetings with schools completely comfortable with the view that the situation was positive for all students who had moved. The HLT remained curious about this would continue to question and probe on this issue. Indeed the level of curiosity on all sides in this matter had increased.

5.65 How much has Progress 8 contributed to the spike in the move toward EHE and possible off-rolling? How can vocational qualifications be elevated for inclusion within this measure?

- The Children's Commission suggested that it was widely recognised that this could be factor behind off-rolling as the results of all children have to be included in the score. What constituted a good school was clearly more than the attainment score however, and this needed to be reflected in school accountability.
- Ofsted responded, that in terms of the accountability structure, school league tables and inspection regimens were supposed to be separate, but over the years had become more closely aligned. These needed to be re-separated as these measures revealed different things about the school. This would hopefully be achieved in the new inspection framework. Ofsted had to be sure that schools were offering a curriculum of substance and were not narrowing it too quickly for students.

5.66 The Commission undertook a number of site visits and had a number of questions from these which were pertinent to the discussion of off-rolling: (i) There were positive and progressive behaviour policies in practice locally which could be shared more widely (ii) The full picture of a child's needs and future development needs to be considered and case studies represent a good way of capturing the complexity and competing views of this area, (iii) One AP had positioned itself as the final port for children, what happens when that child does not succeed here?

- The Difference indicated that case studies were very powerful tool to capture the complex situations which some of the most vulnerable children find themselves in relation to their school and education. The Difference had been trying to develop a more positive narrative and celebrate good practice on this issue. For example Hackney had so many great and innovative teachers who undertook ground breaking work with vulnerable young people, which the borough should celebrate and acknowledged more widely. There was also some good AP in the borough which should be recognised.
- HLT also supported the use of case studies helped to build positive relationships with parents in secondary schools.

5.67 The Commission sought to clarify the data in the HLT report (at page 79) that related to EHE:

- The first table only presented those schools with the highest number of children moving to EHE, and there were a larger number with fewer moves which were not included.
- The table related to 7 out of 16 schools that moved children to EHE.

5.68 The Commission questioned the use of internal exclusion in school and whether the LA could request schools to submit data on the extent that this was used to manage child behaviour locally.

- HLT noted that there were a range of internal exclusions, some of which of high quality and purposeful, some were just exclusion booths, others were a mix of supervised education and activities. This process did cover a wide range of provision.

5.69 How can the HLT and local partners shift the narrative on this issue in which school inclusivity is valued and informed perceptions as to what was considered to be a good school.

- Ofsted were of the view that excellent schools were inclusive schools and should exist together.
- This was endorsed by HLT.

5.70 (Chair of Local Governors – Public) Whilst schools are there to teach and support children, this cannot be undertaken by schools in isolation - a team needed to be built around the child when they were at the point of being off-rolled, not after they've gone to AP or EHE. This is the point where the potential risk is and where action needs to be taken. A multi-agency response is needed at this point to support the child in the wider family context. Case studies are very important in draw on the needs of the child but also to illustrate their range of service support needed in response. Not responding to SEND at an early stage (e.g. early years) was contributing to this issue, as by the time a child enters school, needs are have been unresolved for a long time and are more difficult to manage.

5.71 (HiP – Public) What was Hackney doing to ensure that schools remain accountable for off-rolling and that processes are transparent? How can schools decisions be challenged and verified and taken in the best interests of the child?

- Whilst there was good communication with most schools, lines of accountability were statutorily stronger with maintained schools than other schools. There were good connections with academies on various levels including SEND and other forums, and the LA can raise issues of concern with academy leaders including the board of trustees.
- HLT review and analyse data from schools to support its enquiries with off-rolling. Other data and intelligence on off-rolling can be acquired through complaints directly received by HLT.

5.72 The Commission sought to understand what the role of the Regional Schools Commissioner in relation to school accountability.

- If there were concerns about an academy, then HLT would approach the board of trustees. If the issue had gone beyond the board of trustees then the Regional School Commissioner (RSC) would be contacted to whom all academies are accountable. In terms of parent interaction with the RSC, it was suggested that all complaints should of course try and be resolved locally with the head teacher and school first, and if this remains un-resolved then to utilise the complaints procedure with Trustees. If that does not provide satisfaction then the RSC is the last port of call.
- Ofsted indicated that it would like to hear from parents if there was an unresolved complaint at a school. Whilst it could not investigate individual complaints, such data would help to guide and inform subsequent inspections.
- The Difference also noted there were also a number of active local parental groups which may also be able to assist and provide advice and advocacy for parents with local school concerns

5.73 The Commission invited the panel to indicate key areas where improvements could be made to prevent off-rolling and which may inform the recommendations of the Commission.

- Ofsted – LA should focus on supporting and enabling parents when they were faced with the prospect of their child leaving mainstream education.

- Ofsted - LA should also review and analyse local school roll data and actively challenge schools for the reasons behind any patterns that emerge.
- Ofsted - LA should continue to highlight the impact of unnecessary school moves on those disadvantaged groups whilst also encouraging and building the narrative of the inclusive good school.
- The Difference – there was a need for a local campaign targeted at parents to promote their awareness of these issues, their rights and what support is available to them.
- The Difference – the LA needed to reconfigure the commissioning structure for AP.
- Children’s Commission – there should be additional support for parents when making a decision to EHE their child, a local campaign would be a good idea to promote parental rights as well as further developing the ideal of the inclusive school.
- HLT – There needed to be a clearer definition of off-rolling from Ofsted and DfE.
- HLT – There would be a need to match resources with any additional responsibilities for the LA that may be expected nationally;
- HLT – Raise the profile of inclusive schools as excellent schools should also be a strong local message - this include inclusivity of both children and parents.
- HLT - That there should be closer involvement of social care such as early help or more other more formal intervention in supporting vulnerable children at school to ensure that where possible they remain in the protective environment of the school. It was suggested that there was a case that all children who have been excluded from school or who are in receipt of education in an AP setting should be referred to the Early Help service.
- HLT - further clarity is currently being developed in respect of the early help offer to schools.

5.74 The Chair thanked all the panel for their contributions to the discussion on off rolling.

- **The Commission agreed that (i) It would write the HLT for additional data on off-rolling (ii) Review and analyse panel contributions alongside other data submitted to this meeting and write to the Cabinet member with a number of recommendations for action.**

6 CYP Commission Work Programme 2019/20 (21.00)

6.1 A new Children and Young People Scrutiny work programme is developed each year in consultation with local stakeholders. Over 80 individual suggestions were put forward as possible topics for scrutiny, these were collated and assessed by a representative stakeholder panel into a short-list of possible topic areas. These topic areas will need to be scoped out with officers and prioritised for inclusion within the 2019/20 work programme. The short-listed topics were:

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- Contextual Safeguarding: projects update, how is it being embedded, and what impact is it beginning to have. Has there been universal buy in – cooperation from partner agencies?
- Mental health: What are the drivers for increasing mental health usage among young people? How effectively are services respond to these preventatively?
- Are there any inequities in the way that young people access services - how can these be redressed?
- SEND: support for children and young people post 16? What support is provided for SEND children post 16 to prevent 'cliff-edge' provision? (Consistently raised across consultation)
- Children in Need (Children's Social Care)

- Whole family approach (Children's Social Care) and how services are coordinated for mental health, housing, DM and substance misuse support.
- Childhood Poverty: nature and scale of this issue and what action taken to address this (Environmental poverty; air pollution, road safety and access to green spaces; Food poverty - ability of parents to clothe and feed children).
- Serious youth violence: informed by outcomes of living in Hackney review. Involve young people.
- Sex & Relationship Education: Preparedness of local schools for new SRE regulations in 2020 – with YH.
- Childhood obesity (healthy weight) - update on local strategy - effectiveness of local interventions.
- What does a child-friendly borough look like? How is the voice of young people reflected in service design, planning and delivery? Young Futures/ HYP and young people focused session. Could also involve Planning, Consultation, CCG, IG, PH

6.2 Items selected from the consultation will be incorporated into the work programme alongside other pre-agreed items which include:

- Standing Items – items which require annual oversight by the Commission;
- Review Items – evidence gathering or monitoring recommendations of current or past policy reviews undertaken by the Commission;
- Items agreed from 2018/19 – items the Commission agreed to take forward from last year's work programme.

6.3 The Commission agreed in April of this year to making items more discursive, with additional contributions from local stakeholders and relevant guests. This will make such items longer, but should enable the commission to be more agile and responsive in the way that it able to develop recommendations for service improvement of these areas in the work programme.

6.4 In relation to the review for 2019/20, no decision final decision has been taken as to the focus, except that it would probably avoid education as this had been the focus of in-depth work for the past few years. The Commission had agreed earlier that the review should be undertaken as scrutiny in a day exercise - most likely in early 2020. The Commission agreed that options for the review would be discussed further and final decision to be taken at the next meeting.

Agreed: That options for the in-depth review to be considered at the next meeting in October and a final decision be taken at that time.

6.5 Members with specific interests in items on the work programme were invited by the Commission to undertake reconnaissance work which may support subsequent

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discussions and scrutiny of that subject at a later meeting. Where possible, the Commission would support site visits or other engagement activity to support scrutiny. Members were requested to let the Chair and support officer know of any such interests.

6.6 Similarly, if any training or briefing sessions were required to support the scrutiny of specific subjects, this could also be arranged to support members in the scrutiny of topics selected. A number of members had asked for Safeguarding training, and this could be arranged before January 2020 meeting which has a safeguarding focus.

6.7 It was noted that some of the topic areas suggested from the consultation could be covered in ways other than in-depth review or a dedicated item on the Commission's agenda. Items could be included as part of Cabinet member Q & A or referred to another Commission (if appropriate). It was noted that Scrutiny Panel would be looking at Growing Up Poor in Hackney in January as well as looking at the Poverty Strategy in January 2020.

6.8 The most urgent decision was needed in relation to the November agenda which was 10 weeks away. No plans as yet had been taken, except that (i) Hackney Youth Parliament would be invited to speak to the Commission (ii) a second discursive item would be taken. This would be done in consultation with the Commission.

6.9 A number of members highlighted the importance of mental health issues for local young people and the need to prioritise this in the work programme. The stakeholder group had discussed this and suggested that the Commission might be minded to examine the drivers for mental health and how the council and partners could respond preventatively. Other members of the Commission suggested that, given the number of children growing up in temporary accommodation, it would be worthwhile looking at this in an in-depth way.

6.10 The Commission noted that Cllr Bramble was due to attend the next meeting of on 29th October 2019 for Cabinet Q & A. The Commission would need to identify 3 topics on which to focus questioning with Cllr Bramble, and these need to be submitted by 16th September. Members were requested to send through suggestions as soon as possible.

6.11 The Commission noted that the future meeting planned for Thursday 23rd April 2020 had been moved to Tuesday 28th April. A change to calendar invite had been sent to all members.

7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (21.15)

7.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2019 were noted by the panel, including the additional action points.

- 1) Further details of school transfers for children with SEND;
- 2) Secondary school place planning.

7.2 The Commission agreed the minutes.

8 Any Other Business (21.20)

Brexit Preparation

11.1 Given that the likelihood of a no-deal Brexit on 31st October 2019 had increased the Commission sought to understand what impact this would have on local children's services, particularly children's social care and local schools. The Commission invited the Group Director for Adults, Children and Community Health to respond.

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11.2 The Commission noted that it was difficult to provide complete assurance on this matter given the range of uncertainties and unknowns that remained even at this late stage. The Council was undertaking a wide range of actions in preparation for Brexit. Each Directorate had been meeting for some while to identify risks associated with Brexit to services, this included Adults, Children and Community Health. This had highlighted a number of possible risks including the interruption to fuel supplies which could impact of HLT transport for SEND services and the disruption of food supplies which could also impact on school meals services.

11.3 Schools and Children's Social Care are both aware of the potential impact of the settlement scheme for EU residents, and staff have been encouraged to apply for settled status to help minimise staffing uncertainty. There was also the additional responsibility of the settled status of all the looked after children by the Council, and as a result the Children and Families had reviewed all these and processes enacted. Different scenario planning was taking place.

11.4 The Council has also worked through the unintended consequences that Brexit may have such as large number of people not being able to turn up for work and its impact on children and young people's services (e.g. school teachers, childcare, secondary education, children's social care). In the longer term, there would be issues about safeguarding checks of people working for local services who were EU citizens which had yet to be resolved.

11.5 It was noted that the position of refugees was likely to change, which may affect the ability for families to unite with other family members which have been granted asylum here in the UK. The Council is doing what it can borough wide, and there are a number of task and finish groups to support this work.

11.6 The Commission noted that it would be helpful for all members to have a briefing on the actions taken by the Council to ensure that local services were prepared for Brexit.

The date of the next meeting was Tuesday 29th October

The meeting closed at 10.00.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: A response to questions from Commission following the meeting on Monday, 9 September 2019
Title of report: Follow up questions from the Commission on off rolling and EHE following the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission on Monday, 9 September 2019
Report author: Andrew Lee, Assistant Director, Education Services
Authorised by: Annie Gammon, Education Director, Head of HLT

1. Can you provide data on the yearly total of number of EHE children on the local register for past 3 years?

Academic Year	Total
16/17	272
17/18	379
18/19	471*

*Includes 228 pupils who previously attended Getters Talmud Torah.

2. Can you update the second table to include data from 2018/19 on Page 5 HLT report (Page 79 agenda)? That is now many children have moved from mainstream education to Elective Home Education for the past year?

Academic Year	Primary (Mainstream)	Secondary (Mainstream)	Total
18/19	38	57	95

3. Can you clarify /provide further data on the current cohort on EHE on the local register e.g. age, gender, ethnicity SEND, primary/secondary.

Academic year-end EHE total	471	% of cohort
Key Stage 1	46	10%
Key Stage 2	134	28%
Key Stage 3	192	41%
Key Stage 4	99	21%
Male	331	70%
Female	140	30%
No SEN recorded	445	94%
SEN Support	19	4%
EHCP	7	2%
Not known to Children's Social Care	307	65%
Previously known	136	29%
Open to Children's Social Care	28	6%

4. HLT have instigated a system of visits to schools where movement of pupils is above 4% between year 10-11:

a) Can you clarify how was the 4% threshold was determined?

This was determined by considering that less than 4% could occur through usual in-year movement.

b) How many schools were at or above this threshold and how many were visited?

Last year, three schools met the threshold and were visited.



Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 29th October 2019 Item 5 – Cabinet Q & A	Item No 5
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Outline

The Cabinet member for Education, Young People and Children’s Social Care is invited annually to the Commission to respond to questions within this portfolio.

Members of the Commission will focus on three pre-agreed policy areas which are as set out below:

- 1) School funding update - how will recent funding announcements impact on local schools? Will this result in any net increase in per-pupil funding? Will funding increases apply equally across all school settings? What action is the council taking to support those schools experiencing financial challenges?
- 2) What responsibilities and duties does the Council have in respect of school failure and where there is a possibility of school closure? Are the duties and obligations of the Council different in respect of school closures that occur in the maintained, independent and free school sectors?
- 3) To update the Commission on the establishment of the Hackney Schools Group.

Attending

Cllr Anntionette Bramble

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Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 29th October 2019 Item 6 – Recruitment & Retention of Foster Carers	Item No 6
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Outline

In 2017/18 the Commission undertook an in-depth review into the recruitment and retention of foster carers.

An Executive response was provided to the Commission's 10 recommendations at Cabinet in July 2018.

This is the 2nd progress report on how Children and Families Service is implementing the recommendations agreed by Cabinet.

Attending

- Robert Koglek, Head of Service Corporate Parenting

Action

Members are requested to note the attached report and progress against agreed recommendations.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: Tuesday 29th October 2019

Title of report: Update on Foster Carer Recruitment and Retention

Report author: Elvira Karanja

Authorised by: Sarah Wright

Brief:

In October 2017, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission undertook a review into the recruitment and retention of foster carers in Hackney. The Commission made a total of ten recommendations and this paper outlines Hackney's current position against each of these, building on previous update reports.

Foster carer annual recruitment figures

Year	Number of in-house mainstream foster carers recruited
2016-17	18
2017-18	17
2018-19	12

The most recent published statistical neighbour average was 9.5 in 2017/18.

Foster carer resignation figures

In 2018-19, there were no foster carer resignations or terminations received. In 2017/18 - 16 mainstream foster carers resigned and 1 foster carer's approval was terminated.

Total number of foster carers and percentage vacancy rate

Most recent data shows that at 31st July 2019, there were 105 approved mainstream fostering households (with a maximum capacity for 164 placements) with 107 children in placements. Additionally 23 children and young people were placed with family and friends carers at 31st July 2019. This compares well to 31 March 2015, when there were 84 approved mainstream fostering households in Hackney (with a maximum capacity for approximately 138 placements) with 80 children in placement.

At 31st July 2019, 34 placements were unavailable for use (most commonly due to the personal circumstances of the carer or because they were providing a staying put placement for a young person they had previously fostered), meaning that the vacancy rate for the service was 13%, compared to 22% a year previously.

Number and proportion of children being cared for by in-house carers vs independent agency carers

At 31st March 2019, 139 children were placed with in-house carers including connected persons carers and 144 children were placed with Independent Fostering Agency carers.

Current estimated costs of in-house care vs independent agency care per child

Average weekly cost of placement types at 31 March

Placement type	Average weekly cost 2017/18	Average weekly cost 2018/19	% increase
In-house Fostering	£415	£430	3.6%
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)	£910	£924	1.5%
Semi-Independent	£913	£964	5.3%
Residential	£3,640	£4,073	11.9%

Executive Response to the Scrutiny Recommendations

Recommendation	Update: March 2019	Update: October 2019
<p>Recommendation One</p> <p>It is recommended that when the local looked after children sufficiency strategy is updated, measures to ensure the retention of foster carers are included which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Provide for individualised training programmes for in-house foster carers; (ii) Are informed by regular surveys and consultations with foster carers where such information will help to identify where the local support offer is sufficient and what could be improved; (iii) Are informed by systematic exit interviews conducted with all those foster carers who deregister from the in-house service, to help identify those trends or patterns which may impact on a decision to leave; (iv) Are underpinned by a package of remuneration which is regularly benchmarked against other neighbouring local authorities; 	<p>The Sufficiency Strategy is currently being reviewed with a view to an updated version being available by June 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The foster carer training programme was updated to reflect the needs of looked after children in Hackney, and was shared with foster carers in October 2018. The foster carer training programme will be reviewed on an annual basis. Individualised training needs are incorporated into the programme based on feedback and learning from annual reviews and foster carer forums. Furthermore foster carers are able to access training from the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (NLAFC¹). ii. The Fostering Service are in consultation with the Hackney Foster Carer Council (HFCC) around gathering meaningful feedback. Additionally every foster carer completes a yearly feedback form as part of their annual review. All feedback is captured and shared for service improvement. iii. All foster carers who deregister complete an exit interview where learning is captured. 	<p>The Sufficiency Strategy was reviewed and updated in September 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The foster carer training programme is updated annually to reflect the needs of looked after children in Hackney. Feedback and learning from annual reviews and foster carer forums continue to feed into the design of the training programme. The most recent training programme was completed in September 2019 and will be reviewed again in August 2020. The new training programme was sent to all foster carers via post and electronically. Foster carers continue to have access to online training as well as training from the NLAFC. ii. The Fostering Service continues their consultation with the Hackney Foster Carer Council (HFCC) around gathering meaningful feedback. Additionally every foster carer completes a yearly feedback form as part of their annual review. All feedback is captured and shared for service improvement. iii. All foster carers who deregister or resign are offered an exit interview where learning is

¹ NLAFC is comprised of six London Boroughs, and two Voluntary Adoption Agencies, who have joined together to improve services to children, birth families and to families involved in the fields of adoption and fostering.

<p>(v) Ensure that foster carers are provided with training and development opportunities which enable them to progress through the foster carer banding system so that each year (at least): - 8 level 1 carers progress to level 2; and - 4 level 2 carers progress to level 3</p> <p>(vi) Set out how to increase the number of in-house foster carers that are trained to become Foster Carer Ambassadors from 6 to 12.</p> <p>(vii) Ensure that foster carers who are the subject of allegations or concerns about their practice or standards of care should have access to independent support to assist them to clarify the stages of the procedure and help them to represent their point of view;</p> <p>(viii) Ensure that there is sufficient respite (in respect of duration and quality) for foster carers.</p>	<p>As at March 2019, there have been no foster carers deregistered in 2018/19.</p> <p>iv. The service works closely with the North London Adoption Fostering Consortium and have compared their package of remuneration with Local Authority members of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. A financial working group undertook a thorough comparison across neighbouring boroughs to ensure Hackney's package of remuneration is in line with neighbouring boroughs. The service's financial policy is in the process of being updated to reflect this.</p> <p>v. As at March 2019, five level 1 foster carers had progressed to level 2 and two level 2 foster carers progressed to level 3 in 2018/19. Following feedback from the HFCC, the Fostering Service has recently reviewed the developmental requirements which enable foster carers to progress through the banding system so that experienced foster carers are supported to progress into level 3.</p> <p>vi. The Fostering Service has exceeded the target of recruiting 12 Foster Carer Ambassadors and has successfully recruited 13 as at March 2019. Foster Care Ambassadors were recruited through liaison with social workers and foster carer forums.</p>	<p>captured. In 2018/19 there were no foster carers who deregistered.</p> <p>iv. The Fostering Service works closely with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium and have compared their package of remuneration with Local Authority members of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. A financial working group undertook a thorough comparison across neighbouring boroughs. The comparison identified that Hackney's rate was slightly lower than some neighbouring boroughs and has been increased to ensure Hackney's package of remuneration is in line with neighbouring boroughs. The service's financial policy was updated in April 2019.</p> <p>v. In 2018/19, five level 1 foster carers had progressed to level 2 and two level 2 foster carers had progressed to level 3. Between April 2019 to September 2019, there were eight level 1 foster carers who had progressed to level 2, and three level 2 foster carers who had progressed to level 3.</p> <p>vi. The Fostering Service has exceeded the target of recruiting 12 Foster Carer Ambassadors and has successfully recruited 13 as at March 2019. The current total of fostering ambassadors is 15 and 3 additional households have expressed an interest in becoming ambassadors, with 2 comprising of connected carers.</p>
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	<p>vii. Support is offered to all foster carers subject to allegations through the HFCC and the Fostering Network (funded by Hackney).</p> <p>viii. All foster carers are entitled to a minimum of two weeks respite a year. Additional respite can be provided and all requests are assessed on a case by case basis. The Mockingbird model² (see Recommendation 10) will provide additional support and respite for foster carers.</p>	<p>vii. Support is offered to all foster carers subject to allegations through the HFCC and the Fostering Network (funded by Hackney).</p> <p>viii. All foster carers are entitled to a minimum of two weeks respite a year. Additional respite can be provided and all requests are assessed on a case by case basis. Additional respite is provided to foster carers who are part of The Mockingbird model (see Recommendation 10)</p>
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<p>Recommendation Two</p> <p>It is recommended that the Fostering Service should develop a new, ambitious and long-term local foster carer recruitment strategy. This strategy should:</p> <p>(i) Be informed by a local needs analysis of its population of looked after children to determine the types of care placements required and the skills and experience required of foster carers (e.g. those looking</p>	<p>i. The foster carer recruitment strategy was updated in July 2018. The recruitment activity is informed by the local needs analysis of Hackney's Looked After Children and various publications are used to target a diverse audience for instance, public sector workers and education professionals . Publications include Primary Times, SEN magazine, Teachers Today and Education for Everyone.</p> <p>ii. 14 foster carer families are predicted to be recruited in 2018/19, which is higher than our neighbouring and consortium boroughs. The</p>	<p>i. The Fostering Service have continued working under the recruitment strategy updated in July 2018. An update of the strategy was completed in April 2019 to reflect the change in needs, for instance, specifically targeting more White British foster carers. The updated strategy has taken into consideration the new Supported Lodgings Scheme³ and with it, the need for hosts to support Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.</p> <p>ii. At the end of March 2019, there were 12 new foster carer families approved. Between</p>
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² The Mockingbird model is an innovative method of delivering foster care using an extended family model which provides respite care, peer support, regular joint planning and training, and social activities.

³ The Hackney supported lodgings scheme is designed to offer an additional provision for young people who are ready to leave care but may not be ready to live alone. The scheme aims to provide accommodation and support for young people aged 16-21 years old.

<p>after teenagers, complex needs and SEND);</p> <p>(ii) Set ambitious targets for the recruitment of in-house foster carers in the short, medium and long term: 23 new recruits per year should be the new target.</p> <p>(iii) Adopt an 'Always Be Recruiting' approach, which seeks to maximise Hackney Fostering Service presence, engagement and recruitment at all council and other local events;</p> <p>(iv) Seek to encompass and target under-represented groups, who may not traditionally associate themselves with fostering or do not feel that they have the right skills or experience (e.g. the childless, under 35s, single people, men and the LGBTQI community);</p> <p>(v) Develop recruitment campaigns which focus on the specific needs of looked after children and the required skills of foster carers (e.g. teenagers, complex needs, parent and child);</p> <p>(vi) Maximise the use of word of mouth interventions, such as through the Foster Carer Ambassadors scheme;</p> <p>(vii) Ensure that there is a dedicated and high profile on-line foster</p>	<p>service continues to explore new ways of working to support the efforts of the team to reach the set target of 23 with quality assessments.</p> <p>iii. The Fostering Service has adopted an 'Always Be Recruiting' approach, which seeks to maximise the service's presence, engagement and recruitment at all council and other local events. This approach is ongoing and has been incorporated into business as usual.</p> <p>iv. Fostering advertisements have incorporated messages that reach out to the LGBTQI+ community and have organised an LGBTQI+ family picnic. Similarly a social media campaign ran which corrected some myths about fostering such as clarifying that individuals can apply as a single candidate. There has been an increase over 2017/18 in single male applicants. Furthermore an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC) project will target prospective foster carers from a diverse background such as Vietnamese, Ethiopian and Albanian.</p> <p>v. Recruitment campaigns have been developed, that focus on the specific needs of Hackney's looked after children. Campaigns have focused on teenagers, LGBTQI+, UASC and parent and child placements. Joint recruitment campaigns have also been developed with North London Adoption and</p>	<p>April - September 2019, 4 mainstream fostering households have been approved, and 2 households have been approved as supported lodging hosts. The ambitious target of 23 foster carer approvals per year remains in place and a target of 5 UASC hosts and 5 general supported lodgings hosts have been incorporated into the recruitment plan.</p> <p>iii. An 'Always Be Recruiting' approach has been incorporated into business as usual. Social workers have been proactive in making recommendations to the recruitment team of identified IFA carers who may consider transferring to Hackney. The recruitment team encourages discussions about Supported Lodgings as an alternative, in cases where fostering has not been suitable.</p> <p>iv. The Fostering Recruitment team ran a campaign using Hackney foster carers to highlight the different demographics and experiences of people who foster; this included fostering in your 30s, as a single male, as a mature empty nester, as a Muslim, as an IFA transferring, and fostering with your own children at home. A Facebook campaign ran in September 2019 targeting White British mature 'empty-nest' candidates, and candidates who may be able to support UASC. Another Facebook campaign is underway targeting men only.</p>
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<p>carer recruitment presence (given the importance of this and the limited local resource, it should be explored whether this function could be provided jointly across participating boroughs in the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium);</p> <p>(viii) Ensure that recruitment campaigns are responsive and enquiries for in-house foster carers are dealt with promptly (at the latest, the next day).</p> <p>(ix) Seek to refocus recruitment across a broader range of housing tenures, seeking potential recruits in both the privately owned and privately rented sector (where there may be greater housing capacity).</p>	<p>Fostering Consortium targeting potential foster carers across a number of boroughs.</p> <p>vi. Ambassadors are asked to attend all outreach and public engagement activities. They also on occasion call and share their experience of fostering with those considering fostering. A fostering referral scheme is also in place and a number of potential foster carers have made contact through this route.</p> <p>vii. A dedicated and high profile online foster carer recruitment presence is in place. The North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium has a website that takes enquires and redirects individuals to their home borough. Additionally the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium has a social media presence that allows information sharing. The Fostering Service continue to work with other boroughs around fostering recruitment online activity.</p> <p>viii. All enquiries are followed up within two working days. Anyone completing the online eligibility checker is able to download an information pack and request a call back at their preferred time.</p> <p>ix. The current focus has been for those with a spare bedroom to consider fostering; this applies to homeowners/lease holders and those renting. Consultation with Housing Services have taken place. Where possible,</p>	<p>v. Recruitment campaigns are continuously developed to focus on the specific needs of Hackney's looked after children. Recruitment activity has developed into focusing on the needs and skills of potential foster carers, especially those who can support older children.</p> <p>vi. Ambassadors continue to support outreach and public engagement activities. The current ambassadors have been active in supporting potential candidates during the assessment process through shadowing and providing telephone consultations.</p> <p>vii. There has been an increase in the use of online platforms with adverts and posts appearing on Facebook more regularly. This has had a positive impact on the visibility of Hackney Fostering and there has been an increase in the number of enquiries received. Joint working with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium remains ongoing, with more post-sharing across boroughs taking place.</p> <p>viii. The Fostering Service continues to ensure enquiries are responded to as soon as possible. Due to the increased number of enquiries, more work is underway to contact enquirers after 5pm when possible, and when they have requested this specifically.</p>
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	<p>links will be made with the Housing Service to explore the possibility of potential candidates already living in council housing relocating to bigger housing. This has been challenging due to candidates not meeting the set housing criteria.</p>	<p>ix. The current focus has been for those with a spare bedroom to consider fostering; this applies to homeowners/lease holders and those renting. Where possible, links will be made with the Housing Service to explore the possibility of potential candidates already living in council housing relocating to bigger housing. This has been challenging due to candidates not meeting the set housing criteria. So far 1 foster carer has successfully moved to a bigger property and has 4 children in placement.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Three</p> <p>The Commission understands that the Council has been running a pilot scheme offering up to 4 larger properties to experienced foster carers to enable them to take on additional placements of looked after children. It would be beneficial if this scheme was formalised and agreed, reflecting approaches taken in the neighbouring boroughs of Camden and Islington.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that the Council:</p> <p>(a) Allocate 4 larger (2-4 bedroom) properties to the Fostering Service each year to enable experienced, long term foster carers to provide additional placements, particularly for teenagers (as per the Camden model);</p> <p>(b) Give priority to adult children in foster carer households in local social housing allocation policies, to enable foster carers to take on additional placements for looked after children (as per the Islington model).</p>	<p>a) The scheme has been formalised by the Hackney Fostering Service and Housing Needs Service. There have been challenges recruiting foster carers to the scheme due to the specific set housing criteria.</p> <p>(b) Hackney Fostering Service has explored this further and Housing Needs Service have advised that they unfortunately are not able to commit to this at the moment.</p>	<p>a) The scheme has been formalised by the Hackney Fostering Service and Housing Needs Service. There have been challenges recruiting foster carers to the scheme due to the specific set housing criteria. So far 1 foster carer has successfully moved to a bigger property through the scheme and has 4 children in placement including a teenager.</p> <p>b) Hackney Fostering Service has explored this further and Housing Needs Service have advised that they unfortunately are not able to commit to this at the moment.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Four</p> <p>To bring the Hackney offer into line with other north east London boroughs (e.g. Waltham Forest, Redbridge), the Council should consider the introduction of a Council Tax reduction scheme for foster carers. Such a scheme should:</p> <p>(a) Reflect a level of discount commensurate to the experience and longevity of foster carers (e.g. in alignment with the current banding system e.g. 33% for level 1, 66% for level 2 and 100% for level 3);</p> <p>(b) Provide greater discounts for the care of looked after children who are difficult to match to suitable placements (e.g. children aged 13-17, or parent and child placements);</p> <p>(c) Acknowledge that not all foster carers live within Hackney and will not be eligible to benefit from such a scheme, and therefore provide them with an annual retainer payment (also based on experience).</p>	<p>The Council's Benefits and Housing Needs Service confirmed that their current scheme will remain in place until March 2019. An update from Housing Needs Service will be provided following review in the new financial year 2019/20.</p>	<p>The Council Tax reduction scheme for foster carers has yet to be introduced. The Fostering Service will continue to explore the possibilities of introducing the scheme with the Council's Benefits and Housing Needs Service.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Five</p> <p>The Commission understands that Hackney foster carers already have access to cultural, leisure and other opportunities to support their role. The Commission recommends that the Fostering Service reviews these and explores other opportunities that might be available for foster carers through other services of the Council and local community and voluntary sector (and consult with current foster carers about what would be helpful or appealing to them).</p>	<p>The Fostering Newsletter published on a quarterly basis by the Fostering Service advertises current events and organisations in the borough which carers can access. This includes other services foster carers can have access to through the local community and voluntary sector. The Hackney Fostering Service continues to work closely with The Hackney Foster Carer Council about what would be helpful and appealing to them.</p>	<p>The Fostering and Connected Carers Newsletter published on a quarterly basis by the Fostering Service advertises current events and organisations in the borough which carers can access. This includes other services foster carers can have access to through the local community and voluntary sector. The Hackney Fostering Service continues to work closely with The Hackney Foster Carer Council about what would be helpful and appealing to them.</p>
<p>Recommendation Six</p> <p>Whilst the vacancy rate in Hackney is on a par with, if not better than, the national average, evidence given to the Commission from foster carers would suggest that foster carers are not being utilised as much as they would like, and was a factor in some carers' decisions to de-register. Thus, as well as recruiting more in-house foster carers, it was evident that better use could be made of the existing pool of foster carers. It is recommended that the Council:</p>	<p>i. A 'Step Up Step Down' programme is in place, and in-house foster carers are supporting with outreach when they have vacancies. Furthermore, in-house foster carers support Children in Need (CIN) cases with respite to prevent children from coming into care. This will be incorporated into the updated Sufficiency Strategy.</p> <p>ii. A list of in-house foster carer vacancies is shared on a weekly basis with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium to ensure that the consortium boroughs are informed of the availability of in-house foster carer placements in neighbouring boroughs.</p>	<p>i. A 'Step Up Step Down' programme is in place, and in-house foster carers are supporting with outreach when they have vacancies. Furthermore, in-house foster carers support Children in Need (CIN) cases with respite to prevent children from coming into care.</p> <p>ii. Communication between the Fostering Service and the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium about vacancies and the availability of in-house foster carer placements in neighbouring boroughs has remained ongoing.</p>

<p>(i) Consider the implementation of the 'Step Up Step Down' programme - which seeks to utilise in-house foster carers to provide additional preventative support to those children on the edge of the care system;</p> <p>(ii) As per the Islington model, consider whether in-house foster carer vacancies can be used to support placements in other boroughs, such as within the NL Consortium or further afield;</p> <p>(iii) Increase the number of Foster Carer Ambassadors in Hackney to extend the capacity for targeted outreach recruitment and to support newly appointed foster carers (increase from current 6 to 12);</p> <p>(iv) Consider further ways in which peer support mechanisms can be used to support fostering practice and increase the skills and knowledge base of local in-house foster carers and their ability to provide a wider range of foster placements;</p> <p>(v) Develop the skill base of the existing pool of foster carers to better enable them to support the needs of looked after children in Hackney, particularly those looking after young adolescents</p>	<p>iii. The Fostering Service has exceeded the target of recruiting 12 Foster Carer Ambassadors and has successfully recruited 13 as at March 2019. Experienced foster carers are encouraged to speak to people considering fostering and new foster carers.</p> <p>iv. The Mockingbird model will also provide peer support through the creation of a community network similar to that of an extended family. To further support fostering practice, experienced foster carers are paired up with new foster carers by the fostering officer and matching social worker when required.</p> <p>v. The training programme has been updated in October 2018 to reflect the needs of the looked after children in Hackney. The North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium is also offering parent and child placement training. An induction level 3 training workshop was held to explore with level 3 foster carers specialist training they felt would be beneficial. Feedback will be incorporated into the next training programme. Level 3 foster carers are encouraged to request training they feel is required which Hackney's Fostering Service will consider supporting.</p>	<p>iii. As at September 2019, there are 15 fostering ambassadors and 3 households have expressed an interest, 2 of which are connected carers.</p> <p>iv. The Mockingbird model will provide peer support through the creation of a community network similar to that of an extended family. To further support fostering practice, experienced foster carers are paired up with new foster carers by the fostering officer and matching social worker when required.</p> <p>v. The training programme was updated in September 2019 to reflect the needs of looked after children in Hackney. Following feedback from foster carers, Level 3 specific training that has been incorporated into the training programme. Foster carers continue to have access to training provided by the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. Level 3 foster carers continue to be encouraged to request training they feel is required which the Fostering Service will consider supporting.</p>
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aged 13 and above and parent and child placements.		
<p>Recommendation Seven</p> <p>It is recommended that the Council develop a joint working protocol with partner IFAs which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Addresses issues around the quality and cost of foster care placements; (ii) Seeks to develop usage of foster carers in the IFA sector in a planned way which enables both IFAs and the LA to plan more effectively; (iii) Allows for more effective commissioning and contract management (quality and outcomes of placements); (iv) Enables IFAs and the LA to work cooperatively in line with the Leeds model which seeks to increase the number of 'local solutions for looked after children' by seeking to maximise the use of foster care placements in Hackney (irrespective of which sector foster carers may work for) to help develop and maintain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The North East London residential programme⁴ are exploring a wider London framework to address issues around the quality and cost of foster care placements. The North East London residential partnership has scope to extend to other boroughs as well as the potential to include semi-independent accommodation and children's homes. ii. An annual engagement event by the North East London residential programme will be held in April 2019. This will be an open space event to consult with IFAs around plans for more effective usage of foster carers in the IFA sector. iii. The North East London residential programme aims to provide more effective commissioning and contract management. Young people have been involved in the commissioning process and will be involved in visiting placements scheduled to take place in April 2019. iv. Hackney Fostering Service is part of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium who are focused on increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All placement moves are presented at the Care Planning Panel where the quality and cost of foster placements are reviewed. There is also a quality assurance framework in place which looks at the quality and cost of placements. Additionally, an engagement event with IFAs was held in April 2019, where discussion was held about the quality and cost of placements. The event was positive and built on the relationship between the Fostering Service and IFAs. Discussions were held on the needs of looked after children in Hackney and IFAs shared their ideas on supporting placement stability. The Fostering Service will conduct an annual engagement event with IFAs as feedback from stakeholders was positive. ii. Where possible the Fostering Service work to ensure all placements with IFAs are planned. Furthermore, IFAs are encouraged to attend Hackney's in-house training. Additionally, the Fostering Service is working with IFAs and eight other local authorities around the development of children's residential placements.

⁴ The project will deliver and test the use of block contracts, incentivising the delivery of outcomes and three-way coproduction between the sub-regional partnership, young people, and providers. It will also invest in workforce development opportunities.

<p>strong support networks for children and their carers.</p>	<p>the number of local solutions for looked after children by seeking to maximise the use of foster carer placements.</p>	<p>iii. The Fostering Service work in partnership with IFAs with a strong focus on the quality of placements. Young people have been involved in the commissioning process and learning from stability meetings and feedback forms from young people and IFAs are used to inform future quality assurance processes. Furthermore the Fostering Service works closely with IFAs in regularly reviewing and negotiating the cost of placements, and seeking volume discounts to ensure best value for the service is achieved. Long term matching discounts are actively negotiated and achieved where children have been long term matched, and been in placement for more than a year.</p> <p>iv. A “matching” social worker has joined the Fostering Service. This has supported the work around placing children in suitable placements taking into account location, cultural background and the child/young person’s needs. The Fostering Service continues to focus on increasing the number of local solutions for looked after children by seeking to maximise the use of foster carer placements.</p>
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Recommendation Eight		
<p>It is recommended that the Council and Fostering Service continue to engage and further develop its relationship with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (NLAFC) and identify additional opportunities for collaborative partnerships, particularly in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Effective commissioning of services to support the training and development of foster carers, particularly specialist support; (ii) Increased capacity (finance and expertise) for the recruitment of foster carers particularly those with specialist skills or experience (e.g. looking after teenagers, SEND, parent and child etc.); (iii) Identify ways in which it can work collaboratively with the IFA sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Foster carers have access to all training provided by the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. Specialist training and access to support groups is included as part of the offer. ii. There are regular joint recruitment and advertising campaigns with Hackney Fostering Service and the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium members. Bespoke videos have been created to target potential foster carers with specialist skills or experience, for instance those who may have skills working on teenagers or parent and child placements. iii. An annual engagement event by the North East London residential programme will be held in April 2019. This will be an open space event to consult with IFAs around plans for more effective usage of foster carers in the IFA sector and working collaboratively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Foster carers have access to all training provided by the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. Specialist training and access to support groups is included as part of the offer. ii. There are regular joint recruitment and advertising campaigns with Hackney Fostering Service and the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium members. Bespoke videos have been created to target potential foster carers with specialist skills or experience. All future North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium marketing activity will be through social media. iii. An engagement event with IFAs was held in April 2019, where discussion was held about the quality and cost of placements. The event was positive and built on the relationship between the Fostering Service and IFAs. Discussions were held on the needs of looked after children in Hackney and IFAs shared their ideas on supporting placement stability. The Fostering Service will conduct an annual engagement event with IFAs as feedback from stakeholders was positive.

Recommendation Nine		
<p>The Education Select Committee at the Houses of Parliament conducted a review of Fostering Services in 2017 and has published its report in January 2018 (House of Commons, 2018). This report has in turn contributed to the Government's fostering stocktake, which has been undertaken by Sir Martin Narey on behalf of the Department of Education (Narey & Overs, 2018).</p> <p>The report of the Education Select Committee makes a number of recommendations, including the establishment of a national foster carer recruitment campaign.</p> <p>It is recommend that when the Fostering Service report back to the Commission in 6 months, it also includes a response to those recommendations contained within both the Education Select Committee and Department of Education national stocktake reports, particularly those relating to recruitment and retention of foster carers.</p>	<p>Hackney Fostering Service has reviewed the Narey report and is already considering how the wider Service will respond to the recommendations.</p> <p>An update will be provided in March 2019 in relation to the Service's response to the Narey report (the Fostering Stocktake), the Education Select Committee report on fostering, and the Government's response to both reports.</p>	<p>An update of Fostering Service's response to the Narey report (the Fostering Stocktake), the Education Select Committee report on fostering, and the Government's response was shared at the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission meeting in March 2019.</p>

Recommendation Ten		
<p>The Commission took evidence from both local officers and national bodies on the Mockingbird Scheme, a hub and spoke approach to establish a network of support to local foster carers. Evidence presented to the review suggested that this model can offer more support to foster carers, maintain and engage local foster carers and improve the nature and level of care provided to looked after children. The Fostering Network is working with a number of areas to pilot the Mockingbird approach.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Fostering Service should actively engage with the Fostering Network to identify if Hackney can be included within the existing pilot scheme or within any planned future roll-out of this approach to foster care.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Mockingbird Model Project is underway with a project board meeting monthly to review progress. The Mockingbird Model Project have successfully recruited one hub home carer, who was already known to the service, and a liaison worker. Recruitment of the satellite carers is currently in progress. The Mockingbird project is on track to launch in Spring/Summer 2019.</p>	<p>The Mockingbird Model Project launched in August 2019 which saw the completion of the first constellation. There is currently 1 hub home and 6 satellite carers. All the foster carers and children have been introduced. Planned calendar events such as sleepovers and training dates for the year have been confirmed. The Virtual School and Family Learning Intervention Programme are supporting the project through training on group dynamics. A link clinician has been confirmed who will work closely with the foster carers and children.</p>

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Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 29th October 2019 Item 7 – Children’s Social Care Annual Report	Item No 7
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Outline

This is a standing item which is presented bi-annually within the Commission’s work programme.

The report sets out how the Children and Families Service in Hackney is currently performing for key aspects of children’s social care provision (e.g. referrals, assessments and children entering care) together with identified priorities for the year ahead.

Contributors

- Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health Services
- Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families Service

Action

The Commission is asked to review and assess the attached report.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: Tuesday 29th October 2019
Title of report: Children and Families Service 2018-19 Full Year Report to Members
Report author: Suzanne O'Connor
Authorised by: Sarah Wright
<p>Brief:</p> <p>The Children and Families Service Full Year Report is produced to update elected councillors on developments and key performance trends within the Children and Families Service in Hackney during 2018-19. The report has been tabled for discussion at the Corporate Parenting Board, Cabinet, Full Council, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission, and City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.</p> <p>Below is an overview of developments and areas of note in the period April 2018 to March 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following the Ofsted focused visit in February 2019, the Children and Families Service has worked hard to make changes quickly and is now embedding these.• The Children and Families Service has worked to review and align the Children and Families Service values with the relaunched Council values. These core values for the Children and Families Service form ethical standards that inform everything that we do. Our aim at all times is to be:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Collaborative and respectful○ Innovative and creative○ Child and family focused and responsive to wider context○ Strength-based and reflective○ High aspirations for children○ Purposeful, timely and solution focused• The Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework has been further developed and re-launched - the wellbeing framework is the Hackney partnership's equivalent of a thresholds document and now includes additional information related to extra-familial risk, as well as a Context Wellbeing Framework to support the local partnership to assess risk in extra-familial contexts such as peer groups, schools and neighbourhoods.• The Fostering Network's Mockingbird programme is an innovative research-based method of delivering foster care using an extended family model which provides respite care, peer support, regular joint planning, training, and social activities to other foster placements. Evaluations of the Mockingbird Family Model show improved outcomes for children, young people and carers, with improved placement stability, connection with siblings, and foster carer support and retention. The project launched Hackney's first hub home in August 2019.• Hackney continues to develop its Contextual Safeguarding approach to address risks faced by children from outside of their family and have shared their learning with local authorities across the country.

- Young Hackney's Trusted Relationships project, funded through a successful bid to the Home Office, is providing detached outreach interventions with some of the most vulnerable young people in the borough. The detached outreach team became operational in January 2019 and includes youth workers and a clinical psychologist. The team also aims to generate further insight into young people's lived experiences, through the removal of perceived barriers to access services.

Key performance information:

- Demand for services continues to increase.
- There were more children attending Young Hackney provision than ever before - 177,299 attendances at Young Hackney provision, including commissioned services, by children and young people during 2018/19 – a 7% increase compared to 165,283 in 2017/18.
- Although at the end of March 2019, there were fewer children on Child Protection Plans (194 children), this has since increased to 291 children on Child Protection Plans at the end of September 2019
- A greater number of children were looked after - 405 children were looked after as at 31st March 2019 – a 6% increase compared to 381 children in care as at 31st March 2018. This since increased to 416 looked after children at the end of September 2019.
- 308 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported at the end of March 2019 – an increase compared to the end of March 2018, when 301 care leavers were being supported.
- The number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system decreased from 111 in 2017/18 to 81 in 2018/19. The rate per 100,000 in Hackney is significantly lower the statistical neighbour average

The Children and Families Service priorities for 2019-20:

- Review and reiterate the centrality of the child's lived experience to how we work in Hackney and ensure that the child's lived experience is embedded in all of our processes.
- Ensure the timeliness and effectiveness of social work practice and interventions to safeguard children from harm.
- Ensure the quality and effectiveness of managerial oversight and supervision to ensure that children's circumstances improve within their timeframe.
- Carry out an extensive review of Early Help services to ensure that a comprehensive, consistent and responsive early help offer, based on current best evidence, is in place for all children and young people in Hackney.
- Continue to invest in the workforce across the Children and Families Service, with a particular focus on improving the diversity of our workforce, especially at a management level.
- Move to a 'business as usual' model for delivering Contextual Safeguarding and continue to develop our response to adolescent vulnerability and extra-familial risk, including in the context of their peer group relationships, school environments and the community, linking this work with our Trusted Relationships project.
- Continue our drive to recruit and retain more in-house foster carers, including through the introduction of the Mockingbird model and the launch of our first hub homes in 2019.
- Ensure that we have the right placements to provide stability for our more complex adolescents who are looked after, including through our involvement in the East London residential project and exploring joint commissioning opportunities with other local authorities.
- Work more closely with schools regarding support for children in need and young people at risk of school exclusion.
- Refresh our Corporate Parenting Strategy to reflect greater corporate responsibility for looked after children and care leavers, and reflect the current views of a wider group of

children and young people through the broadened membership of our Children in Care Council.

- Further develop our communications to ensure care leavers can access dynamic and interactive information about our Care Leaver Offer.
- Introduce the internationally recognised Safe and Together model to strengthen our response to domestic abuse across the partnership.
- Respond to the findings of the Hackney Young Futures Commission.
- Ensure that issues relating to identity, diversity, inequality and discrimination are considered and addressed in all aspects of our work, and that we progress improvements identified through the corporate Young Black Men programme.
- Strengthen our safeguarding reach into out of school settings and hard to reach communities.

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October 2019

Children and Families Service

Full Year Report to Members 2018/19

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Legend

 Progress on service priorities	 Feedback	 Strengths	 For information
 Service description	 Case studies	 Areas for development	

A number of case studies and direct quotes from children and young people are included within this report. All names and identifying details are anonymised.

Foreword



Councillor Antoinette Bramble
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care

It gives me pleasure to introduce the Children and Families Service 2018-19 Report to Members. Over the past year, our skilled and committed workforce has continued to strive for excellent outcomes for our children and families and maintained their commitment to continuous learning and development in response to changing needs. Feedback from Ofsted following a short focused visit in February 2019 identified some areas where we needed to take immediate action. I have received regular updates from the Children and Families Service management team about how we are addressing these actions and I am pleased to see how far we have progressed in the last few months. I want to thank our strong and skilled workforce for making changes quickly and working in a committed way towards embedding these.

2018/19 has been another very busy and productive year for the Children and Families Service. Demand for services continues to increase, against a background of financial challenges across the country for social care services. The Children and Families Service continues to explore innovative approaches to addressing need within Hackney.

The Children and Families Service has worked to review and align the Children and Families Service values with the relaunched Council values. These core values for the Children and Families Service form ethical standards that inform everything that we do. Our aim at all times is to be:

- Collaborative and respectful
- Innovative and creative
- Child and family focused and responsive to wider context
- Strength-based and reflective
- High aspirations for children
- Purposeful, timely and solution focused

Please see the appendix to read about these values in more detail.

The Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework has also been further developed and re-launched - the wellbeing framework is the Hackney partnership's thresholds document and now includes additional information related to extra-familial risk, as well as a Context Wellbeing Framework to support the local partnership to assess risk in extra-familial contexts such as peer groups, schools and neighbourhoods.

In the last year the Hackney Young Futures Commission has been set up to involve young people in decisions that affect them. It is led by young people and aims to find out how young people view Hackney as a place to live, the changes they would like to see, and how they want to be involved in the decisions that affect their lives. This was a key manifesto commitment in 2018. I look forward to the findings from this commission and working with partners across the Council in responding to these.

I look forward to building on our successes and learning from our challenges into the coming year.

Overview of Performance



4,190 referrals were received in 2018/19 – a 6% decrease compared to the previous year when 4,433 were received.



16.5% re-referrals were made within 12 months of a referral during 2018/19 – an increase compared to 15.6% in 2017/18.



4,290 assessments were completed in 2018/19 – a 3% decrease compared to 4,438 in 2017/18.



194 children were on Child Protection Plans as at 31st March 2019 – a slight decrease compared to 200 as at 31st March 2018.



23% of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan, were subject for a second or subsequent time during 2018/19 – an increase compared to 14% in 2017/18.



177,299 attendances at Young Hackney provision, including commissioned services, by children and young people during 2018/19 – a 7% increase compared to 165,283 in 2017/18.



405 children were looked after as at 31st March 2019 – a 6% increase compared to 381 children in care as at 31st March 2018.



212 children entered care in 2018/19 – a slight decrease compared to 217 entering care during 2017/18.



119 young people aged 14-17 entered care in 2018/19 – a 12% increase compared to 106 young people aged 14-17 entering care in 2017/18. The 14-17 year old cohort represented 56% of the total number of children that entered care in 2018/19, compared to 49% in 2017/18.



13% of looked after children had three or more placements in 2018/19 – an increase compared to 11% in 2017/18.



65% of looked after children under 16 looked after for at least 2.5 years who have been living in the same placement for at least 2 years in 2018/19 – an increase compared to 62% in 2017/18.



308 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported at the end of March 2019 – an increase compared to the end of March 2018, when 301 care leavers were being supported.

Priorities for the Children and Families Service in 2019/20

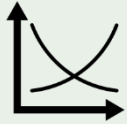
Our identified priorities for the year ahead include to:



Review and reiterate the centrality of the child's lived experience to how we work in Hackney and ensure that the child's lived experience is embedded in all of our processes



Ensure the timeliness and effectiveness of social work practice and interventions to safeguard children from harm



Ensure the quality and effectiveness of managerial oversight and supervision to ensure that children's circumstances improve within their timeframe



Carry out an extensive review of Early Help services to ensure that a comprehensive, consistent and responsive early help offer, based on current best evidence, is in place for all children and young people in Hackney

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Continue to invest in the workforce across the Children and Families Service, with a particular focus on improving the diversity of our workforce, especially at a management level



Move to a 'business as usual' model for delivering Contextual Safeguarding and continue to develop our response to adolescent vulnerability and extra-familial risk, including in the context of their peer group relationships, school environments and the community, linking this work with our Trusted Relationships project



Continue our drive to recruit and retain more in-house foster carers, including through the introduction of the Mockingbird model and the launch of our first hub homes in 2019



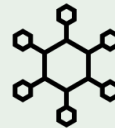
Ensure that we have the right placements to provide stability for our more complex adolescents who are looked after, including through our involvement in the East London residential project and exploring joint commissioning opportunities with other local authorities



Work more closely with schools regarding support for children in need and young people at risk of school exclusion



Refresh our Corporate Parenting Strategy to reflect greater corporate responsibility for looked after children and care leavers, and reflect the current views of a wider group of children and young people through the broadened membership of our Children in Care Council



Further develop our communications to ensure care leavers can access dynamic and interactive information about our Care Leaver Offer.



Introduce the internationally recognised Safe and Together model to strengthen our response to domestic abuse across the partnership



Respond to the findings of the Hackney Young Futures Commission



Ensure that issues relating to identity, diversity, inequality and discrimination are considered and addressed in all aspects of our work, and that we progress improvements identified through the corporate Young Black Men programme



Strengthen our safeguarding reach into out of school settings and hard to reach communities

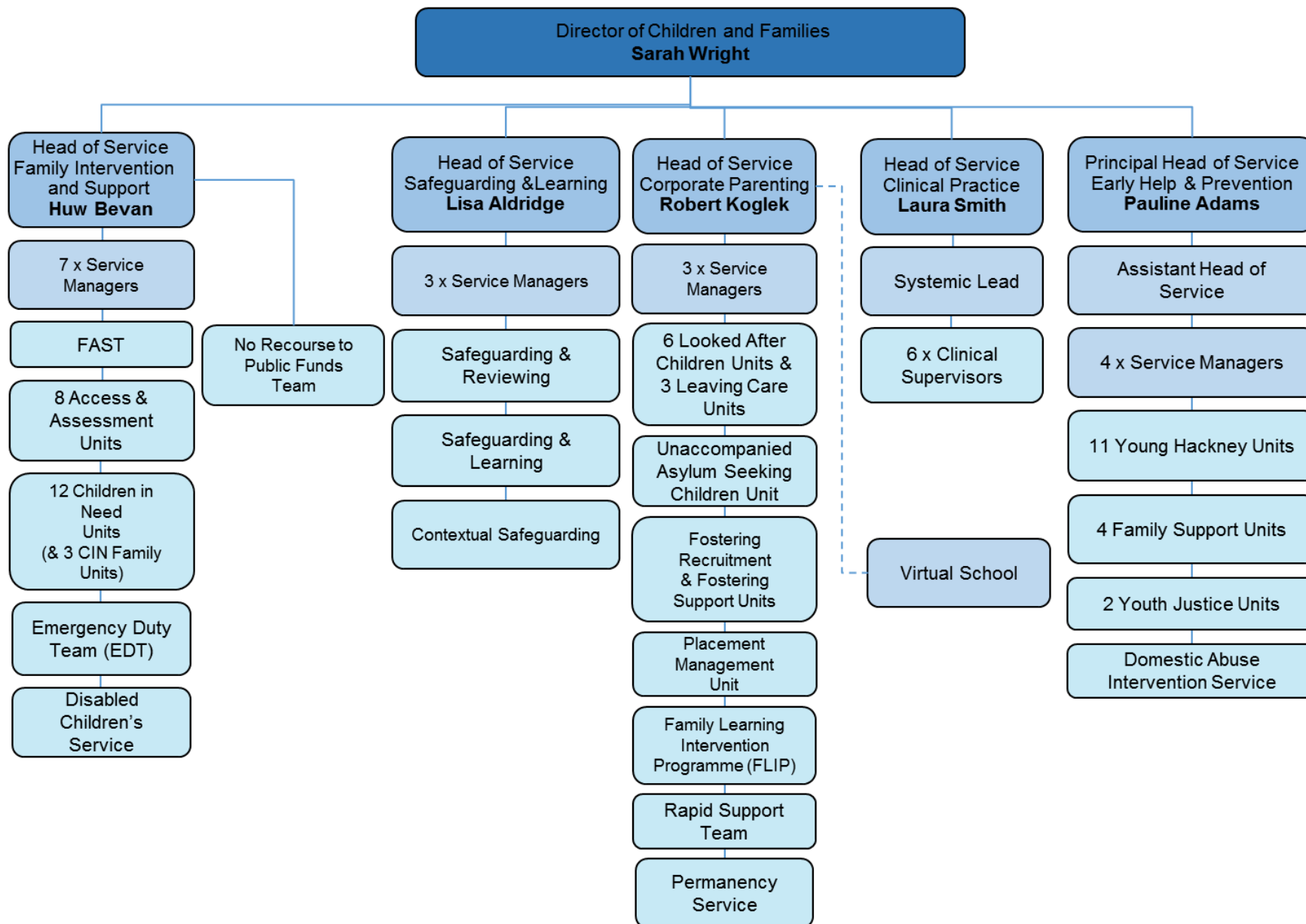


Our service priorities shape and drive our improvement work. These are deeply embedded in all aspects of our everyday practice and have been highlighted throughout the report with the stars symbol.



Children and Families Service Structure Chart

Children and Families Service Management Structure



Ofsted focused visit – *Update following February 2019 visit*

Ofsted visited Hackney in February 2019 to undertake a 2-day review of the arrangements for children in need and those made subject to a Child Protection Plan. Following the visit, Hackney was required to submit a draft action plan to Ofsted addressing two areas identified for priority action and the other areas for development included in the focused visit outcomes letter. The action plan was submitted to Ofsted on 29th March 2019.

Priority action 1. The timeliness and effectiveness of social work practice and interventions to safeguard children from harm

A monthly Progress and Tracking Meeting, chaired by the Head of Family Intervention and Support, has been established to routinely review all Children in Need and Child Protection Plan cases at key checkpoints of 9, 12 and 15 months. An audit of plans in August 2019 showed that in 75% of cases, auditors found that goals were relevant to the child's needs and in line with their timescales, with a further 25% partially meeting the standard. No cases did not meet the standard.

Assessment checkpoints (at 15 days) have been established to ensure more timely decision making is taking place around escalation and de-escalation during assessment and more proportional assessment overall. There has been an improvement in the completion of assessments within 45 working days - this was at 80.1% at the end of August 2019 compared to 62.6% at the end of April 2019.

'Critical questions' have been developed and distributed to staff, included in goal-oriented practice development sessions, the new guidance for plans and review, and Practice Standards. Positive feedback about the practice standards has been received from practitioners about the support and clarity they give to case work.

Priority Action 2. The quality and effectiveness of managerial oversight and supervision to ensure that children's circumstances improve within their timeframe.

Service manager capacity has been increased across the service on a temporary basis to improve targeted oversight activity, including audit, dip-sampling and case tracking. Service Manager capacity in the longer term is being reviewed over the coming months. The Progress and Tracking Meeting, chaired by the Head of Family Intervention and Support, has been established to routinely review all Children in Need (CIN) and Child Protection Plan cases at key checkpoints and an audit in August 2019 found that:

- In 75.6% of CIN cases over 9 months old, there was evidence of service manager review.
- In 85% of audited cases, the service manager review was rated as either 'Yes' or 'Partially' in relation to providing clear case direction or supporting proactive change in the case formulation, plan or risk assessment.

The ability of the service to robustly performance manage children's cases has been improved by the accelerated implementation of the new data performance system - 'Qlikview.' Services are using the data system to monitor and challenge performance at their management team meetings and the fortnightly Performance and Practice Oversight Group, chaired by the Director of Children and Families, is providing strategic level challenge.

3. Children's daily lived experiences to be central to all work

Guidance and management direction has been shared with all staff to ensure that all case discussions and meetings include a review and reflection on the child's lived experience and how this is explicitly informing risk analysis and the actions within the continuing intervention, and that this discussion is clearly recorded and evident on all case files.

Development sessions have taken place with all frontline managers across the service targeting improvements in goal focused practice that re-emphasises the child at the centre of all assessment and planning. Planning and review documents have been revised to be structured around the child's daily lived experience. Additional development sessions on the use and approach expected from the new planning and review documents are being delivered to staff. Casework audit tools have also been revised to place a greater emphasis and priority on evidencing the child's lived experience.

Audits in August 2019 found:

- In 84% of cases, auditors found the child's lived experience was fully or partially captured in case discussions.
- In 83% of cases auditors found that plans and reviews were written in child and family friendly language.

4. The application of thresholds to protect children on child in need plans when risks escalate or children's circumstances do not improve within children's timeframes

In addition to the developmental focus on better planning through improved goal setting, time limited actions and understanding the impact on children's development, the service is publicising and directing case holding staff and managers to focus on 'Critical Questions' to form the basis of ongoing case discussion and individual and peer challenge:

- How does the child feel, what do they want, and what is day-to-day life like for them?
- Is the immediate safety of the child assured?
- What needs to change for us to be less worried, and are changes happening quickly enough?
- What would life be like for the child in the long-term if things do not change?
- Are we putting the right interventions in place to support the change we need to see?
- What needs to happen if things do not change?

Over 100 partnership frontline staff and managers have attended development sessions on understanding the revised Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework over the summer 2019.

The percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral from April-August 2019 was 16.7%, significantly below the national average of 21.9% at the end of March 2018.

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5. Performance data regarding the timeliness and impact of social work practice to improve children's circumstances

The ability of the service to robustly performance manage children's cases has been improved by the accelerated implementation of the new data performance system - 'QlikSense.' Access to consistently high quality performance information had already been identified as a significant challenge for the Service, and the new system was already in development at the time of the focused visit. Additional ICT capacity has been put in place to bring forward the full implementation of the system. The system is being used to provide live performance data to managers across the service on timescales for case review, and critical indicators such as visits to young people, and the recording of management oversight. Following the implementation of 'QlikSense', staff and managers have provided positive feedback about the real time support provided by improved data in performance managing key areas of practice. This is resulting in increasing timeliness of individual case discussions through unit meetings, and an improvement in the timeliness of visits, as well as an improvement in the completion of assessments within 45 working days - this was at 80.1% at the end of August 2019 compared to 62.6% at the end of April 2019.

6. Plans to be more specific and detailed about what needs to change and by when

The developmental sessions and revisions to recording templates are predicated on delivering more specific and focused planning, in particular about what needs to change for us to be less worried about a child's situation and by when.

In addition new guidance has been shared with all staff on understanding and assessing 'parental capacity to change.' Managers are driving the use of the new guidance in unit meetings and individual supervision, and feedback is being routinely gathered.

Audits about the quality of plans in August 2019 found that:

- In 75% of cases, auditors found that goals were relevant to the child's needs and in line with their timescales, with a further 25% partially meeting the standard. No cases did not meet the standard.
- In 92% of audited cases the standard of clarity on what needs to change and by when, was either fully or partially met.

7. The greater consideration of men, including abusive partners, in risk assessments

The Domestic Abuse and Intervention Service (DAIS) has link workers for the Children in Need Teams and for FAST (the front door service) to ensure more robust early intervention and engagement with families where domestic abuse is an identified issue, and that planning and assessment is better informed by the support of specialist staff. A new contact setting and reviewing tool based on evidence from research has been piloted in a number of cases and was promoted across the service from August 2019.

In addition a new safeguarding agreement template and safety plan templates for work with perpetrators and victims of domestic violence and abuse have been developed and shared with all staff in August 2019, together with associated practice guidance.

The roll-out of Safe and Together (an evidence-based practice model with a strong focus on perpetrators) begins in September 2019.

Developments and Innovation

Trusted Relationships Project

Hackney was successful in its bid to the Home Office Trusted Relationships Fund and our Trusted Relationships project, which became operational in January 2019, is now working to create an innovative and effective outreach and detached youth work programme with embedded clinical support. This involves working to build relationships with our most vulnerable young people in the locations they frequent, at times convenient to them, encouraging them to access support and engage with mental health services. The first shared learning event was held in November 2018 offering an opportunity to hear what other local authorities are doing across other successful outreach and detached youth work sites.

Hackney Council Staff Survey 2018

81% of CFS staff who completed the survey said they would speak highly of Hackney Council as an employer to people outside the organisation – compared to 67% overall for Hackney staff. 73% of CFS staff who completed the staff survey said Hackney Council was one of the best /above average when compared to other organisations they had worked for – compared to 60% overall for Hackney staff. 77% of CFS staff, who completed the survey, said they were satisfied with their job – compared to 71% overall for Hackney staff.

North London Social Work Teaching Partnership (NLSWTP)

In April 2018, the NLSWTP received a second tranche of funding from the Department for Education to continue activities in 2018/19. The Partnership has now expanded and comprises of: Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington Councils, the charity Norwood and Middlesex University. Colleagues from across partnership organisations have embarked upon the Leadership & Management programme delivered by the Business School at Middlesex University, including the first ever MBA in Social Work. Initial feedback is positive. A much lower funding amount has been received for 2019/20 to support sustainability planning – further funding is not anticipated. Many courses are being translated into a webinar format to support future access to learning.

City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Partnership

In 2015, the government commissioned Sir Alan Wood to review the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs). The Wood Report recommendations were subsequently embedded in statute with the granting of Royal Assent to the Children and Social Work Act 2017. As a consequence, local safeguarding children's boards, set up by local authorities, are being replaced. Three safeguarding partners (local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and chief officers of police in a local area) must now make new safeguarding arrangements to work together with relevant agencies (as they consider appropriate) to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area. From September 2019, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Partnership has been established, replacing the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board. This Partnership includes Hackney Council, the City of London Corporation, the City & Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and The City of London Police.

Developments and Innovation

Contextual Safeguarding



Hackney Children and Families Service, in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire, received funding from the Department for Education (DfE) Children's Social Care Innovation Programme in March 2017. The Contextual Safeguarding Project is focused on reducing the risks that young people face in extra-familial contexts including risks associated with peer abuse and sexual or criminal exploitation. The project is developing new approaches and systems to support practitioners to appropriately assess risk of harm that comes from beyond a young person's family to develop and implement contextual intervention plans to actively change contexts of concern. A range of training on Contextual Safeguarding has been developed and is being delivered. Contextual Safeguarding processes to support practitioners to think about and respond to contextual risks faced by young people have been developed, and these are being piloted within the Children and Families Service (CFS). Funding for the project is due to end in March 2020, and work is focused on embedding learning and processes across CFS and moving to a 'business as usual' approach.



The Contextual Safeguarding team, in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Bedfordshire, has produced a toolkit for carrying out neighbourhood assessment to support practitioners consider how to assess and develop responses to risk. In addition an interventions website has been made available to practitioners and includes many examples of work developed in Hackney.



Hackney's Contextual Safeguarding project held a national learning event in December 2018. This was attended by over 300 delegates from agencies and local authorities across the country and was an opportunity for the project to share learning and provide updates on the projects innovative approaches to address contextual risk and implement systems change. The event included a presentation from 'Hackney Elite', Hackney's Youth Panel. Young people explained how they developed the youth panel, why they joined, what they have achieved so far, (including the development of Snapchat training) and next steps. The event was extremely well-received and has resulted in a number of requests by local authorities from across the country for more advice and support in developing their own local contextual safeguarding approaches. Feedback from participants included:

'Fabulous conference which has provided inspiration, research, strategic reflections and practical operational examples'.

'Great to hear from young people. We can often ignore their perspective in the planning process so great to see they are an integral part of the contextual approach'.

The Contextual Safeguarding team are now trained to deliver the Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme, a bystander intervention for adolescents and professionals to prevent violence and bullying in schools. School students deliver sessions to younger peers to challenge unhealthy behaviours and teach them how to support victims of abuse and safely challenge perpetrators.

The team have launched revised intervention, planning and assessment guidance, following a review of the Child and Family Assessment Framework, to better identify and respond to extra-familial risks (such as considering location observations and the use of a safety mapping tool). The updated guidance has been piloted by Access and Assessment practitioners and links to the revised Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework.

An initial framework for Contextual Safeguarding Conferences has been piloted to address risks in the context of peers, schools and neighbourhoods. This approach moves beyond current Child Protection Plans which focus on risks to individual children in the context of their families. The aim of the 'context conference' is to provide a coordinated multi-agency response that addresses the risks to vulnerable adolescents in a specific location, thereby reducing the risks to a wider cohort of young people and the wider community. Two well attended strategic multi-agency 'context conferences' were held during October 2018 to review assessments of particular locations of concern and implement a targeted partnership response to address the identified activators of harm.



Extra-Familial Risk Panel Feedback from practitioners and learning from case reviews has shown that, to ensure we have a comprehensive and streamlined response to young people facing extra-familial risks, a systems approach is needed to address the contexts in which harm occurs. A multi-agency Extra-Familial Risk Panel (EFRP) has been created to ensure consistent oversight and planning for cases where young people are at risk of experiencing or being involved in harmful behaviours outside the home. The Panel will take action to reduce extra familial harm (e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Children Going Missing, Criminal Exploitation / Gangs, Modern Slavery) both for the individuals concerned and for the contexts in which the harm occurs (e.g. peers, schools, neighbourhoods, locations). The EFRP has replaced Multi-Agency Planning (MAP) meetings for Child Sexual Exploitation and Harmful Sexual Behaviour as well as Hackney's Pre-MASE meeting and High Risk Case Forum. The fortnightly EFRP has been running since 14th November 2018. Feedback from multi-agency partners has been positive.

Contextual safeguarding approaches have been developed and implemented at the front door

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CAST are able to accept and process referrals in relation to peer groups or locations of concern. This is supporting our understanding of extra familial and peer related risk for young people and enabling the service to provide appropriate support in response.

Amalee was 14 years old and pregnant and her case was discussed at EFRP due to concerns about her vulnerability to exploitation. Multi-agency leads shared their knowledge and concerns about the case and it was discovered that the father of her unborn child was in his 30's and had possibly groomed Amalee from a young age. The Police were very proactive in their pursuit of the perpetrator and through a proactive investigation, proved that he was the father and therefore enabled his prosecution for having a sexual relationship with a minor. Amalee has been offered a high level of support from the Children's Rights Service and Empower (Safer London's Project) to help her understand the nature of coercion and control that she experienced and to support her to develop more positive models of relationships. Through this work, Amalee is safely living with her child and is no longer considered by professionals to be at risk of exploitation by professionals. Amalee is now being supported in her education and she recently proactively approached her advocate for some ongoing support around her current living situation, which highlights the positive nature of their relationship and how she has felt empowered to reach out for support when needed. Through EFPR, the risk to Amalee's peer group through association with this male has been considered and others in her peer group have been offered services to minimise their risk of exploitation.



Workforce Development

Average number of cases per children and family social worker (based on FTE counts)

	2016	2017	2018
Hackney	21	19	17
Statistical neighbour average	14	16	15
Inner London average	13	16	16
England average	16	18	17

While Hackney's published caseload numbers are higher than our statistical neighbours', our unit model provides a high level of administrative support and access to a range of support services, including the in-house Clinical Service, so practitioners can spend more time with the families they are working with. We recognise that increased demand over recent years and the greater complexities of responding to adolescent risk has placed additional pressures on frontline staff. Caseloads across CFS are monitored closely by senior managers, including via the fortnightly Practice and Performance Oversight Group, chaired by the Director of Children and Families and additional resource has been sought and agreed in areas experiencing particular pressures, including the Leaving Care Service which has seen a significant rise in the number of young people being supported through the Service over recent years.

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The Children and Families Service is committed to 'growing our own' staff and there is a comprehensive workforce development strategy in place to further develop our workforce to meet the need for accountable, flexible and highly skilled practitioners and support staff. This strategy covers recruitment and training and is managed via the fortnightly Workforce Development Board, chaired by the Director of Children and Families. There is an extensive training and learning programme which includes a comprehensive ASYE (Assisted and Supported Year in Employment) programme for newly qualified social workers with 15 social workers in placement at September 2019, a staff training programme, and service-wide Practice Development Days that all practitioners attend. Practitioners can access multi-agency training through City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board. Additional development opportunities are also available through the North London Social Work Teaching Partnership. Hackney will be part of the sixth cohort of the Step-Up to Social Work Programme, with 7 student social workers joining the service in January 2020.

Percentage rate of social worker turnover

Hackney's excellent social worker turnover rate of 12.4% in 2018 is significantly lower than the inner London average of 19.1% and national average of 15.2%, showing the service's ability to retain high performing practitioners, in a highly competitive field. Our Consultant Social Worker and Practice Development Manager level (frontline managers) is now almost fully covered by permanent staff.

	2016	2017	2018
Hackney	11.2	12.7	12.4
Statistical neighbour average	24.5	16.4	18.3
Inner London average	22.5	15.9	19.1
England average	15.1	13.6	15.2

Agency Staff

Hackney's agency social worker rate in 2018 is higher than the national and inner London average rate. Hackney has a younger than average age of social worker in the Children and Families Service compared to most local authorities, with a higher number of staff on maternity leave and some of these posts are covered by agency workers. The Service is exploring possible options to recruit its own pool of peripatetic social workers to cover maternity leave across all service areas.

	2016	2017	2018
Hackney	24.3	26.7	27.6
Statistical neighbour average	24.2	23.0	23.3
Inner London average	23.3	27.7	25.5
England average	16.1	15.8	15.4

Workforce Development



Practice Development Day

A Practice Development Day was held in February 2019 focusing on direct practice tools. External speakers in the morning included Dr Karen Treisman, Prof. Pat Petrie and Susan Ridpath. The afternoon session took a 'marketplace' format with staff from across the service sharing direct work tools and practice techniques with their colleagues. These included speech and language therapy tools, life story work approaches, and Looked after Child Review tools amongst many others. Feedback from the day was generally positive - with 78% of those who completed a survey saying that they think the day covered relevant content which can be immediately applied to improve practice.

National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS)



The Department for Education (DfE) expect that the introduction of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) will ensure a consistent way of providing assurance that child and family social workers, supervisors and leaders have the knowledge and skills required for effective practice.

Hackney is part of Phase 2 of the implementation of NAAS. This is an opportunity for Hackney practitioners to be involved with and to influence the implementation of NAAS nationwide, and to feed back to the Government about their experiences.

We are very pleased to confirm that a 12 practitioners within Hackney have achieved accreditation.

Accredited in-house systemic training

Hackney Council is the first local authority in the country to receive accreditation for its postgraduate training in Systemic Theory and Practice within Children's Social Care (Year 1). The Council's in-house postgraduate course has been accredited by the Association of Family Therapy and Systemic Practice (AFT), in a major milestone for the Council's innovative work in embedding systemic practice across its Children and Families Service. Since 2016, 31 staff have received the in-house Year 1 systemic training, and 28 staff have received the in-house Year 2 systemic training. The Service is currently in the process of gaining accreditation for Year 2 of the in-house systemic training programme.

Early Help and Prevention



Strengths/Progress

Effective Troubled Families programme - Hackney has identified and surpassed the programme target figure of 3,510 families to be worked with by March 2020. We have worked with over 5,000 families under the Troubled Families programme remit. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) undertook an annual 'spot check' in April 2019 and commented that they found many examples of good work in Hackney.

Early Help & Out of Court Disposals - Of those young people that the Prevention and Diversion team worked with in 2017/18, effective interventions led to 92% of this cohort being successfully diverted from further offending, with only 8% becoming first time entrants into the youth justice system within a 12 month period.

Trusted Relationships detached outreach project - The project is working to create an innovative and effective detached outreach project that supports some of our most vulnerable young people to access support and engage with mental health services. The detached outreach team became operational in January 2019 and includes youth workers and a clinical psychologist. The team also aims to generate further insight into young people's lived experiences, through the removal of perceived barriers to access services.

Extensive and effective participatory activity with young people - This included two key pieces of research into young people's lived experience (*Critical Conversations* and *I'm Cool*). The elections for the current members of the Hackney Youth Parliament were delivered in October 2018 across schools and youth provisions, with over 12,000 young people casting their votes.



Areas for further development and actions to address

An extensive review of Early Help services was initiated in June 2019 to ensure that a comprehensive, consistent and responsive offer is in place for all children in Hackney. This review will consider options for delivering services following the cessation of Troubled Families funding, and will respond to the work being undertaken within Integrated Commissioning workstreams in relation to Neighbourhood approaches and emotional health and wellbeing and the development of CAMHS provision in schools.

Management information in relation to early help - Work is taking place to develop and improve current management information and reporting systems for early help to support management oversight and understanding of the impact and effectiveness of early help interventions as well as monitoring levels of demand.

Addressing serious youth violence - Serious youth violence, in particular knife crime, remains a significant challenge. Adopting a public-health approach, Hackney has developed a multi-agency Knife Crime Strategy aimed at reducing children's exposure to criminal, violent, and anti-social behaviour. This approach treats violence as a preventable public health issue, using data and analysis to identify causes and focusing on prevention through multi-agency systemic approaches. Whilst the work to develop the strategy is positive, and multi-agency engagement is a strength, this is a new development and the activity to deliver positive outcomes requires continued focus and drive across the partnership.

Early Help and Prevention

Young Hackney



Young Hackney is the Council's early help, prevention and diversion service for children and young people aged 6-19 years old and up to 25 years if the young person has a special education need or disability. The service works with young people to support their development and transition to adulthood by intervening early to address adolescent risk, develop pro-social behaviours and build resilience. The service offers outcome-focused, time-limited interventions through universal plus and targeted services designed to reduce or prevent problems from escalating or becoming entrenched and then requiring intervention by Children's Social Care. Young Hackney's approach to early help is based on a systemic understanding of the key relationships in a child or young person's life and, in particular, the critical influence of peers and family members.

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Work with local schools



Young Hackney works closely with schools to support the delivery of the core Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme as well as to support behaviour management interventions. A curriculum has been developed that is delivered in schools and focuses on topics such as healthy relationships, substance misuse, e-safety and youth participation and citizenship.

The majority of secondary schools in Hackney have an allocated Young Hackney team who will work with them to identify students who require additional support to participate and achieve. If schools identify students who would benefit from individual support, Young Hackney will create an appropriate intervention with the school.



Jakob, aged 14, was referred to Young Hackney following his parents and school expressing concerns regarding his safety. Jakob was spending a lot of time outside of the family home without his parent's knowing who he was with and was caught 'lift surfing' which involves dangerously riding on the top of building elevators. Jakob received a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder when he was 12. Jakob's Young Hackney worker took time to build their relationship as Jakob found it difficult to explain how he was feeling and seemed resistant to thinking about how he might be exposing himself to risks. The Young Hackney worker also supported Jakob to share what he was doing when he is out of the family home and to invite his family to join him to explore his interests and hobbies.

The Young Hackney worker has been looking at ways of reducing anxiety around Jakob within the professional network – whilst having a clear understanding and plan around risks. This has involved supporting Jakob to take a lead in developing a safety plan with the network of professionals around him, especially his school. Jakob's worker has introduced him to an architecture company to help him develop his communication skills and to think about possible career paths. The Young Hackney worker has also been a point of contact for Jakob's mother which has helped reduce her anxiety around how safe Jakob is when he is out of the house; this seems to have had a positive impact on their relationship. Since his involvement with Young Hackney, Jakob's school have reported that they feel he is happier and they no longer have concerns about his safety. Jakob and his family have reported that their relationships have improved. Jakob is now opening up to conversations about risk and is more willing to share with his family what he is doing in the community.



Universal Provision delivered through Youth Hubs

The number of named individuals accessing Young Hackney universal provision increased by 31% in 2018/19 compared to the previous year. 24,024 named individuals accessed Young Hackney provision in 2018/19, compared to 18,342 named individuals in 2017/18. There were 177,299 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years during 2018/19 at the wider youth provision delivered through Young Hackney and commissioned services for young people. This is a 7% increase compared to 2017/18 when there were 165,283 attendances by named children and young people.

Individual Support - Universal Plus and Targeted Support



At any one time, Young Hackney are working with approximately 600 young people through the Early Help teams, providing tailored individual support. The most common presenting issues include: risk of sexual exploitation, behaviour, attendance and truanting, risk of offending, risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET), and different cultural expectations within the family. Young Hackney targeted interventions were delivered to 947 individual young people requiring bespoke early help support in 2018/2019, including the Substance Misuse and Prevention and Diversion teams. This was a 7% increase from 887 young people in 2017/18.

Substance Misuse Team



The Substance Misuse Team supports children and young people aged 6-25 years who are directly affected by substance misuse, or affected through their parent's misuse. Interventions take a tailored and holistic approach that builds young people's resilience and addresses issues of family and relationships, finances, education and housing, while liaising with other services/partners as necessary. Over 2018/19, the team worked with 202 young people on a targeted basis – the same as in 2017/18. The service also delivered outreach sessions to young people in schools and youth hubs.

13 year-old Priti was referred for Young Hackney support following increasing concerns for her growing social isolation and safety in the community. The referral requested support to help Priti explore her identity beyond her disability and overcome barriers to access community activities. The Young Hackney worker was able to build a mutually respectful relationship with Priti and her family and adopted a flexible and creative approach centred on Priti's strengths and enjoyment of drama and music. In the sessions that followed, she attended a local play which featured a cast full of young actors of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. The play encouraged Priti to explore her heritage, culture, and identity, complemented by her one to one sessions with the Young Hackney worker. In other sessions, Priti had been encouraged to share songs and lyrics that resonated with how she was feeling and, over time, she began writing her own lyrics and recording these songs at the youth hub studio. Using these creative mediums, inspiring spaces and sensory aids, Priti identified her own acting ambitions, independence, and social relatability. This summer, Priti has taken part in musical performances in school and the community including at Hoxton Hall's youth arts programme, where she created her own music video and premiered it to an audience including her family. Such active participation and engagement in the wider community has raised Priti's aspirations, encouraged her active citizenship and leadership, as well as continually supporting her transition to adulthood.



The Early Help and Prevention Service also includes:

- Youth and School Sports
- Adventure Playgrounds and play streets
- Prevention and Diversion
- The Health and Wellbeing team

"Just a massive thank you from us all for delivering a fantastic PSHE programme to our year 11s over the last two days. It all went well, was very interesting and very educational".



School about Young Hackney staff

Early Help and Prevention

Family Support Service



The Family Support Service Units are primarily social work led delivering targeted support to families in need of additional and/or intensive support, including those identified as 'Troubled Families' meeting a minimum of two of six headline criteria:

- Parents and children involved anti-social behaviour
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness
- Children who are not attending school regularly
- Children who need help: children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
- Parents and children with a range of health problems

A referral was received in FAST about Nicky, a 12 year old girl who had experienced long absences from school. Nicky experienced acute anxiety when she was separated from her mother and was sleeping during the day and over-eating. There were concerns regarding Nicky's mother's ongoing physical and mental health that were possibly impacting directly on Nicky's wellbeing. These concerns led to a statutory social work assessment which ascertained that there were no safeguarding issues but that the family needed ongoing help and met several 'Troubled Families' criteria and the family were transferred to the Family Support Service. The Service worked in partnership with the family to: obtain a CAMHS assessment for Nicky which resulted in a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder and anxiety; to attend workshops for families in similar circumstances; to access Short Breaks; to help Nicky back into education and to support Nicky's mother to learn how to better respond to Nicky. Nicky is now accessing education and can better manage her feelings and behaviour; she is also growing in confidence and trying new experiences outside the family home.



Domestic Abuse Intervention Service



The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) joined the Children and Families Service as part of the Early Help and Prevention Service in April 2017 and is co-located with other services in CFS. DAIS works with anyone experiencing domestic abuse who is living in Hackney, aged 16 or over, of any sex and gender, and of any sexual orientation. The service assesses need; provides information and support on legal and housing rights; and supports service users with court attendance and to obtain legal protection. The service also works with perpetrators of domestic abuse to try to reduce risk. The team works closely with professionals across the Council and external partnerships and DAIS provides support through a linked worker in the First Access and Screening Team (FAST), where referrals for early help and safeguarding services for children and families are received and processed. DAIS workers provide consultation and expert advice, guidance and training to other staff in the Children and Families Service. A Domestic Abuse Housing Specialist has been seconded to the Housing Needs Service to support with the response to domestic abuse across the Housing Partnership.

DAIS received 1,322 referrals in 2018/19 – an increase of 13.5% from the 1,165 referrals received in 2017/18. There has been a year on year increase in the number of referrals the service receives with a 61% increase between 2015/16 and 2018/19.



For those victims of domestic abuse who have been identified and assessed as high risk, Hackney holds a fortnightly Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), chaired by the police, and scrutinised by the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) lead. 450 cases were heard at MARAC in 2018/19, a decrease of 6% from 2017/18 when 477 cases were heard. 113 (25%) of the total number of cases heard at MARAC were 'repeat' referrals. In 257 of the 450 cases (57%) there were children in the household.



The **Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy** 2019-22 was launched in May 2019; this takes a proven public health approach over the next three years to tackle and reduce causes of violence.

Early Help and Prevention

Youth Justice



The Youth Justice Service works with all young people in Hackney who are arrested or convicted of crimes and undertakes youth justice work including bail and remand supervision and supervising young people who have been given community or custodial sentences.

Young people are supported by a multi-agency team including a Forensic Psychologist, the Virtual School, Speech and Language Therapists, the Police, a Nurse, Probation Services, a Substance Misuse Worker and a Dealing Officer.



"The report was very helpful, provided a very good and detailed background and analysis."

Judge about the work of a Youth Justice Practitioner

Overall, Hackney has a relatively low proportion of 10-18 year olds involved in the youth justice system. The number of young people re-offending in Hackney within a 12 month period has remained relatively stable over the last year, from 70 at the end of March 2018 to 71 at the end of March 2019.

First time entrants (FTE)

The number of young people entering the Youth Justice System for the first time in Hackney decreased from 111 in 2017/18 to 81 in 2018/19. Hackney's first time entrant rate per 100,000 has decreased from 465 in 2017 to 285 in 2018, this is significantly lower than the 2018 statistical neighbour average (358).

Education, Employment and/or Training

Education can be a strong protective factor for young people at risk of offending. The Youth Justice Service has a strong focus on securing access to education, training and employment and is supported by the Virtual School. At the end of March 2019, 71% of young people on youth justice orders were attending and engaging in full time education, training or employment (ETE), a decrease compared to 78% at the end of March 2018. This is due to a change in the reporting rules for this data – we now include the ETE attendance of young people on post court orders, which includes older children with more previous offences and poorer educational engagement histories.

Lewis was 16 years old when he was sentenced to a 12 month Referral Order for Possession of an Offensive Weapon in a Public Place and was referred to the Hackney Youth Offending Team (YOT). At the start of his Order, Lewis was on the verge of being permanently excluded from school due to his behaviour. His YOT worker identified that Lewis may have additional needs. With support from the Virtual School, Lewis's YOT worker ensured he was assessed for an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Lewis's parents and his school were supported by his YOT worker to put measures in place to adjust his behaviour. Lewis's YOT worker worked with him to develop his thinking skills and reduce his triggers for impulsive behaviours. Lewis also received an assessment carried out with the YOT's Speech and Language Therapists. Once Lewis's EHCP was in place, funding meant he could attend a specialist college to meet his learning needs. On completion of Lewis's Referral Order, the behavioural and educational support provided to him saw his risk to others reduce from medium to low. Lewis experienced no further arrests or convictions over the 12 month period since he started his order. Lewis's mother was thankful for the support of the YOT team, writing a letter to Lewis's YOT worker stating "I think out of a dire situation of Lewis being arrested, a lot of good has come out of it. He has had a great support network in the Hackney YOT and we are truly thankful and grateful to all those involved who were passionate and caring... It wasn't just a service carried out; you have showed love and compassion for my son".



Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS)

Access and Assessment

Strengths/Progress

Timely and effective response at the front door - In 2018/19, 99.6% of referrals progressed to assessment within 24 hours, an increase from 97.7% in 2017/18.

Quality of assessments - Audits in 2018/19 continued to show that assessments are comprehensive, analytical and reflective. Practitioners are confident in their understanding and management of risk. The quality of assessments had an average score of 3.7 in audits completed in 2018/19 (where 1 is ineffective and 5 is highly effective).

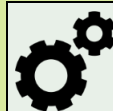
Persistence in seeking the engagement of parents in assessments

- Multi-agency audits, coordinated through City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, found that cases generally evidenced persistence in attempts to achieve the engagement of parents, and the audited cases also evidenced professionals specifically trying to engage fathers, including persistent attempts to engage and include fathers in assessments and interventions, and social work units thinking creatively about how to engage fathers in future work.

Improved consistency for families - the service implemented a revised process in July 2018 to ensure that families that are re-referred to statutory services within 6 months are allocated to the unit that previously worked with the family. This means that families that are referred to Hackney CFS on multiple occasions benefit from swift allocation back to units that know them rather than 'starting again' at each referral and assessment. The impact of this process change is currently being reviewed. The co-location of A&A and CIN 'buddy' units means that units share their knowledge of families and ensure seamless transitions following assessment.

Effective and child-focused assessment work in child sexual abuse cases

- Multi-agency audits on the theme of child sexual abuse within the family, coordinated through City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, found that children and their families feel that their views have been heard and this leads to improvements in the help and support that they receive. The audits found evidence of age appropriate and creative methods being used by social workers to engage children and young people.



Areas for further development and actions to address

Assessment timescales - The Dispensation in relation to assessment timescales was in place in Hackney until March 2019; historically, average timescales were longer than elsewhere in the country. This dispensation has now been removed and the service is realigning practice to ensure improved performance against the national standard of 45 working days. New systems and checkpoints for senior management oversight of the timely progress of assessments have been introduced and performance is being monitored closely.

Information for parents/carers on assessments - A number of complaints received during 2017-18 showed that parents were not always clear about what a Child and Family Assessment entails. Informed by this feedback, the previous information leaflet for families was replaced with a new booklet in 2019 explaining the process as well as parents'/carers' right to comment on the assessment. It is hoped that this leaflet will ensure that parents are clearer about what to expect during the assessment process

Consistency in the engagement of fathers and significant males in assessments

- Although strengths have been identified through audits in our persistence in engaging parents in assessments, work is also taking place to improve the consistency of the engagement of fathers, particularly absent fathers, and other significant males within assessments. Dip sampling of assessments in January 2018, August 2018 and May 2019 focused on the inclusion of fathers found that there has been an improvement in the involvement of fathers in assessments. In cases sampled in May 2019, 80% of assessments involved fathers or there had been clear attempts made to involve them in the assessment that had been unsuccessful. Work is taking place to support practitioners to more consistently record where positive efforts have been made to engage fathers.

Health involvement in strategy discussions - Whilst progress has been made on this over the last two years, following recent audits, further work is being undertaken to ensure that health colleagues are involved in all Child Protection strategy discussions. A contingency plan has been agreed for the Health representative in FAST to contribute to strategy discussions where the allocated Health Professional is not available. Performance is being closely monitored.

Access and Assessment

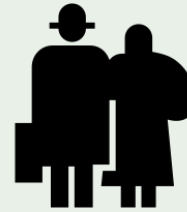


The Access and Assessment Service is part of the Family Intervention and Support Service and undertakes statutory assessments of children in need and child protection investigations for all new referrals to Children's Social Care.



First Access and Screening Team (FAST)

The First Access and Screening Team (FAST) acts as a single point for contacts and referrals to the Children and Families Service for children in need of support or protection. The multi-agency and co-located team of police, probation, health, social work and research staff work together to share intelligence and jointly assess risk. All contacts with FAST are immediately progressed as a referral to Children's Social Care if the threshold for a statutory assessment is met, otherwise FAST supports children and young people to access universal and targeted early help provision such as the Family Support Service, Young Hackney, or Children's Centres.



The **No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Team** supports families with No Recourse to Public Funds with advice and practical support through the provision of accommodation and subsistence payments. During 2018/19 the NRPF team worked with 88 families and 169 children.

Working relationships with local voluntary organisations have strengthened considerably with positive feedback received about the experience of working with the service. There has been a reduction in the number of families this team has worked with during 2018/19 due to the team's effective work to help families achieve settled status.

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"The social worker was brilliant with my son. She spent time just being with him, he really liked this and started to trust her. We found her really helpful as well".

Mother about assessing social worker completing an assessment



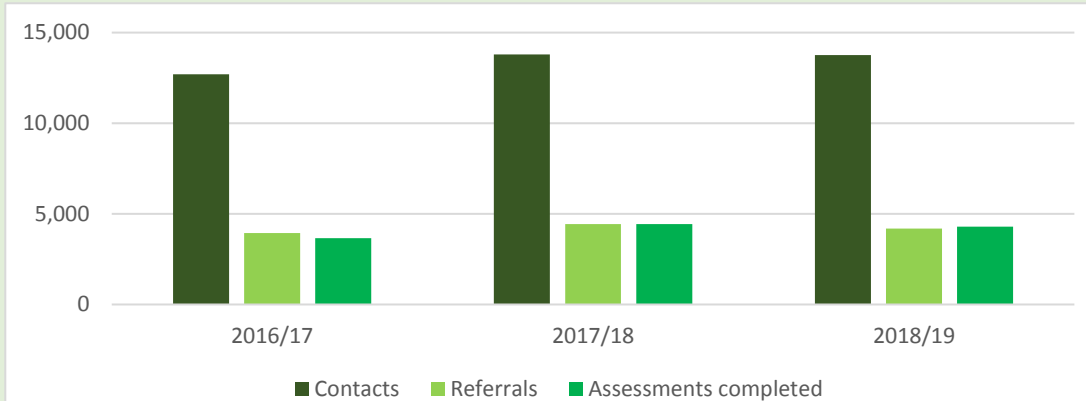
"You are a really good social worker, you are very thorough in your work as well as being calm and respectful towards the family."

Partner agency about an assessing social worker

Out of Hours Social Work Service

The Out of Hours Social Work Service, or Emergency Duty Team (EDT), forms part of a 24-hour and seamless front line child protection service delivered by experienced and senior social work staff from across CFS working on a voluntary rota basis. The service meets the local authority's out of hours statutory social care responsibilities in safeguarding the welfare of children.

Contacts, Referrals and Assessments



	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Contacts	12,699	13,802	13,767
Referrals	3,940	4,430	4,190
Assessments completed	3,667	4,438	4,290

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Contact: when an agency or member of the public provides information to our First Access and Screening Team (FAST). This might be a discussion about a child or family, or be for advice about services.

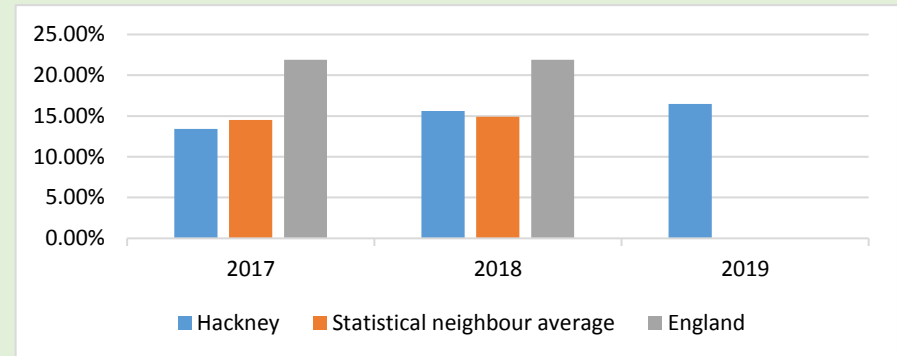
Referral: when a contact is about a specific child and this requires further investigation, the FAST team may progress the contact to a referral into the Access and Assessment Service for an assessment to be completed.

Assessment: when a referral has been accepted, an assessment is undertaken to understand more about the child and their family in order to check that they are safe.

↓ 6% decrease in the number of contacts accepted as referrals compared to last year

↓ 3% decrease in the number of completed assessments compared to last year

Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral



	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019
Hackney	13.4%	15.6%	16.5%
Statistical neighbour average	14.5%	14.9%	Not yet published
England	21.9%	21.9%	Not yet published



There has been an increase in the number of re-referrals since last year, however this is still significantly below the national average.

Length of assessments

Between April 2018 – March 2019, 63% of assessments were completed within 45 days. This is lower than the most recently published statistical neighbour data – 85% of assessments were completed within 45 days over a 12 month period, as at 31st March 2018. During this time however, Hackney had dispensation from the Department for Education around assessment timescales. Considerable progress has been made in improving the timeliness of assessments in 2019/20 with 69% of assessments between April – August 2019 completed within 45 days.

Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS)

The Children in Need Service



Strengths/Progress

Creating greater continuity for children and families - co-location of 'buddy units' – Access and Assessment and Children in Need units are now co-located and have been paired to create 'buddy units' - where an assessment unit and an intervention unit work together to share what they know about families. The strengthening of the buddy unit working arrangements aims to make transitions as seamless as possible for families, facilitate greater collaboration and joint working across the services, and promote skills sharing and sharing of practice expertise. A six month review of the impact of the change is planned in the coming months, and will include consultation and feedback from staff.

Court tracking processes and effective use of pre-proceedings -

Permanency planning and court tracking processes have been enhanced, resulting in a decrease in the overall average length of court proceedings in Hackney in 2018/19 to 28 weeks (from 30 weeks during 2017/18). Of the 85 cases where court proceedings concluded in 2018/19, 59% (50 cases) did not proceed to court. The use of robust pre-proceedings processes is resulting in positive outcomes for children, with final orders being received that more often match the final care plan presented at court.

Positive feedback has been received from Counsel and Children's Guardians about the quality of reports produced for court, and the hard work undertaken by social workers to support families and keep children safe being clearly evidenced in court.

Immediate response to missing from home and care incidents is strong and timely - this includes engagement with police colleagues and where necessary multi-agency strategy discussions. In order to ensure young people who frequently go missing are supported and that the Director of Children and Families and senior managers are kept informed, fortnightly missing children meetings are convened whereby practitioners provide an overview of the risk in relation to the child, the circumstances around the current missing episode in respect of high risk cases and the safety plan for the child. These meetings are now also attended by the Police.



Areas for further development and actions to address

Percentage of repeat Child Protection Plans has increased - The percentage of children in Hackney subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time in 2018/19 was 23%. This represents 60 children, from 34 families, being subject to a second or subsequent Child Protection Plan in 2018/19. This is an increase from 30 children from 19 families (13.6%) in 2017-18. Senior managers have reviewed each case and are satisfied that the decision to initiate the repeat Child Protection Plan was appropriate. Focused audits looking at repeat Child Protection Plans were conducted in December 2018. The audits found that for some families, staff changes affected their ability to engage with practitioners and make meaningful change. In other cases auditors felt there was some over-optimism about the sustainability of changes that had been achieved. New guidance has been shared with all staff on understanding and assessing 'parental capacity to change.' Managers are driving the use of the new guidance in unit meetings and individual supervision, and feedback is being routinely gathered.

Monitoring use of Child Protection Plans - there has been significant fluctuation in the number of children on Child Protections Plans over recent years. Numbers at the end of 2018/19 remain lower than the statistical neighbour average but this has increased significantly in 2019/20. Careful monitoring is in place to ensure that the right children are subject to Child Protection Planning processes.

Consistency of practice in the Disabled Children's Service - A review of governance arrangements for the Disabled Children's Service led to this moving back under the management of the Children and Families Service. Line management responsibility transferred to the Family Intervention and Support Service in April 2019. Audits identified a need to strengthen some of the safeguarding practices within the team and to ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date and implemented consistently within the service.

The Children in Need Service



The Children in Need Service is part of the Family Intervention and Support Service and is responsible for the safeguarding of children and young people assessed as being 'at risk'. Work undertaken in the service includes child protection interventions, court proceedings and statutory family support to help children remain at home safely.



Child Protection Plans

Children thought to be at risk of significant harm are discussed at an Initial Child Protection Conference to determine the need for a Child Protection Plan – a Protection Plan will outline the multi-agency interventions and support that will be put in place with the child and family to reduce the risk of harm and to achieve change within the family. Child Protection Plans are reviewed at regular intervals, and will end when the multi-agency group agrees that the child is no longer at risk of significant harm (in some cases this will be because the child has become looked after by the local authority).



"You've been with us for more than a year and you've helped me so much and my family. We will always be so grateful. You're the most selfless person I know and I just wanna tell you how grateful I am for everything".

Young person about their social worker

"...just gave some of the best social work evidence I have ever seen. Really excellent."

Barrister about a social worker following a court case



"I just wanted to thank you for all the support you have shown us since we have met you. I know it is your job but it has made a real difference in my life and I'm deeply grateful."

Mother about her child's social worker

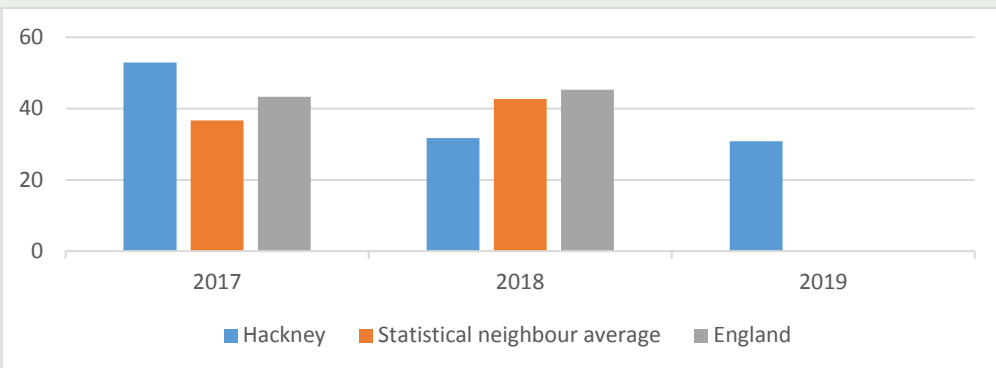
Amber was 5 months old when a health visitor made a referral to the FAST service with concerns about the mental health of her mother, who was struggling with Post-Natal Depression and whether she was able to safely care for Amber. The assessment found that there was sufficient risk to Amber and an Initial Child Protection Conference was held. A Child Protection Plan was agreed by the multi-agency partnership and Amber's case was opened to the Child in Need Service. It became clear to Amber's social worker that her mother needed additional mental health support and she was referred to the in-house Clinical Service. Amber and her mother were invited to attend the weekly New Beginnings Group Intervention with other mothers of young babies. At the start of the group, Amber would lie on her back, not really engaging or interacting with the other adults, but staying close to her mother. As the group progressed, Amber's mother grew in confidence and spoke about how she had applied learning from the group throughout the previous week and what she had learned. In parallel, Amber grew more sociable and confident and less withdrawn in the group. When the group finished the 12-week intervention, there were measurable improvements in Amber's mother's mental health and a marked improvement in the relationship and interactions between Amber and her mother. The risk to Amber continued to reduce and Amber was stepped down to a Child in Need Plan.



Number of Child Protection Plans at 31st March

Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2019
330	200	194

Rate of Child Protection Plans per 10,000 population aged under 18 (at 31st Mar)



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	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2019
Hackney	52.9	31.7	30.8
Statistical neighbour average	36.7	42.7	Not yet published
England	43.3	45.3	Not yet published



3% decrease in the number of children subject to Child Protection Plans compared to the same point last year

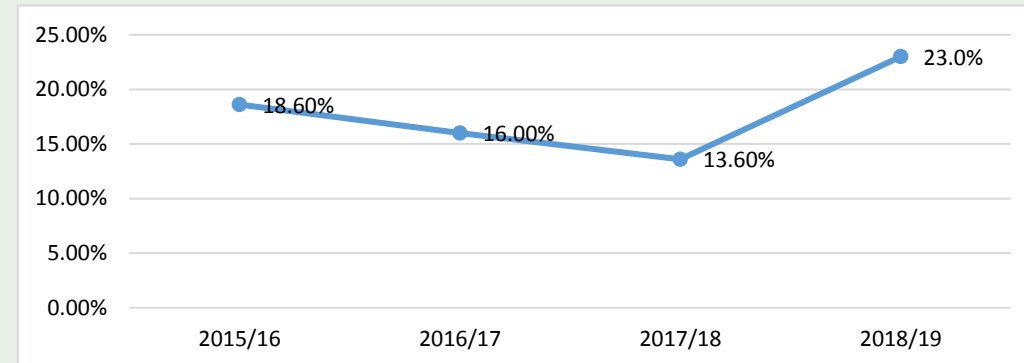


The rate of Child Protection Plans in Hackney at 31st March 2019 was 30.8 children per 10,000. This is a slight decrease from the previous year (31.7 per 10,000 at March 2018)

Court Proceedings

The overall average length of proceedings in Hackney during 2018/19 was 28 weeks. This an improvement compared to the overall average for 2017/18 of 30 weeks, and 2 weeks longer than the national target of 26 weeks.

Percentage of children who became the subject of a Child Protection Plan who became the subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time



	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	16.0%	13.6%	23.0%
Statistical neighbour average	15.1%	15.8%	Not yet published
England	18.7%	20.2%	Not yet published



The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time increased to 23.0% in 2018/19, which is higher than the most recently published statistical neighbour average (15.8%) and the most recently published national average (20.2%). Senior managers have reviewed each case and are satisfied that the decision to initiate the repeat Child Protection Plan was appropriate.

Percentage of children subject of a Child Protection Plan, by length of time as the subject of a plan

Duration of Child Protection Plan	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2019
Under 3 months	36%	33%	27%
3 – 6 months	22%	12%	30%
6 – 12 months	27%	22%	24%
1 – 2 years	12%	34%	13%
Over 2 years	3%	3%	6%

Hackney had more children on Child Protection Plans for over 2 years (6%) during 2018-19 compared to the national average (2%). This related to 11 children from 6 families; senior managers reviewed each case and agreed with the decision to keep these children on Child Protection Plans while work was underway to step families down when risk reduced or begin court proceedings.

Private Fostering



A child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) who is cared for, or proposed to be cared for, and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or close relative for 28 days or more is described as being privately fostered.

Local authorities do not approve private foster carers, but are required to assess and say whether or not they agree and accept a private fostering arrangement to ensure that the welfare of privately fostered children is being safeguarded and promoted. To fulfil this duty local authorities must take a pro-active approach in partnership with other agencies and other key professionals in raising public awareness of requirements regarding notifications of private fostering arrangements.

Age breakdown of total number of children in a private fostering arrangement at March 2019

As at the end of March 2019 there were 13 children in private fostering arrangements in Hackney. This is a decrease from the figure of 21 private fostering arrangements in March 2018.

Age (at Mar 19)	Number of children
Under 1	0
1 - 4	0
5 - 9	7
10 - 15	6
16 and over	0
Total	13

Total number of children in a private fostering arrangement at March 2019 by place of birth

Place of birth	Number of children
UK	5
Africa	4
Europe (other)	2
Asia	2
Middle East	0
Oceania	0
Canada and USA	0
Caribbean, Central and South America	0
Other	0
Total	13

Young Carers



Young carers are children and young people under 18 who provide regular or ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, impacting on his or her emotional or physical well-being or educational achievement and life chances.

The multi-agency Hackney Young Carers Steering Group continues to monitor and support the Hackney Young Carers Project.

At the end of March 2019, there were 290 identified young carers in Hackney, compared to 248 in 2017/18.

Hackney Young Carers Project, funded by the Children and Families Service and delivered by Action for Children, provides a variety of support services which include group work, and one to one work with children in more complex situations. Term time clubs take place such as cooking and homework clubs which take place every week, and one additional term time group that varies by term consisting of drama, sewing or cinema club. Positive activities and fun holiday sessions are well attended by the young people, and there are support groups in four secondary schools in Hackney. The Young Carers Project will be moving in-house from the end of October 2019.

Disabled Children Service



The Disabled Children Service (DCS) was part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) service within Hackney Learning Trust until line management responsibility transferred to the Family Intervention and Support Service in April 2019. DCS operates a social model of disability in offering assessment and intervention in line with the Children Act to families who are experiencing crises due to the disability of their child and or social isolation as a result of their child's disability in accessing universal or targeted services. All referrals for an assessment from DCS are made through the First Access and Screening Team (FAST).

At the end of March 2019, the service was working with **336** children and young people. Of the 336 children, **239 were male and 96 were female** (1 child was not yet born). This is an increase compared to 2017/18, when the service was working with 241 children and young people.

Age breakdown for cases open to the Disabled Children Service (as at Mar 2019)

Age	Number of children
5 or under	48
6 - 8	70
9-11	74
12-14	78
15+	66
Total	336

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Short Breaks

Short breaks are defined as any service or activity outside of school hours which gives the family of a disabled child or young person a break from their caring responsibilities, and gives the disabled child or young person an enjoyable experience. There are currently seven commissioned short breaks providers in Hackney, including providers offering support specifically within the Orthodox Jewish community. In 2018/19, 1,400 children and young people were known to Short Breaks.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of young people accessing Short Breaks provision	1,193	1,257	1,400

Clinical Service



The Hackney Children and Families Clinical Service is an integrated and specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for children accessing Children's Social Care Services, the Family Support Service, Young Hackney and the Youth Justice Service. It works in partnership with the City and Hackney CAMHS Alliance and is accountable through integrated CAMHS commissioning arrangements. The Clinical Service operates on an outreach basis in order to promote accessibility for families, and does not have a waiting list.

Clinical Service Activity Data April 2018-March 2019

Number of new cases	435
Total number of cases	991
% of positive CHI-ESQ* feedback	86%
% of positive SDQ** improvement	76%

*The Children Experience of Service Questionnaire (CHI-ESQ) was developed by the Health Care Commission as a means of measuring service satisfaction in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

**The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief emotional and behavioural screening questionnaire for children and young people.

The Clinical Service delivers training to social workers, foster carers and other frontline practitioners. This includes topics such as managing self-harm risk, and recognising and responding to the attachment needs of looked after children.

Systemic approaches

Family Therapy, Multi-Family Group Therapy and Couples Therapy are available to families where there are relationship difficulties, including risks of abuse, neglect and extra-familial risk. Four Family Therapy clinics run each week, including an evening clinic for working parents. Systemic approaches also inform reflective practice groups for Children and Families Service practitioners.

Since April 2008 all local authorities in England have been required to provide information on the emotional and behavioural health of children and young people in their care. Data is collected through a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ).

The average **SDQ score** for Hackney's looked after children in 2018/19 was 15. This is above the national average score for looked after children of 14 and an increase from last year's average SDQ score of 14.



The scoring range is between 0-40. On an individual basis a score of 13 or below is normal and 17 and above is a cause of concern (14 - 16 is borderline). Every child whose SDQ score was of concern has received additional support from the Clinical Service.



Diane was 15 years old and had been working with Young Hackney for around 6 months before she was referred to the Clinical Service due to low school attendance and concerns about her experiences of grief and panic. Early clinical sessions were attended by Diane's Young Hackney worker to support her engagement. Sessions were also held with Diane's parents at home. Diane presented with symptoms of low mood and anxiety, and infrequent panic attacks. Diane described loss in her past and appeared to experience anxiety related to future loss. Cognitive behavioural therapy formed the foundation of the intervention with Diane, with mindfulness techniques also used. Diane and her family were also given counselling to process their grief. Throughout this intervention and alongside Young Hackney involvement and efforts from school, Diane's school attendance improved. Her ratings on the Revised Children's Anxiety and Depression Scale (RACDS) improved from a total anxiety and depression score of 44 to 18 over the course of the six-month intervention.

Clinical Service

Clinical Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Due to the increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) reporting Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and complex trauma symptoms, the Clinical Service has further developed its offer to include a therapeutic 'Moving On' group for UASC, run with interpreters to ensure accessibility for those in need of support. The group programme draws on both Cognitive-Behavioural and Narrative Therapy approaches, with a focus on stabilisation, psycho-education and support with symptoms such as nightmares, flashbacks and anxiety. A Clinical Psychologist also provides regular clinical consultation to social workers supporting young people who are UASC, in order to support trauma-informed practice and mental health screening.

Farid, an unaccompanied asylum seeking young man aged 16, was referred to the Clinical Service due to concerns related to him experiencing nightmares, flashbacks and anxiety. Farid was the victim of trafficking and forced labour during his journey to the UK. The Clinical Service undertook an assessment and then trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy on a weekly basis. Farid engaged positively in this work and developed a number of personal coping strategies (e.g. breathing techniques, using his senses to self-soothe, incorporating new activities) and also effectively challenged unhelpful beliefs and thoughts related to himself and his world. Farid received Leave to Remain for five years during this period and developed his social network. Farid's experiences of nightmares, flashbacks and general distress largely resolved over a 6 month period. He felt confident that he could manage his remaining symptoms and clinical input was ended by mutual agreement. Farid's responses on the Revised Children's Impact of Event Scale reduced substantially (from a total score of 41 to 9).



Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project

Since May 2018, the Clinical Service has been a strategic and operational partner in the CAMHS Alliance Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools Programme. This pilot initiative has placed CAMHS Clinicians (including Children and Families Service Clinicians) in 40 Primary and Secondary schools - providing clinical consultation about individual pupils, delivering group-work and training for school staff and supporting schools with their wellbeing and behaviour management policies. The programme will be rolled out across all Hackney schools in 2020. The aims of the programme are to increase access to mental health services for all children and young people; promote joined-up working between schools and mental health services; and to increase capacity in schools to identify and respond to mental health needs as early as possible. To this end, from the launch in May 2018 - April 2019, CFS Clinicians have spent over 1000 hours in schools delivering whole-school approaches to meeting young people's mental health needs. ✨

Trusted Relationships Project

Funding was granted from the Home Office Trusted Relationships Fund over a four year period to create a detached youth work and mental health team to work with the borough's most vulnerable and hard to reach young people, who may not otherwise engage with formal support services.

The Clinical Service embedded Clinical Psychologist offers consultation, training and reflective space to the detached youth work team, wider workforce and local community partners to build capacity and develop stronger systemic, trauma-informed practice and community psychology approaches to youth work in order to help identify the risks of exploitation and serious youth crime and respond to the needs of hard to reach young people.

The Clinical Psychologist provides mental health screening and triage as well as supporting staff and local organisations with routine use of clinical screening, outcome measurement and mental health first aid. Delivery of interventions include linking in to universal provision, targeted or specialist mental health support and the development of peer led/ co-production of activities.

Corporate Parenting



Strengths/Progress

A steady increase in the number of looked after children in placements provided by in-house foster carers – there has been a 36% increase in the number of children placed with in-house foster carers from March 2018 to March 2019; and a 15% increase in the number of available in-house foster placements during this period.

Consistently strong educational achievement of Hackney's looked after children

Hackney performed well in the Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures in 2018 achieving better results than the Inner London averages.

Child-centred Looked After Child Review process – There continues to be positive feedback from young people about their Looked After Child Reviews since the launch of these in September 2016 as the more child-friendly 'Our Reviews, Our Choice' process. Young people are being empowered to take a more directive role in their reviews and there has been an increase in young people chairing their review meetings and devising activities for the attendees to be part of.

Foster carer recruitment activity continues to progress - 12 mainstream foster carers were recruited in 2018/19, with no resignations or terminations in this period. This is higher than the statistical neighbour average of 9.5 in 2017/18.

The Children's Rights Service provides independent support and advocacy for children in care. The number of complaints from young people in care or care leavers is low, evidencing the effectiveness of the mediation and engagement work led by practitioners and the Children's Rights Officers. Positive feedback from young people has also been received through an annual survey of young people that received Independent Return Home Interviews in 2018/19

Access to CAMHS support for looked after children - New entrants into care receive robust and timely mental health assessments from our in-house clinicians and ongoing support from clinicians as needed. An in-house clinician is now present at every initial health assessment, strengthening joint working with the LAC Health team at an early stage.



Areas for further development and actions to address

Placement stability is a continuing challenge and this is linked to the older age profile and complexity of needs of those children becoming looked after (61% of the total cohort of children that entered care in 2018/19 were aged 13 years and over, an increase from 56% in 2017/18). The offer available to support placement stability includes innovative interventions such as the Family Learning Intervention Project. However, audits suggest practice needs to be timelier in identifying support needs and implementing appropriate support to sustain placements. Service Managers within Corporate Parenting have initiated in depth work to understand thematic issues affecting placement stability through learning from disruption meetings and extended moving on reviews in order to improve overall performance on placement stability. Management oversight is showing that the majority of placements are supported by effective 'settling in' meetings, however work is taking place to improve the consistency of these meetings at the start of placements to ensure these always take place.

Reducing school exclusions for looked after children - 14.5% of Hackney looked after children received at least 1 fixed term exclusion, compared to the statistical neighbour average of 12.6% and the national average of 11.8% (most recently published data from 2017). The Virtual School is active in delivering training and support to school leaders in developing strategies and activities to support looked after children in mainstream provision, both in Hackney and with schools that looked after children attend outside of Hackney.

Life story work - Recent audits have identified the consistency, quality and timeliness of life story work is an area for development. Practitioners are being supported to develop a deeper understanding of the significance of life story work, and maintaining child friendly records from the earliest engagement with statutory services in a way which supports later preparation of life story work.

Strengthening support for children on Special Guardianship Orders - The number of children leaving care through Special Guardianship Orders has previously been low - this has increased from 6% in 2017/18 to 11% in 2018/19 (putting us in line with the with the national average of 11% in 2017/18). The establishment of a targeted SGO and Connected Carers unit within the Corporate Parenting Service is in progress and this will focus practice on supporting children under SGO arrangements.

Corporate Parenting



Strengths/Progress

Care leavers receive extensive support around education, employment and training (EET) via the Virtual School - Hackney has strong care leaver EET performance - the overall EET figure for 19-21 old care leavers was 61% in 2018, placing Hackney 23rd in the country overall. This has improved further to 65% in 2019. Hackney has a higher proportion than the national average of care leavers in higher education – 10% in Hackney in 2018, compared to 6% nationally. This has increased to 11% in 2019. We consistently have approximately 44 care leavers at university (including those aged over 21), with approximately 14 young people starting university each year.

Clinical support for care leavers - The strong and consistent clinical intervention to looked after children continues for care leavers as they transition to adulthood. Care leavers also have access to community based mental health support through Family Action. This outreach service is available when care leavers first move to independent living accommodation and are at risk of mental health issues.

Skilled workforce in Leaving Care Service - The Leaving Care Service continues to be predominantly delivered by qualified social workers rather than personal advisers as in many local authorities. In response to the increase in the number of care leavers supported by the Service, plans are in place to supplement the current support offer with additional personal adviser capacity.

Strong transitions between the Looked After Children Service and Leaving Care Service - All Looked After Children units are linked to a Leaving Care unit to ensure effective transitions and attendance of the Leaving Care unit at the final Looked After Child Review. From June 2019, Leaving Care units are aiming to also attend the penultimate Looked After Child Review to further support with effective transitions.

Refresh of the Children in Care Council - The Virtual School took over responsibility for participation and managing the Children in Care Council in 2019. The Council was recently relaunched as HoT - Hackney of Tomorrow - and has quickly developed a committed and engaged group of young people, with plans to further increase wider participation within the looked after children and care leaver cohort



Areas for further development and actions to address

Timeliness of Review Pathway Plans - Pathway Plans are in most cases completed in timescale and to a sufficient quality, as part of the Looked After Child Review process until a young person's 18th birthday. The timeliness of Review Pathway Plans is a current area of focus for the Service and is tracked fortnightly by senior managers.

The number of young people 'staying put' is currently lower than expected (25 young people in 2018/19, a slight increase from 23 young people in 2017/18). Recent analysis has highlighted the level of financial support to continuing foster carers as having a key impact on performance in this area. Service Managers have reviewed this following feedback from carers and former carers to understand what offer would better support performance. The Service implemented new arrangements from July 2019 and expects this will increase the number of young people in 'staying put' placements.

Access to affordable accommodation for care leavers - wider housing issues within Hackney and the London area present an increasing challenge to the range of suitable and affordable accommodation available for care leavers. The Service is continuing to work in partnership with the Council's Housing Needs Service to support care leavers to find suitable accommodation, with involvement of Hackney of Tomorrow.

Access to work opportunities for care leavers within the Council and partner agencies - The Virtual School has developed partnerships with external organisations, but more work is needed to develop opportunities across the Council for care leavers to secure work experience and access to apprenticeships within the Council and partner agencies (there are currently 4 care leavers on apprenticeships within the Council), to continue to improve Hackney's already strong care leaver EET performance. This will be progressed through Hackney's refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2019-22 that is currently being finalised.

Improve our Care Leaver Offer to make it more accessible and interactive - We are in the early stages of working on developing our communications and current Care Leaver Offer website content to ensure care leavers can access dynamic and interactive information about the services and support available to them.

Corporate Parenting

Looked After Children



The Corporate Parenting Service is responsible for all areas related to the safeguarding and welfare of children who are in the care of the local authority. This includes planning for their future placements via fostering and adoption, supporting rehabilitation home whenever possible, and supporting young people who have previously been in care up to the age of 25.

The Hackney Promise



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1



The 'Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care' outlines 16 promises around what to expect from the Council and partner agencies when a young person is in care. The Promise was developed by our children and young people and has formed the basis for Hackney's Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Hackney of Tomorrow (previously known as 'Hackney Gets Heard')

Hackney's Children in Care Council provides looked after children with an opportunity to share their experiences of the care system and increase their ability to influence and improve the services they receive. The group also runs fun events, trips and workshops with other young people in care to ensure a wide range of views are captured.

In 2018-19, young people have been involved in staff recruitment panels, delivering Skills To Foster training to potential foster carers, and providing feedback about services.



The Virtual School took over responsibility for participation and managing the Children in Care Council in 2019. A new full time dedicated Participation Officer started in March 2019, and has focused on relaunching Hackney's Children in Care Council and offering wider participation opportunities. The Council was recently relaunched as HoT - Hackney of Tomorrow - and has quickly developed a committed and engaged group of young people, with plans to further increase wider participation within the looked after children and care leaver cohort.

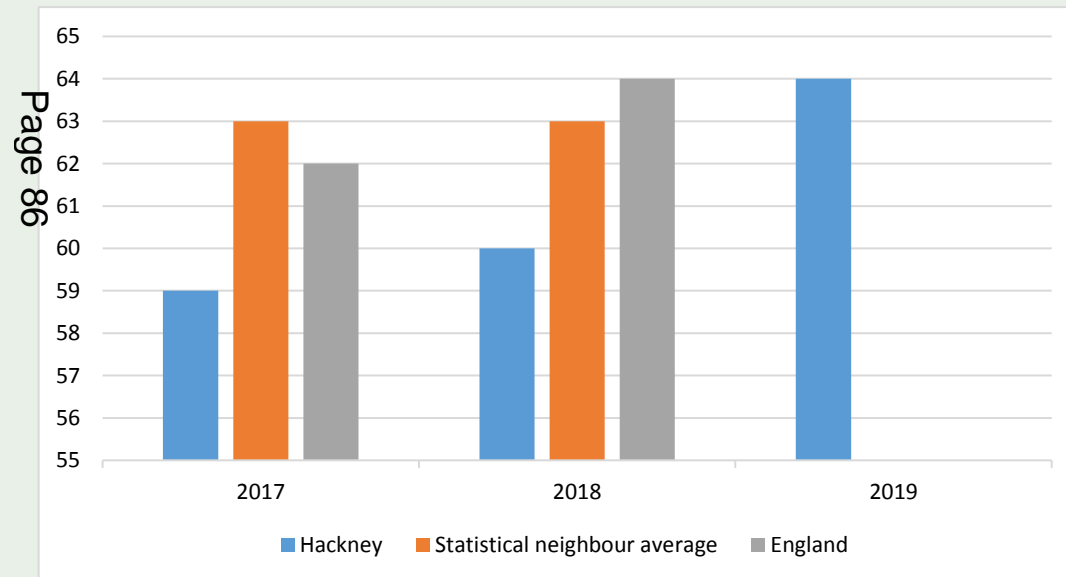
Number of looked after children

Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2019
371	381	405

There was a 6% increase in the total number of looked after children at March 2019 compared to the previous year.

There are some areas where the local authority has no influence on whether children become looked after. The increase in the number of looked after children in 2018/19 is influenced by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), with 44 looked after children (11% of the total cohort) who were UASC as at 31st March 2019, compared to 27 young people at the same point last year.

Children Looked After per 10,000 population aged under 18 (at 31st Mar)

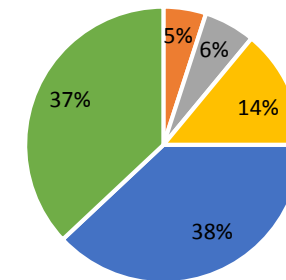


	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2019
Hackney	59	60	64
Statistical neighbour average	63	63	Not yet published
England	62	64	Not yet published

Age breakdown of total number of looked after children, at year ending 31 March

Age	2017		2018		2019	
	Eng	Hackney	Eng	Hackney	Eng	Hackney
Under 1	5%	14 (4%)	6%	25 (7%)	Not yet published	19 (5%)
1 - 4	13%	27 (7%)	13%	28 (7%)		26 (6%)
5 - 9	19%	61 (16%)	19%	64 (17%)		58 (14%)
10 - 15	39%	153 (41%)	39%	143 (38%)		153 (38%)
16 +	23%	116 (31%)	23%	121 (32%)		149 (37%)
Total		371		381		405
Total statistical neighbour average		379		381		Not yet published

Age of total children looked after at 31st March 2019



■ Age ■ Under 1 ■ 1-4 years ■ 5-9 years ■ 10-15 years ■ 16+ years

A higher proportion of Hackney's looked after children cohort are older young people than the national average – 37% of the total cohort were aged 16 years or over in 2019, compared to 23% nationally.

Age breakdown of children entering care during the year ending 31 March, by age on starting

Age	2017		2018		2019	
	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney
Under 1	18%	28 (11%)	19%	32 (15%)	Not yet published	24 (11%)
1 - 4	18%	27 (11%)	18%	22(10%)		22(10%)
5 - 9	18%	43 (17%)	18%	23 (11%)		19 (9%)
10 - 15	29%	73(30%)	28%	68 (31%)		58 (27%)
16 +	17%	75(30%)	18%	72 (33%)		89 (42%)
Total		246		217		



There was a 2% decrease in the number of children entering care during 2018/19 (212 children) compared to 2017/18 (214 children).

More young people come into care at an older age in Hackney. During 2018/19, 147 children and young people aged 10 and over entered care – 69% of the total number that entered care, compared to 46% nationally. More young people come into care in Hackney aged 16 years or over than the national average (42% of the total number entering care in Hackney, compared to 18% nationally).



The percentage of young people becoming looked after for the second or subsequent time within the last 12 months was 14.7% for 2018/19, an increase compared to 9.2% for 2017/18. This relates to a total of 31 children.

The number of children leaving care during 2018/19 was 195, compared to 208 in 2017/18. Of these, 73 (37%) returned home to live with parents, relatives or another person with parental responsibility. A further 25 (13%) left care due to Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangements Orders (previously known as Residence Orders) being granted, and 12 (6%) were adopted.



The Police responded to a call from a member of the public who witnessed a 16 year old girl, Nahal, being assaulted in the street by a man.

Nahal disclosed to the Police and ambulance staff that she was 16 years old and from Afghanistan. She reported that she was married aged 14 by arranged marriage to her husband, aged 36. The Police contacted Hackney Children and Families Service and Nahal was placed in Police Protection and an emergency foster carer was found for her.

Nahal reported that she came to the UK on a spousal visa, and that her husband obtained false documents for her travel. Nahal explained that since coming to the UK, she has experienced ongoing physical and emotional abuse from her husband. Nahal's social worker arranged for legal support around her status to remain in the UK, a health assessment and support from the Virtual School to ensure she can catch up with the education she has missed and get access to English language lessons.

After 6 months, Nahal went missing from her foster care placement and moved in with her sister and brother in law who reside in Manchester, stating she would not return to London. Nahal informed her social worker that she wanted to remain living in Newcastle near her sister and an appropriate foster placement in this area was sought for her. Hackney remain responsible for Nahal's care in order for her to be supported by a consistent social worker and while specialist work to reduce her risk from honour based violence is completed.

Nahal has been in her current placement in Newcastle for 8 months, which she and her foster carer report is going well. Nahal is receiving support to access her education and she hopes to start at college in the next year. Nahal is happy to be near her sister and is feeling optimistic about the future.

Looked After Children

Fostering Service

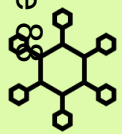


Recruitment of Foster Carers

The Fostering Service has approved 12 mainstream foster carer households during 2018/19, this is higher than the statistical neighbour average of 9.5 in 2017/18. No mainstream foster carers resigned or had their approval terminated during 2018/19. The Fostering Service continues to develop their recruitment and retention strategy, using learning from recent years.



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Mockingbird Project

The Fostering Network's Mockingbird programme is an innovative research-based method of delivering foster care using the Mockingbird Family Model, developed in the USA. The model uses an extended family model which provides respite care, peer support, regular joint planning, training, and social activities to other foster placements. The model centres on a constellation where one foster home acts as a hub, offering advice, training and support to 6-10 satellite foster or kinship families. The hub home builds strong relationships with all those in the constellation, empowering families to support each other and to overcome problems before they escalate or lead to breakdown.

Evaluations of the Mockingbird Family Model show improved outcomes for children, young people and carers, with improved placement stability, connection with siblings, and foster carer support and retention.

Hackney has committed to delivering the Mockingbird Family Model with the Fostering Network. The project launched Hackney's first hub home in August 2019.

"Thank you, thank you for looking after my children over the years, providing for uniforms as well...for helping out with the rent and Housing Benefit".



Mother about their children's social worker



Training of foster carers

As part of the Sufficiency Strategy 2016-19, an extensive training programme is offered to Hackney foster carers. Each foster carer develops their training programme with their supervising social worker, tailored to their needs and reviewed informally during supervision meetings and annually as part of the formal foster carer review. The training programme covers a wide range of training courses to provide support in specific areas such as 'Understanding Attachment' for different age groups; 'Considering the impact of educational pressure and the emergence of school refusal'; 'Safeguarding Young People (Child Sexual Exploitation; Harmful Sexual Behaviour)'; 'Supporting children with difficult behaviours'; 'Makaton Taster Session'; Social Pedagogy Action Learning Sets; and many more.

Looked After Children

Placement Activity

Placement Stability

Percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in one year

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	18%	11%	13%
Statistical neighbour average	11%	12%	Not yet published
England	10%	10%	Not yet published



The number of looked after children with three or more placements in one year increased from 11% in 2017/18 to 13% in 2018/19. This reflects the higher proportion of adolescents coming into care who will have more complex needs and experience greater placement instability. In recognition that this will be an ongoing issue in Hackney due to older children entering care, the Looked after Children Service holds a regular multi-agency meeting to focus on improvement work around placement stability and has focused on this issue in the recently launched 3 year Sufficiency Strategy.



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Percentage of looked after children aged under 16 looked after continuously for at least 2½ years who have been living in the same placement for at least 2 years¹ as at 31st March



	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	69%	62%	65%
Statistical neighbour average	73%	69%	Not yet published
England	70%	70%	Not yet published

¹ (or placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with previous placement lasting for at least 2 years)

Long-term placement stability for children in care has increased from 62% in 2017/18 to 65% in 2018/19. This remains below statistical neighbour and national averages. This relates to 72 children out of a total cohort of 111 children.

Placement Types

Number of looked after children by placement type, as at 31 March 2019

Placement type	Number of LAC
Foster placements	288 (71%)
Placed for adoption	8 (2%)
Placement with parents	15 (4%)
Residential (children's homes)	25 (6%)
Secure unit	0
Semi-independent	56 (14%)
Youth Offender Institution	4 (1%)
Family Centre or Mother & Baby Unit	3 (1%)
NHS/medical care	2(0.5%)
Residential school	0
Other	4 (1%)
Total	405



The vast majority of Hackney's looked after children are placed with foster carers and the Service continues to increase the number of in-house carers available to support them. At 31st March 2019, 139 children were placed with in-house carers including connected persons carers and 144 children were placed with Independent Fostering Agency carers, and 1 child was placed with a carer provided by another local authority.

Placements for looked after children by location, as at 31 March 2019



Placement location	Number of LAC
Hackney	104 (26%)
Not in Hackney, under 20 miles	240 (59%)
Over 20 miles	61 (15%)
Total	405

The majority of Hackney's looked after children are placed within commuting distance of Hackney. There is a strong focus on ensuring that all children, regardless of where they are placed, receive the same level of support.

Looked After Children

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)



As at 31st March 2019, 44 unaccompanied asylum seeking children aged under 18 (UASC) were looked after by Hackney Children and Families Service, an increase compared to 27 at the end of March 2018. 11% of Hackney's looked after children cohort in March 2019 were unaccompanied asylum seeking children compared to a statistical neighbour average of 12% in 2018.

CFS is providing additional support for UASC/former UASC through a project funded by the Government's Controlling Migration Fund

- This project is aiming to develop supported lodgings options for Vietnamese, Albanian and Eritrean UASC, and provide specialist support to develop the independence and integration of this cohort.

Our unaccompanied asylum seeking children also receive support in terms of their education, including learning English, through the Virtual School, and will receive clinical support for trauma by the in-house Clinical Service as required.

Independent Visitors Service

The independent visitor service recruits volunteers who befriend, support and advise looked after children and young people. A careful matching process takes place to understand the interests of the young people and the independent visitor - they may share a hobby, sport or interest. There are currently (as at September 2019) 31 young people matched with an independent visitor.

Placement Costs

Average weekly cost of placement types at 31 March

Placement type	Average weekly cost 2017/18	Average weekly cost 2018/19	Movement %
In-house Fostering	£415	£430	3.6%
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)	£910	£924	1.5%
Semi-Independent	£913	£964	5.3%
Residential	£3,640	£4,073	11.9%



The table above illustrates the difference in the average weekly costs for In-house Fostering placements (excluding Fostering Service staffing costs, foster carer training and other associated costs), Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements, Semi-Independent placements and Residential placements.

We have seen a steady increase in the number of residential placements which has added to the financial pressures, with placements on average costing in excess of £200k per year. As well as an increase in the number of placements we have also seen a considerable increase in the unit cost (12% compared to the previous year). Residential placements represented 27% of the total placements cost in 2018/19 however only 5% of the young people in care placements. There has been an increase in the number in-house fostering placements and a decrease in number of IFA placements between 2017/18 and 2018/19. This has resulted in overall reductions in costs due to better utilisation of in-house foster carers and a reduced reliance on IFA placements. IFA placements on average are twice as expensive as in-house fostering placements. IFA placements made up 60% of the total fostering placements in 2018/19. Residential and IFA placements collectively represent 60% of the total care placements costs.

Corporate Parenting

The Virtual School



The Virtual School team provides additional educational support for children looked after, from early years all the way through to post-16 education and training opportunities, which provides continuity for children and young people in care. The Virtual

School is well-resourced and includes a variety of roles including social pedagogues, learning mentors, an occupational therapist and speech and language therapists.

Key Stage 2

Pupils in year 6 are identified for additional teaching support according to their academic level and the Virtual School intervention teacher delivers creative one to one sessions in Maths and English. Feedback from children and schools is very positive and the accelerated progress of each child is evident.

All pupils are offered support for the transition to secondary school, and links are made with designated teachers before children transition to their new school.

% of KS2 Pupils achieving the required standard or above in maths, reading and writing in 2018 (2019 data is not yet available)

	Reading	Writing	Maths
England	51%	49%	47%
Statistical neighbour average	61%	53%	57%
Hackney	X (fewer than 5 children)	46%	46%

Hackney achieved results slightly lower than the national average in reading, writing and maths. This data relates to a small cohort of children. 33% of looked after children in Hackney in 2018 had a SEN Statement or EHCP compared to an average of 27% nationally.

Key Stage 4

Pupils in Key Stage 4 are offered additional sessions of one to one tutoring in maths and English in both Year 10 and Year 11. Progress is monitored throughout and where necessary individual targeted support is offered.

All Year 11 pupils receive support to identify appropriate pathways once statutory schooling has ended, and when necessary, are accompanied to college open days and interviews by a member of the Virtual School staff.

Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 in 2018

	Attainment 8
England	18.9
Statistical neighbour average	19.1
Hackney	20.2

Attainment 8 averages the scores of the best 8 subjects for each young person, adds them together to get a cohort score. (The maximum score possible is 80, assuming 8 A results).*

Hackney performed well in this measure achieving better results than England and statistical neighbour averages.

EPIC (Exceptional People in Care) Awards - In February 2019, the annual EPIC Awards took place at Hackney Empire to celebrate the achievements of Hackney's looked after children and care leavers. A total of 267 young people were nominated for an award in recognition of their hard work and commitment to their education.

Corporate Parenting

The Virtual School

Attendance

Percentage of looked after children classed as persistent absentees at 31st March

	2016	2017	2018
Hackney	12.2%	9.6%	10.5%
Statistical neighbour average	11.1%	12.2%	13.8%
England	9.1%	10.0%	10.6%

*A low percentage represents better attendance**

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The Virtual School has continued to send out attendance leaflets to all foster carers and monitor every young person's attendance every 2 weeks. This strategy has contributed to in attendance exceeding the statistical neighbour average.

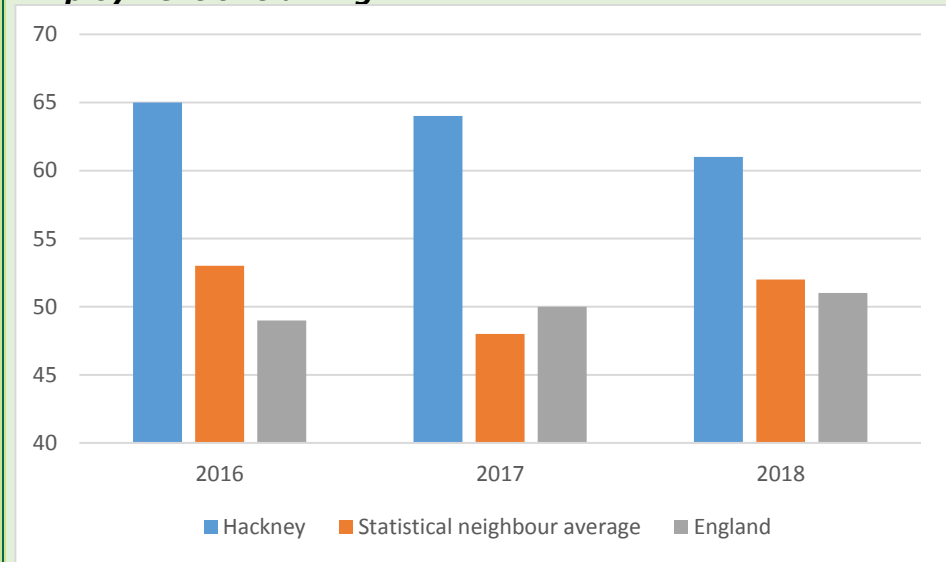
The Virtual School provides access to a broad range of cultural and educational activities for looked after children and care leavers. In the last year this has included residential trips to India, Kench Hill outdoor pursuits centre, and Jamie's Farm, an art trip to Barcelona, and residential trips to Romania, Slovakia and Rome.



Education, employment and training

The consistent support offered by the team during the last year has again resulted in a low number of care leavers aged 19-21 who are NEET (not in education, employment or training). Hackney compares very favourably to the national picture and far fewer Hackney care leavers are NEET (27%) when compared to London, statistical neighbour (38%) and national (39%) averages in 2018.

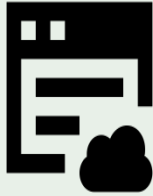
Percentage of Care Leavers who were in Education, Employment or training



10% of Hackney care leavers were in higher education in 2018 compared to 9% of statistical neighbour care leavers, and 6% of England care leavers overall.

Looked After Children

Health



The Hackney Looked After Children (LAC) health service is delivered by a dedicated team closely aligned with Hackney's universal school-based health service and is co-located with the Virtual School to promote the delivery of a more holistic and integrated service to our looked after children and young people.

The Health of Looked After Children (HLAC) Service in Hackney will be entirely delivered by Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust under a new integrated service model from 1st September 2019; previously it had been delivered by Whittington Health NHS Trust.

The HLAC Team remains the same and will continue to work with our looked after children and care leavers to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes.



Percentage of looked after children whose health checks were in time during a 12 month period

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	90%	97%	91%
England	89%	88%	Not yet published

91% of children and young people had their review health assessment completed on time in 2018/19, a decrease from 97% in the previous year and greater than the national average of 88% in 2017/18.

Percentage of looked after children whose immunisations are up to date



	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	79%	77%	70%
England	84%	85%	Not yet published

Performance on this at 70% in 2018/19 was lower than the national average in 2017/18. Performance in this area is affected by Hackney's higher proportion of older young people coming into care, as well as the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) in the cohort, for whom immunisation data may not be available.

Percentage of looked after children who have had an up-to-date dental check

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	74%	82%	71%
England	83%	84%	Not yet published



71% of looked after children had an up to date dental check in 2018/19, a decrease from 82% in 2017/18. This corresponds to the increase older cohort of looked after children entering care in Hackney who may decline to attend dental check appointments - 119 young people aged 14-17 entered care in 2018/19 (a 12% increase compared to 106 young people aged 14-17 entering care in 2017/18 and 56% of the total entrants to care). Work is underway with Health colleagues to address this and performance against this indicator is being closely monitored by the Corporate Parenting Service.

Corporate Parenting

Adoption and Post Permanency



Number (and percentage) of looked after children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Hackney	19 (9%)	12 (6%)	12 (6%)
Statistical neighbour average	19 (9%)	12 (6%)	Not yet published

In 2018/19, 12 Hackney children were adopted; the same number as 2017/18 and in line with the statistical neighbour average in 2017/18.

Pages at 31st March 2019, 7 children were placed with their adoptive family but an Adoption Order had not yet been granted. A further 12 children had a formal plan for adoption but had not yet been placed with an adoptive family.

During 2018/19, the children who have been adopted have generally been placed quickly with adopters, with children waiting on average 4 months from the time the Placement Order has been granted to the date they moved in with their adoptive families.

Recruiting adopters

6 adoptive families were approved in Hackney in 2018/19.



Regionalisation of Adoption Services

All local authorities are required to become part of a Regional Adoption Agency by April 2020.

In London the majority of local authorities are participating in the development of Adopt London which has 4 Sub-Regional Adoption Agencies Hackney will be part of Adopt London North which will consist of 6 local authorities (Hackney, Camden, Islington, Enfield, Barnet and Haringey). The development of the Regional Adoption Agency is being led by Islington Council. Each local authority will need to formally delegate its statutory duty to provide an adoption service to the Regional Adoption Agency. The Regional Adoption Agency (Adopt London North) will commence on 1st October 2019.

Post Permanency

There continues to be a high demand for post permanency support services from the Permanency Service, both from adoptive and Special Guardianship families. The range of work is broad and includes support for adopted adults and access to records; social work involvement and support; practical support; life story work; requests for financial support; contact (direct and letterbox); and access to therapeutic support. As at September 2019, the Permanency Service was providing support to 51 families who have adopted children (post-Order support), 10 families who are in the process of adopting children (pre-Order support), and 43 families where Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) have been made. The Adoption Support Fund (ASF), established by the Department for Education in 2013, is being utilised to provide group work programmes within the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium and to enable adoptive and Special Guardianship families to access therapeutic parenting training externally. The majority of ASF applications made on behalf of families are to provide personalised therapeutic support to individual families. Work continues to increase awareness and uptake with Special Guardianship families, who traditionally have been less aware of the potential benefits of therapeutic support. As at September 2019, Hackney has 34 applications pending to the ASF for therapeutic adoption support and 11 applications for supported guardianship therapeutic support. From 1st October 2019, responsibilities for post permanency support for adoptive families will transfer to Adopt London North while support for Special Guardianship families will remain with Hackney.

Corporate Parenting

Leaving Care



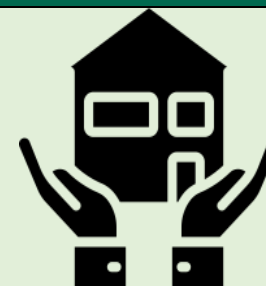
The Leaving Care Service ensures that young people are supported to develop independent living skills, offered career advice and training and educational opportunities, and supported to reach their full potential in all aspects of their life.

308 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported by the Leaving Care Service, as at March 2019, a 2% increase compared to the 301 being supported at the same point in March 2018. 66 care leavers aged 22-24 were being supported at March 2019. This is a 120% increase compared to the 30 care leavers aged over 21 who were in higher education, as at March 2018. This increase was expected following legislative changes introduced in April 2018. It is anticipated that this number will continue to increase over the coming years.

As at 31st March 2019, 25 young people were living in Staying Put arrangements (continuing to live with their previous foster carer after they have turned 18), an increase compared to 23 young people as at the end of March 2018.



The percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 who were in suitable accommodation in 2018/19 was 80%, an increase from 78% last year. Most of the young people who were recorded as not in suitable accommodation were in custody (18 young people).



Housing continues to be an issue nationally, especially for care leavers in the London area, with the statistical neighbour average remaining at 81% in 2018 (also 81% in 2017).

The Service will continue efforts to improve the number of care leavers in suitable accommodation in partnership with the Council's Housing Needs Service.



Adjara arrived in Hackney 6 years ago from Africa to live with her father before concerns were raised about the care she was receiving. Adjara had very little parental supervision and was often out late at night in risky situations. The risk to Adjara was so high that she became looked after at age 13. Adjara experienced a difficult adolescence, becoming permanently excluded from school, being linked to gangs in Hackney and often experiencing missing episodes. Throughout this, Adjara had consistent support from her foster carer and social worker, and when she reached 18, her placement became a staying put placement. Through this consistent care, Adjara has finished college, received a Level 3 BTEC in sports, is volunteering in a school, and was also recently granted indefinite leave to remain. Adjara now hopes to be able to go to University or get an apprenticeship. Adjara has a promising future, supported by the stability and loving home her foster carer has provided her.

Safeguarding and Learning



Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO investigates allegations of harm or a concern around the conduct or suitability of an adult to work or volunteer with children.

There were 266 referrals to the LADO in 2018/19, a 61% increase from 165 referrals in 2017/18.



There is a strong and effective working relationship between Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) and the LADO service. This is particularly important as the majority of LADO referrals are education setting based. The LADO has worked extensively with the Head of Wellbeing and Education Safeguarding over the last year to address the ongoing difficulties posed by unregistered educational settings and the challenges around safeguarding in these settings.

Children's Rights Service

The Children's Rights Service offers children and young people access to confidential and impartial support on issues concerning the Hackney Children and Families Service. The Service also provides Independent Return Home Interviews to young people following a missing episode. The Children's Rights Officer (CRO) aims to ensure that children and young people's voices are heard and their rights & entitlements upheld. While undertaking much of the work of a conventional advocate, the role has a specific focus on resolution and contributing to wider organisational learning.



The number of Children Act complaints from looked after children in 2018/19 has remained the same as last year with zero complaints – with 37 looked after children being referred to the CRO in 2017/18 compared to 45 referred in 2018/19. This would seem to indicate that the CRO has been effective in resolving issues and difficulties on an informal basis. There has also been a significant increase in care leavers accessing the service from 10 in 2017/18 to 21 in 2018/19. 4 care leavers made complaints in 2018/19 compared to none in 2017/18.

The use of Independent Return Home Interviews continues to be effective in supporting young people to share information about push and pull factors, what happens when they going missing and what support they need to reduce further episodes. The clear focus on the young person's voice alongside timely and case specific safety planning promotes the safety of these young people. The close liaison with the professional network promotes more effective risk assessment by the social work unit.



Benjamin's Independent Chair has had oversight of his case since his Initial Child Protection Conference when his mother was pregnant with him due to concerns about whether she could care for him due to her own additional needs. Following good information-sharing across partner agencies concerned about Benjamin and his mother, an advocate was sought for Benjamin's mother and a placement was found for them in a parent/child (mother and baby) foster placement to ensure Benjamin received the care he needed and to understand whether Benjamin could be safely cared for by his mother. Unfortunately this placement broke down, with Benjamin's mother unable to care for him safely and it was agreed to initiate care proceedings. A foster to adopt placement was found which meant that Benjamin's prospective adoptive families, who were well matched to his needs, were supported to be approved as foster carers until the end of court proceedings. His foster carers then had the knowledge and commitment to Benjamin to apply for an adoption order without delay. Benjamin's contact with his parents was supported by the professional network and Benjamin's mother was also referred to the Pause Project for ongoing support.

Safeguarding and Learning

Independent Chairs

Hackney's Independent Chairs provide independent oversight of work with looked after children as well as chairing Child Protection Conferences. They hold regular consultations on determining whether cases meet thresholds for Child Protection and Conferences. The Independent Chairs also attend and contribute to multi-agency public protection arrangement meetings (MAPPA), the Children's Resource Panel, the Care Planning Panel, liaise regularly with Court Guardians around cases in Care Proceedings, provide their written views for all Care Plans presented to Court, as well as having formal links to the Youth Justice Service



Looked after Children (LAC) reviews

After consulting with young people and partner agencies Hackney made the decision to move away from the traditional LAC review meeting process. Independent Chairs now use a range of tools and activities to engage and work with young people during their LAC reviews. Independent Chairs take a creative approach to LAC reviews, consulting with professionals, families and children before the review to ensure the LAC review is meaningful for the young person. Engagement techniques that are used include drawing and creative activities to enable children to talk about their lives and individual pieces of work to help young people identify the important people in their lives using football players and pop star references. LAC review reports are written by Independent Chairs directly to the child/young person and, alongside the carers' and social worker's reports, these form part of the young person's life story work.

Performance for LAC reviews completed within timescale has improved over the last year - 87% of LAC reviews were completed within timescale in 2018/19, compared to 85% in 2017/18. Plans are in place to further improve this performance in 2019/20.

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"The Independent Chair for one of my young people ...at the last Looked After Child Review ... announced that she would be leaving Hackney. *I am really sad to see her go, that she was good and instrumental in moving my young person's care plan along positively*".

- Foster carer about their looked after child's Independent Reviewing Officer

Safeguarding and Learning

Missing Children and Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

In 2018/19, we re-focused our case review and monitoring processes from specifically focussing on child sexual exploitation (CSE) and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) to incorporate a wider understanding of exploitation of young people and extra-familial harm including criminal exploitation, county lines and trafficking. The establishment of the multi-agency Extra-Familial Risk Panel in November 2018 to ensure consistent oversight and planning for cases where young people are at risk of experiencing, or are involved in, harmful behaviours outside the home has enabled a more joined up partnership response, with input from Police, Education, Health, Youth Offending Team, Young Hackney and the Integrated Gangs Unit. The Panel develops Partnership Plans to reduce extra-familial harm both for the individuals concerned and for the contexts in which the harm occurs (e.g. peers, schools, neighbourhoods, locations). From November 2018- June 2019 there have been 147 young people and their peers and associates discussed at the Extra-Familial Risk Panel. Of those 147 young people, 105 were discussed for the first time and 42 young people were subject of review discussions. The primary exploitation type in the cases discussed has been criminal exploitation, including county lines (64 cases), child sexual exploitation (25 cases) and sexually harmful behaviour (7 cases). There have been 3 location based discussions at the Extra-Familial Risk Panel in this period. Themes and strategic issues from the Extra-Familial Risk Panel are shared with the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) group for wider consideration and agency action. Specific issues discussed at MACE have included Xanax use, online image sharing, educational absenteeism, and understanding the needs of the Orthodox Jewish community.



Quality Assurance

The Children and Families Service is a complex system and many tools are used to understand performance and identify learning opportunities, themes and trends to enable the service to continue to adapt and respond to new demands. This includes management and audit oversight, with 426 audits taking place in 2018/19. Key strengths include thorough assessments, appropriate and timely responses to high levels of risk, inclusion of the child's voice in recording and strong multi-agency working and information sharing. Key areas for development identified through audits include improving exploration of identity and diversity with young people, and continuing to improve case recording, especially of unit meeting minutes. Multi-agency audits are also coordinated through City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board. Following the Ofsted focused visit, the casework audit tool has been revised to place greater emphasis on evidence of the child's lived experience and we worked with colleagues from neighbouring authorities on the development of our case audit moderation processes.

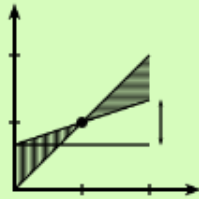


Learning from complaints is used to identify areas where our service to families can be improved; a total of 97 complaint-related representations were received during 2018/19 - this is an increase from 2017/18 when 78 representations were received. Learning from complaints this year has led to improvements in information leaflets provided to families, and reminders to practitioners about recording standards for unit meeting minutes and visits and the importance of timely sharing of information with families.



In 2018/19, 84 young people went missing from care on 467 occasions and 60 young people went missing from home on 101 occasions. In 66% of the occasions where a young person went missing from care it is recorded that they were offered a Return Home Interview (an increase from 62% in 2017/18). In 72% of the occasions where a young person went missing from home it is recorded they were offered a Return Home Interview (an increase from 69% in 2017/18). In order to ensure young people who frequently go missing are supported and that the Director and senior managers are kept informed, fortnightly missing children meetings are convened whereby practitioners provide an overview of the risk and plans in relation to the child and the circumstances around the current missing episode in respect of high risk cases and the safety plan for the child.

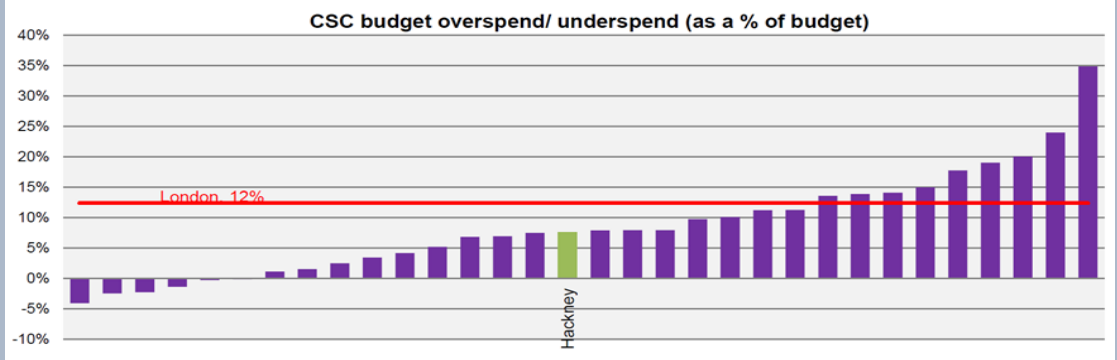
Financial Performance – Overview



The outturn for 2018/19 for the Children and Families Service on a net budget of £58m was an overspend of £362k after use of grants and reserves of £4.2m including a drawdown on the Commissioning Reserve of £3m. There has been a requirement to draw down

from the Commissioning Reserve since 2012/13 due to the increased number of children in care and a shortage of in-house foster carers.

The financial position for 2019/20 is a net budget of £58.4m for the Children and Families Service, and the service is forecasting to overspend by £1m (as at August 2019) after use of reserves and drawdown of grants totalling £5.8m (including full use of the commissioning activity reserve of £2.3m).



The sustained pressure on Children’s Services budgets is a position that is not unique to Hackney, as shown by the results of a recent survey on Children’s Social Care spend carried out jointly by the Society of London Treasurers (SLT) and the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS). The graph above shows how Hackney’s spend compared to budget for Children’s Social Care compares to other boroughs.

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The Children and Families Service has continued to make significant contributions to the efficiency agenda of the Council. Over the previous eight years the service has delivered £11.3m savings with a further £187k being delivered in 2019/20.



The increase in commissioning costs has been driven by an increase in the number of looked after children since 2011/12, and this trend looks to continue through 2019/20. There

is a continuation of a large proportion of children being placed with independent fostering agencies (IFAs) due to a lack of suitable in-house foster carers. The cost of an IFA placement is significantly greater than that of an in-house placement.



Hackney has also seen an increase in residential placements since 2015 adding considerable budget pressures with an average annual unit cost of £200k. We are also seeing a rise in the number of under 18s in high-cost semi-independent placements. Where young people in their late teens are deemed to be vulnerable, and in many cases are transitioning from residential to semi-

independent placements, they may still require a high-level of support and in extreme circumstances bespoke crisis packages. These pressures have been recognised by the Group Director - Finance & Corporate Resources with a total growth of £7.4m included in the base budget between 2012/13 to 2019/20.

Children & Families Service Our Values



OPEN, honest, and accountable, working with others, listening, showing trust in each other and in our residents



INCLUSIVE both as an employer and a service provider, celebrating diversity, and treating colleagues and residents with respect, and with care



AMBITIOUS for Hackney, and for ourselves, always seeking to be the best at what we do, and to get the best for the people of Hackney



Collaborative and respectful. We work openly and in partnership with families, communities, partners and each other. We value families' experiences, insights and wisdom - doing 'with' not 'to', and are mindful of the power we hold and the way this is experienced by children and their families in our relationships with them.

Innovative and creative. We seek opportunities to develop new approaches to better meet the needs of children and their families, being flexible and responsive in our practice, we are prepared to take managed risks and do things differently when this is in the best interests of the child.

Child and family focussed and responsive to wider context. By prioritising the child's voice and daily lived experience we develop a deep understanding of the diverse perspectives, identities and experiences of children and their families. We work to understand the impact of wider social and environmental factors on children's lives and address the impact of contextual risks, disadvantage, discrimination and trauma.

Strength-based and reflective. We are thoughtful in our work with children and their families. Delivering confident, evidence-based practice that has a strong theoretical orientation and is underpinned by systemic approaches. We value different perspectives and expertise, and celebrate the successes of children, young people and their families.

High aspirations for children. We work with families, their communities and other professionals to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children and young people that we serve, seeking and valuing feedback as a learning organisation that is committed to continually improving the services we deliver.

Purposeful, timely and solution focussed. We are clear about the outcomes we are trying to achieve, supporting children, young people, families, and communities to develop their own potential and reducing dependency wherever possible, whilst acting decisively when necessary, to keep children and young people safe.



PIONEERING and innovative, always seeking new solutions and making space to be creative, to learn and to share ideas.



PROUD of what we do, of the Council, of each other, and of Hackney



PROACTIVE and positive in the way we approach problems and challenges, and take up the opportunities that come our way



Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 29th October 2019 Item 8 – Cabinet response to ‘Support for LGB+ students in school’	Item No 8
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Outline

At its meeting in February 2019, the Commission assessed the support available to LGBT+ students in school in Hackney. Recommendations from this assessment were submitted to the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for Education, Young People and Children’s Social Care in June 2019.

The Deputy Mayor’s response was approved by Cabinet in September 2019.

Action

The Commission is requested to:

- (i) Note the Cabinet response;
- (ii) Agree if any further action or follow-up is required.

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**Cabinet Response to the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
Investigation into support for LGBT+ pupils in schools in Hackney**

CABINET MEETING DATE

16 September 2019

CLASSIFICATION

Open

WARD(S) AFFECTED

All Wards

CABINET MEMBER

**Cllr Anntoinette Bramble
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for Education, Young People and
Children's Social Care**

KEY DECISION

No

GROUP DIRECTOR

**Anne Canning
Group Director, Children, Adults & Community Health**

1. Cabinet member introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 25 February 2019, the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Commission assessed the nature and level of support available for LGBTQ+ pupils in Hackney. Their review took place in the context of disturbing scenes in Birmingham and elsewhere, where schools have come under pressure to abandon inclusive relationships education.
- 1.2 In Hackney, we know how important inclusivity and tolerance are to a supportive school environment, to the vast majority of our residents and to the borough's reputation as a beacon of diversity where all of our communities are supported and celebrated.
- 1.3 Through analysis of the evidence received before it, the Scrutiny Commission identified a number of priorities for supporting LGBTQI+ young people in Hackney, and their report made five recommendations.
- 1.4 There is a wide range of excellent work within Hackney schools to help foster pupil wellbeing and develop character and personal attributes that are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. I welcome the Scrutiny Commission's report, and their recommendations as to how we can build on this existing work. A response to each of the recommendations is set out in the report below.
- 1.5 I commend this report to Cabinet

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Cabinet is asked to approve the content of this response.

Executive Response to the Scrutiny Recommendations

Recommendation One	Response
There is a need to further develop the voice of LGBT+ young people so that their needs are better articulated and reflected in commissioning priorities and service planning across Hackney;	Young Hackney are working with the Council's Communications Team to promote consultation with LGBTQI+ young people in order to gather their views on a review / relaunch of the Young Hackney LGBTQI+ provision. It is expected that Hackney Youth Parliament and Young Futures will also contribute the views of LGBTQI+ young people to inform commissioning and service design. In addition the Team Leader for the Young Hackney Health and Wellbeing

	Team is now a member of the CAMHS Transformation LGBTQI+ workstream, which will manage a grants programme for new and existing LGBTQI+ groups.
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<p>Recommendation Two</p> <p>Ensure that there is appropriate training for teachers so that LGBT+ issues can be taught confidently and positively, equips teachers to respond to the needs of LGBT+ young people and supports them to deliver a cross-curricular approach to teaching LGBT+ issues (alongside other equality strands) in their school;</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>Training to Hackney schools is currently delivered through a range of meetings and CPD provided through the Council's training & support offer. In this respect, Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) can and does actively promote equality across schools. In particular, PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) Forum for school leads in the borough provides opportunities to support school staff in teaching about LGBTQI+ issues.</p> <p>In addition, HLT's School Improvement Team have a responsibility to consider the cross curricular aspects of this area and will continue to raise this, as appropriate, through school visits and curriculum discussions with school staff.</p> <p>The Council will commission more Educate and Celebrate training events in the spring term.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Three</p> <p>Continue to work with Headteachers, school governors and other school leaders to ensure that there is effective leadership and robust policies in place that enable schools to meet statutory equality duties, support LGBTQ+ inclusivity and have appropriate safeguards to monitor and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying or discrimination;</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>The Mayor and Deputy Mayor Bramble wrote to all Hackney Headteachers in April to offer the Council's full support in delivering inclusive relationship and sex education in schools, and supporting and celebrating all of Hackney's communities.</p> <p>Hackney Learning Trust's Leadership & Management Advisers provide a range of support to Hackney's headteachers and school leadership teams. Equality issues are central to this work through ensuring schools are aware of statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding and tackling discrimination. The School</p>
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	<p>Improvement Team are available to support schools in this work. A model equalities policy and behaviour policy will be available.</p> <p>In addition, the Behaviour & Wellbeing Forum (a termly school led meeting between HLT managers and pastoral deputy headteachers) and the WAMHS (Wellbeing & Mental Health in Schools) project also consider and review how to best support young people in the borough. The Scrutiny Commission findings & recommendations regarding support for LGBTQI+ pupils in schools in Hackney will be referred to these meetings for consideration and discussion. There will be a briefing for Headteachers and Governors at the Director's Briefing and termly Headteachers' Briefing.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Four</p> <p>For schools to provide a safe and positive space for teachers to meet with children and young people who may be questioning their gender identity or raise concerns about homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying;</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>As set out above, the Behaviour & Wellbeing Forum and the WAMHS project are well placed to consider and review how to best support young people in the borough, including support for LGBTQI+ young people. The Commission findings will be referred to these meetings for consideration and discussion.</p> <p>Hackney Learning Trust will also raise awareness of the Scrutiny Commission's report and recommendations with schools regarding the need to provide opportunities for a safe space for students in school through the bi termly Leadership Update to Headteachers and Chairs of Governors.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Five</p> <p>The need for integrated advice, guidance and support for LGBT+ children and young people across Hackney.</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>This recommendation will be picked up within the Young Hackney Service Offer. Young Hackney will explore how Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)</p>
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	<p>can be embedded across teams and services, as well as how to improve communication across the wider partnership.</p> <p>The Health & Wellbeing Team have integrated LGBTQI+ advice and guidance into all of the PSHE/Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) sessions they offer, as well as offering more bespoke sessions to all 5-19 years old (25 for Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)) in Schools (including Virtual Schools), Hackney Hubs and other youth settings, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">§ Homophobia & Bullying§ Gender Roles & Normativity§ Sexuality & Gender <p>These subjects have also been delivered as professionals training to teachers, foster carers, and parents. The Health and Wellbeing Team will be rolling out a programme of training to all of Young Hackney, and subsequently as part of the wider Children and Families training programme.</p> <p>In the past the Health and Wellbeing Team has supported LGBTQI+ young people in schools, colleges and youth hubs with projects; such as an LGBTQI+ exhibition at the Hackney Museum, making flags to carry on the London Pride March, as well as running trips to places of interest for the LGBTQI+ Community. Cllr Bramble has also joined staff to speak to pupils about homophobic bullying in schools. Future projects and activities will be informed by the views of LGBTQI+ young people.</p>
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Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 29th October 2019 Item 9 – Work Programme 2019/20	Item No 9
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Outline

Attached is a copy of the latest work programme for the Commission for 2019/20. A number of additions have been made to the work programme since the last meeting (September 2019) which include:

- 1) 25th November - Making Hackney a child friendly borough
- 2) 10th December - Post 16 provision for children and young people with SEND
- 3) 24th February - Update from Black Men's Project
- 4) 24th February –Sex and Relationship Education Guidelines - preparedness of Schools for new guidelines.

No decision has yet been taken on the in-depth review for 2019/20 except that this will be as a 'scrutiny in a day' exercise.

Action

The Commission is asked to review and confirm the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2019/20 which has been agreed thus far.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2019 – May 2020

Meeting 1	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<u>Meeting Date: 24th June 2019</u> Deadline for reports: 12 th June 2019 Publication Date: 14 th June 2019	Election of Chair and Vice Chair	Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Team/ Chair CYP	
	Children’s Social Care – Action Plan in response to Ofsted focused visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne Canning, Group Director, Adults, Children and Community Health, Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Families 	- Circulation of outcome of Ofsted focused visit.
	School Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marian Lavelle, Head of Admissions and Pupil Benefits, HLT Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT 	
	Childcare Sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years, HLT Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT 	- LA required to produce Childcare Sufficiency Report and present to members.
	Developing new CYP Work Programme for 2019/20	Commission/ Scrutiny officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consult local stakeholders Meet with service Directors Collate topic suggestions

Meeting 2	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p><u>Meeting Date:</u> <u>Monday 9th September 2019</u></p> <p>Papers deadline: 12.00pm Thursday 29th August</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: Friday 30th August</p>	<p>New arrangements for City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Canning, Group Director Adults, Children and Community Health • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser, CHSCB 	
	<p>Off-rolling in schools: discussion item to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify and define of off-rolling; - Determine the nature and scale of off-rolling; - Assess the accountability of schools; - Identify what support children and parents may need; - Establish the role and duties of the local authority and how best it should respond to off-rolling. - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT • Andrew Lee, Assistant Director of Education, HLT • Simone Vibert, Office of Children’s Commissioner • Mike Sheridan HMI, Regional Director, Ofsted • Kiran Gill, CEO, The Difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key background documents distributed to members in advance of the meeting.
	<p>CYP Work Programme 2019/20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcomes of the CYP Work Programme Consultation - Identification of training and development needs of Commission, site visits and rapporteurs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer / Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Details of all topic suggestions circulated to members and published in the agenda. - Arrange meetings with senior officers to scope out work items.

Meeting 3	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Tuesday 29th October	Cabinet Question Time: Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for Education, Young People and Children’s Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Anntoinette Bramble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notification of 3 policy areas need to be with Cabinet member by 16th September 2019.
Agenda dispatch Monday 21st October	Recruitment & Retention of Foster Carers - Update 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Service • Anne Canning, Group Director Adults, children & Community Health • Robert Koglek, Head of Corporate Parenting 	
Papers deadline: Tuesday 15th October 2019	Children and Families Service Bi-Annual Report to Members To provide oversight to children social care provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Services • Lisa Aldridge, Head of Service, Safeguarding and Learning • Deborah Ennis, Service Manager - Safeguarding and Learning 	
	Support to LGBT+ children in school – Cabinet response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission - to review and note Cabinet response. 	
	Outcomes of Exclusions – update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer 	
	CYP Work Programme 2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer • Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To review and monitor progress.

Joint meeting with Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Meeting 3a	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p><u>Meeting</u> <u>Date:</u> <u>Monday 4th</u> <u>November</u></p>	<p>Update on integrated Commissioning - Children, Young People and Maternity Work-stream</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health • Amy Wilkinson, Work-stream Director 	

Meeting 4	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: Monday 25th November 2019</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: Friday 15th November 2019</p> <p>Papers deadline: Midday Tuesday 12th November</p>	Making Hackney a Child Friendly Borough		
	Policy ambitions for a Child Friendly Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Families, SEND, Early Years and Play 	
	Engagement and involvement of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hackney YP Representatives • Young Futures Commission • Rohney Saggat-Malik and 2 YF representatives (TBC) • Consultation & Engagement service – Polly Cziok, Director (TBC) 	
	Developing child friendly neighbourhoods:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natalie Broughton/ Katie Glasgow, Gabrielle Abdi – Haringey Planning Service • Dinah Bornat, Director ZCD Architects • Luke Bellingham, Hackney Wick Through Young Eyes (TBC) 	
Work Programme 2019/20	Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Team	- To review and monitor progress.	

Meeting 5	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: Tuesday 10th December 2019</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: Monday 2nd December 2019</p> <p>Papers deadline: Midday Tuesday 26th November 2019</p>	<p>Support for children and young people with SEND post 16 (Discursive item 100-120 mins)</p>		
	<p>HLT SEND Team Special schools Views of Parents Project Search</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, HLT, Andrew Lee, HLT , Francesca Canarella HL • Ickburgh, Stormount and Garden Schools (TBC) • Hackney Independent Parent and Carers Forum • Supported employment team 	<p>To meet with director / senior officers to scope and plan this item.</p> <p>To meet with parents and young people before 10th December</p>
	<p>Annual Question Time: Cabinet Member for Families, SEND, Early Years and Play</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Christopher Kennedy 	<p>Notification of 3 policy areas need to be with Cabinet member by 29th October 2019.</p> <p>Possible areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report of the Social Care Ombudsman – findings around timeliness of EHC Plans and effective support? - Update from SEND working group - strategic vision direction and funding for this service?
	<p>Work Programme 2018/19</p>	<p>Scrutiny Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To review and monitor progress.

Meeting 6	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Monday 27th January 2020 Agenda dispatch: Friday 17th January 2020 Papers deadline: Tuesday 14th January 2020	Contextual Safeguarding (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families • Lisa Aldridge, Head of Safeguarding and Learning 	Safeguarding children training session for Commission.
	Annual Report City and Hackney Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Gamble, Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser 	
	Unregistered Educational Settings -Update 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health, LBH • Andrew Lee, Assistant Director Education Services, Hackney Learning Trust • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser, CHSCB 	
	Work Programme 2018/19	- Scrutiny Officer	- To review and monitor progress.

Meeting 7	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<u>Meeting</u> <u>Date:</u> <u>Monday 24th</u> <u>February</u> <u>2020</u>	SRE Education in Schools- preparedness for new guidelines September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pauline Adams, Head of Service, Young Hackney • David Wright, Young Hackney • Annie Gammon / Helena Burke, HLT(TBC) • Nadia Sica, Public Health • Head Teachers 	
Agenda dispatch: Friday 14th February	Young Black Men’s Project - Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonia Khan, Head of Policy and Strategy • Solomon Rose, Policy & Research Officer 	
Papers deadline: Tuesday 11th February	Children and Families Service Bi-Annual Report to Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Services • Lisa Aldridge, Head of Service, Safeguarding and Learning • Deborah Ennis, Service Manager - Safeguarding and Learning 	6 month update report to September
	Work Programme 2018/19	Scrutiny Officer	- To review and monitor progress

Meeting 8	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p><u>Meeting Date:</u> <u>Tuesday 28th April 2020</u></p> <p>Agenda dispatch: Monday 20th April 2020</p> <p>Papers deadline: Tuesday 14th April 2020</p>	<p>Annual Update on Achievement of Students at Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.</p>	<p><u>Hackney Learning Trust</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Wooldridge, Early Years Team Leader • Sara Morgan, Principal Adviser Primary • Anton Francic, Principal Secondary Adviser 	
	TBC		
	TBC		
	Work Programme 2018/19	Scrutiny Officer	- To review and monitor progress

Standing Items		
Election of Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission 	Scheduled 24/6/19
School Admissions and Childcare Sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Marian Lavelle • Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years 	Scheduled 24/6/19
Children and Families Service Bi-Annual Report to Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Services • Lisa Aldridge, Head of Service, Safeguarding and Learning • Deborah Ennis, Service Manager - Safeguarding and Learning 	Scheduled 29/10/19 and 24/2/20
Annual Report City and Hackney Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Gamble, Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser 	Scheduled 27/1/20
Annual Question Time with Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years and Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Christopher Kennedy 	Scheduled 10/12/18
Annual Question Time with Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Anntoinette Bramble 	Scheduled 29/10
Annual Update on Achievement of Students at Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Morgan, Principal Adviser Primary, HLT • Anton Francic, Principal Secondary Adviser, HLT • Tim Wooldridge, Early Years, HLT 	Scheduled 23/4/20

Review Items		
Outcomes of Exclusions – Update / Final report (TBC)	Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer	Scheduled October / November 2019
Recruitment & Retention of Foster Carers - Update 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Wright, Director of CFS, • Robert Koglek Head of Corporate Parenting 	Scheduled 29/10/19
Unregistered Educational Settings - Update 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health • Andrew Lee, Assistant Director Education Services, Hackney Learning Trust • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser, CHSCB 	Scheduled 27/1/20

One off Items agreed from 2018/19		
Action Plan arising from Ofsted Focused Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health, LBH • Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Services 	Scheduled 24/6
Off-rolling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT 	Scheduled 9/9
Support to LGBT students in Schools in Hackney – Cabinet response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLT/ Public Health/ Integrated Commissioning/ CCG/ Young Hackney 	Scheduled 29/10
Well-being and Mental Health Services (WAMHS): early intervention and support to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophie McElroy, CAMHS Alliance Project Manager • Helena Burke, HLT • Waveney Patel, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Homerton Hospital (CAMHS) • Greg Condon, Mental Health Programme Manager, NHS City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group • Laura Smith, Clinical Lead, Children's Social Care, Hackney Learning Trust 	To be scheduled (with other mental health item)
New arrangements for Local Safeguarding Children Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Canning, Group Director Adults, Children and Community Health • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser, CHSCB 	Scheduled 9/9

<p>Young Futures Commission (1) Update on work of the YFC. Emerging issues. (2) Views in relation to the planned item on the Voice of Young People.</p>	<p>Rohney Saggar Malik, Young Futures Commission</p>	<p>Scheduled 25/11/19</p>
<p>Hackney Youth Parliament - Report Back (1) Update on work HYP (20 mins). (2) Views in relation to the planned item on the Voice of Young People.</p>	<p>Hackney Youth Parliament Representatives: Aleigha Reeves, Raivene Walters and Clive Kandza</p>	<p>Scheduled 25/11/19</p>

Policy areas identified for possible scrutiny from the consultation process		
Contextual Safeguarding: projects update, how is it being embedded, and what impact is it beginning to have. Has there been universal buy in – cooperation from partner agencies?	One-off item	Scheduled for 24 th January 2020 (TBC) dependent on if there will be sufficient data at this time. (Alternative that this could be taken as part of the Children's Social Care item in February 2020)
Mental health: What are the drivers for increasing mental health usage among young people? How effectively are services respond to these preventatively? Are there any inequities in the way that young people access services - how can these be redressed?	Review / One off – discursive item	
SEND: support for children and young people post 16? What support is provided for SEND children post 16 to prevent 'cliff-edge' provision? (Consistently raised across consultation)	One off – discursive item	Scheduled 10 th December – to coincide with Cabinet member Q & A (Cllr Kennedy in whose portfolio this sits).
Children in Need (Children's Social Care)	Review / One off – discursive item	
Whole family approach (Children's Social Care) and how services are coordinated for mental health, housing, DM and substance misuse support.	Review / One off – discursive item	
Childhood Poverty: nature and scale of this issue and what action taken to address this (Environmental poverty; air	One off – discursive item	The Poverty Strategy is being taken at Scrutiny Panel in April 2020. The Panel will

pollution, road safety and access to green spaces; Food poverty - ability of parents to clothe and feed children).		look at the effects of growing up poor in Hackney.
Serious youth violence: informed by outcomes of living in Hackney review. Involve young people. Living in Hackney completes its review in autumn 2019. This should inform any work of the CYP Commission.	One off – discursive item (with young people)	To be scoped
Sex & Relationship Education: Preparedness of local schools for new SRE regulations in 2020 – with YH. New regulations effect September 2020. To obtain assurance that schools were sufficiently prepared – scrutiny would need to be 6-12 months in advance to enable implementation of any recommendations.	One off – discursive item	Scheduled for February 24 th 2020
Childhood obesity (healthy weight) - update on local strategy - effectiveness of local interventions.	One-off item	
How to make Hackney a child friendly borough? How is the voice of young people reflected in service design, planning and delivery? Young Futures/ HYP and young people focused session. Could also involve Planning, Consultation, CCG, IG, PH	One off – discursive item (with young people)	Scheduled 25 th November 2019

Other items that may emerge in the course of the year which may require scrutiny.		
Further Ofsted inspection of Children and Families Service.	Anne Canning, Group Director, Adults, Children and Community Health, Sarah Wright, Director of CFS	Inspection expected autumn 2019 - outcome November/ December onwards
Children's Centre's - engagement exercise completed July 2019 – report on outcomes.	Annie Gammon, Director of Education Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years	Oct-December 2019
Reports of the social care ombudsman (reported to Cabinet July) on two upheld SEND cases; timeliness of EHC assessments.	Annie Gammon, Director of Education	
Case Reviews of young people that took their own life by CHSCP (from March 2019 meeting).	CHSCB/ CCG	Discussion with CHSCB - autumn
Impact of no-deal Brexit on schools, education and children's social care	Anne Canning, Group Director, Adults, Children and Community Health	Scheduled September 2019



<p>Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>29th October 2019</p> <p>Item 10 – Outcome from School Exclusions – review update</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>10</p>
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Outline

The Commission is currently completing its in-depth review of the outcomes of school exclusion. A verbal update will be provided on the work of the Commission together with some emerging findings.

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