

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

Wednesday 19 January 2022

7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. E8 1AE

Contact:

Martin Bradford

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Mark Carroll

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair), Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Katie Hanson, Cllr James Peters, Cllr Anna Lynch, Young, Sizer, Troughton and Cllr Caroline Selman (VACANT, 1 Labour, 1 Opposition)

Co-optees: Steven Olalere, Shabnum Hassan, Jo Macleod, Ernell Watson and Michael Lobenstein, 5 members of Hackney of Tomorrow, Hackney Youth Parliament

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Sexual Harassment in Schools (19.05)** (Pages 7 - 14)

In early 2021, the Everyone's Invited website school children recorded over 8,000 anonymous reports of sexual abuse and harassment. This item aims to review the nature and scale of this issue in Hackney and local initiatives to support schools, children and their families.

Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding

Annie Gammon, Director of Education

Jacque Burke, Group Director of Children and Education

Zehra Jaffer, Head Teacher, Stoke Newington Secondary

School

5 Unregistered Educational Settings - Review Update (19.45) (Pages 15 - 30)

The Commission completed an in-depth review of unregistered educational settings in 2018. Given the difficulty in making progress against these recommendations, the Commission has continued to receive annual updates since 2018.

Jim Gamble QPM, Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner

Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, Safeguarding and Learning

Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding

Annie Gammon, Director of Education

Jacque Burke, Group Director of Children and Education

6 City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report (20.25) (Pages 31 - 178)

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership produces an annual report of its work. This report is presented to the Commission to support its overview and scrutiny of local services.

Jim Gamble QPM, Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner

Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, Safeguarding and Learning

7 Adolescents Entering Care - Scoping Report (21.20) (Pages 179 - 204)

Scrutiny may undertake in-depth reviews to assist the policy-making function of the Council. The Commission have agreed to review the increasing number of adolescents entering care, and the Councils approach to supporting this cohort of young people with a view to developing and improving local practice. The scoping report for this work is presented for review and agreement.

Overview & Scrutiny Officer

8 Work Programme (21.25) (Pages 205 - 218)

To receive an update on the Commission's work programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

9 Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 219 - 234)

To note and agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 6th December 2021

10 Any Other Business

To include updates on children and young people related issues from other scrutiny commissions

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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The Monitoring Officer, or the Chair of the meeting, may designate a set area from which all recording must take place at a meeting.

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The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all those present recording a meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be required by the Chair to cease recording or may be excluded from the meeting. Disruptive behaviour may include: moving from any designated recording area; causing excessive noise; intrusive lighting; interrupting the meeting; or filming members of the public who have asked not to be filmed.

All those visually recording a meeting are requested to only focus on recording councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will ask any members of the public present if they have objections to being visually recorded. Those visually recording a meeting are asked to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed or photographed. Failure by someone recording a meeting to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed and photographed may result in the Chair instructing them to cease recording or in their exclusion from the meeting.

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.

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Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission 19th January 2022 Item 4 - Sexual Harassment in Schools	Item No 4
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Outline

In early 2021, the Everyone's Invited website school children recorded over 8,000 anonymous reports of sexual abuse and harassment. This item aims to review the nature and scale of this issue in Hackney and local initiatives to support schools, children and their families.

- Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding
- Annie Gammon, Director of Education
- Jacquie Burke, Group Director of Children and Education

In addition, a short verbal update will be provided from Zehra Jaffer, the Head Teacher at Stoke Newington Secondary School, as to how this issue is being addressed locally.

Reports

Hackney Education - Sexual Abuse and Harassment in Schools

Action:

Members of the Commission are invited to review the attached report and ask questions of officers present.

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Scrutiny Commission Report

Report title: Sexual abuse and harassment in schools and colleges

Meeting date: 19th January 2022

Report originator: Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding, LBH

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. To update the commission on the work being undertaken in response to the publication of Ofsted's report reviewing sexual abuse and harassment in schools and colleges, which was published in June 2020.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the commission notes the progress made since the publication of their report.

3. Background

- 3.1. Following the murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021 there was increased awareness of the issue of violence against women and girls. It was at this time that the [Everyone's Invited](#) website came to national prominence.
- 3.2. Everyone's Invited stated that it was '*a place for survivors to share their stories*' and had as its mission '*to expose and eradicate rape culture with empathy, compassion and understanding*'.
- 3.3. The website saw thousands of young women report their experiences of harassment, abuse and assault perpetrated by boys or young men who either attend their own school, a neighbouring school or their university.
- 3.4. The reports were anonymous though the testimonies often named the school or university the perpetrator attended.
- 3.5. Independent and state schools nationally were named on the site.
- 3.6. Reported incidents occurred both in school and out of school (e.g. at parties).
- 3.7. Some boys also posted their experiences.
- 3.8. Nationally in response the following occurred:
 - 3.8.1. A nationally coordinated police response;
 - 3.8.2. A 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline set up;
 - 3.8.3. Ofsted were asked to conduct a review; and
 - 3.8.4. Entries reviewed and, where appropriate, local safeguarding partners notified.
- 3.9. In response Hackney Education held briefings for head teachers, designated safeguarding leads and school governors so they were fully aware of the website, the issues raised and appropriate actions to take in response. The first of these meetings was held on April 21st 2021 and was jointly led by Hackney Education, the police and Young Hackney. Slides from the meeting held on the 21st April can be found [here](#).

4. Ofsted's review of sexual abuse and harassment in schools & colleges

- 4.1. In June 2021 Ofsted published their review of into sexual abuse and harassment in schools and colleges having visited 32 schools and spoken with over 900 young people in those settings. Ofsted's report can be found [here](#).

4.2. A summary of Ofsted's findings is set out below.

- 4.2.1. The review highlighted how prevalent sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are for children and young people and that incidents were so commonplace that children and young people saw no point in reporting them.
- 4.2.2. Girls told Ofsted that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse was much more prevalent than adults realise and that it occurred so frequently that it had become commonplace. The frequency of harmful sexual behaviours means that some children and young people consider them normal.
- 4.2.3. When asked about where sexual violence occurred unsupervised spaces outside of school, such as parties or parks without adults present, were mentioned though some girls reported to Ofsted that they also experienced unwanted touching in school corridors.
- 4.2.4. Children and young people, especially girls, told Ofsted that they do not want to talk about sexual abuse for several reasons, even where their school encourages them to. For example, they reported that the risk of being ostracised by peers or getting peers into trouble is not considered to be worth it for something perceived by children and young people to be commonplace. They were also worried about how adults will react, because they think they will not be believed, or that they will be blamed. They also think that once they talk to an adult, the process will be out of their control.
- 4.2.5. The Ofsted review found that children and young people reported that they were rarely positive about the relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) they had received. They felt that it was too little, too late and that the curriculum was not equipping them with the information and advice they needed to navigate the reality of their lives.
- 4.2.6. In the schools and colleges Ofsted visited, some teachers and leaders underestimated the scale of the problem. They found that schools either did not identify sexual harassment and sexualised language as problematic or they were unaware they were happening. They were however dealing with incidents of sexual violence when they were made aware of them, and following statutory guidance.

4.3. Ofsted's report made the following recommendations for schools and colleges:

- 4.3.1. That school and college leaders should create a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated. They should assume that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening in their setting, even when there are no specific reports, and put in place a whole-school approach to address them, which should include:
 - 4.3.1.1. A carefully sequenced RSHE curriculum, based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance, that specifically includes sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online;
 - 4.3.1.2. High-quality training for teachers delivering RSHE;
 - 4.3.1.3. Routine record-keeping and analysis of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online, to identify patterns and intervene early to prevent abuse;
 - 4.3.1.4. A behavioural approach, including sanctions when appropriate, to reinforce a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated;
 - 4.3.1.5. Working closely with local safeguarding partners in the area where the school or college is located;
 - 4.3.1.6. Support for designated safeguarding leads (DSLs)
 - 4.3.1.7. Training for all staff

- 4.4. Schools and colleges have been told to assume that sexual abuse and harassment is taking place in their school even if there are no reports and plan a whole school response accordingly.
- 4.5. Since publication of the review the Department for Education has updated its guidance relating to [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).
- 4.6. Ofsted have also updated their inspection framework to ensure peer on peer sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online feature as part of the inspection of schools from September 2021.

5. What are schools are doing in response

- 5.1. Since publication of Ofsted's report, schools and colleges have responded to the issues raised in the review and have sought to create a culture where girls and young women are safe in schools.
- 5.2. Different schools and colleges have responded to the report in different ways depending on their school or college context. Activities have however broadly fallen into one of five categories:
 - 5.2.1. Understanding the current situation by
 - 5.2.1.1. Meeting with groups of pupils
 - 5.2.1.2. Meeting with staff
 - 5.2.1.3. Reviewing behaviour incidents
 - 5.2.2. Handling disclosures by
 - 5.2.2.1. Reviewing and updating reporting mechanisms
 - 5.2.2.2. Introducing anonymised reporting
 - 5.2.2.3. Discussing how best to report with pupils
 - 5.2.3. Policies, procedures and training by
 - 5.2.3.1. Updating safeguarding and behaviour policies
 - 5.2.3.2. Providing training for relevant staff
 - 5.2.4. RSHE Curriculum by
 - 5.2.4.1. Reviewing and updating the RSHE curriculum, including involving pupils
 - 5.2.4.2. Ensuring there was progression and key topics were revisited
 - 5.2.4.3. Training for staff delivering the RSHE curriculum
 - 5.2.5. Raising Awareness by
 - 5.2.5.1. Holding age appropriate assemblies with pupils
 - 5.2.5.2. Briefing staff on the report and any changes to policies
 - 5.2.5.3. Sharing the report with staff and parents
 - 5.2.5.4. Providing advice to parents on boundaries

6. How is Hackney Council supporting schools and colleges; and their pupils

- 6.1. Hackney Education, Young Hackney and the Context Intervention Unit (CIU) have been working in partnership with schools and colleges to support them in this area of work. This

has included individual, group and whole school work, which assists schools in understanding their context and how to address any issues raised by pupils.

- 6.2. In addition Young Hackney has adapted its RSHE curriculum offer to reflect the report and ensure that issues such as domestic abuse, healthy relationships, sexual harassment and consent are addressed appropriately in their sessions.
- 6.3. Hackney Education has:
 - 6.3.1. Held discussions with head teachers, secondary deputy head teachers and designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) on the topic so that the report findings are widely understood.
 - 6.3.2. Worked with the two schools that were referenced in the Everyone's Invited website.
 - 6.3.3. Convened three sessions of the DSL Forum devoted to this topic to ensure DSLs are aware of the recommendations, feel supported in responding and are made aware of good practice and support available from other services.
 - 6.3.4. Promoted to schools the use of the Contextual Safeguarding Network's Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools [toolkit](#), which alligns with the wider work being undertaken by the Contextual Intervention Unit. The self-assessment tool in the toolkit has been used widely by schools.
 - 6.3.5. Worked with CIU to develop an Extra Familial Risk & Harm audit tool for schools to use. This will enable schools to examine their understanding and practice regarding sexual harassment as part of their work relating to peer on peer harms. Once this is approved by the CHSCP it will be rolled out to schools next year.
 - 6.3.6. Carried out an audit of schools in December 2021 to ascertain actions taken by schools. This showed schools had overwhelmingly acted upon the report's findings. Key findings include:
 - 6.3.6.1. 94.7% reported that they had assigned a member of SLT to lead on this
 - 6.3.6.2. 86.8% reported that they had reviewed incidents
 - 6.3.6.3. 94.7% reported that the school's safeguarding policy had been updated
 - 6.3.6.4. 81.6% had reported that they had provided training to staff
 - 6.3.6.5. 81.6% reported that they have reviewed and revised their RSE curriculum
 - 6.3.6.6. 76.3% reported that they had reviewed their reporting mechanisms
- 6.4. The Context Intervention Unit has:
 - 6.4.1. Undertaken peer group work in secondary schools around sexual exploitation
 - 6.4.2. Held drop down days in conjunction with CHYPS Sexual Health Service and the Young Hackney Health and Wellbeing Team.
 - 6.4.3. Carried out student surveys in some schools and colleges, which include scoping questions around sexual harm in schools.
 - 6.4.4. Implemented the Mentors in Violence Prevention program in three secondary schools
 - 6.4.5. Developed an early help and critical incident school assessment guide to support schools in responding to extra-familial harm of which sexual assault is one form of harm.

6.5. Young Hackney has:

6.5.1. Held sessions with pupils in a number of primary and secondary schools covering consent, healthy relationship, child sexual exploitation, pornography and sexual harassment.

6.5.2. Delivered training for staff/professionals on harmful sexual behaviour.

7. Some examples of practice from schools

7.1. One school is running three projects with students on these issues. For Years 10 and 11 boys - Beyond Equality; for Year 9 they have the Mentors in Violence Prevention program and for Years 7 and 8 they are commissioning a theatre company called Immediate Theatre who are going to work with us to create a relevant performance on the issue.

7.2. Another school issued an all student questionnaire regarding sexual abuse and harassment. They have also held lunchtime reflections to raise awareness and sent letters home to parents/carers regarding sexual abuse and harassment.

7.3. Other secondary schools have worked with Hackney Education and the Context Intervention Unit to disseminate surveys to children and staff members about their experiences of safety, including from sexual harm and exploitation. The responses to these are used as part of 'context assessments' and the targeting of appropriate interventions from Young Hackney and referrals to the Extra Familial Risk Panel where necessary.

7.4. Another school held a parent forum to discuss the RSHE curriculum and the Ofsted findings. They also surveyed all students to give them an opportunity to say how helpful they found RSHE and how they would like to change it.

7.5. One primary school worked with the CIU with Year 6 pupils. This covered sexual messaging and concerns about violence to women in the community. This work will be repeated with the new Year 6 cohort and the plan is to develop a transitions program with the school which focuses on risk of harm in school, peers and community.

7.6. One college is working with Young Hackney to run a fortnightly women's empowerment group.

8. Conclusion

8.1. Everyone's Invited started a conversation across the education sector about sexual abuse and harassment in schools. The subsequent Ofsted review then revealed the scale of the issue and the everyday experience of many young women.

8.2. Since then schools have responded to the issue and have adopted the mantra of assume it is happening here. In doing so they have sought to understand the issue in their school, and to tackle the issue by improving reporting mechanisms, raising awareness across staff, pupils and parents; updating policies and procedures; and improving the quality of RSHE teaching.

8.3. The issue of sexual abuse and harassment is bigger than schools alone and is reflective of attitudes prevalent in wider society. Therefore schools will not be able to solve the issue alone but as the Chief Inspector of Ofsted said recently in response to the issue, '*good schools, doing what they do really well, can make a difference*'.

8.4. Likewise an issue as endemic as this will not be tackled overnight and requires a sustained approach that ensures that attitudes and behaviours are changed over time as we seek to make the sexual harassment and abuse of young women unacceptable.

Report originator: Chris Roberts

Other contributors:

Name	Designation	Section
Carly Buchecker	Context Intervention Unit	6 & 7
James Sykes	Hackney Education	6 & 7
David Wright	Young Hackney	6 & 7

Date:

Cleared by:





Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission 19th January 2022 Item 5 - Unregistered Education Settings	Item No 5
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Outline

The Commission completed an in-depth review of unregistered educational settings in 2018. Given the difficulty in making progress against these recommendations, the Commission has continued to receive annual updates since 2018.

- Jim Gamble QPM, Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner
- Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, Safeguarding and Learning
- Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding
- Annie Gammon, Director of Education
- Jacquie Burke, Group Director of Children and Education

A representative from the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations will also attend to update the Commission.

Reports

Hackney Education and City & Hackney Safeguarding Partnership - Unregistered Educational Settings Update

Action:

Members of the Commission are invited to review the attached report and ask questions of officers present.

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Scrutiny Commission Report

Report title: Unregistered Education Settings (Inquiry Recommendations Update)

Meeting date: 19th January 2022

Report originators: Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, CHSCP

Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding, LBH

1. Purpose of the report

1.1. In January 2018 the Scrutiny Commission published its report following an inquiry into Unregistered Education Settings (UES) in Hackney. The purpose of this report is to update commission members on the progress made in response to the report's ten recommendations.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That the commission notes the progress made since the publication of its report and recognises that where progress has been limited, this is primarily due to factors outside of the control of the London Borough of Hackney (LBH) and the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP).

2.2. That the commission supports safeguarding partners of the CHSCP, including LBH, in making use of the various legal powers available to them in response to UES.

2.3. The commission endorses the conclusion of LBH's internal audit that *'the Council and the CHSCP have demonstrated that considerable effort has been made under current legislative and regulatory constraints to implement the recommendations made in the investigation on UES by the CYP Scrutiny Commission'*.

3. Background

3.1. Over the course of 2017 Hackney's Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission conducted an inquiry into the issue of UES in Hackney. Its report, which was published in January 2018, made ten recommendations.

3.2. UES provide a 'full-time' education to children of compulsory school age but teaches a curriculum that is too narrow for the setting to constitute a 'school'. The consequence is that they cannot be registered (or regulated) in the same way that schools are. This was and remains a significant issue of concern for the safeguarding partners of the CHSCP.

3.3. The situation remains largely unchanged from when the commission examined this issue and published its investigation report. This is despite on-going and significant efforts to engage with community leaders and lobby the government for change.

3.4. That said, some changes have been introduced to support and improve the multi-agency response to concerns raised about UES. This has been driven via four relevant and related work strands, which are:

3.4.1. The continued engagement and efforts of the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner on behalf of the CHSCP;

3.4.2. The work and oversight of the UES Working Group, which is chaired by the Director of Hackney Education;

3.4.3. The work of the Out of Schools Settings (OOSS) Project to better engage settings in the child safeguarding agenda; and

3.4.4. The implementation of the UES protocol, which provides a multi-agency framework for coordinating the response to settings by bringing together a range of services and partners.

4. Commission recommendations with progress update

- 4.1. The commission's recommendations along with a progress update as of September 2021 can be found in Appendix A to this report. Please see this appendix for full details.
- 4.2. The commission will want to be aware of some of the specific work that has been undertaken in respect of UES over the past 12 months.
 - 4.2.1. The UES protocol is now embedded into operational practice and in 2021 eight protocol meetings were convened to consider our response to nine settings. Protocol meetings are multi-agency and as well as representatives from relevant Hackney Council services they are attended by the police, fire brigade, health and Ofsted. This has led to Ofsted inspections of settings and other measures to safeguard children.
 - 4.2.2. Collaboration between Hackney Education and the Planning Department has led to the identification of new UES and the co-ordinated appropriate use of planning powers in response to these where planning permission is also lacking.
 - 4.2.3. There are currently 609 children and young people known to Hackney Education who are believed to attend UES. This however is a fraction of the true number, which is estimated to be in excess of 1,500. Since July, following the appointment of an officer to focus on this cohort. Since starting, the officer has undertaken visits to families to check a) on the education arrangements and b) the welfare of the child.
 - 4.2.4. Efforts have been ongoing to engage with Orthodox Jewish representative bodies regarding safeguarding practice in UES and ensure we have assurance as to those arrangements. However, these have not been successful at bringing about satisfactory engagement with UES themselves to provide the necessary assurance we seek regarding safeguarding. We are looking at offering sessions as part of the wider Out Of School Settings work to see if there is a take-up of our safeguarding offer.
 - 4.2.5. The CHSCP has continued to lobby the Department for Education for changes in legislation in the area. Proposals were consulted on in 2020 and Hackney submitted a response to this. The outcome of that consultation has still not yet been published however the responsible minister, Baroness Barran, in a letter dated 3rd December to the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner for City & Hackney confirmed that the government remains committed to changing the law to require currently unregistered settings to register in the same way as independent schools.
 - 4.2.6. The Council is exploring how it can best utilise the legal powers currently available to us in respect of the UES and the children who attend them.
- 4.3. Between August and November 2021 LBH's internal audit reviewed the progress of the commission's ten recommendations. Audit found the following:
 - 4.3.1. Implemented - Two
 - 4.3.1.1. Recommendations 5 and 7
 - 4.3.2. In progress (within the Council's control) - Two
 - 4.3.2.1. Recommendations 4 & 10
 - 4.3.3. Partially implemented (constrained by factors outside of the Council's control) - Six
 - 4.3.3.1. Recommendations 1,2, 3, 6, 8 & 9
 - 4.3.4. Not implemented - None
- 4.4. Internal audit made one recommendation, which was that
 - 4.4.1. *'Further consideration is given to making use of the legal powers confirmed by the legal advice provided to the CHSCP on the legal position relating to UES in the*

context of the Children Act 2004 and the new safeguarding arrangements led by statutory safeguarding partners.'

4.5. The management response to this recommendation was:

4.5.1. 'The Children and Education Department recognises its legal powers to take action regarding UES. We established a system to respond to concerns about UES and this includes seeking legal (counsel) advice and taking legal action. This is an ongoing activity.'

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Local children who attend UES in Hackney continue to be outside the line of sight of safeguarding professionals. There is no direct mechanism to ensure that the premises within which they congregate are safe; that the infrastructure is sound; environment appropriate; or that contemporary safer recruitment practises are being applied to those working frequently and routinely with children.
- 5.2. Disappointingly, despite repeated attempts to engage community leaders and seek their cooperation, the status quo continues. A comprehensive package of safeguarding support has been developed and shared with community leaders. Even with this package excluding any focus on what is being taught in UES, these leaders have been unable or unwilling to commit to or influence cooperation with any programme of work. Based on the conditions seen at some UES (via the UES protocol meetings), this remains a significant concern.
- 5.3. Equally disappointing is the ongoing legislative vacuum that facilitates the ongoing operation of UES as they are. Whilst recent contact from government (to the CHSCP's Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner) states its intent to introduce legislation, timescales in this regard remain ambiguous.
- 5.4. This overall situation regarding the above means that the position concerning UES remains largely unchanged from when the commission examined this issue in 2017.

Report originators: Chris Roberts & Rory McCallum

Other contributors:

Name	Designation	Section

Date:

Cleared by:



Appendix A - Commission recommendations and progress update

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	Commission Recommendation	Progress Update
1	<p>To formalise and build on the work that has already been undertaken locally, it is recommended that the Council develop and publish a strategy that clearly sets out its approach to UES in the borough. Such a strategy will help to develop a comprehensive, consistent and transparent approach to UES, particularly within the Orthodox Jewish Community in Hackney.</p> <p>a) Local ambitions and priorities for UES and those children that attend, and which clearly describe the expected benefits of registration and compliance with the regulatory framework in respect of health and safety, safeguarding, educational outcomes and community cohesion;</p> <p>b) The legal duties of the Council (and partners) in ensuring that children attending UES in Hackney are taught in safe and hygienic conditions, that there are rigorous safeguarding protocols in place, that their well-being is promoted and that the curriculum taught conforms to agreed standards;</p> <p>c) The roles and responsibilities of the Council and its statutory partners in the regulatory and enforcement framework for UES; specifically to state how they work together to identify, support and promote compliance with regulatory standards for health and safety, safeguarding and quality of education taught;</p> <p>d) How the Council will engage the Orthodox Jewish community and its representatives to promote compliance and adherence to the regulatory framework;</p> <p>e) The legal responsibility of parents to provide an appropriate and full-time education for their child regardless of setting.</p>	<p>The impact of the strategy has been limited. The overall vision of the strategy remains frustrated on a number of levels.</p> <p>Although the Council has endeavoured to constructively manage this problem, no real progress has been made. There are considered to be two primary reasons for this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first reason is highlighted by the absence of a central faith and community based body with responsibility for and authority over yeshivas. Each setting is understood to be autonomous and the local proposals to strengthen safeguarding oversight have simply gained no traction. Whilst there remains an aspiration by partners to work together to ensure that all children in Hackney receive appropriate educational opportunities in safe and suitable environments, there is all but no progress in the context of collaboration and co-production in this regard. • The second reason is because there is no existing regulatory/statutory framework within which these settings neatly fit. As a consequence, the Council has been both required and encouraged to be lawfully audacious in its approach to assuring the safety of the children who attend these settings, which the Council has done with limited success. <p>The Council has engaged (and continues to engage) the police, fire service and other partners focusing on health and safety to intervene with those running the establishments in an effort to safeguard the young people frequenting them.</p> <p>The position the Council finds itself in was previously summarised by Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector</p> <p><i>"We can issue a warning notice, but ... no one has the power to close them, neither us, local authorities or the Department for Education."</i></p>

		<p><i>There is no general power to close something that is not registered as a school. We need a better definition of a school – it is too easy to fiddle at the margins and claim that something isn't a school. When people are operating illegally, there should be somebody with powers to make it close. There should be serious consideration of disqualifying people who've run an illegal school. The legal framework needs to evolve."</i></p> <p>The Council endorses Amanda Spielman's comments regarding the need for a clearer definition of a school and the importance of a legal framework within which we can act to inspect and regulate establishments to ensure the welfare of children and young people.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Whilst the Commission acknowledges the challenges in developing meaningful engagement and involvement with the Charedi Orthodox Jewish community, this remains the only way to secure consensual and lasting change and to bring UES into regulatory compliance in Hackney. The Commission therefore recommend that engagement efforts are renewed, and that a contact group be established between Community leaders, including the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, Interlink, Head Teachers of Registered Independent Schools and Chief Rabbis of all Charedi sects operating yeshivas in Hackney, and the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (or its equivalent successor organisation) to support the development of a safeguarding reassurance process. The establishment of such a contact group would help to build trust and confidence, and demonstrate a commitment to improve understanding of those issues pertaining to UES and to develop shared solutions to improved safeguarding arrangements for children that attend such settings.</p> <p>It is recommended that the contact group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Is led by the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board and therefore free from involvement of any other statutory body including e.g. Hackney Council, the Metropolitan Police or Ofsted; b) Should develop a clear remit and terms of reference which should: 	<p>Whilst the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner of the CHSCP and Hackney Council have attempted to find a resolution to this problem (and despite continuing efforts to engage community leaders), no real progress has been made.</p> <p>Since 2014, the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner (ICSC) and the Council have been proactively advocating that the central government needs to enact legislation that provides the same level of safeguards for all children who attend full-time education settings, whatever subject is being taught. The DfE consulted on possible changes to legislation in 2020 but to date, the outcome of the consultation has not been published and no such legislation has been implemented.</p> <p>Local children who attend UES in Hackney continue to be outside the line of sight of safeguarding professionals. There is no direct mechanism to ensure that the premises within which they congregate are safe; that the infrastructure is sound; environment appropriate; or that contemporary safer recruitment practises are being applied to those working frequently and routinely with children.</p> <p>Disappointingly, despite repeated attempts to engage community leaders and seek their cooperation to develop a safeguarding reassurance framework, they have been unable, unwilling or lacked the overarching authority to commit to the changes required.</p>

<p>(i) Set out those measures that will build confidence between and among various representative including how UES will be engaged and involved;</p> <p>(ii) Agree the nature of safeguarding standards to be established in UES (for example DBS checks on staff, staff awareness and training in safeguarding, anti-bullying, complaints procedures, whistleblowing, health and safety);</p> <p>(iii) Identify those systems and processes that will provide assurance that identified safeguarding standards are being met within UES (e.g. health checks, piloting and peer assessment and assurance) and acknowledge that this will be an incremental process;</p> <p>(iv) Agree key milestones and outcomes (both process and safeguarding practice) and the timeframe for their implementation within UES in Hackney.</p> <p>c) Report back progress of its work twice yearly to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission and annually within the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report.</p>	<p>Significant communication has been sent by the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner to a variety of stakeholders encouraging UES to engage in a range of opportunities set out within an agreed 'offer' (to be led by the CHSCP and Hackney Education).. More recently the CHSCP has been contacted by PR Pro, a PR company engaged by a Rabbi in the UOHC. Our understanding is that this company has been commissioned to help broker progress against the CHSCP's offer.</p> <p>IICSA - The ICSC of the CHSCP gave evidence on behalf of the Council to the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). This was as part of the Inquiry's focus on religious institutions and settings. This set out the already known problems, the attempts at resolution and the action required by the government.</p> <p>IICSA published its report in September 2021. Of two recommendations, one specifically related to UES, which was:</p> <p><i>Legislation on the definition of full-time education and unregistered educational institutions providing full-time education The government should introduce legislation to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>change the definition of full-time education, and to bring any setting that is the pupil's primary place of education within the scope of the definition of a registered educational setting; and</i> • <i>provide the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) with sufficient powers to examine the quality of child protection when it undertakes inspections of suspected unregistered institutions.</i> <p>UES Protocol - In 2020, the CHSCP developed a protocol to help manage the response to the identification of UES and any concerns arising in respect of them. It is disappointing that this has been necessary, but in the absence of any appetite from either community leaders or Yeshivas themselves to cooperate, this is the best we have been able to do as a partnership.</p> <p>UES protocol meetings are chaired by the Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding, Hackney Education. When convened, there is good engagement from all relevant agencies, including Ofsted. The</p>
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		<p>Disclosure & Barring Service has recently been made a standing member of the group</p> <p>The protocol itself is relatively straightforward. There is an expectation that when UES are identified, they are notified to Hackney Education and when there are reported concerns, that defined procedures oversee the response to these. The protocol has not been constructed on the basis of educational registration requirements, but on core safeguarding requirements. It is already distinct in that its entire focus is upon those settings that are neither registered nor regulated.</p> <p>Legal Advice - The CHSCP has also sought counsel advice on the legal position relating to UES in the context of the Children Act 2004 and the new safeguarding arrangements led by statutory safeguarding partners.</p>
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3	<p>It is recommended that the Mayor and Chief Officers within the Council continue to robustly press the Government, Department for Education and relevant parliamentary bodies (e.g. Education Select Committee) for a more effective legislative framework for UES. Government should review its legislative timetable and produce a 'statement of intent' about how it plans to close the evident legal loopholes that allow UES to operate with impunity. Specific improvements required of such new legislation would be to:</p> <p>a) Extend the definition of a school, or a part-time school, to include where this setting is the child's main educational experience;</p> <p>b) Expand the powers of entry, inspection and enforcement of UES to give local authorities greater powers to regulate and improve such settings, particularly in relation to health and safety and the safeguarding of children;</p> <p>c) Improve regulation around home schooling, specifically making it a legal requirement for parents to notify the local authority if their child is being electively home educated, and additional powers for the local authority to ensure the quality of education where children are home schooled;</p> <p>d) Improved statutory guidance for how local statutory agencies work in partnership to improve safeguarding of local children (sharing of inspection data, shared intelligence);</p> <p>e) Improve statutory guidance and powers to help local authorities track those children missing from education – with a duty of cooperation among partners (see recommendation 6);</p> <p>f) Provide further clarification about the introduction of a system of regulation for out-of-school settings (including for example, the maintenance of a central register and being subject to inspection and sanctions for those not meeting required standards).</p>	<p>The record on this issue already details the significant lobbying undertaken with ministers. Disappointingly, there appears to have been little appetite to progress solutions at pace and the overall response from the government has lacked any sense of urgency.</p> <p>The Department for Education launched a consultation concerning the regulation of UES and other independent settings on 14 February 2020. This consultation was withdrawn on 7 May 2020 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and was relaunched on 13 October 2020. It closed on 27 November 2020.</p> <p>More recently, the CHSCP's Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner has escalated this matter to the former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Schools System (Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose). This yielded no clarity. Subsequent letters to the new Secretary of State for Education, The Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP, were the same. The new Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Schools System, Baroness Barran, replied on 3 December. Her letter stated:</p> <p><i>I am happy to confirm that the government remains committed to changing the law on the registration of independent education settings, which would bring into scope a range of currently unregistered institutions. You will know that we repeated that commitment in the department's evidence to the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse, and we welcomed the recommendation when the report was recently published. I expect that we will be publishing the response to the Regulating Independent Educational Institutions consultation shortly.</i></p> <p>Our collective position remains unchanged. Government needs to strengthen both the registration requirements and regulation of UES. Without such change, children and young people will continue to be exposed to a two-tier safeguarding system that is simply unacceptable.</p>
4	<p>It is recommended that the Council should take the lead in developing an alliance with those authorities which experience similar issues with UES.</p>	<p>The Council has previously had contact with a number of authorities who are concerned about existing legislation – although it's important to</p>

<p>Such an alliance will facilitate the sharing of good practice and help to develop a common approach to resolving those concerns with UES. In addition, such an alliance will aid the collection of evidence and strengthen the position of those authorities to lobby for legislative change with the Secretary of State for Education and other governmental departments. To support this recommendation the Council should consider hosting a UES conference for local authorities as this will help to maintain the public profile of this issue, assist in identifying the legislative reforms required and help to identify common ways forward for local authorities.</p>	<p>note that Hackney's concerns are distinct and very different to those of other councils, so learning has been limited.</p> <p>The Out of Schools Settings (OOSS) project has, however, assumed this role at a local level. The project brings together 16 Local Authorities, nine of which are East London boroughs. The OOSS Project, which is funded by the DfE, is designed to map and support settings in relation to safeguarding children. It sits alongside existing work undertaken by LBH officers including the Prevent Education Officer and Children Missing Education Team.</p> <p>The strategic direction of the OOSS project has been to build a comprehensive typology of settings and test interventions to discover what works and identify the challenges or barriers to engagement. In practical terms the interventions have included meetings with trustees, staff and volunteers, policy support and the offer of signposting to safeguarding training.</p> <p>The OOSS project team has undertaken extensive mapping of the sector and identified over 300 settings including yeshivas, tuition centres, sports clubs, housing associations, community centres, charities, church halls and other religious settings.</p> <p>The OOSS project team has also developed a RAG rating system. This has been adopted by other pilot projects and promoted, via the DfE, as a model of good practice.</p> <p>Engagement thus far has concentrated in community spaces, particularly those hiring halls to other/smaller organisations or clubs and ensuring hire agreements explicitly describe expectations to safeguard.</p> <p>To support this, an example policy has been written and organisations are signposted to relevant sources of support including the NSPCC's webpages for the sector, the voluntary code for OOSS and CHSCP training.</p> <p>A significant challenge to understanding and embedding effective safeguarding practice is staff and volunteers accessing appropriate safeguarding training. To remedy this the OOSS project team has</p>
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		<p>developed a training offer that will be delivered free of charge either in settings (if there are sufficient staff) or via The Tomlinson Centre. This sits alongside the core training offered by the CHSCP. Three sessions have been held, to introduce the OOSS project to settings that have been delivered, supported by HCVS.</p> <p>Promotional materials have been produced for parents/carers and for proprietors; information is presented on the Local Offer and an OOSS App is in development. This is in addition to an OOSS online portal that contains instructive videos from the HE Safeguarding in Education Team and Re-Engagement Unit, highlighting OOSS responsibilities with links to local and national guidance. Partnership working with other pilot areas including Redbridge, Manchester and Birmingham is online to develop the portal.</p> <p>In conjunction with the CHSCP, all mapped OOSS were sent a tailored Safeguarding Self Assessment audit tool, after being named as 'relevant agencies'. In total the following responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 30 OOSS ● 6 Community Halls ● 11 orgs under Southern / Hackney Housing ● 22 religious settings ● 16 OOSS which are also captured under the commissioned provider
<p>5</p>	<p>The Commission noted evidence of positive collaboration among regulatory partners, though it is apparent that such partnerships between the Council (Planning, Learning Trust, Children & Families and Food Safety) and statutory partners (Health & Safety Executive, Fire Service, Ofsted) could be improved and formalised to help strengthen and improve the regulatory framework for UES. To support this process, it is recommended that a Memorandum of Understanding or similarly agreed protocol is developed across these agencies to:</p> <p>a) Identify a common approach and priorities for UES – e.g. child safeguarding;</p>	<p>Positive collaboration remains across a range of local agencies and services involved with UES. The Council also continues to engage with Ofsted and DfE, particularly through the operation of the CHSCP's UES Protocol. When called, meetings are well attended by partners and actions taken away; including partners such as LFB and Ofsted.</p> <p>Oversight on progress against strategy and operational actions with individual settings is overseen by the UES Working Group, which is chaired by the Group Director.</p>

	<p>b) Share data and intelligence about UES across statutory partners (e.g. location, number of children in attendance, health and safety concerns etc.);</p> <p>c) Undertake joint holistic inspection and assessments of UES;</p> <p>d) Develop a coordinated response and interventions where such settings are uncovered, and do not meet regulatory standards.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Understanding that a significant number of Charedi Orthodox Jewish children are able to remain outside the registered school sector and therefore unknown to the Council and other regulatory partners, the Commission recommends that the Council must improve those systems for identifying and tracking children missing from education. Improved tracking and identification processes are central to developing an informed and proportionate response to UES, and will help to establish a clearer picture of the nature and scale of UES and the children that attend them, and to guide and support regulatory and enforcement action. To this end it is recommended that the Council:</p> <p>a) Lobby for legislative change that legally requires parents to notify their LA if their child is electively home educated (as in 3 above);</p> <p>b) In line with statutory requirements, ensure that all local Independent Schools notify the LA of those children that enter or leave the school register at standard transition points;</p> <p>c) In line with statutory requirements ensure that all local Independent Schools notify the local authority when a child leaves or is placed on the central school register outside transition points;</p> <p>d) In line with statutory guidance, raise awareness of the Council's children missing education procedures and notification processes with local agencies including schools, GPs, other health professionals (Health Visitors), clinical commissioning groups, police and other emergency services, housing agencies and voluntary sector groups;</p> <p>e) Given the possible numbers of children involved (1,000-1,500), ensure that the Children Missing Education Service is adequately resourced and</p>	<p>The EHE consultation ended in June 2019. A formal response by the government is still awaited after all this time, though revised guidance was issued by the DfE in April 2019.</p> <p>Despite the proposed duties undoubtedly strengthening oversight on the children attending such settings, the consultation failed to adequately address the issue of oversight of the settings themselves by way of regulation.</p> <p>The local authority has recruited an additional officer to manage the recent requirement for schools to inform the local authority of non-standard phase admissions. This duty applies to state funded and independent schools. The return rate is subject to ongoing monitoring. Schools with no or inconsistent returns are reminded of their responsibilities. Where a school 'off rolls' a pupil, they are required to specify or undertake joint investigations to determine the name of the receiving setting. If this cannot be determined the issue is referred to the CME team. Reminders of the process are sent to schools annually.</p> <p>Hackney Education's processes regarding elective home education were updated and revised in July 2020 and the resources undertaking EHE assessments were increased from 0.5 FTE to 1 FTE. These processes were subject to a recent internal audit and no recommendations were made. In addition Hackney Education has employed a Pupils Out of School Officer, part of whose job is to engage with Orthodox Jewish families who are believed to be attending a yeshiva. This is to check on children's wellbeing and their education arrangements. Families who attend yeshivas state that they are</p>

	<p>supported to undertake systematic identification, tracking and enforcement procedures;</p> <p>f) With improved detection of those children missing education, introduce a more robust policy of administering enforcement notices and School Attendance Orders.</p>	<p>educating otherwise than at school and therefore come under the scope of the EHE/CME procedures.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Although there are limited statutory duties and responsibilities for the Council in respect of registered schools within the independent school sector, given</p> <p>a) the interrelationship between this sector and the children that attend them and UES and</p> <p>b) the number of local independent schools which are not reaching the required standards or where explicit safeguarding concerns have been raised; it is recommended that engagement and liaison with the local independent school sector by the Council should be strengthened. Improved relationships will help build links, trust, and confidence and help to establish those systems and processes which ensure local children are taught in safe conditions, that their welfare is safeguarded and they obtain the best possible educational outcomes.</p>	<p>The activities and approaches cited in the previous update continue to be pertinent. A standing invitation remains to Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators (SENDCOs) from independent sector schools to attend events such as the termly SENDCO forum and annual conference that SENDCOs from the maintained sector attend.</p> <p>Following engagement with Interlink, Hackney Education has, in conjunction with independent schools, established a forum for heads of independent schools. The forum will be jointly coordinated by a senior leadership and management advisor from HE and an independent school headteacher.</p> <p>Hackney Education has also met with Interlink and school leaders to discuss SEND provisions and will be attending their next meeting of the independent schools SENCO Forum.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Parents are ultimately responsible for the safety and welfare of their child and legally obliged to ensure that they are in receipt of appropriate full-time education. It is recommended therefore that the Council should engage and involve parents within the Charedi Orthodox Jewish community, to inform them of relevant statutory health and safety regulations (e.g. fire safety) and safeguarding standards (e.g. DBS checks) required for their child's schooling, with the intention of supporting parental enquiry and challenge to local UES. It is recommended that the Council should start to engage directly with parents in the Charedi community, rather than relying on intermediary bodies</p>	<p>As part of the OOSS project, guidance for parents and carers for children attending OOSS (including UES) has been revised and is available on the Local Offer.</p> <p>Whilst the identities of some children are known, there remains an absence of intelligence on a significant majority of children attending UES and hence the parents / carers who could be 'enabled' to challenge UES.</p> <p>The changes in legislation concerning Home Educated Children might provide an avenue to identify these families at some point in the future as might the application of the legal powers open to safeguarding partners through the seeking of an injunction. The latter is yet to be tested. Hackney's new EHE procedures are clear on the threshold for</p>

		<p>determining suitability and this includes an element of a secular education (as required by the DfE).</p> <p>The DfE has published guidance for parents/carers with the intention of developing their understanding of the types of questions they should ask proprietors of, and people offer OOSS. This will be available via the OOSS App.</p>
9	<p>Whilst it was broadly recognised that child safeguarding must take a priority for the Council and other regulatory bodies, there was widespread recognition that specific issues with the curriculum at yeshivas remained which could not be ignored and not addressed given the marked differences in educational attainment and the work and training outcomes that result for the Orthodox Jewish Community (particularly among males). It is the belief of the Commission that there will be a significant benefit for the Charedi Orthodox Jewish community if English and STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths) were taught in parallel with religious studies, and in advance of likely changes to legislation. Specifications and standards for any school curriculum, irrespective of setting, are however determined and regulated by the Department of Education and this is an area over which the Council has no powers. In addition, the Department of Education and Ofsted are responsible for inspection, compliance and enforcement of the curriculum quality and standards within all educational settings. In this context, the Commission recommend that the DfE and Ofsted work with the Charedi Orthodox Jewish Community to identify those processes which can lead to a pathway to compliance for UES, in which the curriculum taught is balanced, of sufficient quality and provides outcomes for children which enable them to achieve better outcomes for themselves and their families. The Commission recognises that the Council has no direct role here, but recommends that the Council should facilitate this work and help to move this issue forward wherever possible.</p>	<p>Engagement with registered Orthodox Jewish schools continues from Hackney Education.</p> <p>Hackney Education also continues to work with partners on the issue of UES. Whilst dialogue continues and a clear offer of support / advice for UES has been made by Hackney Education, activity at present is primarily focused on responding to UES under the CHSCP's protocol.</p>
10	<p>The Commission noted that the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) is still in the process of development and finalisation, and as such</p>	<p>The Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) is being developed. The need for further school places and community facilities is recognised in the</p>

	<p>represents an opportunity to address those education and training issues identified for the Orthodox Jewish Community within this review. It is recommended therefore that the Council ensures that the Stamford Hill AAP makes sufficient provision in respect of:</p> <p>Capacity of educational settings to deal with future demand from the Orthodox Jewish community;</p> <p>Availability of potential sites for registered education settings;</p> <p>Youth employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities for young people in the areas, particularly from the Orthodox Jewish community</p>	<p>plan. Even though, it is not possible to distinguish between registered and unregistered provision within planning policy, the AAP does include an Informative on Safeguarding and Health & Safety in Schools which sets out the need for new schools to register with the Department for Education and meet the requirements set out in the Independent Schools Standards. It also sets out that if an existing school is looking to expand or change their site they must notify the Department for Education of a material change to their existing registration.</p> <p>The AAP's approach to educational facilities is to increase the capacity of existing educational settings in a managed manner and to identify site allocations that can accommodate flexible and adaptable space to accommodate a wide range of community needs, which could include educational facilities.</p>
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<p>Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>19th January 2022</p> <p>Item 6 - City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (Annual Report)</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>6</p>
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Outline

Each year, the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership produces a report of its work. This report is presented to the Commission to support its role in the overview and scrutiny of local services.

- Jim Gamble QPM, Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner
- Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, Safeguarding and Learning

Reports

City & Hackney Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2021/22

Members of the Commission are invited to review the attached report and ask questions of officers present.

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Report Title:	The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) Annual Report 2020/21
Meeting for:	Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
Date:	19 January 2022
Produced by:	The CHSCP Team
Authorised by:	Jim Gamble QPM, Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner

Report Summary

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership annual report for 2020/21 sets out examples of the impact, evidence, assurance and learning arising from the safeguarding arrangements in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney.

It covers and reports on activity between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 and includes the following:

- The governance and accountability arrangements for the CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements.
- The context for safeguarding children and young people in the City of London, highlighting the progress made by the City partnership over the last year.
- The context for safeguarding children and young people in the London Borough of Hackney, highlighting the progress made by the Hackney partnership over the last year.
- The lessons that the CHSCP has identified through its Learning & Improvement Framework and the actions taken to improve child safeguarding and welfare as a result of this activity.
- The range and impact of the multi-agency safeguarding training delivered by the CHSCP.
- The CHSCP's priorities going forward and the key messages for those involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.

The Annual Report can be accessed via the CHSCP website: [HERE](#)

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city & hackney
safeguarding
children
partnership

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Annual Report 2020-2021



Foreword

During 2020/21, the COVID-19 pandemic thoroughly tested every part of our local safeguarding arrangements in the City of London and Hackney. In these unprecedented times, safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and others connected with the CHSCP, not only demonstrated their professional commitment, but an ability to flex and do whatever it took to keep our children and young people as safe as we could. For this, I am immensely proud. You should be too.

As an immediate response to the first lockdown, the partnership reviewed its meetings framework, and adapted its priorities to focus on how best to maintain services in a rapidly changing environment. We scaled back several forums and introduced Contingency Oversight Group (COG) meetings. The COGs ensured that partners could frequently address issues linked to the health and well-being of the workforce, identify emerging safeguarding trends (including our line of sight on the young and vulnerable), and spot early issues impacting on the sufficiency of our inter-agency systems.

Alongside focused reassurance activity with partners, we supported targeted awareness raising on issues such as children's mental health, hospital attendance and accidents at home. We pivoted to online training sessions, with participation matching our 2019/20 numbers and in response to the increased threat of online harms, the Safer Schools App was rolled out to schools, parents and carers. This built on our commitment to utilise innovative technology to ensure the information people need to stay safe is always at hand.

With regards to the day-to-day work involving safeguarding children, this continued, albeit in an environment that has never been seen before. Despite such challenges, this report contains numerous examples of the **evidence, assurance, impact and learning** that has been accrued over the reporting period. It includes accounts of how front-line practitioners across all sectors have truly gone above and beyond.



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Getting the basics right has been one of the clear strategic priorities for safeguarding partners for some time. This has never been more important during this period of uncertainty. Making sure that our practice reflects the principles of 'safeguarding first', 'context' and 'professional curiosity and challenge' are as relevant now as they have ever been.

At the time of writing, the reports into the tragic deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, alongside the publication of our own reviews, further illustrate the necessity for children to be 'seen, heard and helped'. I cannot understate the importance of these basic tenets of practice and the need for the government, in partnership with local organisations, to create the conditions whereby strong leadership, a stable workforce, manageable workloads and an appetite to learn allow this to happen.

Last year, I mentioned the fact that the timing of the report does not always assist those in leadership roles to make decisions based on the nature of immediate, contemporary and emerging safeguarding threats. To this end we made a commitment in 2019/20 to produce more routine strategic threat assessments. Whilst securing funding from the Department for Education, we have struggled with recruiting to the analyst role identified to deliver this initiative. Efforts continue and I am optimistic we will soon be able to report positive news in this regard.

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Jim Gamble QPM

Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership



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About the Annual Report

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THE CHSCP

COVID-19

COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY &
SOCIAL MEDIA

CITY
SAFEGUARDING
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About the Annual Report

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership annual report for 2020/21 sets out examples of the impact, evidence, assurance and learning arising from the safeguarding arrangements in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney. It covers and reports on activity between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 and includes the following:

- The governance and accountability arrangements for the CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements.

Page 40 The context for safeguarding children and young people in the City of London, highlighting the progress made by the City partnership over the last year.

Page 40 The context for safeguarding children and young people in the London Borough of Hackney, highlighting the progress made by the Hackney partnership over the last year.

- The lessons that the CHSCP has identified through its Learning & Improvement Framework and the actions taken to improve child safeguarding and welfare as a result of this activity.
- The range and impact of the multi-agency safeguarding training delivered by the CHSCP.
- The CHSCP's priorities going forward and the key messages for those involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.

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ABH	Actual Bodily Harm	HCVS	Hackney Council for Voluntary Service
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic	HLT	Hackney Learning Trust
CAF	Common Assessment Framework	HUHFT	Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
CAFCASS	Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Service	ICSC	Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner
CAIT	Child Abuse Investigation Team	IRI	Independent Return Interview
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	LA	Local Authority
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group	LAC	Looked After Child / Children
CDR	Child Death Review	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
CHSAB	City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board	LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
CHSCB	City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board	MAP	Multi Agency Panel
CHSCP	City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership	MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
CHYPS	City and Hackney Young People's Service	MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
CP	Child Protection Plan	MASE	Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation
CRIS	Crime Reporting Information System	MAT	Multi Agency Team
CSC	Children's Social Care	MPM	Management Planning Meeting
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	NHS	National Health Service
CYPPP	Children and Young People's Partnership Panel	NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
DfE	Department for Education	PPU	Public Protection Unit
DVIP	Domestic Violence Intervention Project	PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
EIP	Early Intervention and Prevention	PSP	Pupil Support Plans
ELFT	East London NHS Foundation Trust	SCR	Serious Case Review
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	SDVC	Specialist Domestic Violence Court
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
FGMPO	Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
FJR	Family Justice Review	SRE	Sex and Relationship Education
FRT	First Response Team	TRA	Tenant Resident Association
GLA	Greater London Authority	TUSK	Things You Should Know (CHSCP briefing)
GP	General Practitioner	UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children



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Summary

The City of London and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) is established in accordance with the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) and the statutory guidance issued within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements define how safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and other organisations work together to coordinate their safeguarding services. These arrangements meet the requirements of statutory guidance and include details about how safeguarding partners will identify and respond to the needs of children, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide for independent leadership and scrutiny. The published arrangements are available [HERE](#).

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Purpose

The CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively.
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats.
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

Vision

That all children in the City of London and Hackney are seen, heard and helped; they are effectively safeguarded, properly supported and their lives improved by everyone working together.



Principles

As leaders across a range of organisations, the commitment of the CHSCP is to work together to make the lives of children safer by protecting them from harm; preventing impairment to their health and/or development, ensuring they receive safe and effective care; and ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for them to live in. The CHSCP wants to make sure that everyone who works with children across the City of London and Hackney has the protection of vulnerable children and young people at the heart of what they do. In practice, this means that children are seen, heard and helped:

- **Seen;** in the context of their lives at home, friendship circles, health, education and public spaces (both off-line and on-line).
- **Heard;** by professionals taking time to hear what children and young people are saying - putting themselves in their shoes and thinking about what their life might truly be like.
- **Helped;** by professionals remaining curious and by implementing timely, effective and imaginative solutions that help make children and young people safer.



The CHSCP's aim is to ensure that safeguarding practice and outcomes for children are at least good, and that staff and volunteers in every agency, at every level, know what they need to do to keep children protected, and communicate effectively to ensure this happens. All of our activity is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.** As a partnership, we will champion the most vulnerable and maintain a single child-centred culture.
- **Context is key.** Capitalising on the unique opportunities presented by a dual-borough partnership, we will have an unswerving focus on both intra-familial and extra-familial safeguarding contexts across the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney.
- **Anti-Racist practice is key.** The CHSCP's safeguarding arrangements are proactively anti-racist. Our focus in this context moves beyond the rhetoric and is evident in our leadership, our practice and in the outcomes of the children, young people, and families we engage.

- **The voice of children and young people.** We will collaborate with children and young people and use their lived experience to inform the way we work. We will regularly engage with them as part of our core business and ensure their voices help both design and improve our local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- **The voice of communities.** Improving our understanding of the diverse communities across the CHSCP's footprint, we will regularly communicate with, listen to, and engage local communities in the work of the CHSCP. We will harness their experience to both inform and improve the way we safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- **Enabling high quality safeguarding practice.** We will promote awareness, improve knowledge and work in a way that is characterised by an attitude of constructive professional challenge.
- **Fostering a culture of transparency.** We will enable the CHSCP to learn from individual experience and continuously improve the quality of multi-agency practice.



Key Roles & Relationships

SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

The safeguarding partners agree on ways to co-ordinate safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning. All safeguarding partners retain an equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a single point of leadership, safeguarding partners will decide on which partner will take the lead on relevant issues that arise. The safeguarding partners in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney are 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. The lead representatives of the safeguarding partners during 2020/21 were:

- **Tim Shields, The Chief Executive of Hackney Council**
- **John Barradell, The Town Clerk of the City of London Corporation**
- **Jane Milligan, The Accountable Officer of the City & Hackney CCG**
- **Marcus Barnett, The Commander of the MPS Central East BCU**
- **Ian Dyson, Commissioner, City of London Police**

RELEVANT AGENCIES

Safeguarding partners are obliged to set out which agencies are required to work as part of the CHSCP's arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. These agencies are referred to as relevant agencies and have a statutory duty to cooperate with the CHSCP's published arrangements. A defined number of relevant agencies meet regularly with safeguarding partners as the CHSCP Executive. Others are invited when deemed necessary and/or be included in various CHSCP sub-groups / thematic groups. Wider engagement events will also be facilitated through the City & Hackney Safeguarding Partnership which includes a much broader range of agencies, professionals and volunteers involved in safeguarding children and young people. A schedule of relevant agencies is defined in part 4 of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018.



OTHER NAMED ORGANISATIONS

Safeguarding partners can also include any local or national organisation or agency in their arrangements regardless of whether they are named relevant agencies. Whilst not under the same statutory duty, there remains an expectation of compliance, with legal powers existing in defined areas. For example, Section 16H of the Children Act 2004 contains a wider power exercisable by the safeguarding partners to request a 'person or body' to provide information to them. There is no limitation or definition of 'person or body' therefore the request can be made to anyone. Local organisations named by the CHSCP include:

- All 'Out of School Settings' providing tuition, training, instruction or activities without the supervision of parents or carers.
- Social Housing providers.

THE INDEPENDENT CHILD SAFEGUARDING COMMISSIONER

Jim Gamble QPM is the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner (ICSC) of the CHSCP. The ICSC is appointed by safeguarding partners and given authority to coordinate the independent scrutiny of the local child safeguarding arrangements. The ICSC is fundamentally independent to local safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. The ICSC has significant experience of operating at a senior level in the strategic coordination of multi-agency services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

ASSURANCE

Through engagement, commentary, and lobbying, the ICSC provides independent leadership in respect of local matters relevant to the safeguarding of children and young people. The ICSC holds both safeguarding partners and relevant agencies to account for their effectiveness in safeguarding children and young people. The ICSC chairs the CHSCP's Strategic Leadership Team and the CHSCP Executive to ensure fundamental independence is built into the oversight of statutory safeguarding partners and relevant agencies. The ICSC also chairs the Case Review sub-group to ensure independent decision making in respect of the commissioning and progress of reviews. The ICSC continues to be engaged with elected officials to brief on specific issues, raise concerns and to provide an independent overview of practice. This takes place via 1:1 meetings and other forums (such as 'joint chairs' meetings) and those that engage elected members and other local boards (Health & Wellbeing / SAB / CSP). The ICSC is also engaged by the Local Authority scrutiny functions in both the City of London and Hackney.



THE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) are senior officers that can speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent. They can hold their organisation to account, take decisions and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters. The SLT is chaired by the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner and during 2020/21, comprised the following:

- **Anne Canning, The Group Director of Children, Adults and Community Health (Hackney Council)**
- **Andrew Carter, The Director of Children and Community Services (The City of London Corporation)**
- **David Maher, The Managing Director (The City & Hackney CCG)**
- **Marcus Barnett, The Commander of the MPS Central East BCU**
- **Dai Evans, T/Commander, City of London Police**
- **Annie Gammon, Director of Hackney Education (Hackney Council)**

THE CHSCP EXECUTIVE

The CHSCP Executive comprises representatives from safeguarding partners and several relevant agencies. It includes named / designated professionals. It is independently chaired by the and is responsible for delivering the CHSCP business plan and mitigating any identified risks. The core membership of the CHSCP Executive can be found [HERE](#).

THE CHSCP TEAM

The CHSCP is supported by a dedicated group of staff. The team includes a Senior Professional Advisor, a Business and Performance Manager, a Training Co-ordinator and a Co-ordinator role.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER BOARDS

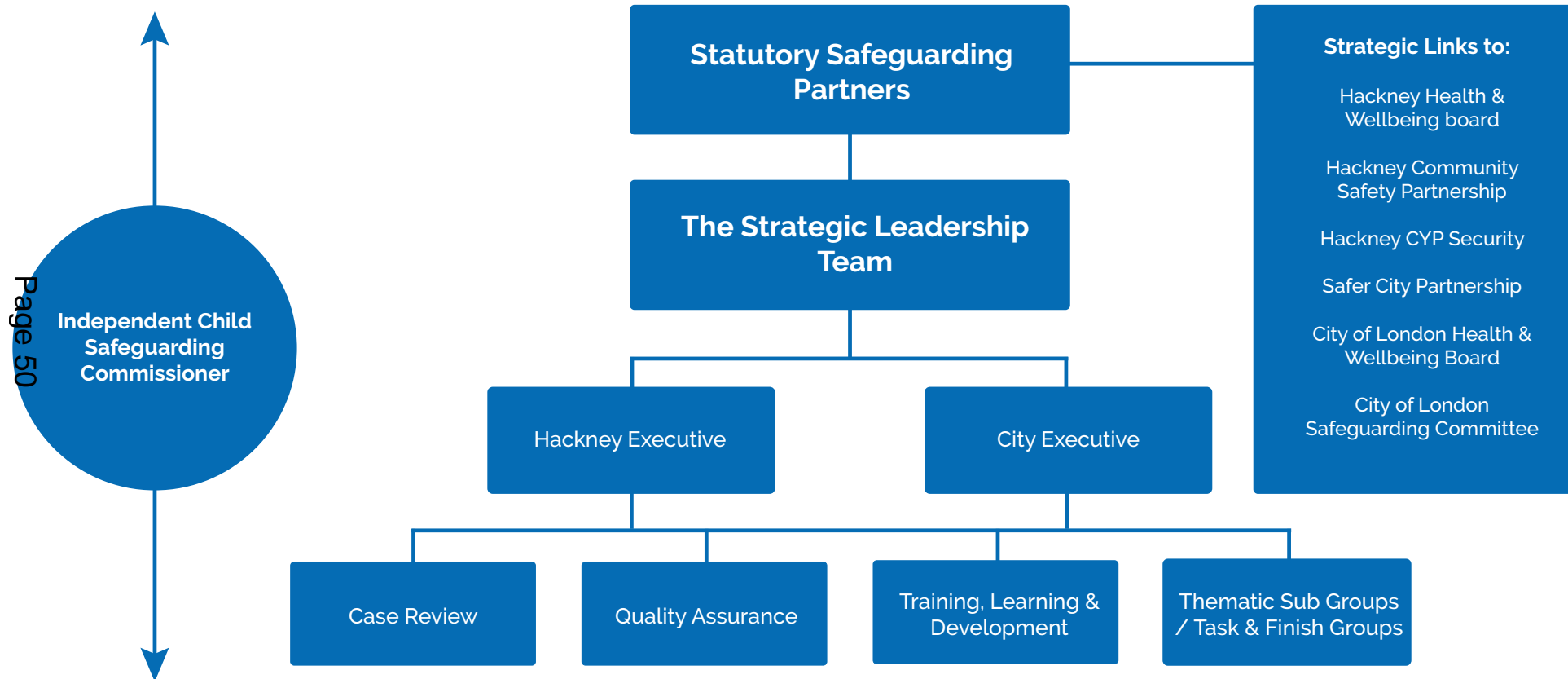
Continued engagement with the City & Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB) and other strategic partnerships in the City of London and Hackney was frustrated but continued during 2020/21.

EVIDENCE

Working collaboratively with the CHSAB, the Transitional Safeguarding Task and Finish Group led on an exercise asking organisations working with young people aged 16 - 25 years old about the safeguarding issues affecting young people. The group used this information to create a brief outlining the safeguarding issues affecting young people and an action plan on how to take this work forward. A transitional safeguarding action plan was developed, which focusses on Information gathering / Engagement activity and Partnership and awareness raising.



CHSCP Structure 2021



Note: In 2020/21, the CHSCP operated with a combined Executive group covering the City of London and Hackney.



Financial Arrangements

IMPACT

As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, INEQE Safeguarding Group continues to support the local partnership in the production of its annual report.

Page 51	Serious Case Reviews	£10,649
	Staffing and Travel	£283,963
	Training & Learning Management System	£9,909
	Printing, supplies and Equipment	£3,489
	Venues	£0
	Miscellaneous	£0
	Total Expenditure	£308,010





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Whilst the contexts of safeguarding are different across the City of London and Hackney, the three biggest challenges facing multi-agency safeguarding work over 2020/21 remained as follows:

- The impact of COVID-19 creating challenges in respect of the sufficiency of current and future workforce capacity. Contingency arrangements in this regard were scrutinised by the CHSCP. Whilst evidence of resilience, there remains concern as to the potential for future workforce challenges. These centre on the longer-term effects on the mental health of practitioners arising from extended periods of remote working in a highly charged and challenging area of practice.
Support systems for children and young people (via school, services, friends and family) changed over 2020/21 and were either reduced or removed. Children and young people were less visible and families were under increased financial and social pressure.
- Increasing demand in respect of specific needs and risks.

The priority for the CHSCP is to ensure that our children are **seen, heard and helped**. We cannot do this if we are unable to support and sustain a motivated, healthy and engaged multiagency workforce, identify emerging safeguarding themes and ensure ongoing interagency interoperability. To this end, Contingency Oversight Group (CoG) meetings were set up in response to Covid-19 and held in both the City of London and Hackney.

EVIDENCE

The pandemic highlighted the invisibility of vulnerable children and the increase in safeguarding risks that they faced. Throughout the series of lockdowns there was restricted access to services and reduced school attendances for all children, coupled with parental perception that it was unsafe for them and their children to use health services even when they were ill because of their fears of getting Covid. The issues reported nationally were reflected locally i.e., an increase in domestic abuse notifications. Paediatricians reported a significant reduction in children attending emergency departments with an associated reduction in child protection referrals. Some children presented very late and seriously ill when they should have been seen earlier. Despite the reduction in presentations, when children presented, they had quite significant safeguarding issues for example in the first lockdown there was an increase in the number of children under one with head injuries, one of which resulted in a local child safeguarding practice review being undertaken locally. There has been an increase in children with emotional disorders (e.g., eating disorders) and over a 50 percent increase in CAMHS referrals. The pandemic has had and will continue to have an adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of children. CCG Annual Report 2020/21



IMPACT

CoG meetings identified emerging issues throughout 2020/21 such as attendance at A&E, domestic violence, mental health, a local increase in head injuries to babies / toddlers and risks arising from hazards in the home. This led to a focused approach by safeguarding partners on targeted awareness raising, developing specific guidance and delivering training. During the pandemic, partners also swiftly pivoted to providing digital solutions to ensure that agencies were engaged (despite not being able to physically meet). Multi-agency processes such as strategy discussions, child protection conferences and visits to children were all undertaken virtually where required.

IMPACT

During the pandemic, partners also swiftly pivoted to providing digital solutions to ensure that agencies were engaged (despite not being able to physically meet). Multi-agency processes such as strategy discussions, child protection conferences and visits to children were all undertaken virtually where required.

ASSURANCE

The CHSCP prepared for further challenges by ensuring that safeguarding partners and relevant agencies had clear plans in place and that they were sufficiently prepared. This was achieved by conducting a **COVID-19 Operational Resilience Audit**. A major focus of this audit activity related to workforce sufficiency and the cruciality of safeguarding partners ensuring effective support is in place across the system. Whilst the CHSCP had already identified the health and wellbeing of the workforce as a priority, Covid-19 accelerated reassurance activity in this respect.

88% of organisations either partially or fully identified best practice and agreed pathways for staff to access occupational health support.

96% of organisations had a risk assessment process which assessed the risk to individual employees from the COVID-19 virus. It identified increased risks due to staff's age, ethnicity, gender and relevant health conditions.

93% of organisations ensured staff who had suffered bereavement, due to COVID-19 or other reasons, were supported to access specialist support services and that there were policies and practices in place for pastoral support of staff.



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The CHSCP continues to promote its digital platforms and communications reach. The CHSCP website design was refreshed over 2020/21.

THE CHSCP WEBSITE

The CHSCP website has continued to allow for user-friendly content searches and accessible resources. The most visited pages continue to be those relating to training and case reviews.

www.chscp.org.uk

TWITTER

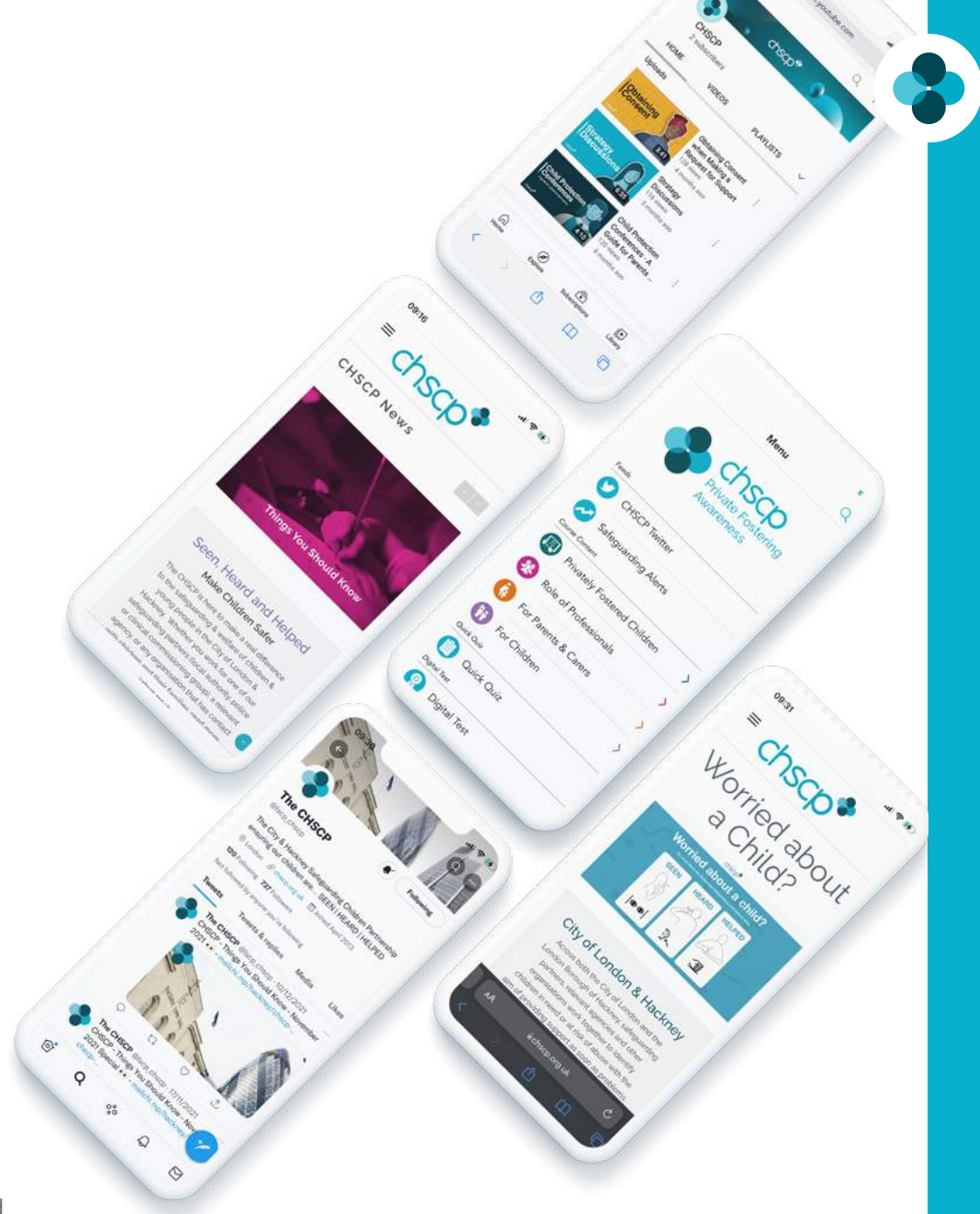
Page 56 [@lscp_chscp](https://twitter.com/lscp_chscp)

PRIVATE FOSTERING APP

Following the success of the City of London Private Fostering App, the CHSCP developed and launched a bespoke App for the partnership. Alongside providing information about private fostering, the App includes a training module and other important advice for safeguarding professionals.

TUSK BRIEFINGS

The CHSCP produces e-briefings called Things You Should Know, more commonly referred to as 'TUSK briefings'. These are circulated to subscribers and also cascaded by safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations. The number of subscribers to the TUSK remained broadly static over 2020/21, increasing from 1414 to 1432.





Technology & Social Media

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With the growing use of technology and social media, all professionals need to adopt a much more sophisticated approach to their safeguarding responsibilities. They need to reflect on the changing nature of communication and how this impact upon practice issues, particularly those focused on the identification and assessment of potential risk. To do this successfully, professionals need to recognize that children and young people do not use technology and social media in isolation. Their offline and online worlds are converged, and both need to be understood when trying to identify the type of support that a child, young person and their family might need.

To help professionals (and parents / carers) better understand this complex environment, new Apps have been launched by Hackney Council and the City of London Corporation. The Safer Schools App provides support on topics including online bullying, mental health, sexting, media literacy, gaming and sexual exploitation online. It costs nothing to download and provides access to advice, guidance and CPD accredited training, with a specific focus on making children and young people safer in the online world.

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City Safeguarding Snapshot

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↗ **1,825** children and young people under 18

↔ **16.7%** of total population

↗ **12%** of children living in poverty

↗ **13.7%** of children in primary schools in receipt of free school meals (national average 20.8) (Jan2021)

↘ **12** cases referred / stepped-down to the City's Early Help Team

↗ **46** Team around the Child (TAC) meetings held

↔ **5** young people going missing from care (12 incidents)

↔ **0** incidents of children & young people missing from home

↘ **259** contacts to the City Children & Families Team Hub

↘ **62** referrals

↘ **9.7%** re-referrals

↘ **44** statutory social work assessments completed by The City Children & Families Team

↘ **72%** of assessments completed within 45 days

↘ **5** child protection investigations

↘ **3** children on a Child Protection Plan as of March 2021

↗ **131** Children in Need episodes as of March 2021 (101 in 2019/20)

↘ **20** children & young people looked after as of March 2020

↗ **6** MARAC meeting involving children

↗ **15** referrals to the LADO

↔ **0** Private Fostering arrangements as of March 2020



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Safeguarding in The City of London

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City of London Demographics

The City of London has an estimated resident population of about 8500 and a transient daytime working population of around 330,000. Of the resident population, approximately 16.7% are children and young people. The City of London is an economically diverse area, with its population characterised by areas of affluence and poverty. Within the Square Mile, there are large disparities. The Barbican West and East residential areas are among the most affluent areas in England. Portsoken Ward, however, is among the most deprived. An estimated 78% of the City of London population is White British; however, approximately 40% of children are from black or ethnic minority groups compared to 21% nationally. The Bangladeshi community makes up 4% of the total population. Domestic abuse remains a key issue in the City with the majority of child protection investigations in the City involving domestic abuse concerns. There are no children involved in the criminal justice system currently and no teenage pregnancies. Academic attainment for City resident children is higher than the national average. The numbers of children and young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), obesity rates, infant deaths and underweight babies, hospital admissions for self-harm, deliberate injury, alcohol-related injury and the number of pregnant smokers are all low with numbers ranging from 0 to 5 in each category. Within the City, there is one maintained primary school (with a Children's Centre attached), four independent schools and several higher educational establishments. It has no maintained secondary schools. The majority of children attending these schools come from other boroughs and most of the local authority's secondary school age children go to school outside of the City.

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Early Help

Early help services across the City of London are delivered by People's Services and a range of partners, including schools, children centres, one GP surgery and health colleagues as well as other local service providers, including the community and voluntary sector. They are effective, and some are particularly strong. The range of services available to children, young people and their families in the City continue to adapt and evolve based on the needs of the local population. The early help arrangements in the City have been in place now for a number of years and are embedded with agencies. Children needing an early help service in the City receive a well-resourced, dedicated service, which is provided by trained staff. Over 2020/21, the Early Help Strategy for the City of London continued to drive partnership improvements. With a focus on ensuring the right help is provided at the right time and in the right place, the strategy is focussed on key strategic objectives and is coordinated by the CHSCP City Early Help Sub-Group. Through critical reflection, consultation and co-production with children and families, partners from the Multi-Agency Practitioners Forum and the City's Parent Carer Forum for children with SEND, the following progress has been made:

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EVIDENCE

In 2020/21, the total number of cases referred or stepped down to early help services was 12, a reduction from 21 in 2019/20. This reflects the reduction in activity seen nationally as a consequence of the Covid-19 lockdowns. There were no re-referrals to early help within 12 months of closure. This has been a consistent pattern and reflects the effectiveness of the multi-agency intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people, preventing problems getting worse.

ASSURANCE

'Work is appropriately held within early help, and there is evidence of good direct work with families to effect change. There is effective engagement with partner agencies to support individual families, and, strategically, to develop the early help service further.' OFSTED 2020



ASSURANCE

The City of London has a clear Thresholds of Need document that has been agreed with partner agencies. This is used to provide services at an appropriate stage and as early as possible to prevent higher levels of need in the future.

There is a single point of contact for referrals to Early Help services and Children's Social Care, enabling timely and appropriate decision making and allocation.

The Early Help Assessment is co-created with the family, including discussions with the child/ young person as well as with practitioners from involved agencies.

*Early help practice in the City of London is **Empowered**: evidenced through insightful assessments by highly skilled staff, that lead to robust offers of help. **Child-centred**: evidenced by children and young people routinely being present at meetings or represented through direct work. **Integrated**: evidenced through a strong 'Think Family Focus', and a 'top-three' (cases of concern) collaboration across children's, health, adult, housing and homeless service.*



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Children in Need of Help and Protection

Good practice with children and young people who are in need of help and protection can be seen when help is provided early in the emergence of a problem and there is a well-coordinated multi-agency response. Thresholds between early help and statutory child protection work are appropriate, understood and operate effectively. Risk is effectively mitigated and outcomes improved through good assessment, authoritative practice, planning and review.

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ASSURANCE

'Children in need of help and protection within the City of London receive a good service that is proportionate to their needs and enables them to effect positive change. Risks to children are minimised and, where required, additional support is provided to prevent concerns from escalating.' OFSTED 2020.

ASSURANCE

The City of London Corporation undertook a virtual visit thematic audit in May 2020. This showed that social workers were aware of the potential deficits in using virtual visits to assess and manage risk. There was evidence when comparing the quality between face to face and virtual visits that social workers had taken this into consideration by following the guidance they had been given. Telephone contact did not give the same depth or quality of information required, as audits completed using this method showed that the interaction was rather one-dimensional. Where possible, video/face to face visits were used. Since August 2020, all visits have been face-to-face, unless there are risk factors which require alternative planning. Data shows a large increase in fact to face visiting for quarter 3.



Contacts, Referrals and Assessments

The Children and Families Team Hub provides responsive screening activities and ensures all contacts are immediately progressed as a referral if the threshold for a statutory social work assessment is met. Signposting activity requires staff to have a continually updated knowledge of local services alongside a comprehensive understanding of the City of London Thresholds of Need. The Children and Families Team Hub aims to ensure that only those children meeting thresholds for statutory assessments are progressed as referrals. Local Authorities undertake these assessments to determine what services to provide and what action to take. The full set of statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 can be found [HERE](#).

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EVIDENCE

The 259 contacts made to the Children and Families Hub reflects a decrease on previous years and again, this will be related to the lockdown arrangements because of Covid-19. Referrals similarly decreased from 100 in 2019/20 to 62 over 2020/21. The re-referral rate in the City of London was 9.7%, a reduction from 15% in 2018/19. Notwithstanding the reduced demand during 2020/21, the performance data in the City continues to be indicative of a good social work response and timely access to appropriate support that helps children and their families. The Children and Families Team completed 44 assessments during 2020/21, compared to 67 in 2019/20. 72% of assessments were completed within 45 days or less. There were five child protection (Section 47) enquiries in 2020/21, a reduction from 20 recorded in the previous year.

ASSURANCE

Despite the clear challenges arising from identification of need and risk, children continued to receive a swift service during 2020/21 when safeguarding concerns became apparent. All Section 47 enquiries undertaken in the City are led by a suitably qualified and experienced registered social worker.



CHILDREN ON CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

Following a child protection enquiry, where concerns of significant harm are substantiated and the child is judged to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, social workers and their managers should convene an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). An ICPC brings together family members (and children / young people where appropriate) with supporters, advocates and professionals to analyse information and plan how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child / young person. If the ICPC considers that the child / young person is at a continuing risk of significant harm, they will be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP). Children who have a CPP are considered to be in need of protection from either neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse; or a combination of one or more of these. The CPP details the main areas of concern, what action will be taken to reduce those concerns and by whom, and how professionals, the family and the child or young person (where appropriate) will know when progress is being made. Three children were subject to a CPP in the City at the end of 2020/21.

ASSURANCE

'When children are identified as being at risk, strategy meetings are convened in a timely manner and are well attended by professionals, who provide relevant information to inform decision-making. Decisions following these meetings and any subsequent enquiries are clearly recorded by managers to facilitate effective interventions with families.' OFSTED 2020



Children in Care

A child or young person who is 'looked after' is in the care of the local authority. They can be placed in care voluntarily by parents struggling to cope, they can be unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; or in other circumstances, the City of London Corporation and partners will intervene because the child or young person is at risk of significant harm. As of 31 March 2021, the City of London Corporation was responsible for looking after 20 children and young people, a reduction from 24 in 2019/20. The City of London's rate for looked after children is well above statistical neighbours and proportionately, this reflects a high volume of work for the City of London social workers.

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PLACEMENT STABILITY, TYPE AND LOCATION

In 2020/21, 5% of children looked after had three or more changes of placement over the year. This was one young person and an improvement from 2019/20. Caution should be observed in analysing these figures because variations of one or two children can have a major impact on the rate and this performance can therefore fluctuate. This continues to reflect good performance and means that children looked after by the City tend to enjoy good stability and placements that meet their needs well. The local authority does not have its own fostering service due to the size of the looked after children population, but spot purchases from the Pan London consortium. Ofsted rates all independent fostering agencies used by the City either Good or Outstanding. There are sufficient suitable placements available to meet the needs of the City's looked after children and young people. All placements are outside of the local authority, with nine young people being placed over 20 miles from the City.

ASSURANCE

An external audit commissioned by the City of London on Placement Stability took place in November 2020. This audit found examples of good and outstanding practice across twenty-five cases. Areas for improvement were identified in only a small number of cases. The audit concluded the overall quality of foster care and semi-independent placements was generally of a good standard. The City of London Corporation evidenced proactive mitigation (where mitigation was possible) against dominators which caused placement instability. Even when placement breakdowns were experienced, with its associated implications, good outcomes for young people are being achieved.



Care Leavers

There is a strong range of support for care leavers in the City of London. Care Leavers are well supported, workers remain in touch with them, there is availability of suitable accommodation, and they are provided with health support. 25 out of 39 care leavers were in education, training or employment; 1 in university, 20 attending college; 4 in employment, 12 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and 2 recorded as unknown (March 2021).

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ASSURANCE

In some areas, particularly in relation to children in care and care leavers, services have improved, resulting in positive experiences and progress for young people. OFSTED 2020

Violence Against Women and Girls

Children and young people who are exposed to domestic violence and abuse can grow up in a vacuum of what is expected in terms of a positive and healthy relationship. This can create additional vulnerabilities and/or harmful behaviours. Responding proactively and in collaboration with the Safer City Partnership (SCP), violence against women and girls remains a key priority for the CHSCP, recognising both the short and long-term impact on the safety and welfare of children and young people. During 2020/21, the Safer City Partnership continued its focus on developing services and a new **Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy**.

IMPACT

Operation Encompass has been rolled out by The City of London Police. The City's schools have completed the training which was delivered virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. Training material has been delivered to all schools so they can refresh staff as and when required.

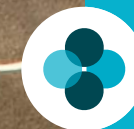


MARAC

Operational arrangements for MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment case conference) processes are clearly defined in the City of London. The City MARAC operates a lower threshold than in other local authorities and takes cases where a preventative approach would be helpful. This is good practice and enables children within these families to have a better co-ordinated multi-agency service.

EVIDENCE

In 2020/21, six MARACs were held where children were involved. This increase mirrors the patterns seen elsewhere across London and the UK in terms of domestic violence and abuse escalating during periods of lockdown.

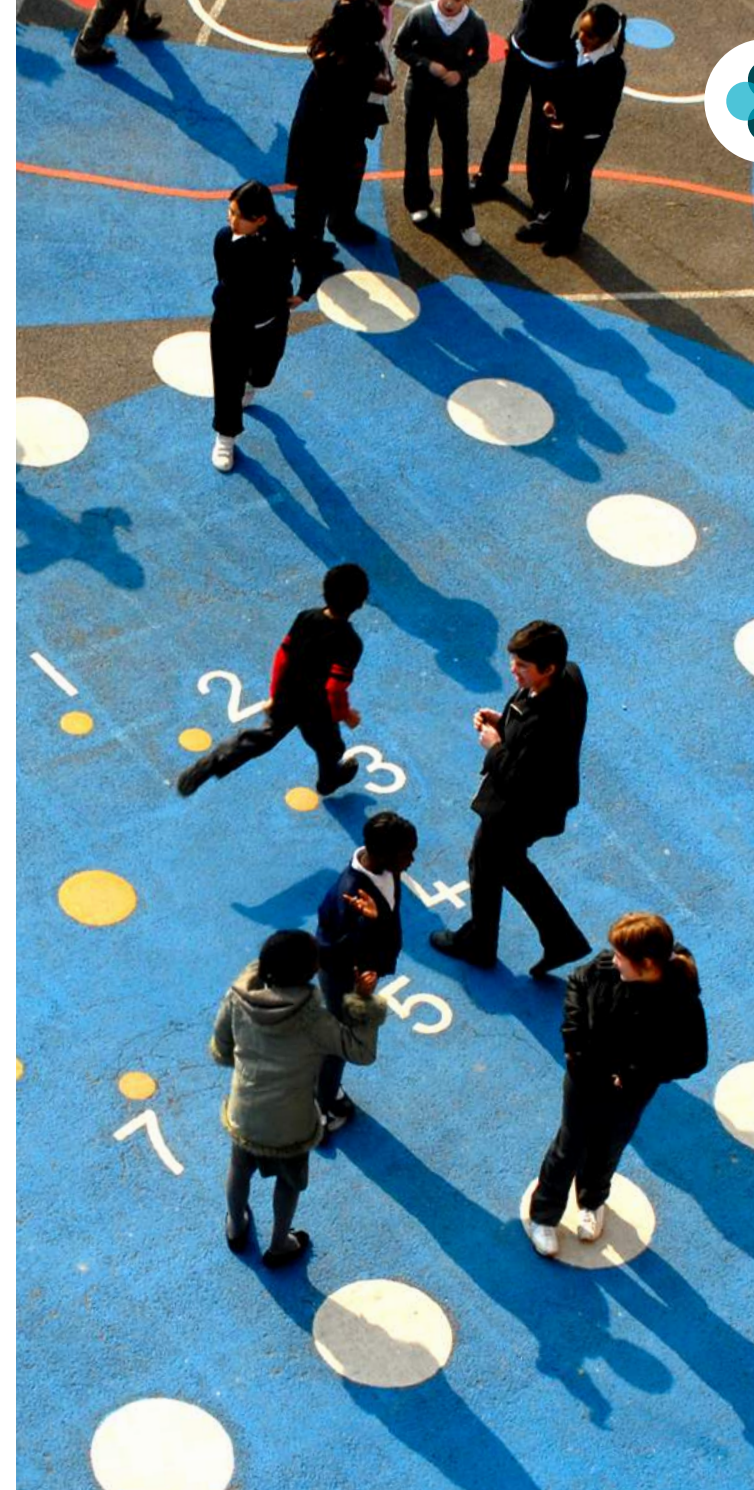


Safeguarding Adolescents

Understanding the context in which children and young people live their lives is an essential feature of effective multi-agency intervention. For the CHSCP, this issue remains central to our overall approach in making children and young people safer. Context is key. During 2019/20, the CHSCP refreshed its defined strategy for safeguarding adolescents. This strategy builds on the progress made by the partnership in safeguarding children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and those missing from home, care and education. It was developed in parallel to our improved understanding of the issues facing young people; established through focused problem profiles, national and local learning and intelligence pictures involving vulnerable adolescents.

The strategy continues to draw on evidence about effective practice from contemporary research. It is a focussed document that sets the parameters for developing our understanding of the complexities of young people's vulnerabilities and finding more effective multi-agency responses to these issues. The strategy maintains a focus on making sure that professionals are getting the basics right whilst striving to develop best practice in terms of the following priorities:

- Knowing our Problem, Knowing our Response
- Strong Leadership
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Protection and Support
- Disruption and Prosecution





CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Understanding the nature and prevalence of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) and ensuring that partner agencies provide appropriate safeguarding responses and interventions remains a priority. In February 2017, a revised definition of CSE was issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

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'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.'

DfE 2017

The City of London continued to experience a low number of cases relating to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), with most contacts being about non- residents. Over the last four years, the crimes relating to CSE that have been recorded by the City Police include rape, sexual activity and possession of indecent images. Cases have also included grooming by offenders via the internet / social media. Partner agencies engaged in the City continue to share intelligence that may influence the knowledge of the profile. Of significance is the City's location as a major transport hub. A quarterly data set of over twenty indicators produced for the MASE Group supplements the information provided by the City Police. This informs understanding, and the identification of risk indicators. In recognition of the overlapping vulnerabilities adolescents face, the City Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation panel was changed to the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation panel to include all forms of abuse and exploitation that adolescents are at increased risk of. Although few in number and type and relatively lower level risk in comparison to neighbouring LAs, the City is not complacent and maintains an 'it could happen here' stance.



CHILDREN MISSING FROM HOME, CARE AND EDUCATION

The City Police lead on all children who go missing from home or care and a coordinated response takes place with the City Children and Families team, working closely with the child's parents or carers. Numbers of children who go missing in the City of London are very low. A specific part of the Safeguarding Adolescent Strategy focuses on the effective management of children who are missing. The City of London has reviewed its Missing from Care Procedures and the arrangements for Return Home Interviews. There remains senior leadership oversight through the missing period with robust partnership arrangements in place. All strategy meetings have health, social care and police engagement as a minimum. This has helped with the timely response to missing episodes and alerting relevant authorities to missing episodes.

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ASSURANCE

NCH Action for Children is commissioned by the City of London Corporation to give missing children a return home interview within 72 hours. These interviews are followed up with therapeutic support depending on the outcome to address risk-taking behaviour. This is in line with statutory guidance published by the Department of Education in 2014. Return home interviews are reviewed and used by the partnership to understand the reasons why children go missing and inform strategy and service delivery.

ASSURANCE

Since 2015, the City of London Corporation has implemented a rigorous system to identify all children of statutory school age and where they attend school. The City of London maintains this record of where children are placed through the primary and secondary transitions process. A school tracker is updated and reviewed regularly.

ASSURANCE

There is senior leadership oversight through the missing period with robust partnership arrangements in place. All strategy meetings have health, social care and police engagement as a minimum. This has helped with the timely response to missing episodes and alerting relevant authorities to missing episodes.

A Vulnerable Children's list includes missing and includes oversight by social care and education. This is currently reviewed monthly and throughout Covid-19 was reviewed weekly.



GANGS, CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION AND SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

There are several ways in which young people can be put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in and as victims of gang violence which can be in relation to their peers or to a gang-involved adult in their household. The City of London Drugs Profile found that the largest area of drug misuse was among affluent City workers with the supply of drugs controlled by organised criminal groups involving male 'runners' in their 20s who often deal pre-ordered drugs out of their cars. While drug related crime involving resident children and young people is low, a case involving a trafficked young person highlighted this as an emerging theme in the City that requires close attention and partnership working between Police, Adult and Children's Social Care, and businesses. There is concern in the north of the City that young adults known to be associated with Islington gangs have been seen around Golden Lane Estate. Community safety partners are monitoring this closely and report 'no hard issues' other than gang related graffiti to date. Work with the estate and Islington is needed to understand this emerging pattern and mitigate associated risks for CYP.

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IMPACT

Work continues on the implementation of Operation Innerste, which is a process that enables police to obtain the fingerprints and photograph of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors when they present at the police station. The aim of the operation is to provide an active deterrent to traffickers or potential exploiters Pilot schemes have seen it greatly reduce the number of minors who abscond from their placements and present in a different local authority area. During 2020/21, Operation Innerste training was delivered to all frontline police officers, with plans implemented for Children's Social Care staff to receive a streamlined package.



ADOLESCENT NEGLECT

Identifying, naming and responding to adolescent neglect can be challenging due to misconceptions that adolescents become more resilient because of their age alone, an over-reliance on older young people to be responsible for themselves, and the assumption that they can and will ask for help if needed. This is further exacerbated in affluent families where material wealth and access to private services can serve to keep neglect and emotional abuse of adolescents hidden. It is also the case that CYP in affluent families where there is parental substance misuse, mental ill health, or domestic violence can be harder to reach due to the way families use their resources to block access and can hide the extent of their needs through the use of privately funded services.

Page 7/5

EVIDENCE

The City of London has previously sponsored research on neglect in affluent families. Conducted by Goldsmith University, this research identified teens as a particularly vulnerable cohort with complex safeguarding needs. Research by The Children's Society has also found a potential link between emotional neglect and those children living in more affluent families. Given the City's demographics, this remains a priority, ensuring that practitioners have the necessary skills to recognise and respond to the signs and symptoms of adolescent neglect.

SELF-HARM & SUICIDE

The partnership's focus on self-harm and suicide continued over 2020/21 as a consequence of the deaths of a number of young people from Hackney. Learning from the published reviews into these cases is set out later in this report. The City of London's Suicide Steering Group continued to provide strategic oversight and operational planning covering both adults and children.

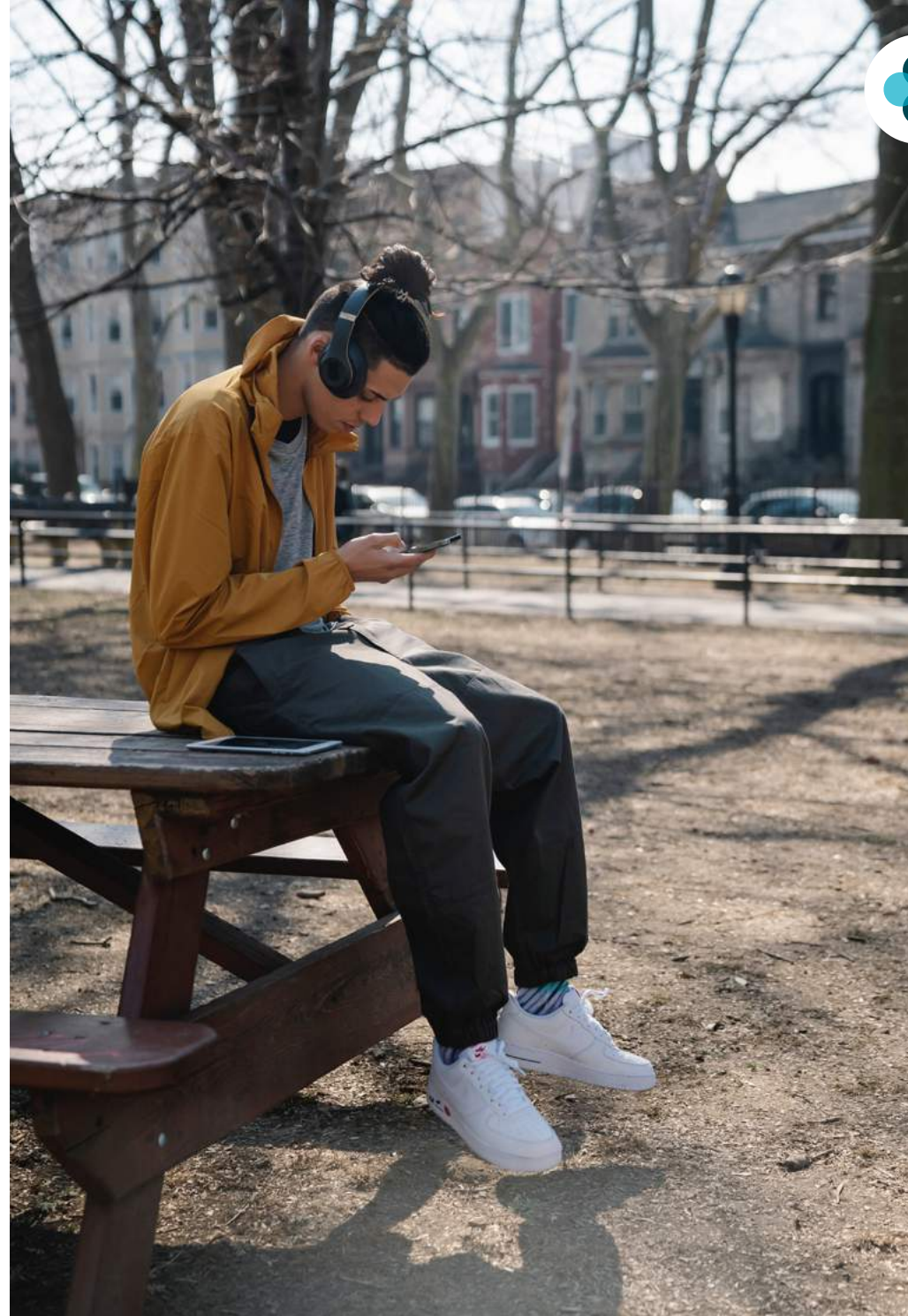




RADICALISATION

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act received Royal Assent on 12th February 2015. Prevent was placed on a statutory footing in July 2015 to ensure all specified authorities in local areas, as a minimum, understand the local threat and take action to address it, assess if local frontline staff need training to recognise radicalisation, and to ensure that all of those who need to work together to deliver the programme do so in the most effective way. The City of London has not been identified as a Priority Area and as such, receives no additional Home Office funding to deliver its Prevent programme. The Safer City Partnership (SCP) retains overall governance of this agenda, which includes a focus on ensuring there are sufficient arrangements in place to safeguard children and young people. The City of London Police delivers Prevent training to schools, youth providers and businesses.

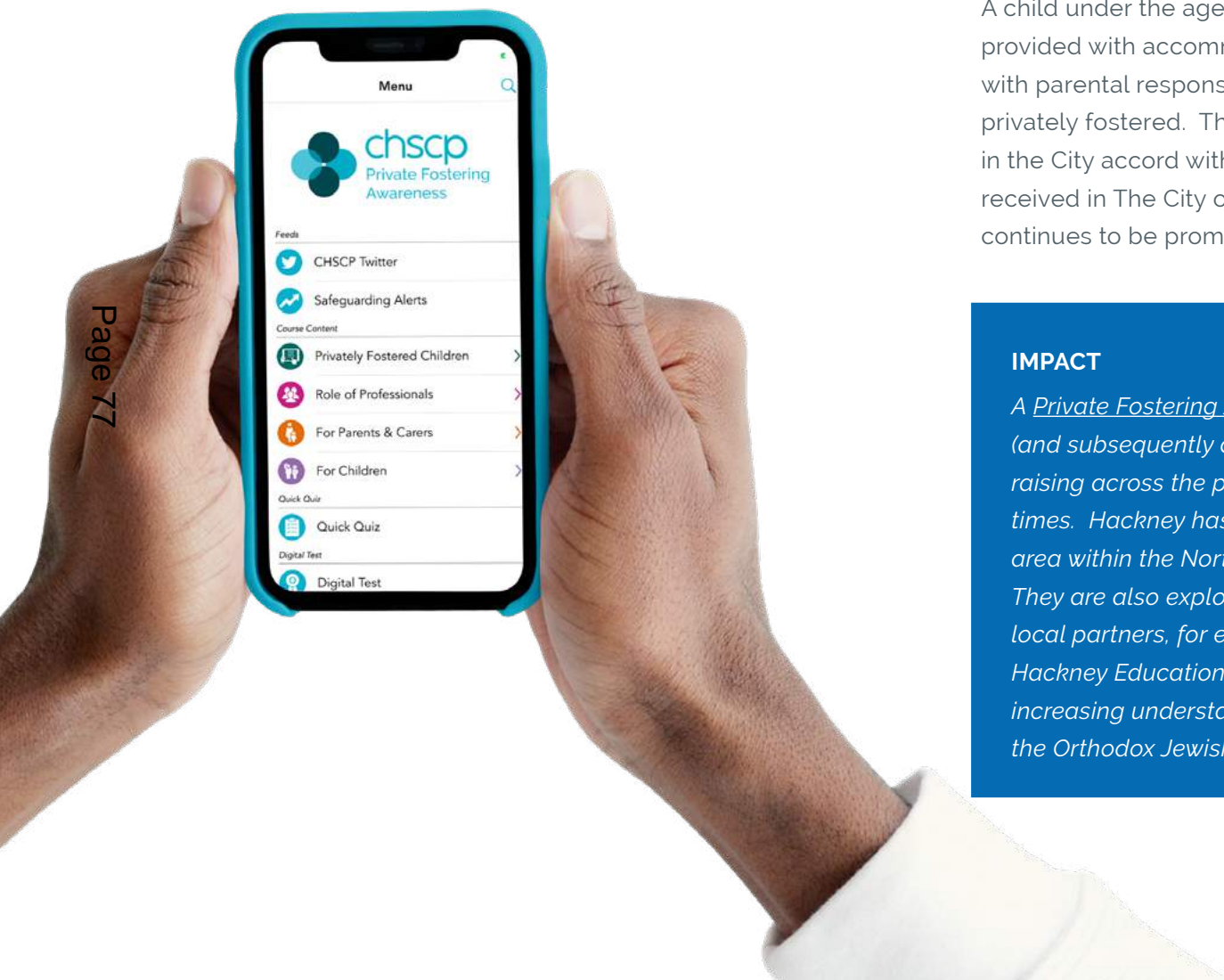
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Private Fostering

A child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or a close relative for 28 days or more is privately fostered. The arrangements for managing private fostering in the City accord with statutory requirements. No notifications were received in The City of London during 2020/21. Private Fostering continues to be promoted via the CHSCP Private Fostering App.



IMPACT

A Private Fostering App originally launched in the City of London (and subsequently developed by the CHSCP) to support awareness raising across the partnership has been downloaded nearly 7000 times. Hackney has worked closely with colleagues working on this area within the North London Consortium, to share best practice. They are also exploring opportunities to raise awareness with specific local partners, for example, looking at the admissions process with Hackney Education and local voluntary sector organisations about increasing understanding of the private fostering regulations within the Orthodox Jewish community.



Children with Disabilities

Since the introduction of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms in September 2014, the City of London Corporation has made good progress in implementing these. All former Statements of Special Educational Needs were transferred to Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans well in advance of the national deadline of 1 April 2018. All statutory assessments are completed within 20 weeks (the statutory timeframe). There remains a very high level of satisfaction rate amongst families accessing the City of London's services and their view of multi-agency working is good. The SEND Joint Strategy and self-evaluation form (SEF) has been developed with both partners and families to set out the City's priorities and to highlight the areas where the most progress is being made.

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MAPPA

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are the statutory measures for managing sexual and violent offenders. The Police, Prison and Probation Services (Responsible Authority) have the duty and responsibility to ensure MAPPA are established in their area and for the assessment and management of risk of all identified MAPPA offenders. The purpose of MAPPA is to help reduce the re-offending behaviour of sexual and violent offenders in order to protect the public from serious harm, by ensuring all agencies work together effectively.

IMPACT

The City of London provided short breaks to four children supported by Early Help and there were 20 children with EHC plans in place (January 202). There is a disability lead in the social work team who has specialist knowledge and supports the service when needing to progress assessment work with disabled children. During the Covid-19 pandemic, partners in the City of London have continued to offer close support to children with EHC Plans and their families through a weekly review and have a strong integrated offer between Special Educational Needs and Children's Social Care.

EVIDENCE

Across London on 31 March 2021, there were 6549 Category 1 'Registered Sex Offenders' (RSOs) (6581 in 2019/20 and 6452 in 2018/19), 3521 Category 2 'Violent Offenders' (3735 in 2019/20 and 4128 in 2018/19) and 61 Category 3 'Other Dangerous Offenders' (31 in 2019/20 and 27 in 2018/19).



Safer Workforce

Despite all efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations are made against staff or volunteers working with children. Organisations should have clear procedures in place that explain what should happen when such allegations are raised. These should include the requirement to appoint a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to whom these allegations are reported. It is ordinarily the responsibility of the DSL to report allegations to, and otherwise liaise with, the designated officer in the local authority (referred to as the LADO). The LADO has the responsibility to manage and have oversight of allegations against people who work with children. Reporting to the Assistant Director of People Services, the LADO role in the City is held by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager. The LADO should always be contacted when there is an allegation that any person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

EVIDENCE

Activity - There were 15 referrals made to the LADO during 2020/2021 period, which is an increase of 7 from 2019/2020. This increase has not been due to any significant surge in referrals, but how referrals and contacts are now being recorded. In the past only cases that went to an Allegation Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) Meeting were recorded as a LADO, but this did not truly reflect the breadth of concerns and allegations that were being referred.

EVIDENCE

Themes - The highest proportion of referrals received by the LADO related to incidents that occurred in the professional's person life. Of the five referrals received in this category, two were related to child sexual offences, one was related to domestic abuse and two were related to the professional's behaviour in their personal life. The majority of these incidents were progressed through disciplinary procedures. The range of organisations involved included Health, Education and the voluntary sector.



IMPACT

There was improved engagement with the LADO due to the accessibility enabled by virtual working. The speed at which meetings could be convened was also enhanced without availability being affected by travel, distance and room availability.

IMPACT

LADO Training & Awareness Raising - Designated Safeguarding Leads accessed training through the CHSCP.

Part of this training focuses on the role of the LADO. Face-to face training by the LADO was hindered over 2020/21 due to the pandemic, but key professionals remained engaged through the Safeguarding Education Forum and CHSCP meetings, including the Contingency Oversight Group meetings convened in the City of London.

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ASSURANCE

Practice audits of LADO work are conducted every 6 months by the Service Manager and Practice Development Managers in the Safeguarding and Reviewing Service. These consistently find timely responses from the LADO Service, positive working relationships between the LADO and partner agencies, clear actions and outcomes being achieved. What routinely remains problematic is a lack of written referrals/information being received from referrers, and partners not providing updates of feedback from their internal investigations as requested by the LADO. This results in additional work for the LADO in terms of having to outline phone conversations in emails so that the network is clear on advice provided and actions expected, and in following up requesting updates.



Hackney Safeguarding Snapshot

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THE CHSCP

COVID-19

COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY &
SOCIAL MEDIA

CITY
SAFEGUARDING
SNAPSHOT

SAFEGUARDING
IN THE CITY OF
LONDON

HACKNEY
SAFEGUARDING
SNAPSHOT

SAFEGUARDING IN
HACKNEY

LEARNING &
IMPROVEMENT

KEY MESSAGES
FOR PRACTICE

TRAINING &
DEVELOPMENT

PRIORITIES &
PLEDGE

WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW



↔ Approximately **63,828** children and young people under 18

23% of total population

↗ **30%** of children living in poverty

↗ **479** children were subject to a CAF and MAT intervention in 2020/21

↔ **293** new early help cases identified and supported through the MAT process

↘ **11,473** contacts to Hackney CFS

↘ **2,093** referrals

↗ **18.6%** re-referrals

↘ **3,664** assessments completed by Hackney CFS

↗ **78%** of assessments were completed within 45 days

↘ **836** child protection investigations

↘ **237** Children on a Child Protection Plan as of March 2021

↘ **426** children & young people looked after as of March 2021

↗ **279** MARAC meetings involving children and young people living in families with domestic violence



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Safeguarding in Hackney

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THE CHSCP

COVID-19

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CITY
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TO KNOW



Cyberattack

Hackney Council was the victim of a serious cyberattack in October 2020. The attack meant that the social care management system (Mosaic) and document management systems (Comino and eDOCS) were unavailable, which has had a significant and widespread impact on Hackney's Children & Families Service (CFS). The cyberattack has affected the ability of the CHSCP to oversee the full suite of performance metrics relevant to CFS.

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ASSURANCE

Hackney CFS continued to work to safeguard children and to support children and families following the significant impact of the cyberattack. It worked closely with partner agencies to share information where there were gaps in records in the immediate period after the cyberattack. This included the police establishing a team to carry out additional checks to support social workers to know the history of families in the absence of historic case records, and linking in with schools and health partners to gather information on children on CP Plans as a priority.

ASSURANCE

Hackney CFS asked all its practitioners to complete case summaries for all the children they were working with to capture what they knew so this could be saved in the interim case recording system - this was particularly important if practitioners were going on maternity leave or leaving the organisation, but was also vital to share and record known information in the absence of historic case records.

ASSURANCE

A suite of new forms were immediately put into use so that practitioners could continue to record their work from the first day of the cyberattack. The Council built an interim social care recording system so practitioners could continue to record and view their work with children and families - this went live for practitioners in January 2021. The Council also rebuilt its live performance reporting system (Qliksense) to provide live data to operational and strategic managers in the Children and Families Service to be able to track and monitor the progress of work with children and families.



ASSURANCE

ICT colleagues are continuing to work to recover information from historic case records from prior to the cyberattack. Previous case notes from before October 2020 were recovered and added to the interim social care recording system in March 2021. This supported practitioners to understand the history of families they were working with. ICT are continuing to work on recovering further historic information.

ASSURANCE

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As a result of the cyberattack, NHS Cyber Security severed their connection to the NHS Spine which prevented Child Protection – Information System (CP-IS) uploads and downloads. CP-IS is a database that is used locally by Homerton Hospital to identify vulnerable children.

CP-IS Operations Team have been in regular contact with LB Hackney to offer assistance. With no case management system or database, LB Hackney and Homerton reverted to manual processes.

No new plans were being uploaded onto the NHS Spine and no attendances at unscheduled health settings were being sent to the LA.

Local processes for data sharing were set up with the main local NHS Trusts. Their mitigating child safeguarding processes have been audited and accepted.

NHS Digital extracted all LB Hackney data held on the spine and sent for audit.



Hackney Demographics

The London Borough of Hackney is an inner-city London borough. Its population is estimated at 281,100 people with 23% of its population aged under 18 (63,823 children). Hackney is a culturally diverse area, with significant 'Other White', Black and Turkish/Kurdish communities. A large Charedi Jewish community is concentrated in the North East of the borough and is growing. Hackney was the 22nd most deprived local authority overall in England in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation, in 2015, it was ranked eleventh, and in 2010 it was ranked second. It is relatively more deprived in relation to barriers to housing and services, income and living environment than its overall rank suggests, but generally less deprived than its overall ranking for crime, employment and health and significantly less deprived for education. At GCSE the average Attainment 8 point score per pupil in Hackney was 49.2 points, slightly lower than the London average of 49.7. Crime fell by over a third between 2003 and 2015 (over 13,000 fewer victims of crime). Crime levels have increased by a third since 2015. Crime in Hackney is now higher than in other inner-London boroughs with similar social and economic characteristics.





Early Help

Children and young people in Hackney continue to have access to and benefit from an extremely wide range of early help services that are sharply focused on meeting the diverse needs of local communities. These services are delivered by the Hackney Children and Families Service, Hackney Education and a range of partners, including 74 schools, a network of 21 children centres delivering a range of services and working closely with schools, GPs and health colleagues as well as other local service providers, including the community and voluntary sector.

CHILDREN'S CENTRE FAMILY SUPPORT AND MULTI-AGENCY TEAM (MAT) MEETINGS

Family support in children's centres seeks to improve parenting capacity, protect children from harm and neglect and improve outcomes for young children. Family support is part of the early help Universal Partnership Plus offer to families with children predominantly but not exclusively, under 6 years and is coordinated by the MAT (Multi-Agency Team meetings), underpinned by the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) early help assessment. MAT meetings have continued to occur fortnightly in each of the six strategic Children's Centres in Hackney. Chaired by a qualified social worker employed by Hackney Learning Trust, MAT meetings are attended by a range of professionals including midwives, health visitors, Children's Centre family support teams, speech and

language therapists and First Steps. Early help interventions delivered include: parenting programmes; individual and small group work to address family relationships and dynamics; support with: housing; finance; child behaviour; sleeping; toilet training; routines; and the transition to nursery and school.

IMPACT

Early help interventions are largely effective in meeting the needs of the children and young people who access them. Only 12% of MAT cases that closed in 2020/21 ended in escalation to statutory services and 72% (208) of MAT cases closed with a lower risk assessment than the preliminary risk assessment at the start of the intervention.

Of children whose allocation to Family Support Units ended over the past 6 months, 11% of these cases escalated to statutory services. 12% of the cases received for coordinated Early Help support from Multi-Agency Teams during 2020/21 were stepped down from social work intervention.



YOUNG HACKNEY

Young Hackney provides 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.

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PROGRAMME - CCG

Through the City and Hackney Neighbourhoods programme, the CCG has been progressing several projects that aim to strengthen knowledge and understanding of practitioners working within neighbourhoods and strengthen pathways through services. It has revised the processes of involving Primary Care in multi-agency discussions regarding 0-5 years children and their families so that GPs are better linked in. The CCG has also been testing the strengthening of links and pathways between services working with vulnerable adults and services for children and young people.

ASSURANCE

The CCG is progressing a project that aims to strengthen links between Primary Care and Schools with the aim that by the end of the next financial year, all Primary Schools will have a named contact at their Local GP Practices and there is a pathway for Schools to draw on expertise concerning children who are absent from School or who have specific, complex or chronic health needs. By the end of the academic year this should look like:

A named contact for Schools and their local GPs to have a direct line of communication to increase dialogue.

Clear pathways for managing health concerns within the school using GP advice.

A directory of GP contacts and named School contacts produced, so that with consent, respective parties can contact a child's GP to input into multi-agency discussions concerning children's wellbeing.

For children, young people and families this should mean health needs are being picked up earlier and families are being better supported through COVID anxieties to ensure children's absence from School is avoided or minimised.



Children in Need of Help and Protection

Good practice with children and young people who are in need of help and protection can be seen when help is provided early in the emergence of a problem and there is a well-coordinated multi-agency response. Thresholds between early help and statutory child protection work are appropriate, understood and operate effectively. Risk is effectively mitigated and outcomes improved through good assessment, authoritative practice, planning and review.

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CONTACTS, REFERRALS AND ASSESSMENTS

During 2020/21, the First Access & Screening Team (FAST) acted as the single point of contact for referrals to Children's Social Care in Hackney and provided responsive screening activities.

EVIDENCE

FAST received 11473 contacts from a range of sources of which 2903 were accepted as a referral to CFS. This is a marked decrease in the number of referrals compared to 2019/20 (5031). The percentage of re-referrals increased from 15.8% to 18.6%. The reduction in volume mirrors that seen in other areas and is directly correlated to the pandemic and lockdowns resulting in children being less visible to the professional network.

The decrease in the rate of referrals in Hackney is also linked to a change in approach and methodology at the 'front door', including the introduction of a consultation line for professionals and improved early help pathways.

Following contact, the FAST aims to ensure that only those children meeting thresholds for statutory assessments are progressed as referrals to CFS. Local Authorities undertake these assessments to determine what services to provide and what action to take. The full set of statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 can be found [HERE](#).

EVIDENCE

3,664 assessments (574 per 10k) were completed in 2020/21, a 26% decrease compared to 4,923 assessments (771 per 10k) completed in 2019-20. Hackney's current rate of assessment is now far more in line with the rates seen in statistical neighbour authorities. The 2020/21 rate was slightly higher than the statistical neighbour 2020 rate of 547 per 10k and the 2020 national average of 554 per 10k. As with referral rates, the 2019-2020 statistical neighbour and national averages do not reflect the impact of the pandemic on the number of assessments completed, and it is expected that these averages will be lower for 2020-21 based on information about the decrease in referrals/assessments seen nationally during the pandemic.



EVIDENCE

Performance in relation to the timescale for the completion of assessments within 45 working days has continued to improve compared to previous performance against this indicator. 93% of assessments during the first quarter of 2021/22 were completed within 45 working days, compared with 77% in 2020/21 and 64% in 2019/20. A significant proportion of assessments result in families receiving a timely and proportionate response.

A Strategic Plan was put into place in May 2020, with a number of new initiatives rolled out over the year including:

A refresh of the Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework

The launch of a professional consultation line in February 2021

A representative from Hackney Education joining the multi-agency team in FAST.

Development of plans to transition the FAST into a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

IMPACT

In February 2020 a review of FAST was undertaken, led by Hackney CFS, due to increasing levels of contact, referral and assessment rate and in turn a higher proportion of assessments that ended in No Further Action. The review wanted to understand if more children and families could be helped and supported at an earlier stage and how effective the application of threshold (need, harm and risk) was across the safeguarding partnership, but specifically to address how children and families could receive the right help and support that was proportional to their need, including the need for protection.

ASSURANCE

There can be no doubt that partners have grasped the opportunities presented by the pandemic to bring operations closer together. Plans are in place to have a fully co-located and integrated MASH service, that will also harness a blended approach to partnership working.



STRATEGY DISCUSSIONS

Ofsted's inspection of Hackney's children's social care services in 2019 identified that in some strategy discussions, they do not involve all relevant partners sharing agency information until the initial child protection conference stage. In response, the CHSCP has developed this protocol as a practical guide for Hackney professionals involved in a child protection enquiry. It covers details about when strategy discussions should be convened, who needs to be involved and what factors need to be considered. The protocol includes an agenda template that will help you follow the process and understand the decisions that need to be made. This material has been further enhanced through the CHSCP launching an animated video guide on strategy discussions. Watch it [HERE](#).

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CHILDREN ON CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

Following a child protection enquiry, where concerns of significant harm are substantiated and the child is judged to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, social workers and their managers should convene an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). An ICPC brings together family members (and children / young people where appropriate) with supporters, advocates and professionals to analyse information and plan how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child / young person. If the ICPC considers that the child / young person is at a continuing risk of significant harm, they will be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP).

EVIDENCE

308 children became subject to a Child Protection Plan in 2020-21, an 18% decrease from 374 children (59 per 10k) in 2019-20. The 2020/21 rate of 48 per 10k was higher than the 2020 statistical neighbour average (42 per 10k) and lower than the 2020 national average (55 per 10k). At the end of March 2021, 237 children were on a CP Plan. During the year, CP Plans were seen to increase. This was due to a reduction in the number of children ceasing to be subject to CP Plans in the first half of the year rather than an increase in the numbers becoming subject to CP Plans. The figures are indicative of the challenges that the pandemic restrictions presented in undertaking effective work with families to support them to reduce the level of risk to their children.



Children in Care

A child or young person who is in care is in the care of the local authority. They can be placed in care voluntarily by parents struggling to cope, they can be unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; or in other circumstances, Hackney CFS and partners will intervene because the child or young person is at risk of significant harm.

EVIDENCE

'Children in care and leaving care in Hackney benefit from a strong service.' OFSTED 2019

IMPACT

Prior to November 2020 there had been a particular increase in the number of 15-17-year-olds coming into care. Some of the increase in the number of children who are in care in 2020 was also due to Court proceedings being delayed due to the impact of the pandemic that meant that some children didn't move onto other arrangements.

The decrease in the number of children who are in care since November 2020 is linked to several factors including a focus on edge of care work to support young people where there is a risk of family breakdown as well as changes to the Children's Resource Panel. The Panel has been refreshed to offer a higher level of respectful challenge and high support, with a focus on mobilising resources to step in to a family and reduce harm keeping children at home where possible, enabling Hackney CFS to be more confident that it has the right children in its care.

EVIDENCE

As of 31st March 2021, Hackney was responsible for looking after 426 children and young people. There has been a significant decrease in the number of children who are in care from a peak of 477 children (75 per 10k) in November 2020, to 404 children (63 per 10k) in June 2021. This follows a sustained increase in the number per 10,000 during the first half of 2020/21. The June 2021 rate (63 per 10k) remains higher than the 2020 statistical neighbour average (61 per 10k) but is now lower than the 2020 national average (67 per 10k).



PLACEMENT STABILITY, TYPE & LOCATION

On the whole, stability is associated with better outcomes for children. Proper assessment of a child's needs and a sufficient choice of placements to meet the varied and specific needs of different children are essential if appropriate stable placements are to be achieved. Inappropriate placements tend to break down and lead to frequent moves. Data capture on these indicators was affected by the pandemic. Similar to earlier years, the vast majority of children who are in care are in foster placements.



Care Leavers

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.

Each year over 10,000 young people leave the care system and become care leavers. Their immediate transition to independence and the years that follow can be difficult for many. With little to no family support, the lived experience of some can be extremely challenging and isolating. In 2020, the CHSCP published a briefing paper building on our collective understanding of the challenges faced by care leavers. It provides several headline messages for improving multi-agency safeguarding practice. It summarises the lessons from the reviews of two cases involving care leavers who tragically died by suicide. Wherever you work, use this briefing paper to generate discussion about the vulnerability of care leavers, particularly in the context of their mental health. Talk about what you can do differently, reflect on the key messages and above all, ensure your individual practice is sufficiently attuned to them.



Violence Against Women and Girls

It is estimated that 3 in 10 women (aged 16+) will have experienced domestic abuse at some point in their lives and that 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse in the home. Applying these figures to local populations would suggest that 34,142 women have experienced intimate violence, with 5804 children and young people being either directly or indirectly affected by it. Responding proactively and in collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership remains a key priority for the CHSCP, recognising both the short and long-term impact the safety and welfare of children and young people.

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The CHSCP is represented on Violence Against Women and Girls operational and strategic panels, which is comprised of statutory and voluntary sector organisations. The partnership in Hackney progressed its ambition to move from a strategy based on tackling DV to one that aims at a wider approach responding to all forms of VAWG. This development follows national and regional policy and aims to embrace all forms of violence that are committed against women and girls as they have a number of commonalities and therefore suggest a linked approach.

Operationally, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) in Hackney encompasses the following areas:

- **Intervention Officers.** The Intervention Officer posts allow for the recruitment of social workers, former police officers, probation officers as well as qualified domestic abuse advocates. This will build a service with a mix of skills and backgrounds who are experienced in assessing and managing risk.
- **Perpetrator interventions.** This model integrates allows for the flexibility for staff to engage with perpetrators directly as needed to deliver a responsive, holistic and victim-focused risk management service.
- **Operational and strategic management.** Managers are responsible for operational case work and for strategic / partnership working. This differs from the usual model whereby a 'VAWG co-ordinator' role sits separately from the delivery of risk management services working with clients.

From April 2017, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) joined the Children and Families Service as part of the Early Help and Prevention Service. 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; supports service users with court attendance; supports service users to obtain legal protection; and works with service users and other professionals to address their needs. The service also works with perpetrators of domestic abuse to try to reduce risk.



EVIDENCE

DAIS have throughout 2020-2021 managed capacity with a continued offer of in-person appointments either at the Hackney Service Centre, in homes or in other settings, telephone contact and virtual meetings. The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service received 1,354 new referrals between April 1st 2020 and March 31st 2021. The average weekly number of referrals across 2020/21 was 26, slightly above the weekly pre-Covid rate of 25 cases per week.

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EVIDENCE

DAIS clients give positive feedback about DAIS. After DAIS' intervention, 76% of clients feel less likely to "have to change what I say or do based on how [the perpetrator] might react". 69% report feeling less worried about being hurt again. 88% reported that DAIS had considered well any issues relating to their identity. In terms of partner agency feedback on training provided by DAIS, 97.5% describe it positively with 72.5% describing training as 'very useful' with 97% reporting that their practice will be improved as a result of the training. 97% found DAIS to be an accessible service. 97% said if they had a friend or relative being hurt by someone they loved, they would recommend DAIS to them





MARAC

The number of cases considered at MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment case conference) continues to reflect a robust response to providing multi-agency support to victims and children at risk of domestic violence and abuse.

EVIDENCE

Numbers of high-risk cases have continued to rise during and following the covid restrictions. 2020/21 saw a total of 595 cases, an increase of 21% on the 492 cases heard in 2019/20. This rise in referrals was seen in other London boroughs and may be due to better recognition and reporting as well as a rise in actual high risk domestic abuse precipitated in part by covid restrictions providing greater opportunity for perpetrators to abuse and control victims. The MARAC has continued throughout and since the covid restrictions period to operate successfully. Police, the Council and partner agencies have found the online forum to be more efficient regarding multi-agency participation, sharing information before and during the meeting and agreeing joint actions to reduce harm. Of the total MARAC cases, 279 involved children in the household (an increase from 253 in 2019/20).





Safeguarding Adolescents

Understanding the context in which children and young people live their lives is an essential feature of effective multi-agency intervention. For the CHSCP, this issue remains central to our overall approach in making children and young people safer. Context is key. During 2019/20, the CHSCP refreshed its defined strategy for safeguarding adolescents. This strategy builds on the progress made by the partnership in safeguarding children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and those missing from home, care and education. It was developed in parallel to our improved understanding of the issues facing young people; established through focused problem profiles, national and local learning and intelligence pictures involving vulnerable adolescents.

The strategy continues draws on evidence about effective practice from contemporary research. It is a focussed document that sets the parameters for developing our understanding of the complexities of young people's vulnerabilities and finding more effective multi-agency responses to these issues. The strategy maintains an unswerving focus on making sure that professionals are getting the basics right whilst striving to develop best practice in terms of the following priorities:

- Knowing our Problem, Knowing our Response
- Strong Leadership
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Protection and Support
- Disruption and Prosecution

The partnership has continued to develop its understanding of exploitation and extra-familial harm including criminal exploitation, county lines and trafficking. The Extra-Familial Risk Panel, a key operational component, continued to be held fortnightly 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. There is strong multi agency attendance from Police, Education, Health, Youth Offending Team, Young Hackney and the Integrated Gangs Unit. The Panel develops operational actions which looks to reduce harm and disrupt exploitation of children. 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. Both forums also report back any significant issues via the CHSCP Safeguarding Adolescents Group.



CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Understanding the nature and prevalence of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) and ensuring that partner agencies provide appropriate safeguarding responses and interventions remains a priority. In February 2017, a revised definition of CSE was issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.'

DfE 2017

EVIDENCE

Analytical research has been undertaken to interrogate data relating to CSE and HSB and to identify emerging themes and trends which inform service development. The research has highlighted three broad CSE profiles in Hackney:

CSE risk resulting from peer-on-peer abuse (sexual offences/exploitation against one or more victims and usually perpetrated in a group setting)

CSE risk from an adult perpetrator (typically a young person believing themselves to be in a 'relationship' with an adult after being introduced to them by a normally vulnerable friend, or through online contact)

Exploitation via social media (inciting or encouraging a victim to take and send explicit images of his/herself)



CHILDREN MISSING FROM HOME, CARE AND EDUCATION

The Police lead on all children who go missing from home or care and a coordinated response takes place with Hackney CFS working closely with the child's parents or carers. For those young people who repeatedly go missing this co-ordinated response often involves a lead professional from education, Young Hackney, Youth Justice Service and the Integrated Gangs Unit. Hackney CFS has led on strengthening the partnership's understanding of and response to children and young people who go missing from home and care. Missing episodes are considered as part of a broader spectrum of vulnerabilities affecting adolescents which include CSE, harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), radicalisation and gang and youth violence.

When a young person returns from an episode of going missing, they are offered an independent return home (IRH) interview by the Children's Rights Service. 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 go missing and what support they need to reduce further episodes. The implementation of a daily meeting with Missing Police has supported better working relationships, information sharing and development of robust risk assessments and timely plans to locate children and offer the appropriate support. The most prominent themes in reasons children and young people have been going missing is 'difficulties at home or



school', with overcrowding being highlighted in a number of cases. Mental health was also a key precipitating factor for missing episodes, as was additional learning needs whereby young people became confused with how to get home or made poor decisions due to peer influences.

IMPACT

Hackney CFS and the police have agreed that any child identified as high risk with a pattern of missing episodes will have a Missing Child Meeting within 24 hours of them going missing rather than 72 hours, with the aim to respond to these children in line with other concerns, such as domestic abuse.

In respect of children missing education, The Children Missing Education (CME) Team continues to identify, monitor and track children missing or not receiving a suitable education. This includes liaison with FAST when there are safeguarding concerns. The work of the CME team fits closely with other strands of work to support vulnerable pupils including supporting schools and families to prevent poor school attendance, truancy, exclusions and supporting schools and families to get children back to school once absence has occurred. The team liaises closely with the Education Attendance and Admissions Services.

IMPACT

Over the last 18 months a rapid improvement plan in relation to Children Missing Education has been developed and implemented. This has included:

The development of a structure for a bi-annual teaching and a learning forum to support parents in securing positive outcomes for children and young people

The development and adoption of a protocol to set out our approach to engender improved relationships with the Orthodox Jewish community to establish whether or not children and young people are electively home educated.

The launch of an updated Elective Home Education (EHE) policy with schools in July 2020. A public campaign in November 2020 included settings within the Orthodox Jewish community.

The redesign of the Elective Home Education assessment framework in accordance with statutory guidance.



GANGS, EXPLOITATION AND SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

The approach of safeguarding partners to violence treats it as a preventable public health issue; using data and analysis to identify causes, to examine what works and to co-produce solutions. Incidents of serious violence have a significant and lasting impact on the wider community as well as for the young people and families involved. Safeguarding partners remain conscious of the impact and effect of trauma and as a partnership, we are committed to increasing resilience and developing trauma informed practice.

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EVIDENCE

During 2020/21, local police and youth offending data showed a downturn in serious violence, however partners remained mindful of the increased threat of serious youth violence (SYV) as lockdown restrictions eased and young people returned to school. As of March 2021, police data for Hackney showed that knife injury for under 25's was down 35% compared to 2019/20. Total knife crime and robbery were both down 32%. The rate of SYV offences in Hackney indicates a downtrend and the borough is the only member of the

'YOT family' to experience falls each year. In Hackney male children continue to commit the majority of all SYV offences, although the total SYV offences by males has reduced. Common features of those engaged in SYV include complex and traumatic family experiences (domestic violence and/or abuse; SEND needs and experiences of school exclusion, family history of involvement in offending and parental substance misuse and/or mental health). In Hackney our education, health and social care services have placed emphasis on understanding these adverse childhood experiences and developing practice which is trauma informed.

Local police conduct serious violence threat assessments daily, weekly and monthly to support the tasking process. The tasking process ensures that partnership resources are allocated to undertake interventions in an integrated way. Health services and third sector charities are also playing a key part in the approach to tackling SYV. Red Thread and St. Giles Trust staff are embedded at Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (HUHFT) and the Royal London Hospital trauma unit respectively and use 'teachable moments' to divert young people away from offending and violence. Hackney's Context Intervention Unit and Integrated Gangs Unit are developing closer working relationships with both teams to ensure the partnership is fully sighted on emerging trends



and peer groups and locations of harm. Within the Safer Schools Partnership, information is exchanged on a case by case or school by school basis to inform daily and weekly deployments of police, schools and partnership staff. A monthly Gangs Partnership Tasking Meeting is held to present the latest intelligence and analysis on gang youth related violence and exploitation. This meeting identifies priority areas and individuals who require immediate and longer-term partnership interventions.

EVIDENCE

Young Hackney Early Help & Prevention Service delivers the out of court function of youth justice. It offers young people aged 10-18 diversionary interventions whilst working in close partnership & collaboration with police, YOT, CSC colleagues and specialist services. Hackney's approach to prevention and diversion is to ensure that all young people offered an out of court disposal (Triage, Youth Caution, Youth Conditional Caution) are provided with interventions to reduce the risk of further offending.

Interventions focus on identity, building and creating opportunities for change through participation and community integration. Restorative justice, desistance & criminogenic factors and the Good Lives Model underpin interventions alongside an exploration of young people's own experiences of 'victimisation'.

Outcomes for young people offered an 'out of court disposal' are positive - consistently over the last 4 years Triage success rates (i.e. Not converted to First Time Entrant to the Youth Justice system) has been over 82%.





IMPACT

A Vulnerable Children's group was formed during the first lockdown and met fortnightly to monitor school attendance and consider the needs of vulnerable pupils. The group was attended by officers from Children's Social Care, Early Help and Education. Children and Families Service staff quickly identified young people in need of support, at risk of harm and in receipt of statutory or early help services through its casework database. An assertive approach was taken with young people, their families and schools to encourage and facilitate their return to in-person learning as a means of addressing their needs and reducing risk. Where they did not return to school, young people were engaged proactively in home and other settings e.g., parks and Youth Hubs.

IMPACT

In 2018 Hackney successfully bid to the Home Office's Trusted Relationships Fund to establish a detached outreach team with an embedded clinical psychologist. The team has operated throughout the pandemic and engages young people on the street to develop trusted relationships with professional adults, build resilience and reduce vulnerability to criminal or sexual exploitation. Delivery involves engagement through recreational sports and arts activities, support to develop critical thinking skills, information advice and guidance (substance misuse, relationships, health/ sexual health, careers), conflict resolution, safety mapping/ planning, first aid, mental health first aid, and sharps disposal. The project is subject to independent evaluation by the Behavioural Insights Team commissioned by the Home Office.



ADOLESCENT NEGLECT

Like younger children, adolescents are more likely to experience neglect at home than any other form of child harm. A report by the Children's Society into adolescents and neglect found that there was evidence that professionals struggle to identify adolescent neglect and are unsure what to do when they come across it. This has partly been based on misconceptions, including that adolescents become resilient to neglect and that neglect is less harmful than other forms of maltreatment. Neglect has been linked to a variety of problems for adolescents, including to 'challenging' behaviours e.g. poor engagement with education, violence and aggression, increased risk-taking (offending or anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, early sexual intercourse). It can lead to poor physical health, difficulties with relationships (with peers and adults) and be behind 'internalised' problems – e.g. low levels of well-being or mental ill health.

SELF-HARM & SUICIDE

The partnership's focus on self-harm and suicide continued over 2020/21 as a consequence of the deaths of a number of young people from Hackney. Learning from the published reviews into these cases is set out later in this report. This focus was heightened as a result of Covid-19 and the identified growth in demand for mental health provision for children and young people.

RADICALISATION

Statutory guidance expects Local Authorities to assess the threat of radicalisation in their areas and to take appropriate action. The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) retains overall governance of this agenda, which includes a focus on ensuring there are sufficient arrangements in place to safeguard children and young people. The Prevent Strategy is a key part of the Government's counter-terrorism Contest strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and has three objectives - challenging ideology, supporting vulnerable individuals and working with sectors and institutions. A strategic priority for Hackney's Prevent work is to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people to prevent them becoming drawn into supporting terrorism. In Hackney a multi-agency Channel Panel, chaired by the Head of Safer Communities, works at the pre-criminal stage to support vulnerable individuals where a risk of radicalisation is assessed and a plan of action devised.

During 2020/21, there were 12 referrals to the Hackney Channel Panel (a decrease from 26 in 2019/20). 11 referrals concerned male subjects and one female. Four of these referrals involved young people under 18 generated from the education sector.



Private Fostering

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

Comparison with national and statistical neighbours has not been undertaken following the DfE ceasing to publish statistics on notifications and closing the private fostering data collection for local authorities.

Review of all private fostering arrangements was conducted in early 2020 and a new Private Fostering Policy was rolled out the following month. Numbers remained broadly in line with last year. As of 30 September 2020, only nine private fostering arrangements were open to Hackney. By July 2021, this had increased slightly to 12.

ASSURANCE

Bi annual audits of all Private Fostering are undertaken by Hackney CFS. These audits identified evidence of practice improvement. Of the audits in respect of the 12 children in private fostering arrangements in February 2021, 10 or 83% of cases were rated as 'good' or 'outstanding', and 2 or 16% were rated as 'requires improvement'. No cases were rated as 'inadequate'. The average score was 3 (good).

IMPACT

A Private Fostering App developed by the CHSCP to support awareness raising across the partnership has been downloaded nearly 7000 times. Hackney has worked closely with colleagues working on this area within the North London Consortium, to share best practice. They are also exploring opportunities to raise awareness with specific local partners, for example, looking at the admissions process with Hackney Education and local voluntary sector organisations about increasing understanding of the private fostering regulations within the Orthodox Jewish community.

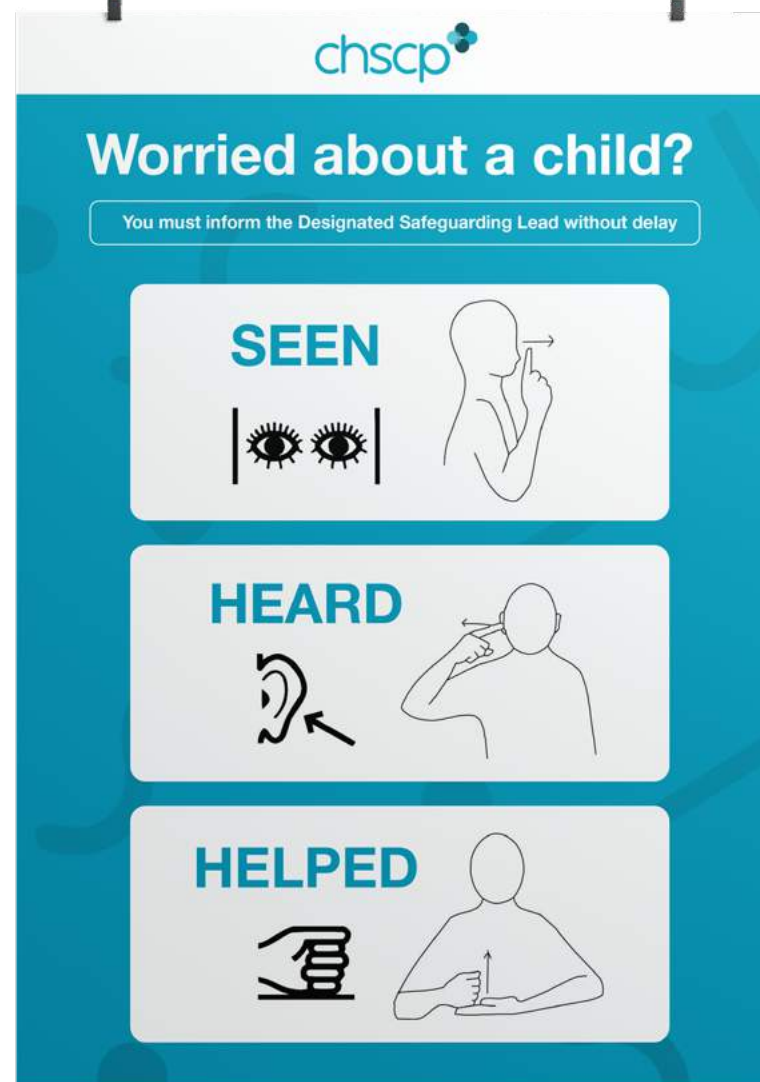


Children with Disabilities

At the end of March 2020, the service was working with 402 children and young people. Of these, 267 were male and 132 were female (3 children were not yet born). This is an increase of 20% compared to 2018/19, when the service was working with 336 children and young people. In 2017/18, the service was working with 241 children and young people.

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IMPACT

Following engagement with the Head of Safeguarding at Homerton Hospital and The Garden School in Hackney, the CHSCP produced an awareness raising poster in Makaton for promotion in settings where children have communication difficulties.





Children's Mental Health

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in City and Hackney are provided by Homerton University NHS Foundation Trust (First Steps and the CAMHS disability team, a joint service with the ELFT CAMHS); Clinicians employed by London Borough of Hackney's children's social care and the Specialist Service is provided by the East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT). ELFT CAMHS provides the specialist (Tier 3) community-based service, the CAMHS provision within the Young Hackney Service and a service for adolescents with more complex mental health needs, for example, first onset psychosis and complex eating disorders. East London NHS Foundation Trust also provides the inpatient service (Tier 4) and the out-of-hours service for City and Hackney.

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EVIDENCE

Impacts of the pandemic have been seen with Tier 4 beds at capacity and increasing presentations. This continues to be addressed with a new crisis group working with the provider collaboratively, an integrated discharge planning group meeting fortnightly to strengthen the community offer and several new services supporting families online. The CCG is also developing plans for an integrated T3 service.

EVIDENCE

Since the first Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020, there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people admitted to Homerton hospital in emotional distress. In the first 3 months of 2020/2021, there were 11 admissions of which eight young people were transferred to the Coborn adolescent psychiatric unit. This was a 73% increase compared to the same period last year. The trajectory of growth in respect of mental health continued over the rest of the year. Of significance, diagnosed eating disorders were identified as increasing significantly. The sufficiency of the partnership's effectiveness at meeting the mental health needs of children and young people remains a priority.

EVIDENCE

CAMHS did (and still does) a clinical risk rating of children who should be seen face to face for clinical reasons, but also prioritises children in terms of digital inclusion/digital poverty (i.e. those who can't connect or don't have access to privacy etc). Before schools re-opened, CAMHS were very aware that not all vulnerable children weren't being 'seen' in school or by other agencies as regularly and safeguarding was considered by CAMHS practitioners when contacting those families. The CAMHS risk assessment covers safeguarding, DV, exploitation and other safeguarding issues.

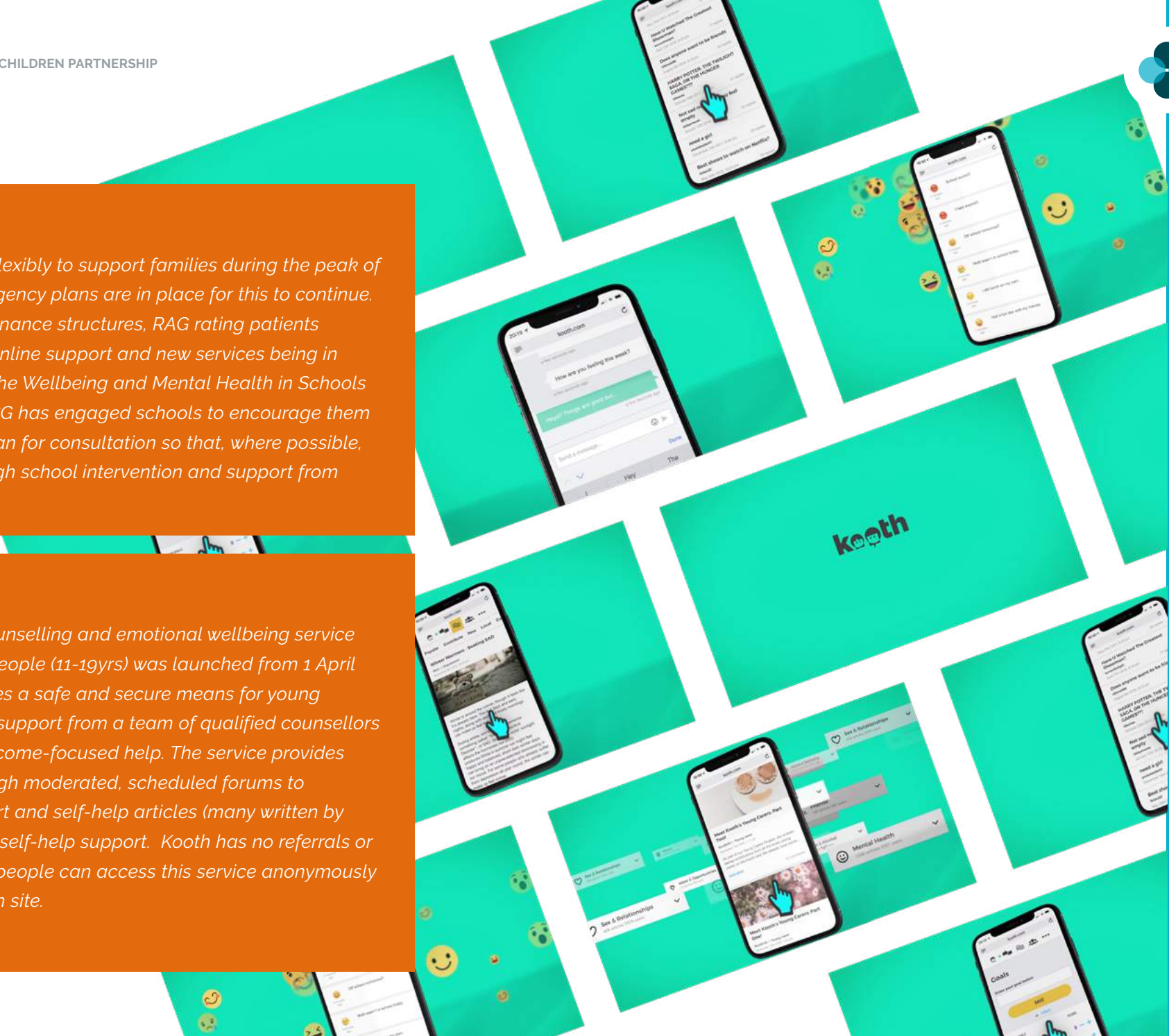


ASSURANCE

CAMHS has responded flexibly to support families during the peak of Covid-19. Robust contingency plans are in place for this to continue. This includes solid governance structures, RAG rating patients and the introduction of online support and new services being in development. Through the Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) project, the CCG has engaged schools to encourage them to use their linked clinician for consultation so that, where possible, cases can be held through school intervention and support from other agencies.

IMPACT

Kooth – A new online counselling and emotional wellbeing service for children and young people (11-19yrs) was launched from 1 April 2020. The service provides a safe and secure means for young people to access online support from a team of qualified counsellors who provide guided, outcome-focused help. The service provides additional support through moderated, scheduled forums to facilitate peer led support and self-help articles (many written by service users) to provide self-help support. Kooth has no referrals or waiting lists, and young people can access this service anonymously by signing onto the Kooth site.





MAPPA

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are the statutory measures for managing sexual and violent offenders. The Police, Prison and Probation Services (Responsible Authority) have the duty and responsibility to ensure MAPPA are established in their area and for the assessment and management of risk of all identified MAPPA offenders. The purpose of MAPPA is to help reduce the re-offending behaviour of sexual and violent offenders in order to protect the public from serious harm, by ensuring all agencies work together effectively.

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MAPPA

Across London on 31 March 2021, there were 6549 Category 1 'Registered Sex Offenders' (RSOs) (6581 in 2019/20 and 6452 in 2018/19), 3521 Category 2 'Violent Offenders' (3735 in 2019/20 and 4128 in 2018/19) and 61 Category 3 'Other Dangerous Offenders' (31 in 2019/20 and 27 in 2018/19).





Unregistered Educational Settings

In the context of Hackney, the response to Unregistered Educational Settings (UES) has focused upon Yeshivas within the Charedi community. Many of these Yeshivas provide 'full-time' education to children of compulsory school age but teach a curriculum that is too narrow for the setting to constitute a 'school'.

The consequence is that they cannot be registered (or regulated) and this remains a significant issue of concern for the safeguarding partners of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP). Despite ongoing efforts to engage community leaders and lobby government for change, the situation remains largely unchanged.

That said, activity by the CHSCP and the Council has yielded several changes that have supported and improved the multi-agency architecture responding to this issue. This has been driven via four relevant and related work strands.

EVIDENCE

The continued engagement and efforts of the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner on behalf of the CHSCP.

The work and oversight of the UES Working Group, now chaired by the Director of Hackney Education.

The work of the Out of Schools Settings (OOSS) Project (led by Hackney Education as part of a DfE funded initiative to better engage OOSS in the child safeguarding agenda (note; this includes UES but is not solely limited in its focus to these settings)).

The implementation of the UES protocol, which provides a multi-agency framework for coordinating the response to settings by bringing together a range of services and partners.



IMPACT

Strategy - In response to the CYP Scrutiny Commission investigation on UES, a strategy was developed by Hackney Council, setting out its approach to tackling this issue. The impact of the strategy has been limited. The overall vision remains frustrated on a number of levels. Indeed, although the Council has endeavoured to constructively manage this problem, no real progress has been made. There are considered to be two primary reasons for this.

The first reason is highlighted by the absence of a central faith and community based body with responsibility for and authority over yeshivas. Each setting is understood to be autonomous and the local proposals to strengthen safeguarding oversight have simply gained no traction. Whilst there remains an aspiration by partners to work together to ensure that all children in Hackney receive appropriate educational opportunities in safe and suitable environments, there is all but no progress in the context of collaboration and co-production in this regard.

The second reason is because there is no existing regulatory/statutory framework within which these settings neatly fit. As a consequence, the Council has been both required and encouraged to be lawfully audacious in its approach to assuring the safety of the children who attend these settings, which the Council has done with limited success.

The Council has engaged (and continues to engage) the police, fire service and other partners focusing on health and safety to intervene with those running the establishments in an effort to safeguard the young people frequenting them. The position the Council finds itself in was previously summarised by Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector "We can issue a warning notice, but ... no one has the power to close them, neither us, local authorities or the Department for Education. There is no general power to close something that is not registered as a school. We need a better definition of a school – it is too easy to fiddle at the margins and claim that something isn't a school. When people are operating illegally, there should be somebody with powers to make it close. There should be serious consideration of disqualifying people who've run an illegal school. The legal framework needs to evolve."

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IMPACT

Engagement - Disappointingly, despite repeated attempts to engage community leaders and seek their cooperation to develop a safeguarding reassurance framework, they have been unable, unwilling or lacked the overarching authority to commit to the changes required. Significant communication has been sent by the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner of the CHSCP to a variety of stakeholders encouraging UES to engage in a range of opportunities set out within an agreed 'offer' (to be led by the CHSCP and Hackney Education).

IMPACT

UES Protocol - In 2020, the CHSCP developed a protocol to help manage the response to the identification of UES and any concerns arising in respect of them. It is disappointing that this has been necessary, but in the absence of any appetite from either community leaders or Yeshivas themselves to cooperate, this is the best we have been able to do as a partnership. UES protocol meetings are chaired by the Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding, Hackney Education. When convened, there is good engagement from all relevant agencies, including Ofsted. The Disclosure & Barring Service has recently been made a standing member of the group. The protocol itself is relatively straightforward. There is an expectation that when UES are identified, they are notified to Hackney Education and when there are reported concerns, that defined procedures oversee the response to these. The protocol has not been constructed on the basis of educational registration requirements, but on core safeguarding requirements. It is already distinct in that its entire focus is upon those settings that are neither registered nor regulated.

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IMPACT

Evidence at IICSA - The ICSC of the CHSCP has also given evidence on behalf of the Council to the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). This was as part of the Inquiry's focus on religious institutions and settings. This set out the already known problems, the attempts at resolution and the action required by the government. IICSA published its report in September 2020. Recommending that the government should introduce legislation to change the definition of full-time education, and to bring any setting that is the pupil's primary place of education within the scope of the definition of a registered educational setting; and provide the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) with sufficient powers to examine the quality of child protection when it undertakes inspections of suspected unregistered institutions.



IMPACT

Lobbying - The record on this issue already details the significant lobbying undertaken with ministers. Disappointingly, there appears to have been little appetite to progress solutions at pace and the overall response from the government has lacked any sense of urgency. The Department for Education launched a consultation concerning the regulation of UES and other independent settings on 14 February 2020. This consultation was withdrawn on 7 May 2020 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and was relaunched on 13 October 2020. It closed on 27 November 2020.

More recently, the CHSCP's Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner has escalated this matter to the former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Schools System (Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose). This yielded no clarity. Subsequent letters to the new Secretary of State for Education, The Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP, were the same. The new Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Schools System, Baroness Barran, replied on 3 December 2021. Her letter stated:

I am happy to confirm that the government remains committed to changing the law on the registration of independent education settings, which would bring into scope a range of currently unregistered institutions. You will know that we repeated that commitment in the department's evidence to the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse, and we welcomed the recommendation when the report was recently published. I expect that we will be publishing the response to the Regulating Independent Educational Institutions consultation shortly.

Our collective position remains unchanged. Government needs to strengthen both the registration requirements and regulation of UES. Without such change, children and young people will continue to be exposed to a two-tier safeguarding system that is simply unacceptable.



Out-of-School Settings

Many children and young people participate in some form of organised activity outside of school at some point during their primary and secondary school years. There is plenty of excellent local practice which provides a wide range of activities and opportunities to young people and the community, for example improving cultural awareness, building self-esteem and encouraging our children to be active citizens within their community. In Hackney, the Out Of School Settings (OOSS) project continued with the aim of helping parents and carers make sure that their children are happy, safe and protected in after school and extra-curricular activities. Led by Hackney Education, this DfE funded project intends to strengthen the safeguarding arrangements within Out of School Settings.

has undertaken extensive mapping of the sector and identified over 300 settings including yeshivas, tuition centres, sports clubs, housing associations, community centres, charities, church halls and other religious settings.

The OOSS project team has also developed a RAG rating system. This has been adopted by other pilot projects and promoted, via the DfE, as a model of good practice. Engagement thus far has concentrated in community spaces, particularly those hiring halls to other/smaller organisations or clubs and ensuring hire agreements explicitly describe expectations to safeguard.

To support this, an example policy has been written and organisations are signposted to relevant sources of support including the NSPCC's webpages for the sector, the voluntary code for OOSS and CHSCP training.

A significant challenge to understanding and embedding effective safeguarding practice is staff and volunteers accessing appropriate safeguarding training. To remedy this the OOSS project team has developed a training offer that will be delivered free of charge either in settings (if there are sufficient staff) or via The Tomlinson Centre. This sits alongside the core training offered by the CHSCP. Three sessions have been held, to introduce the OOSS project to settings have been delivered, supported by HCVS.

IMPACT

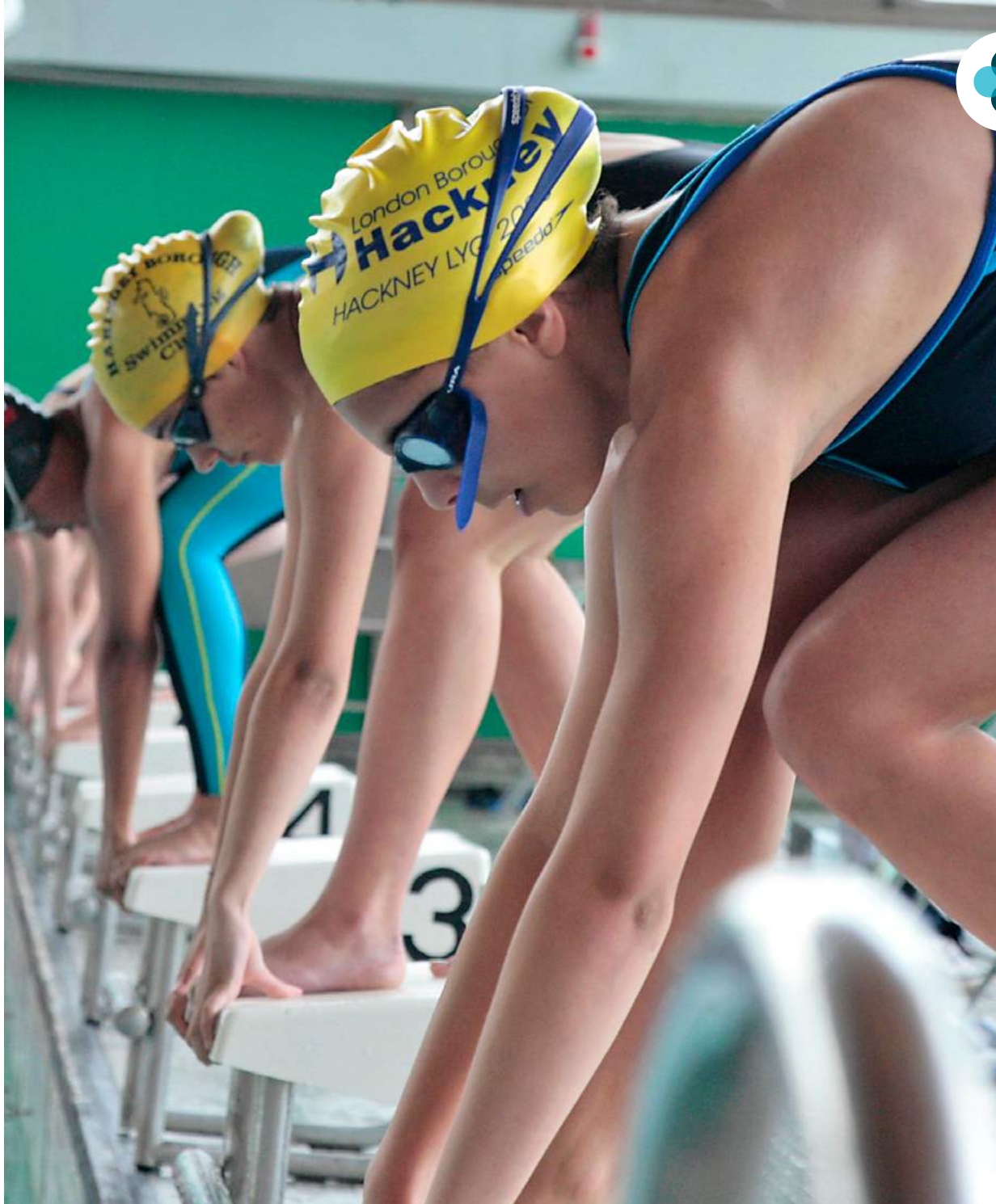
OOSS Activity - *The strategic direction of the OOSS project has been to build a comprehensive typology of settings and test interventions to discover what works and identify the challenges or barriers to engagement. In practical terms the interventions have included meetings with trustees, staff and volunteers, policy support and the offer or signposting to safeguarding training. The OOSS project team*



Promotional materials have been produced for parents/carers and for proprietors; information is presented on the Local Offer and an OOSS App is in development. This is in addition to an OOSS online portal that contains instructive videos from the Safeguarding in Education Team and Re-Engagement Unit of Hackney Education, highlighting OOSS responsibilities with links to local and national guidance. Partnership working with other pilot areas including Redbridge, Manchester and Birmingham is online to develop the portal. In conjunction with the CHSCP all mapped OOSS were sent a tailored Safeguarding Self-Assessment audit tool. In total 85 organisations responded.

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Positive, but there is still work to do in this regard.





Safer Workforce

Despite all efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations are made against staff or volunteers working with children. Organisations should have clear procedures in place that explain what should happen when such allegations are raised. These should include the requirement to appoint a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to whom these allegations are reported. It is ordinarily the responsibility of the DSL to report allegations to, and otherwise liaise with, the designated officer in the local authority (referred to as the LADO). The LADO has the responsibility to manage and have oversight of allegations against people who work with children. The LADO should always be contacted when there is an allegation that any person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

EVIDENCE

Activity - There were 174 contacts to the LADO in 2020/21, a 44% decrease from 309 referrals in 2019/20. This was due to the Covid-19 pandemic where the lockdowns and school closures resulted in less professional contact with children and young people. This was particularly relevant to the education sector, given schools and nurseries are the dominant employment groups that generate referrals to the LADO service.

EVIDENCE

Themes - This period saw a change for previous reporting, where the highest number of contacts has consistently been physical harm. In 2020/2021, 'concerns in private life' accounted for 28% of the total concerns, whereas physical harm was the reason for 21% of the LADO contacts. 'Conduct' was the third highest category at 20%. This change is likely to have arisen due to the pandemic and with people spending more time at home. Concerns arising in someone's private life are relevant to who work in settings with children, especially if there is the potential for risk transferability.



EVIDENCE

Themes - Another key theme for the period of 2020/21 was the increased complexity of some of the cases. For example, one case required three review meetings following the initial ASV meeting due to the nature of the concerns. It is unclear why complexity has increased, although this is a theme that has been echoed by colleagues across London. Again, it could be indicative of the complexities brought on by societal changes as a result of the pandemic, although this is somewhat speculative.

IMPACT

There was improved engagement with the LADO due to the accessibility enabled by virtual working. The speed at which meetings could be convened was also enhanced without availability being affected by travel, distance and room availability.

ASSURANCE

Where complaints arise in respect of the conduct of the police, although a LADO investigation will not necessarily follow, it was previously agreed that the LADO will follow up to ensure that the complaint is being dealt with and that the police will share the outcome of their investigation. This provides reassurance that a) the matter had been investigated and b) an official outcome had been reached. The MPS Child Safeguarding Development Group attended two London LADO Network meetings to work in collaboration with the LADOs and refine a draft MPS LADO Engagement Protocol. This was unfortunately placed on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ICSC is following this up as there still remains a level of ambiguity concerning expectations and the interface with the LADO process and that of the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

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EVIDENCE

LADO Training & Awareness Raising - The Hackney Education (HE) Safeguarding in Education Team runs an extensive training programme throughout the year including Safeguarding and Child Protection training for Hackney Education staff, Designated Safeguarding Leads for schools, colleges and early years, school and college staff, governors, early years and childminders. Their training covers safe practice and the procedures for dealing with allegations against adults who work with children and young people. They continue to run specific training dealing with managing allegations for managers in the early years and school sector, once every academic year for schools and twice for early years managers.



ASSURANCE

Practice audits of LADO work are conducted every 6 months by the Service Manager and Practice Development Managers in the Safeguarding and Reviewing Service. These consistently find timely responses from the LADO Service, positive working relationships between the LADO and partner agencies, clear actions and outcomes being achieved. What routinely remains problematic is a lack of written referrals/information being received from referrers, and partners not providing updates of feedback from their internal investigations as requested by the LADO. This results in additional work for the LADO in terms of having to outline phone conversations in emails so that the network is clear on advice provided and actions expected, and in following up requesting updates.



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Learning & Improvement

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THE CHSCP

COVID-19

COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY &
SOCIAL MEDIA

CITY
SAFEGUARDING
SNAPSHOT

SAFEGUARDING
IN THE CITY OF
LONDON

HACKNEY
SAFEGUARDING
SNAPSHOT

SAFEGUARDING IN
HACKNEY

LEARNING &
IMPROVEMENT

KEY MESSAGES
FOR PRACTICE

TRAINING &
DEVELOPMENT

PRIORITIES &
PLEDGE

WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW



Reviews of Practice

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (reviews) are undertaken on 'serious child safeguarding cases' to learn lessons and improve the way in which local professionals and organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These reviews were previously known as Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) but were transitioned to this alternative model in July 2019. The detailed arrangements for how they are undertaken are set out in the CHSCP's local protocol [HERE](#).

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ASSURANCE

Since its inception, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has emphasised the responsibility of safeguarding partners to decide upon whether a review is needed or not. However, the risks in this approach have been recognised, with safeguarding partners agreeing to maintain fundamental independence within the CHSCP's reviewing arrangements. This is the right thing to do in terms of transparency and to ensure that safeguarding partners avoid being in a position of 'either marking their own homework or deciding not to do their homework at all'. Locally, the decision-making function for reviews is delegated to the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner. Safeguarding partners ratify any decisions made, with a resolution process existing to deal with any differences of opinion.

EVIDENCE

There were three serious incident notifications and three Rapid Reviews submitted to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

Two Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews were commissioned.

Four other cases were also considered by the Case Review Sub-Group, although none resulted in a local review.

Two legacy Serious Case Reviews and one 'Lessons for Practice' briefing were published.

Full details of all the reviews published by the CHSCP are available [HERE](#).



Rapid Reviews

On notification of a serious incident, a Rapid Review meeting will be convened. The CHSCP has 15 working days from the original notification to produce and send an overview of the Rapid Review to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel setting out the actions it intends to take. The panel will decide if the case is of national importance and may instigate its own review. During 2020-21, three Rapid Reviews were convened in 2020-21.

RAPID REVIEW 1 – CHILD R

On arrival at the family's address, paramedics from the London Ambulance Service found Child R to be unconscious with extensive physical injuries. He had bruising, lacerations, scabbing to his cheek, a large cut on his back and scarring around the feet. The accommodation was unkempt and there were signs of disturbance.

Paramedics contacted the Metropolitan Police Service. Child R was taken to hospital, where further tests identified a bleed on his brain. No explanation was given to the police to account for Child R's condition or his injuries.

Child R's mother maintained she had not seen anything and that her son was with her partner prior to the ambulance being called. A witness reported hearing shouting and sounds of a child being hit. Child R and his mother had only recently moved to Hackney and were living in temporary accommodation. Risks relating to domestic abuse and concerns about mother's parenting capacity were evident in the family history. In the days immediately preceding the discovery of Child R's injuries, reports were made to the police about his safety.

LEARNING

A review was initiated by the CHSCP and will be published on 2021-22. Potential improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this case relate to the effectiveness of what might be seen to be basic steps in respect of child protection practice. The professional response to concerns of child abuse, the thoroughness of questioning and investigation and the focus on the child are all relevant lines of enquiry.

Local police have now instigated a procedure whereby the body worn cameras of officers are dip sampled as part of a supervision and reassurance process.



RAPID REVIEW 2

The London Ambulance Service received a call for a child not breathing. Two paramedic ambulances were dispatched and arrived at the family home within ten minutes. The first resource on scene arrived in four and a half minutes.

The child was located by paramedics lying in an external corridor, with a neighbour administering CPR. Paramedics took over the active resuscitation and several life support drugs were administered. The child was placed on a ventilator and transferred to hospital.

Mother told paramedics that she had found her son hanging behind a door in the property. He was on his knees with a bicycle cable wrapped around his neck. He was unconscious, not breathing and unresponsive. Mother released the lock and took him out to the front of the property where neighbours assisted, and LAS was called. The child suffered a serious brain injury and sadly died.

LEARNING

The immediate response by practitioners to this tragic case was both sensitive and effective, with the family GP being identified as the single point of contact to provide and coordinate support to the family and surviving siblings. Neither abuse nor neglect were identified as contributory factors and no practice issues, recurrent themes or concerns about multi-agency working were identified. The criteria for commissioning a review were not met. However, following contact from the Designated Doctor for Child Deaths, the ICSC has escalated this case (and that of another family where a child accidentally died) to Hackney's Housing Services. The families continue to reside in the same accommodation where their children died in exceptional and traumatic circumstances. The two cases were discussed by the CHSCP's Strategic Leadership Team and whilst understanding the exceptional pressures on housing services, two issues have been raised for support and action:

That the Local Authority, in partnership with other agencies as appropriate, recognise these exceptional circumstances as requiring a 'safeguarding response' and that the families' moves to alternative accommodation are expedited.

For both the City of London and Hackney, that relevant housing protocols for moving families are reviewed and where required, amended to ensure they sufficiently prioritise circumstances that deal with the potential mental health impact on children and their families when children die at home (in such traumatic and exceptional cases).



RAPID REVIEW 3 – CHILD Q

This case focuses on examining the circumstances surrounding a search undertaken by the police on a young person whilst on school premises. The young person was observed by teaching staff to smell strongly of cannabis upon arrival at school. Given the circumstances of this case, a Rapid Review was initiated, and a report submitted to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. The Panel responded encouraging the CHSCP 'to think carefully about whether one [a review] is necessary as we felt that this case was not notifiable and did not meet the criteria for an LCSPR.' Despite the Panel's suggestions, a review was nonetheless initiated. The relevant guidance set out in Chapter 4 paragraph 15-19 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 was fully considered. The delegated and independent decision of the ICSC to commence a review was fully supported by safeguarding partners. Whilst acknowledging that the circumstances did not meet the precise definition of a 'serious child safeguarding case', there were unambiguous issues of importance in respect of local safeguarding practice. Potential improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children centre on three key issues.

- Practice in such circumstances needing to be sufficiently attuned to the rights of children as set out in the relevant articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Practice being sufficiently focused on the potential safeguarding needs of children, as opposed to a sole focus on criminal justice.

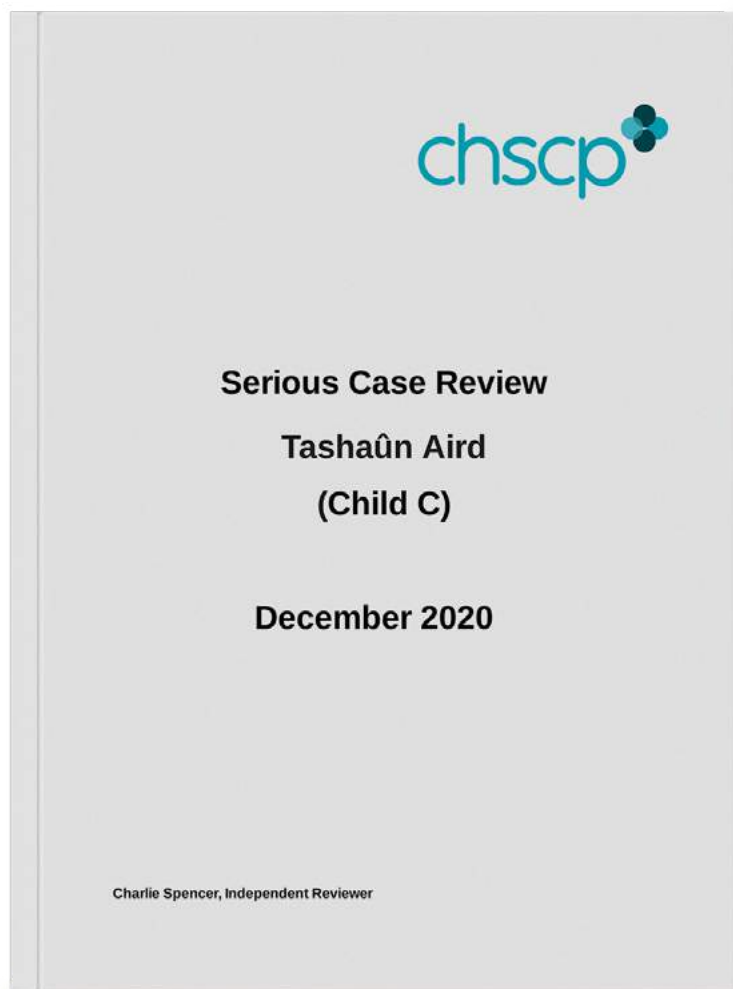
- Whether the law and policy, which informs local practice, is properly defined in the context of identifying potential risk and furthermore, that law and policy does not create the conditions whereby practice itself can criminalise and cause significant harm to children.

LEARNING

Adultification - *Recognising the need to immediately influence practice, the CHSCP commissioned a 12-month programme of training sessions on Adultification. Initially delivered to senior leaders across the safeguarding partnership, this training covers the broad concepts of racism, intersectionality and adultification, helping practitioners understand notions of vulnerability and childhood and how these are applied to some children more than others.*

IMPACT

Anti-Racist Practice - *The CHSCP has included Anti-Racist practice as one of its key principles governing our local arrangements. Alongside the significant single agency activity seen in this respect, work is progressing in the development of a multi-agency Anti-Racist charter and how we can better learn and improve practice in this context.*



Published Reviews

As of 31 March 2021, the following case reviews had been published by the CHSCP.

SERIOUS CASE REVIEW – TASHAÛN (CHILD C)

On 1 May 2019, Tashaûn Aird, a 15-year-old male, died after being stabbed whilst in the street. Tashaûn had been permanently excluded from school and three months before his death, he was seriously injured in another stabbing incident. On 19 December 2019, a 15-year-old boy was found guilty of his murder at the Old Bailey. A 16-year-old boy and an 18-year-old male were both convicted of manslaughter. A fourth suspect, a boy aged 16, died in custody prior to trial after becoming unwell. Tashaûn's Serious Case Review (SCR) was published in December 2020 and made nine findings relating to the protection of young people at risk of extra-familial harm.



LEARNING

- *Exclusion from mainstream school can heighten risk.*
- *Education settings need access to local intelligence.*
- *A focus on the individual child is important.*
- *Clarity is needed about interventions to mitigate extra-familial risk.*
- *Developing positive relationships with young people is important.*
- *Involving and supporting parents is essential to effective safety planning.*
- *Inconsistent judgements about risk creates uncertainty.*
- *The use of child protection procedures.*
- *Poor case recording can directly impact on practice.*

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The SCR identified that a range of practitioners had access to information indicating that risk had escalated. They knew Tashaûn had been excluded from school, that he was frequently going missing, and intelligence suggested he was being criminally exploited. However, despite these signs, multi-agency practice lacked a collective focus on Tashaûn's lived experience and whilst it can be said that local procedures were broadly followed, they were insufficient to keep him safe.

The SCR action plan is overseen by the CHSCP Case Review Subgroup. The wider partnership response to extra-familial risk remains under the governance of the Safeguarding Adolescents Subgroup, although there remain close links with activity being delivered by the Community Safety Partnership. Progress against the plan has been broadly positive and several of the themes identified by the SCR have gained significant traction within our safeguarding system. That said, there remain stubborn challenges.

A full update of the action plan is available [HERE](#). Key headlines are set out below.



IMPACT

Awareness Raising and Training - Actions in response to the need for awareness raising and the delivery of training have largely been completed. Relevant learning continues to be promoted, embedded, and tested as part of the CHSCP's Learning & Improvement Framework. The SCR report has been cascaded to front-line practitioners via partner agency leads, single agency communications, a CHSCP Things You Should Know (TUSK) briefing and via the CHSCP website.

Two learning seminars were also hosted by the CHSCP in March 2021. Led by the independent author, these sessions involved Tashaûn's mother, stepfather and sister providing an account of the family's perspective. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and the contribution of Tashaûn's family was powerful in driving home key lessons for practice. Over the course of the two events, 133 practitioners participated. 94% of those attending said the content was either excellent or very good and 92% said the learning shared on the day would enable them to safeguard children and young people more effectively. A selection of comments made by participants are set out below:

"The fact that the parents and sister of the young man who lost his life contributed to the presentation, was both humbling and powerful. I am most grateful to them for sharing their thoughts, feelings, and reflections. As professionals we MUST learn from this".

"The voice of the parents was crucial to us as professionals remembering we are dealing with people, not cases, and each child should be seen as an individual not a statistic".

"Understanding the true impact on the family. Having the opportunity to hear first-hand from the parents' perspective. Hearing real, live emotion, distrust, their journey. How things can improve from young people and the necessary steps to prevent this from happening in the future".

In support of these events and to help create a 'learning legacy' of Tashaûn's experiences, the family has also agreed to participate in a video training resource for the CHSCP. Whilst the imposition of the pandemic has frustrated our ability to finalise this, we remain hopeful it will be completed and launched in early 2022. This resource will be available to the entire professional network and will form part of the CHSCP training programme focused on safeguarding adolescents. Of relevance, Hackney Education has also revised the content of exclusion training for school governors to include reference to Tashaûn and the SCR's findings. Further information for school governors was similarly developed and has been shared via the Hackney Governors' Forum.



IMPACT

Exclusions - The publication of Tashaūn's SCR has acted as a major catalyst for considering how schools are supported to prevent exclusions. Building on the work that has been already undertaken, proposals have been developed to create a universal education early help offer to support pupils vulnerable to exclusion. The Re-engagement Unit will be expanded to cover all primary schools and have an expanded offer for secondary schools, enabling them to support greater numbers of pupils who are vulnerable to exclusion than currently. This is being developed alongside the wider changes in early help provision within Hackney and it is envisaged that referrals for support would be made via the Early Help Hub, thus allowing for a wider understanding of needs and support to be established at the point of referral. The development of a universal education early help offer will enable greater numbers of pupils to sustain their placements in mainstream schools and reduce the need for Alternative Provision placements. These proposals are due to be implemented in September 2022.

Alongside these proposals, the agreement with New Regent's College is due for renewal and will be updated to reflect the service required from New Regent's College going forward. Whilst recognising there will remain a need for some provision for pupils who have been PEX from school, the new agreement will consider how placements at the PRU and other AP settings can better support school inclusion in Hackney. The new agreement will commence in September 2022.

Whilst these plans are still in development, there has also been several immediate actions to improve information sharing and understanding of risk at the point of PEX. In order to improve the process, the exclusion notification form has been redesigned to include a short risk assignment that highlights to an AP any known risks. In addition details of all permanent exclusions are now routinely shared with MASH, YOT and Young Hackney so any existing information about the young person from those services can be shared with the AP prior to their starting. This means that when pupils start in their AP setting, there is a better understanding of who is working with the young person and any risks or issues that might affect their placement.



IMPACT

Alternative Provision - A defined risk assessment process has been incorporated into the exclusion notification form. This will undoubtedly support Alternative Providers as part of inducting pupils into a new setting and risk management in the context of the child, other pupils, peer groups and the setting itself. This was a key issue in Tashaun's SCR, where the Alternative Provider held limited information about the risks that Tashaun was exposed to.

Engagement with Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit is also progressing and a suitably anonymised briefing on the key themes, patterns and trends relating to gang activity will be produced for direct circulation to schools, colleges, the PRU and APs. The CHSCP remains committed to exploring with schools how the exclusions process can better accrue the benefits of multi-agency working. This will have the aim of leveraging support and mitigating risk.

IMPACT

Named Professionals / Trusted Adults - Tashaun's SCR recommended that the multi-agency partnership should nominate a named professional or adult who has (or who can develop) a trusted relationship with children who are assessed to be of risk of serious youth violence. This named professional should focus on developing the child to adult relationship. Actions against this recommendation are complete.

The CHSCP has revised and updated its practice guidance on strategy discussions to ensure that every child at risk of serious youth violence now has the possibility to benefit from developing a positive relationship with a trusted professional. Guidance now sets a clear expectation for trusted adults to be identified at the strategy discussion stage of intervention.

Multi-agency audits undertaken by the CHSCP in June 2021 identified evidence of good practice in this context with named / trusted leads identified in several cases involving serious youth violence. Strategy discussion guidance and its accompanying agenda template continue to be promoted by the CHSCP. A video explainer has also been released by the CHSCP and can be found [here](#).



IMPACT

Risk Gradings - The SCR recommended that the CHSCP should review partnership and individual agency processes that involve the application of risk gradings for young people at risk of serious youth violence. Where required, these should be changed to ensure consistency and a clear understanding as to what the judgement means in the context of practice. Actions in response to this recommendation are complete.

Several multi-agency sessions were held to better understand practice in this context. It was agreed impractical to try and align all agencies' risk processes into one singular approach. This was largely due to the fact these are used for different purposes. As a 'workaround', local guidance has been strengthened to ensure that more detailed information about risk gradings / judgements is shared during strategy discussions (see below). The potential / relevance for this narrative to feature in other partnership meetings is being reviewed by Hackney CFS.

If in place within their agency (normally applicable to Police/Probation/IGU), professionals need to share a RISK GRADING/CATEGORY assigned to the child (ren), explain the action taken/ to be taken as a result of this grading/category and share the date this will be reviewed (note: risk gradings/categories should always be updated when new and relevant).

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SERIOUS CASE REVIEW - CHILD A

This complex Serious Case Review (SCR) covered the period from Child A's birth to the age of 11. It was initiated due to concerns about the amount of Fentanyl (an opioid) prescribed to Child A for pain management, suspected Fabricated or Induced Illnesses (which was investigated and unsubstantiated), how agencies had worked together, and the overall care provided to Child A. The SCR made the following findings:

There was an absence of a lead professional to co-ordinate and communicate the input of different agencies. This risked diagnosis and treatment being based on inadequate information and inappropriately left Child A's parents with the responsibility to pass communications and information between practitioners.

The absence of a local chronic pain team contributed to the inadequate monitoring and supervision of Child A's long-term medication. Following a period of hospitalisation, Child A was discharged on the analgesic Fentanyl. Over a period of six years, no professional was overseeing Child A's pain management or the impact of long-term opioid use.

There were weaknesses in practice to monitor the repeated postponement or cancellation of Child A's health appointments by the parents. Despite practitioners identifying concerns in this respect, there is little evidence that these were raised in supervision, effectively responded to or that local policy was followed.

There was an insufficient response in meeting Child A's educational needs. Child A became 'lost' in the system and there were no reviews held on Child A's educational progress for four years.

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IMPACT

Practitioners did not consistently listen to the voice of Child A so as to understand Child A's perspective, concerns and feelings in order to undertake a meaningful assessment. This was a feature across agencies. Child A's voice was strikingly absent from records.

Some of Child A's reported symptoms were responded to without any objective assessment by health professionals. This led to unnecessary and inappropriate medical intervention. FII was investigated as part of a child protection enquiry when Child A was ten years old, but unsubstantiated. The SCR sets out a basis for reframing existing guidance concerning the management of suspected FII and "perplexing presentations".



Practitioners insufficiently challenged and escalated their concerns about Child A. The review identified many examples when practitioners should have escalated their concerns and been more critically challenging of decisions made by others that impacted on Child A's safety and wellbeing. It was not until Child A was ten years old that a referral was made to Children's Social Care.

guidance on Fabricated and Induced illness to ensure it appropriately takes account of children who are coming to harm through excessive medical intervention and references the revised policy of the RCPCH on perplexing presentations. The revisions and reference to the RCPCH policy have been included in the London Child Protection Procedures as of September 2021.

IMPACT

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Practice Guidance - Local Guidance on [Safeguarding Disabled Children](#) was refreshed and disseminated to ensure sufficient focus on defining the circumstances when children should be seen alone. The Guidance clarifies **"Where there is a safeguarding concern related to the child's home environment, the child should be seen away from their parents, outside of the home, with a professional (e.g. their teacher or a speech and language therapist) who is familiar with their preferred communication method. For disabled children subject to CIN or CP Plans, these arrangements should be made on an ongoing basis and at a minimum of every 8 weeks for CP cases and 3 months for CIN cases."**

Procedures - Escalation to the London Safeguarding Children Partnership Chair requesting a review of pan-London practice

Assessment of Needs - Significant changes to the Wheelchair Service pathway are underway in response to this SCR including structured triage of referrals, clinical peer review, development of a shared pathway with the Physio pathway and documenting the voice of the child on the assessment form. An audit of cases is also underway to provide assurance around the new requirements.

Continual Professional Development - A Protected Learning Time event was facilitated by the NEL CCG (C&H) safeguarding team, C&H prescribing team and Great Ormond Street Hospital pain clinic. This event delivered to GPs, Community Pharmacists, the Clinical Lead for Pain Management, and Consultant in Paediatric Anaesthesia and Pain was designed to support knowledge and understanding around the prescribing and dispensing of opioids for children and enable effective challenge when children are prescribed medication outside of the normal parameters.



Competency Framework - The CCG reviewed and disseminated an updated competency framework (cross referenced against Working Together 2018, Intercollegiate Guidance and the GP Safeguarding Toolkit) to support GP Safeguarding Leads providing children and young people a safeguarding service that is safe, up to date and timely. An updated guidance / escalation chart (including reference to the MASH consultation line) has been issued to GP Safeguarding Leads to support the early recognition of a child at risk and escalation to children's social care.

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LOCAL REVIEW - CARE LEAVERS

Each year over 10,000 young people leave the care system and become care leavers. Their immediate transition to independence and the years that follow can be difficult for many. With little to no family support, the lived experience of some can be extremely challenging and isolating. This short briefing paper builds on our collective understanding of the challenges faced by care leavers and provides a number of headline messages for improving multi-agency safeguarding practice. It summarises the lessons from the reviews of two cases involving care leavers who tragically died by suicide. Wherever you work, use this briefing paper to generate discussion about the vulnerability of care leavers; particularly in the context of their mental health. Talk about what you can do differently, reflect on the key messages and above all, ensure your individual practice is sufficiently attuned to them.

care leavers is essential to effective pathway planning. Such planning should always include a focus on mental health and local areas should ensure that services in this regard are sufficient to meet need. It can be easy for young people to hide vulnerabilities. Practitioners should always hold in mind that some young people, including care leavers, will tell you what they think you want to hear. The reasons for this can be wide ranging and complex. They may relate to fear of what might happen if the young person 'opens up' or they may be an active intent to deflect concerns.

The immediate time period following a mental health crisis is a critical window of opportunity for both observation and support. Whilst a comprehensive safety and discharge plan is important for children and young people who have a family unit around them, it is also essential for those vulnerable young adults who live independently.

IMPACT

Whilst recognising the need to balance issues relating to capacity and an individual's right to make their own choices, practitioners should always take a Safeguarding First approach when engaging care leavers.

Engagement of practitioners with the right skills to meet the needs of

There is a need to consider the number of changes, transitions and the ending of relationships (both professional and personal) in a young person's life. The impact of such cumulative loss on outcomes should never be underestimated and is especially important for young people who have difficulty, or who take longer, to develop trusting relationships.



IMPACT

Transitional Safeguarding & the Child Protection Information System - This review identified that once a young person becomes a Care Leaver, details are removed from the Child Protection Information System (CP-IS) alert system used by Health. Professionals may not, therefore, be aware of historic / current vulnerabilities when a Care Leaver attends a health setting. The CHSCP escalated this to the lead for CP-IS. A response confirmed plans to expand the system to include vulnerable adults, such as Care Leavers (who will have consented to their details being included) and expressing local support towards addressing the issue of 'transitional safeguarding', where we know vulnerabilities remain for young adults who turn 18.

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Previous Reviews

MULTI-AGENCY CASE REVIEW – CHILD E 2014

This review was initiated following a professional's visit to Child E's home that identified significant concerns regarding neglect. Questions were raised about the opportunities for earlier identification of the environment in which Child E was living; with an independent review subsequently being agreed by the Independent Chair. The following summary sets out the key areas of learning identified, some of the specific actions undertaken by the CHSCB and a range of examples of the impact that this review has had on the safeguarding system.

LEARNING

- *Children need to be seen, heard and helped, the importance of home visits and escalating concerns*
- *The importance of identifying and dealing with neglect*
- *The need for all staff to "Think Family"*
- *The importance and clarity of information sharing*

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SERIOUS CASE REVIEW – FC 2015

In 2015, the CHSCB published a Serious Case Review (SCR) in respect of Case FC. The review involved a Hackney foster carer who, prior to his recruitment, was anonymously reported to the police about his use of indecent images of children. The police failed to investigate this complaint properly at the time and although information was retained about the anonymous report, it was never disclosed to Hackney Council. Over thirty children were subsequently placed by Hackney Council with this foster carer. In 2014, he received a custodial sentence after being found guilty of rape and a range of other sexual offences. Some of the victims were children in care. He is known to have sexually abused five children of primary school age, one victim in the community and one other unidentified victim abused some 30 years earlier. The SCR found that despite the police knowing about the initial allegation, on each of the occasions when the foster carer was subject to the regular criminal record checks that carers are required to undergo, a decision was made not to share that information with Hackney Council. At no time was Hackney Council given the opportunity to make an informed decision about the foster carer's employment. He escaped this scrutiny due to repeated professional judgements being made by the police on the basis of a particular understanding of legislation and case law regarding the sharing of 'soft intelligence'.

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LEARNING

- *The weaknesses in the guidance relating to the disclosure of 'soft intelligence' under the Police Act 1997*
- *The need for GP contracting of counselling services to be clear about how to handle a disclosure*
- *An explicit recognition that children who are in public care need to be kept safe*
- *Educational work with children and young people to reduce the likelihood of further sexual abuse*



MULTI-AGENCY CASE REVIEW – CASE K 2015

In September 2013 (when they were aged 8 and 2) the police removed both children from their family home because of the extremely poor home conditions. It is now known, prior to this intervention, the family home had not been visited by any professional since late 2008. Both children were well known to a number of agencies and there were concerns about their health and development, which in the case of Child 1 were long-standing. He had a statement of special educational needs (SEN), a severe communication disability and developmental delay. Child 2 had more recently been diagnosed as having a significant developmental delay. Historically there had been concerns about possible neglect. Mother was convicted of cruelty and received a community sentence. They have remained in the care of the local authority and there is currently no plan to return them to her care. After the children were removed the mother was diagnosed with severe depression.

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LEARNING

- *The importance of home visits and not only seeing families in 'settings'*
- *The importance of identifying and naming neglect as a potential concern – to ensure swift action is taken to protect children.*
- *The importance of robust and thorough assessments of potential neglect*
- *The importance of joint working across children's and adult services and 'thinking family'*
- *The need for robust arrangements for safeguarding children in education settings.*
- *The recognition of neglect and children with disabilities – additional vulnerabilities for this cohort.*



SERIOUS CASE REVIEW – CHILD H 2016

Child H was a baby girl who lived with her mother and father at the home of the maternal grandparents. Child H died at the age of six weeks. Medical advice indicated that the death had been caused by inflicted injuries. Child H's parents, Ms M and Mr F, were arrested but subsequently no charges brought. No one has been held to account for Child H's death. The circumstances of the death met the statutory requirement that a SCR be conducted.

JOINT SERIOUS CASE REVIEW / DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW – CHILD D 2016

Child D and her mother were murdered by mother's ex-partner (father of Child D). There was no significant multi-agency involvement prior to the deaths, although mother reported concerns regarding domestic violence to police and their response has been subject to separate investigation by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

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LEARNING

The importance of distinguishing between parental learning difficulties v disabilities – the thresholds for engagement by other services and the assessment of any needs in the context of parenting capacity.

- *The importance of thinking family and engaging relevant specialisms (whether adult or children) as part of the assessment process.*
- *The importance of management oversight and supervision of case work to ensure its quality.*
- *Ensuring a clearer understanding of Psychosocial Meetings held at Homerton Hospital.*

LEARNING

- *Professional curiosity in the context of people experiencing domestic violence and abuse.*
- *Accurate risk assessments of the risk of domestic abuse.*
- *The need for agencies to work together effectively.*
- *The need for robust supervision to ensure high quality work.*
- *The importance of sufficient resources being made available for front-line staff to do their jobs effectively.*



MULTI-AGENCY CASE REVIEW – CHILD L 2016

Child L was a 17 year old male who was fatally stabbed. The assailants (who were found guilty of murder) were of a similar age and were known to Child L. Child L came to the attention of statutory services in the months before he died. On two occasions he was reported missing to the police and had been arrested or had contact with the police on at least seven separate times for drug offences in a number of cities across the UK - including in the period when he had been reported missing.

SERIOUS CASE REVIEW – CHILD M 2018

Child M and his sibling were subject to Child Protection Plans following injuries that Child M's sibling sustained whilst in the care of Child M's father. In 2016, Child M was taken to hospital by his mother and on examination was found to have bruising to his face and transverse fractures to both femurs. In criminal proceedings father was found not guilty in relation to the GBH against Child M. Both mother and father were found guilty of child cruelty.

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LEARNING

Seeing beyond criminal behaviours to consider if a young person, in particular young men, are potential vulnerable or at risk of harm/exploitation.

- *Recognition of the increase vulnerability of young people who move across geographical areas as there is greater risk of them falling through statutory service gaps.*

LEARNING

- *The recognition of avoidant behaviour & disguised compliance.*
- *The need for professional curiosity and challenge in the context of ensuring children are safe.*
- *The need to guard against professional optimism.*



MULTI-AGENCY CASE REVIEW – CHADRACK 2018

Chadrack was 5 years old when both he and his mother were found dead at their home in 2016. Chadrack had Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and was non-verbal. From the inquest into their deaths, it was concluded that Chadrack lived alone in the family home for over a fortnight after his mother's death. He was unable to feed himself or seek help. He died of starvation and dehydration.

SERIOUS CASE REVIEW - CHILD N & CHILD O 2018

In March 2017, Child N was assaulted by his father and pronounced dead in hospital. His female twin (Child O) sustained serious injuries in the same incident. Father subsequently pleaded not guilty to murder but admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility and in October 2017 was sentenced to indefinite detention.

Page 140 LEARNING

- *The importance of thinking safeguarding first when dealing with absence, attendance and missing from education.*
- *Ensuring professionals attempt to understanding the context of the child's life and that of the parents / carers.*
- *The practical application of professional curiosity; beyond rhetoric.*
- *The need to rule safeguarding 'in or out' as an issue before anything else.*
- *Keeping children safe in education; proactively asking for information on vulnerabilities which may impact on the child or family network.*

LEARNING

- *The need to consider identified or unidentified fathers in terms of potential value or risk in the context of parenting capacity.*
- *The need for routine enquiries to be made with respect to the possibility of domestic abuse.*
- *The relevance of cultural / linguistic barriers to understanding and the need to understand the context of the family.*



MULTI-AGENCY CASE REVIEW – RACHEL 2019

Rachel was 16 years and 3 months when she took her own life. Her family, school and local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) had been concerned about her well-being for some time, including a risk of self-harm, suicidal ideation and acts. She had also become known to her GP, the local Emergency Department, the London Ambulance Service, the Police and Children's Social Care.

LEARNING

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The need for professionals to have an holistic family view of support and/ care.

The importance of supporting parents/carers in safety planning and providing opportunities for engagement with professionals.

- *The need to consider parents' worries and observations in the assessment process.*
- *The impulsivity of young people and the fact sometimes they will tell adults what they think they want to hear.*
- *Professionals needing to remain curious and maintain healthy scepticism in all contexts.*
- *The influence of social media, internet use and media.*
- *The importance of robust safety planning and ensuring all key agencies are alert to potential risks.*

MULTI-AGENCY CASE REVIEW - X 2019

X took his own life in October 2016. He had just had his sixteenth birthday and was in Year 11 at school, preparing for GCSEs. X lived with his mother and father. His older sister had just moved away from home to university, outside London.

LEARNING

- *Drug use and alcohol use amongst young people – particularly the use of Xanax.*
- *The use of the internet and social media in self-harm and suicide.*
- *The need for professionals to support awareness of mental health in young people - Peers as Supporters.*
- *The need to create environments where boys / young men can seek help.*



Auditing

THE CHSCP'S SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

During 2020/21, the CHSCP launched its new Safeguarding Self-Assessment Framework to help organisations make children safer. It replaced the Section 11 audits and Section 157 / 175 audits with the aim of making the process easier to access and update. Whether an organisation is a safeguarding partner, a relevant agency or named within our local arrangements, there is an expectation that the self-assessment is completed. The Self-Assessment programme engaged Social Housing Providers and Out of School Settings (OOSS) for the first time and demonstrated increased engagement by VCS organisations.

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EVIDENCE

Evaluation of self-assessment returns from the City of London and Hackney provided reassurance about the sufficiency and focus on safeguarding children. Areas for improvement included increased awareness raising to OOSS on topics such as CHSCP training, policies and guidance. Planned activity going forward will include additional quality assurance of the submitted returns, Peer Review and the introduction of Child Safeguarding Statements in 2022/23.

IMPACT

Launching CHSCP Policy Guidance - Self-Assessment activity by the CHSCP identified that settings were producing increasingly complex and non-user-friendly child protection policies. The CHSCP developed and disseminated Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Guidance to support organisations in writing their policy and how to structure it for best effect.



ASSURANCE

Child Safeguarding Statements - The CHSCP is preparing to launch an additional process to help strengthen safeguarding leadership and accountability. This involves the requirement for organisations to complete a Child Safeguarding Statement. Developed from a model in operation in Ireland, Child Safeguarding Statements should be developed once a self-assessment has been completed. To do this, organisations will need to undertake a risk assessment that considers the potential for harm to come to children while they are in the organisation's care. Risk in this respect is the risk of abuse and not general health and safety risk. The risk assessment exercise does not need to follow a prescribed format but should be sufficient to allow organisation to establish whether there are any practices or features of their service that have the potential to put children at risk. It is intended to enhance an organisation's ability to identify potential risks, develop policies and procedures to minimise these risks by responding to them in a timely manner and review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks.

After the risk assessment has been completed, organisations will be required to develop their Child Safeguarding Statement. These are written statements that specify a number of key points:

- **The nature of the organisation and the services being provided.**
- **The organisation's commitment to child safeguarding**
- **An overview of the measures in place to ensure that children are protected from harm. It may also refer to more detailed policies which can be made available on request.**
- **Any potential risks to a child that have been identified and the actions in place to mitigate these.**

Upon completion, a Child Safeguarding Statements must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or equivalent. For schools, both the Headteacher and Chair of Governors must sign. For charities, both the CEO and the Chair of Trustees must sign. Child Safeguarding Statements must be shared with all staff members / volunteers. They must be displayed in a prominent place and made available to parents and guardians and members of the public upon request. Child Safeguarding Statements are reviewed within 24 months (or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers). Requiring Chief Executives and/or those in senior leadership positions to be directly engaged with and sighted on their individual organisation's strengths and weaknesses, will also help provide clarity on accountability. Being required to publicly display such statements will help with transparency and reinforce messaging about the protection of children and young people.

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MULTI-AGENCY CASE AUDITS

The Multi-Agency Case Auditing programme was further developed to focus on specific areas of the safeguarding system. This has allowed multi-agency partners to increase the number of auditing rounds and the breadth of scrutiny whilst adapting rapidly to local or national intelligence. This auditing methodology has received excellent feedback from partners and lessons identified have led to tangible improvements. All audits result in an outcome focussed action plan that the CHSCP uses to track and evidence improvements in front-line practice. Learning is also disseminated to front line staff via the [Things You Should Know \(TUSK\) monthly briefings](#).

CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES AUDITS

LEARNING

- *Tools are already in place to support professionals attending Child Protection Conferences.*
- *There remains work to do in respect of all agencies submitting written reports in a timely manner that have been shared with families in advance.*
- *HCFS systems require review to ensure that professionals are correctly identified and invited to conferences.*
- *Professionals need to submit a written report including information and professional judgements that can support decision making about significant harm for the child.*
- *Professionals should engage families in advance of Child Protection Conferences, including ensuring that their information submitted is relayed. This is easier for professionals when a strengths-based approach is undertaken.*





STRATEGY DISCUSSIONS AUDITS

EVIDENCE

- There was evidence of **good timeliness** in identifying concerns and convening strategy discussions.
- There was also high confidence that the **decisions and actions** made at the strategy discussion **made children safer**.
- The significant majority of cases demonstrated the **sharing of sufficient information** to confidently inform decision making and planning.
- There was good evidence of **information being provided in a timely manner after the strategy discussion, where this was not immediately available**.
- The significant majority of cases evidenced **relevant information sharing about significant others** involved with the family.
- The significant majority of cases audited were clear on the next steps and timescales for **immediate and short-term protection and support**.
- Of the cases involving **Serious Youth Violence**, there was evidence that **named professionals** were being identified to support the young person, consistent with the CHSCP's Strategy Discussion guidance.



LEARNING

- *Prior to participating in a strategy discussion, practitioners should watch the CHSCP video and have to hand the CHSCP Guidance and Agenda template. This will help ensure that all necessary areas are covered, with participants having a clear understanding of the key decisions that strategy discussion should make.*
- *All can be found on the dedicated [CHSCP webpage](#) for strategy discussions.*

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Whilst no professional disagreement was evidenced in the cases audited, it is important that practitioners remain aware of the CHSCP Escalation Policy and are confident in its use.

HCFS should amend its interim case recording template for strategy discussions to match the headings set out in the CHSCP Agenda template.

- *Improvement is needed in the circulation of formal minutes of strategy discussion minutes to agencies in attendance and other relevant professionals.*
- *Explore options to facilitate opportunities to engage GPs.*
- *Improve the engagement of ELFT at strategy discussions by ensuring ELFT practitioners involved with families (both adults and children) are identified and invited. This improvement to be supported via the introduction of an ELFT role within the new Hackney MASH model.*
- *To ensure that any impact arising as a result of race and ethnicity are consistently considered and evidenced within strategy discussions.*



The Voice of the Child, Family & Community

EVIDENCE

Reviews undertaken during this period have maintained a clear, child centric focus. They have engaged children and their families, with their experiences and views being fully reflected in the findings and recommendations.

EVIDENCE

The City of London Corporation commissions Action for Children to complete an annual survey of all the children and young people open to the Children's Social Care Team and Early Help Service. This survey is completed by someone independent from the city, and the information is anonymous, so children and young people can speak freely. This survey constantly highlights the close relationship between the young people and their social worker, whereby they feel able to speak to their social worker if they were worried, especially children who are looked after and care leavers. This survey has also led to changes, when young people raised concerns that they did not have a laptop to use for their college work, this was then picked up and acted on by the Virtual Head. This survey is shared across the organisation, with partner agencies and Members, so that any learning from this survey can be acted on.

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EVIDENCE

Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust uses a range of mechanisms to capture the feedback of service users which includes but not limited to: electronic surveys, the Friends and Family Test and complaints. Information is collected through hand held devices or electronic survey links are sent to the parents. The impact of the pandemic and the reduction in face to face contact with children and families has impacted somewhat on collecting service user feedback. In 2020/21, 100% of the 53 respondents said that Homerton staff made them feel safe.



EVIDENCE

The Participation service in the City of London engages with children and young people who are looked after and care leavers. Young people have engaged well with the participation service, even though much of the contact has had to be virtual over the past year. More recently face to face activities have been re-established and there has been some joint work with Toynbee Hall to establish young people's views about their experience of being cared for by the City of London. The information obtained from this consultation will support the future development of services in Children's Social Care Services. An area for development within the participation service will be a consistent approach to capturing and reviewing how feedback is obtained. The views and opinions of the young people will be used going forward to help shape services for children and young people. Evidence of the impact on the development of services will hopefully encourage more young people to participate within context of a "you said, we did" approach.

EVIDENCE

The Education and Early Years' Service have been making a film that captures the voice of the children and young people with EHCPs in the City. The final version of this film will be ready by mid-November 2021. This will be launched with partner agencies when completed. The SEND strategy has always placed the voice of the child at the centre of their work, ensuring that parents, carers, children, and young people are consulted on a regular basis through one to one and consultation. They continue to use Inclusive solutions for person centred meetings, and this has proved really good at keeping the focus on the child.



EVIDENCE

ELFT CAMHS has strong People Participation work to capture the voice of young people in our services – they run events with young people, families and carers several times a year to hear directly from young people what they want from their services. In June 2021 the “all about me” event was held, an interactive, reverse conference, where the delegates were the experts. Specifically for Hackney there was recent work with a number of our service users to support recruitment into our services (<https://youtu.be/nrrgffzyHck>) as some examples. ELFT has NHS mandated surveys, a dedicated people participation lead for East London and as part of our recruitment processes mandate service users on their recruitment panels for staff. The safeguarding children team hold annual service user participation groups in which young people are invited to share their views on a range of safeguarding issues

The importance of capturing the voice of the child is embedded in the safeguarding children policy and safeguarding children supervision policy. Tools are available for practitioners to use to assist in capturing the voice of the child including the “my world triangle” and the assessment framework.

EVIDENCE

Training is continuing and mandatory for front line staff in the City of London Police to raise awareness and gain a different perspective on the impact of police activity on children, to assist embedding the ‘Voice of the Child’ ethos. This includes development of a ‘calling card’ around vulnerability /support agencies where police visit an address.

EVIDENCE

Feedback surveys are carried out by Hackney CFS to gather the views of children and young people that we work with, for example the Family Feedback Covid-19 Survey was sent out to children and families between January and March 2021 asking about their experience of support during the pandemic. A children in care and care leavers survey is also undertaken annually. Work is currently taking place to review and redevelop the feedback programme to gather feedback from children, young people and parents/carers that we support across the Children and Families Service and a refreshed programme will be launched in 2022.



EVIDENCE

As a commissioning organisation, the CCG does not provide services directly to children and families. However, engagement and co-production with young people is a CCG Children Young People Maternity and Family (CYPMF) Integrated work stream transformation priority. With this priority in mind, the work stream piloted a Young People's System Influencer programme between November 2020 and February 2021. A group of 10 young people aged 16-25 were recruited from existing engagement groups and employed for 7 weeks to co-produce projects to influence systems.

Each of these young people was assigned two experienced 'System Mentors' who offered support and guidance throughout the delivery of their projects. The young people were also supported to take on their 'System Influencer' roles through another programme role, 'Peer Mentors'. The two Peer Mentors were young people, slightly older than the System Influencers, who acted as a bridge between the influencers and the mentors. The majority of the System Influencers delivered a number of projects touching on issues such as how young people access health and wellbeing support, evaluation of current models of youth engagement by the council and VCS organisations, a project aimed at young black people who are involved in the youth justice system which used art as a tool to explore experiences of trauma, and engagement on the CYP City and Hackney Emotional Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

The programme was extremely positively evaluated with plenty of learning to take forward as part of the delivery of the next phase. There is currently a joint financial proposal in development between Health Watch and LBH/NEL CCG in order to secure funding for two posts to support the delivery of the mainstreamed programme; one of these is a young person's post. Current plans are for the next phase to begin in quarter 3 of 2021/22.



Performance Data

Due to Covid-19, activity in 2020-21 focussed on review of the CHSCP dataset to ensure it remains proportionate and avoids duplication of metrics already captured. The dataset is structured around core indicators with supplementary thematics providing wider context on the data.

EVIDENCE

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During the year, the CHSCP was successful in securing DfE funding for a fixed term Strategic Data Analyst post to develop contemporary threat assessments. Data analysis and interpretation will strengthen decision making, improve scrutiny and enhance tactical decision making of safeguarding partners and relevant agencies of the CHSCP. Unfortunately, despite a number of recruitment rounds, the post remains un-filled. Activity is ongoing to appoint.

Front-Line Intelligence

In response to the Pandemic, Contingency Oversight Groups met on a bi-monthly basis during the lockdown. These groups actively considered service impacts, vaccination rates, covid fatigue, workforce pressures, community engagement and the health and wellbeing of staff (staffing levels, protective clothing, access to occupational health, homeworking, and communication channels). In response to feedback, information on bereavement support and services was developed and disseminated to the partnership in May 2020 alongside signposting access to mental health services.





External Learning

The CHSCP is a learning organisation and is constantly looking outwards to identify relevant learning opportunities that may help assist in its role of co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of the safeguarding systems across the City of London and Hackney. Where relevant, national reviews and inspection reports are considered by the CHSCP. Links to NSPCC thematic briefings and wider learning from other local areas continued to be disseminated to front-line staff via CHSCP training and [TUSK briefings](#).

EVIDENCE

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Disseminated [Safer Schools Apps](#) were released in the City of London and Hackney in response to Covid-19 and an increase in cyber-enabled offences identified through local and national 'learning' ([Pathways to Harm](#), [Internet Matters](#)).

Disseminated [Keeping Kids Safe](#) guidance from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents to parents and practitioners, in response to nationwide learning about the impact of Covid-19, [Child Death Review](#) intelligence and a local Rapid Review.

Disseminated [Safer Sleep](#) guidance to parents and practitioners and developed a [dedicated webpage](#) in response to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel [report on Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infants \(SUDI\)](#). A multi-agency task group was set up to map current initiatives and identify areas to strengthen the local approach using the 'prevent and protect practice model for reducing the risk of SUDI' framework detailed in the report. Activity is ongoing and will be reported next year.

Disseminated and promoted [ICON guidance](#), an evidence base programme of simple messaging to support parents/carers cope when an infant cries, to professionals and parents following national and local increases in head injuries for children under one during lockdown.



Key Messages for Practice

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THE CHSCP

COVID-19

COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY &
SOCIAL MEDIA

CITY
SAFEGUARDING
SNAPSHOT

SAFEGUARDING
IN THE CITY OF
LONDON

HACKNEY
SAFEGUARDING
SNAPSHOT

SAFEGUARDING IN
HACKNEY

LEARNING &
IMPROVEMENT

KEY MESSAGES
FOR PRACTICE

TRAINING &
DEVELOPMENT

PRIORITIES &
PLEDGE

WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW



SAFEGUARDING FIRST

For many organisations, safeguarding is one priority amongst many. Because of this, risk to children and young people can escalate when safeguarding is absent from an organisation's culture and how its professionals and volunteers discharge their duties. It is essential that leaders promote such a culture. If anyone has any doubts as to the importance of this message, read The CHSCP's review on [Chadrack](#)

[Moala-Mulo](#).

To help promote such a philosophy of 'Safeguarding First', always think about safeguarding whatever you are doing, whatever policy you are following and whatever action you might be taking. Professionals should also listen to what children and young people have said they need from those who work with them (Working Together 2018).

CHILDREN HAVE SAID THEY NEED

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views
- **Protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.



Context

Context is key and understanding the context of a child's life is essential for effective safeguarding. In terms of practice, this is about how the partnership works together to better understand the lived experience of children at home, in education and in health, alongside those aspects that are typically outside of the family environment; such as peer groups, places and spaces, and the virtual world that children occupy through their use of technology and social media. Knowing about these contexts will help us determine whether they reflect pathways to harm or pathways to protection. However, it is usual that no one individual has oversight on the detail of everything. In this respect, a first and important step is to make sure that professionals are confident in sharing information and talking with each other. If you are worried about a child or young person, you are allowed to talk with other professionals without fearing you are doing something wrong. You aren't. Talking to each other and sharing information when trying to protect people from actual or likely harm or to prevent a crime is lawful and in the substantial public interest.



Curiosity

Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. This has been described as the need for practitioners to practice 'respectful uncertainty' – applying critical evaluation to any information they receive and maintaining an open mind. In safeguarding the term 'safe uncertainty' is used to describe an approach which is focused on safety but that takes into account changing information, different perspectives and acknowledges that certainty may not be achievable. Professional curiosity can require practitioners to think 'outside the box', beyond their usual professional role, and consider families' circumstances holistically. Professional curiosity and a real willingness to engage with children, adults and their families or carers are vital to promoting safety and stability for everyone.

Much has been written about the importance of curiosity during home visits and the need for authentic, close relationships of the kind where we see, hear and touch the truth of their experience of 'daily life' and are able to act on it and to achieve similar closeness with parents or carers. Practitioners will often come into contact with a child, young person, adult or their family when they are in crisis or vulnerable to harm. These interactions present crucial opportunities for protection. Responding to these opportunities requires the ability to recognise (or see the signs of)

vulnerabilities and potential or actual risks of harm, maintaining an open stance of professional curiosity (or enquiring deeper), and understanding one's own responsibility and knowing how to take action. Children in particular, but also some adults, rarely disclose abuse and neglect directly to practitioners and, if they do, it will often be through unusual behaviour or comments. This makes identifying abuse and neglect difficult for professionals across agencies. We know that it is better to help as early as possible, before issues get worse. That means that all agencies and practitioners need to work together – the first step is to be professionally curious.

Curious professionals will spend time engaging with families on visits. They will know that talk, play and touch can all be important to observe and consider. Do not presume you know what is happening in the family home – ask questions and seek clarity if you are not certain. Do not be afraid to ask questions (and difficult questions) of families, and do so in an open way so they know that you are asking to keep the child or young person safe, not to judge or criticise. Be open to the unexpected, and incorporate information that does not support your initial assumptions into your assessment of what life is like for the child or young person in the family.



Challenge

Differences in professional opinion, concerns and issues can arise for practitioners at work and it is important they are resolved as effectively and swiftly as possible. Having different professional perspectives within safeguarding practice is a sign of a healthy and well-functioning partnership. These differences of opinion are usually resolved by discussion and negotiation between the practitioners concerned. It is essential that where differences of opinion arise, they do not adversely affect the outcomes for children, young people or adults and are resolved in a constructive and timely manner. Differences could arise in a number of areas of multi-agency working as well as within single agency working. Differences are most likely to arise in relation to the criteria for referrals, outcomes of assessments, roles and responsibilities of workers, service provision, timeliness of interventions, information sharing and communication. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and front-line staff need confidence in talking with each other about decisions that have been made, discussing any concerns regarding those decisions and where there isn't agreement; escalating those concerns as appropriate. Remember, equally important is the culture of how we work; and it is vital that front-line staff are encouraged to remain professionally curious and to raise issues where they feel that their concerns for children and young people aren't being addressed. To help staff resolve professional differences, the CHSCP has issued a simple [Escalation Policy](#).





Training & Development

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Training Summary 2020/21

The training opportunities offered by the CHSCP are designed to meet the diverse needs of staff at different levels within the wide range of organisations that work with children, young people, or adult family members. Sessions range from those that raise awareness about safeguarding and child protection to specialist topics aimed at more experienced staff. The training programme focuses on areas of practice prioritised by the CHSCP, with learning from local and national case reviews integrated into the training material.

As a result of the pandemic, the CHSCP's training programme rapidly pivoted to virtual delivery. The CHSCP team and trainers were swift to adapt and overall, attendance figures increased from 2019/20. Feedback also remained positive with the programme continuing to improve the knowledge and skills of the safeguarding workforce.

EVIDENCE

69 training sessions were held in 2020/21 (70 in 2019/20).

21 safeguarding topics were covered.

Four case review seminars were held involving the Child A and Child C Serious Case Reviews.

17 Reducing Parental Conflict courses funded by the Department for Work & Pensions.

All courses were delivered virtually over an 11-month period (April 2020 training was postponed due to the pandemic).

2853 available training places of which 99% were booked in advance of the course date.

Of the booked places, 685 delegates (24.2%) either cancelled or did not attend the course

66% of attending delegates worked in Hackney, 10% in the City of London, and 24% worked across both Boroughs.



Delegate Numbers

Basic Safeguarding Children Awareness x14	604	Safe & Together Webinars x 7	117
BRAVE Webinar x1	28	Safeguarding in a Digital World Webinars x 3	100
Child Abuse Linked to Faith & Belief Webinar x1	38	Safeguarding Children with Disabilities x 1	61
Child A Learning Seminar x2	136	Small Steps Reducing Extremism x 1	25
Child C Learning Seminar x2	133	VAWG & Harmful Practices Webinar x 1	24
Corrective Rape and Faith Based Abuse & Breast Ironing Webinar x 1	21	WRAP PREVENT Webinar x 1	24
Designated Safeguarding Leads Webinars x 5	247		
Domestic Abuse and Substance Misuse Webinar x 1	29		
DVA Risk Assessment & MARAC Webinar x 1	16		
Engaging Perpetrators of DVA Webinars x 2	57		
FGM Risk Assessment Tool Webinar x 1	24		
So-Called Honour-Based Violence & Forced Marriage Webinar x 1	23		
Introduction to Intra Familial CSA Webinar x 2	75		
Introduction to Contextual Safeguarding x 1	20		
Impact of Neglect & Emotional Abuse x 1	19		
MARAC Masterclass Webinar x 2	61		
Reducing Parental Conflict Webinars x 17	254		

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Agency	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		Trend
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
CAFCASS	0	0%	1	0.1%	10	0.5%	
CCG	10	0.9%	13	1.1%	58	2.7%	
City of London - Children's Centres & Nurseries	4	0.4%	8	0.7%	33	1.5%	
City of London - Corporation	23	2%	22	1.9%	43	2.0%	
City of London - Housing	5	0.4%	6	0.5%	1	0.0%	
City of London - Police	15	1.3%	0	0%	27	1.3%	
City of London - Schools & Further Education	N/I*	N/I*	N/I*	N/I*	59	2.8%	
City of London - Other	3	0.3%	3	0.3%	8	0.4%	
ELFT - Adult Mental Health	55	4.9%	52	4.4%	12	0.6%	
ELFT - CAMHS	36	3.2%	32	2.7%	32	1.5%	
ELFT - Forensics	3	0.3%	19	1.6%	46	2.2%	
Health - Other	5	0.4%	20	1.7%	7	0.3%	
Homerton University Hospital	123	10.9%	100	8.5%	165	7.7%	
LBH: Children's Centre/Nursery	40	3.6%	70	5.9%	130	6.1%	
LBH: Children & Families Service	241	21.4%	320	27.1%	513	24%	

* Not included in last year's annual report

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Agency	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		Trend
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
LBH: Hackney Education	32	2.8%	17	1.4%	46	2.2%	
LBH: Health & Community Services	21	1.9%	10	0.8%	1	0.0%	
LBH: Neighbourhoods & Housing	25	2.2%	14	1.2%	47	2.2%	
LBH: Schools & Further Education	74	6.6%	78	6.6%	290	13.6%	
LBH: Other	14	1.2%	10	0.8%	21	1.0%	
London CRC	0	0%	3	0.3%	1	0.0%	
Metropolitan Police	4	0.4%	3	0.3%	4	0.2%	
National Probation Service	11	1.0%	34	2.9%	37	1.7%	
Public Health	20	1.8%	3	0.3%	8	0.4%	
Voluntary & Community Services	125	11.1%	92	7.8%	296	13.9%	
Whittington Heath	6	0.5%	8	0.7%	4	0.2%	
Other	207	18.4%	201	17%	237	11.1%	
Total Places	1124	100%	1182	100%	2136	100%	

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Evaluation

Supported by its Training Evaluation and Analysis Framework, the CHSCP continues its practice in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its core training programme. Work undertaken to review the quality of training in 2020/21 has enabled the CHSCP to gain important insight into the difference it is making towards improved outcomes for children and young people.

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EVIDENCE

98.4% of delegates stated that the trainers' facilitation skills, teaching style and knowledge were **GOOD** (11.4%) **VERY GOOD** (35%) or **EXCELLENT** (52%). This is excellent feedback and a testament to the skill and expertise of our internal & commissioned trainers.

IMPACT

BEFORE training **65%** of delegates believed their knowledge was **GOOD** (40%), **VERY GOOD** (20%) or **EXCELLENT** (5%).

AFTER training **98.2%** stated their knowledge was **GOOD** (18.8%), **VERY GOOD** (60%) or **EXCELLENT** (19.4%).

IMPACT

98% stated what they had learned would help them safeguard children & young people more effectively.

95% of delegates said what they had learnt at the seminars would be useful to them in their work with children and young people.

97% of delegates rated the content of the learning seminars on Child C and Child A as **GOOD**, **VERY GOOD** or **EXCELLENT**.



IMPACT

"The facilitator was excellent, really clear and engaging, approached difficult subject empathically". (Basic Safeguarding)

"I have reflected and as a result of the training, I plan to develop training for our staff team on particular aspects to develop confidence and knowledge". (Designated Safeguarding Leads)

"What was said that I found key was "It's not about the internet, it's about people and their behaviours." From this, I will challenge young people's behaviour, explain to them how they should behave online and make them aware of the dangers. Also, ways they can make it safer for themselves online". (Safeguarding in a Digital World).

"I feel that I am definitely going to use the understanding of the use of denial, minimization and blaming by the perpetrators as well as the techniques to challenge these in my work with them". (Engaging Perpetrators of DVA).

"Recommend my colleagues to participate in the training. To support my services users who are victims of domestic abuse. Share information with my colleagues" (Domestic Abuse and Substance Misuse).

"I will use the information learned from the training to help parents and myself to notice behaviours and signs that children are at risk - especially signs children are being groomed for gangs". (Building Resilience Against Violence & Extremism) (BRAVE)

"A very well-run course - reminders were set at reasonable intervals, and the content was exactly as I had hoped for". (MARAC Masterclass)

"I think the training covered a really broad range in safeguarding children with additional needs and I found it all extremely useful. Also hearing from different people from different fields in the safeguarding team was really helpful". (Safeguarding Children with Disabilities).

"I am now more aware of the current issues that children and their families are experiencing This will be demonstrated throughout my daily practice, as I am now better equipped to support families". (VAWG & Harmful Practices)

".... an amazing trainer as she was very informative about the topic and always took the time to listen to other opinions." (Impact of Neglect and Emotional Abuse on Children and Young People)



Two Learning Seminars were held on Tashaun Aird (Child C) a 15-year-old child who was fatally stabbed whilst in the street. The seminar was facilitated by Charlie Spencer, the author of the Serious Case Review (SCR). Tashaun's parents and sister were involved in the seminars and shared their experiences on how they felt Tashaun's interactions with the various safeguarding agencies had impacted on their lives including Tashaun's.

IMPACT

"The fact that the parents and sister of the young man who lost his life contributed to the presentation, was both humbling and powerful. I am most grateful to them for sharing their thoughts, feelings and reflections. As professionals we MUST learn from this".

"Understanding the true impact on the family. Having the opportunity to hear first-hand from the parents' perspective. Hearing real, live emotion, distrust, their journey. How things can improve from young people and the necessary steps to prevent this from happening in the future".

"The voice of the parents was crucial to us as professionals remembering we are dealing with people not cases and each child should be seen as an individual not a statistic".

"Engaging parents/ families where they are willing and able has a powerful impact and I'd recommend this approach in future".

"We will be reflecting on this case and others and thinking about how we continue to escalate those cases where children and adolescents are at obvious risk".



Priorities & Pledge

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CHSCP Priorities 2021/22

Priority 1: The Health & Stability of the Safeguarding Workforce

Outcome: Safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations attract, retain, develop, and support their workforce. A healthy and stable workforce contributes to high quality safeguarding practice that improves outcomes for children and young people.

Priority 2: The Voice of Children and Young People

Outcome: Multi-agency safeguarding practice reflects the lived experience of children and young people. The voices of children and young people are central to all aspects of practice across the child's journey in the safeguarding system. These influence action and improve outcomes.

Priority 3: Getting the Basics Right

Outcome: Safeguarding practice in the City of London and Hackney is at least good. Children and young people are effectively protected from harm by early, robust, timely and coordinated multi-agency intervention and support.

Priority 4: The Appetite to Learn

Outcome: Children and young people are effectively safeguarded by professionals being actively engaged with the CHSCP's learning & improvement framework. Leaders encourage independent scrutiny, challenge performance, and embed lessons for practice improvement across their respective organisations.

Priority 5: Making the Invisible Visible

Outcome: The activity of safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations makes children and young people who live in groups and communities that are less engaged with public services safer. Legislation in respect of Unregistered Educational Settings (UES) is amended by government and the CHSCP obtains reassurance that the safeguarding arrangements of all settings are sufficiently robust.



CHSCP Pledge 2021/22

The Health & Stability of the Safeguarding Workforce - Without a healthy and engaged workforce, no agency can fully participate in and support the work of the partnership. The CHSCP will therefore seek to develop a better understanding of the pressures that staff and volunteers face and the steps that can be taken to mitigate them. This work will be undertaken in the context of what we know about the current conditions – Covid-19, organisational change, and restructure, reduced resourcing levels and increased demand. It will include evaluation of workforce stability, its capacity, and the support available to help deliver high-quality practice.

The Voice of Children and Young People - We will support and enable a culture of working that routinely seeks out and reflects the voices of children and young people. The lived experience of local children and young people and their voices will be evident in the policies we create, the practice we review and the communication channels that our wider partnership creates. Importantly, it will be evident in our casework and our intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Getting the Basics Right - Whilst welcoming innovation, the CHSCP is aware that good practice begins with getting the basics right. We will maintain focus on ensuring these aspects are embedded in our work covering the journey of the child through the safeguarding system. This includes our approach to early help, children in need (including those with SEND), child protection, looked after children and care leavers. We will also concentrate on those areas that require strengthening as identified by our Learning & Improvement Framework, local intelligence and the CHSCP strategic data analyst.





The Appetite to Learn - We are committed to maintaining our improvement journey and to that end, we will actively seek out and embrace opportunities to learn. Our quality assurance activity remains structured on our learning and improvement framework. We will routinely revisit the action plans to ensure that identified improvements are reflected in contemporary practice. Critically, we will respect the independent scrutiny role of the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner, the right to 'roam', the right to ask difficult questions and the right to respectfully challenge. Whenever required, safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and named organisations will provide whatever information they can to address a relevant enquiry or concern.

Making the Invisible Visible - The CHSCP will seek to better understand the vulnerabilities that can negatively impact on the outcomes for children and young people, particularly with those for whom oversight, and engagement is limited. We will seek to develop a more complete understanding of existing and emerging harms in the City of London and Hackney and work to mitigate and prevent them. We will map and analyse vulnerability as we know it based on age, location, need and the context of young people's lives, at home, in care and in the public spaces and places (including the internet) they frequent.





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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Nothing is more important than making sure you are safe and well cared for.
- As adults, sometimes we think we always know best... we don't... and that's why your voice is so important.
- This is about you and we want to know more about how you think children and young people can be better protected.
- We want to talk to you more often and we want to know the best way to do this... please help.
- If you are worried about your own safety or that of a friend, speak to a professional you trust or speak to Childline on 0800 1111.

childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
[childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk) | 0800 1111



PARENTS AND CARERS

- Public agencies are there to support you and prevent any problems you are having getting worse...Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Tell us what works and what doesn't when professionals are trying to help you and your children.
- Make sure you know about the best way to protect your child and take time to understand some of the risks they can face.
- You'll never get ahead of your child when it comes to understanding social media and IT – but make yourself aware of the risks that children and young people can face.



THE COMMUNITY

- You are in the best place to look out for children and young people and to raise the alarm if something is going wrong for them.
- We all share responsibility for protecting children. Don't turn a blind eye. If you see something, say something.
- If you live in Hackney, call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0208 356 5500.
- If you live in the City, call the Children & Families Team on 0207332 3621.
- You can also call the NSPCC Child Protection helpline on 0808 800 5000.



FRONT-LINE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN OR ADULTS

- Make children and young people are seen, heard and helped. **SAFEGUARDING FIRST, CONTEXT, CURIOSITY & CHALLENGE.**
- Your **professional judgement** is what ultimately makes a difference and you must invest in developing the knowledge, skills and experiences needed to effectively safeguard children and young people. Attend all training required for your role.
- Be familiar with, and use, when necessary, the **Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework and/or The City of London Thresholds of Need tool** to ensure an appropriate response to safeguarding children and young people.
- Understand the importance of **talking with colleagues and don't be afraid to share information**. If in doubt, speak to your manager.
- **Escalate your concerns** if you do not believe a child or young person is being safeguarded. This is non- negotiable.
- Use your representative on the CHSCP to make sure that your voice and that of the children and young people you work with are heard.
- If your work is mainly with adults, make sure you consider the needs of any children if those adults are parents.



LOCAL POLITIANS

- You are leaders in your local area. Do not underestimate the importance of your role in advocating for the most vulnerable children and making sure everyone takes their safeguarding responsibilities seriously.
- Councillors Anntoinette Bramble (Hackney) and Randall Anderson (The City of London) are the lead members for Children's Services and have a key role in children's safeguarding – so does every other councillor.
- You can be the eyes and ears of vulnerable children and families... Keep the protection of children at the front of your mind.



CHIEF EXECUTIVES AND DIRECTORS

- You set the tone for the culture of your organisation. When you talk, people listen. Talk about children and young people. Talk about SAFEGUARDING FIRST.
- Your leadership is vital if children and young people are to be safeguarded.
- Understand the capability and capacity of your front-line services to protect children and young people - make sure both are robust.
- Ensure your workforce attend relevant CHSCP training courses and learning events.
- Ensure your agency contributes to the work of CHSCP and give this the highest priority. Be compliant with minimum standards for safeguarding.
- Advise the CHSCP of any organisational restructures and how these might affect your capacity to safeguard children and young people.



THE POLICE

- Robustly pursue offenders and disrupt their attempts to abuse children.
- Ensure officers and police staff have the opportunity to train with their colleagues in partner agencies.
- Ensure that the voices of all child victims are heard, particularly in relation to listening to evidence where children disclose abuse.
- Ensure a strong focus on MAPPA and MARAC arrangements.



HEAD TEACHERS AND GOVERNORS OF SCHOOLS

- Ensure that your school / academy/ educational establishment is compliant with statutory guidance KCSIE.
- You see children more than any other profession and develop some of the most meaningful relationships with them.
- Keep engaged with the safeguarding process and continue to identify children who need early help and protection.



CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUPS

- CCGs in the health service have a key role in scrutinising the governance and planning across a range of organisations.
- Discharge your safeguarding duties effectively and ensure that services are commissioned for the most vulnerable children.



THE LOCAL MEDIA

- Safeguarding children and young people is a tough job.
- Communicating the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility is crucial - you can help do this positively.
- Hundreds of children and young people are effectively safeguarded every year across the City and Hackney.
- **This is news.**

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Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission 19th January 2022 Item 7 - Adolescents Entering Care (Scoping Report)	Item No 7
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Outline

Scrutiny may undertake in-depth reviews to assist the policy-making function of the Council. The Commission have agreed to review the increasing number of adolescents entering care, and the Council's approach to supporting this cohort of young people with a view to developing and improving local practice. The scoping report for this work is presented for review and agreement.

- Overview & Scrutiny Officer/ Commission

Reports

Adolescents entering care scoping report.

Members of the Commission are invited to review and agree the attached report.

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Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission Adolescents (aged 14-17) Entering Care Review - Scope

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Scrutiny Commission's may undertake in-depth investigations into service areas to assist the Council's policy review or development process. Such reviews generally take place in areas where the issues are complex and which require a more detailed assessment of the evidence and where contributions from multiple stakeholders are required.
- 1.2 Through its review and monitoring work, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission (CYPSC) is aware that the demography of young people entering care is evolving, where children are now more likely to adolescents (aged 14+) and often with complex and multiple needs. This changing pattern of demand has left children's social care services facing both structural and financial challenges as it seeks to respond to the needs of this cohort of young people.
- 1.3 The proposed review by the CYPSC aims to assist local policy and practice in this area by highlighting challenges faced by local services, reviewing and comparing existing support structures for young people and making recommendations for improvement.

2. National Context

- 2.1 Under the Children's Act (1989) Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need and to provide appropriate services to support such children in their local area. Local Authorities also:
- Have a duty to provide accommodation to children in need (Section 20);
 - Provide additional support to enable a child to reach reasonable levels of health or development where a child is assessed to be 'in-need' (Section 17);
 - May make necessary enquiries to decide whether to act to safeguard a child's welfare where they may be at risk of suffering or harm (Section 47);
 - May use powers to apply to court for an order to place a child in their care (Section 31).
- 2.2 Local Authorities provide a tiered range of services to meet these obligations and to respond to the local needs of children and families:
- Tier 1 - Universal Services such as schools, children centres, health visiting;
 - Tier 2 - Targeted services for children and families who are beginning (or at risk of) experiencing problems;
 - Tier 3- Specialist services to support children with multiple needs such as family support or disabled children;
 - Tier 4 - Highly specialised services for children with severe or complex needs such as looked after children.

Demand for children's social care services

- 2.3 In 2019/20, in excess of 640,000 referrals were made to children's social care services in England. The number of young people within the social care system has been growing since 2010/11 with increases in activity recorded in all aspects of child's social care and support provided by local authorities.

	Total 2019/20	% Increase 2010/11-2019/20
Referrals to Children's Social Care	642,980	+7%
Children in Need	389,260	+4%
Child Protection Enquiries (Section 47)	201,000	+129%
Children on a Child Protection Plan	51,510	+32%
Looked After Children	80,080	+24%

- 2.4 Whilst it is difficult to determine the precise nature of the drivers behind the increase in demand for children's social care services, evidence supplied within the annual social care assessment of Association of Directors of Children's Services (2021) would suggest the following influences:

- Demographic changes with an increase in 0-17 population;
- Parenting capacity /needs of parents (mental health, drug abuse/dependency domestic abuse);
- Poverty and the impact of welfare reforms;
- Growing awareness of non-familiar safeguarding risks (especially among adolescents).

- 2.5 Analysis of national data for 2019/20 indicates that domestic parental violence was the most numerous factor recorded in the completion of the Children in Need assessments. The other most common factors within the Children in Need assessments were are as follows:

Children in need factor identified at end of assessment 2020 (England)	
Domestic violence (parent)	169,860
Mental health (parent)	156,140
Emotional Abuse	110,300
Neglect	91,170
Alcohol Abuse (parent)	72,620
Physical abuse	70,740
Domestic violence (child)	64,500

2.6 The rate of children's social care activity reported by individual local authorities also varies widely. In 2019/20 the average rate of Children in Need across England was 324 (per,10,000 0-18 children) though this was as high as 870 in Middlesbrough and low as 177 in Richmond Upon-Thames. Wide variations for children's social care activity among local authorities are also reported for Children on a Child Protection Plan and Looked After Children.

2019/20	HACKNEY	England	LA Highest	LA Lowest
Children in Need (Rate per 10,000)	485	324	Middlesbrough - 870 Blackpool - 718 Hartlepool - 696	Richmond UT -177 Hertfordshire - 185 N Somerset - 197
Child Protection Plan (Rate per 10,000)	38	43	Blackpool - 124 NE Lincs - 118 Middlesbrough - 116	Westminster - 11.5 Ken & Chelsea - 14.5 Barnet - 16.7
Looked After Children (Rate per 10,000)	68	67	Blackpool - 223 Middlesbrough - 189 NE Lincs - 166	Wokingham - 24 Richmond UT - 27 Redbridge - 31

2.7 A number of bodies have attempted to explain the reasons behind such variations in local authority activity including the National Audit Office (NAO, 2019)¹ and Association of Directors of Children's Services (2021)². These organisations concluded that variations in local authority children's social care activity were increasing and could be attributed to a number of factors including:

- Varying levels of deprivation;
- Local transformation programmes;
- Housing supply difficulties;
- Insecure work;
- The number of unaccompanied children seeking asylum seekers.

2.8 The NAO report also identified a number of localised factors which may explain some of the variations among local authority children's social care activity:

- Local policies and practice of individual LA's;
- Local market conditions;
- Characteristics of children and young people in that area;
- Historical patterns of service demand and government funding.

Impact of Covid Pandemic

2.9 The Covid-19 pandemic has also impacted on vulnerable children and families and children's social care services designed to support them. For some families life has evidently become more challenging as Covid has exacerbated disadvantage

¹ NAO - Pressures on Children's Social Care, 2019

² Safeguarding Pressures, March 2021

particularly among lower income groups who have experienced heightened job insecurity and greater reliance on state assistance. There are also concerns that school closures may have exposed children to greater risk of abuse (domestic violence, parental drug misuse or mental health concerns) and reduced oversight and detection of children experiencing neglect. With families locked down, social networks reduced and limited access to statutory and other support services (schools, youth clubs, nurseries) there is also a concern that Covid 19 has had a detrimental impact on both children's and parents mental health.

- 2.10 Nationally, referrals to children's social care in 2020 remained lower (5-10%) than pre-pandemic levels largely as a result of the closure of schools. However, even when schools were reopened in the autumn of 2020, this did not result in an expected surge of new referrals. In this context there is a concern that projected levels of need resulting from the pandemic remain at odds with the number of children's social care referrals and whether vulnerable young people may be going under the radar. In this context, the ADCS report from March 2021 concluded 'that full impact of the pandemic may yet to have been seen'.
- 2.11 The pandemic also impacted on the children's social care service provision and the nature of cases coming forward where audits undertaken by the DfE (2019) and ADCS (2021) noted that Covid had:
- Impacted on staff availability to work;
 - Necessitated social workers to use virtual means to contact some children;
 - Led to an increase in cases involving domestic abuse;
 - Led to an increase in the complexity of cases needing support.
- 2.12 Of particular concern in this reporting was the increase in the complexity of cases presenting for support at children's social care services which has exacerbated 'social care placement sufficiency issues'. As a consequence, many local authorities reported a deterioration in the availability of children's social care placements and increasing costs for private provision such as placements with independent fostering agencies and within residential care.
- 2.13 Given the pressures around the availability of residential social care placements, concerns have arisen nationally about children being placed in unregulated accommodation and the quality of these care arrangements. The DfE have since moved to tighten up LA placements of looked after children, and as of September 2021 all such children must be placed in (Ofsted) regulated accommodation.

Funding for Children's Social Care

- 2.14 Funding for children's social care is provided through central government grants to local authorities, the majority of which is not ring-fenced and is left to individual authorities to determine how this is spent according to local needs and priorities.

Total spending by local authorities on children's social care funding in England totalled £10.6 billion in 2019/20.

- 2.15 The table below shows total spending on children's social care services by local authorities from 2014/15 through to 2019/20. This shows that local authority spending on children's social care has increased from £9.2billion in 2014/5 to £10.6billion in 2019/20.

<i>Totals</i>	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/21
England	£9.2b	£9.1b	£9.2b	£9.5b	£9.9b	£10.6b
Inner London	£841.4m	£829.9m	£863.7m	£818.3m	£866.7m	£916.3m
HACKNEY	£73.9m	£75.7m	£79.4	£79.6	£85.6m	£88.1m

- 2.16 Demand for children's social care services continues to outstrip increased spending, which has created significant budgetary pressures. The Local Government Association (LGA) analysed children's social care spending in 130 (out of 151) local authorities and concluded that despite children's social care budgets rising by £535m in 2019/20 many local authorities overspent, cumulatively totalling £832m.

- 2.17 A detailed assessment of budget pressures within Children's Social Care undertaken by Oxford University³ on behalf of the DfE identified a number of key factors behind these budgetary pressures of local authority children's social care budgets:

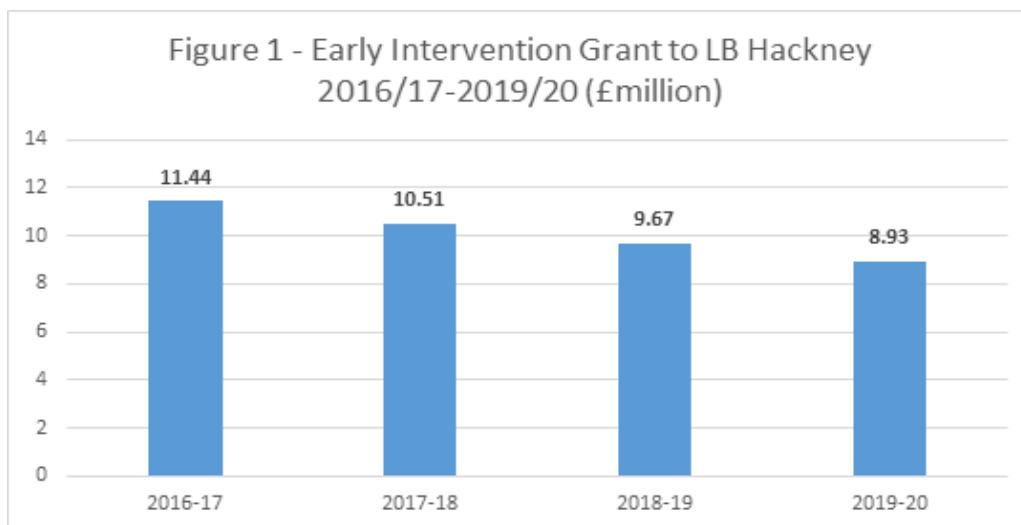
- Rising demand nationally for children's social care (e.g. LAC, CPP, CiN);
- Increased complexity of the needs of children, young people and their families (CSE, criminal exploitation);
- An increased adolescent looked after child population, who are likely to need continued support from children's social care beyond the age of 18.
- Supporting care leaver entitlement of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, which is not fully funded by the Home Office;
- An increase in the proportion of care leavers making the transition to higher education, placing an additional financial cost on children's social care budgets.

- 2.18 Data analysis by the National Audit Office suggests that whilst government funding has fallen in real terms since 2010/11, Local Authorities have generally sought to protect spending on children's social care.⁴ Nonetheless, the ADCS predicted that an additional £824m would have been required at the end of 2019/20 to just maintain levels of provision.

³ Children's social care cost pressures and variations in unit costs, Lisa Homes, Rees Centre UoO, 2021.

⁴ NAO, Financial Sustainability of local authorities, March 2019

- 2.19 Whilst local authorities appear to have protected spending on statutory children's social care services, spending on non-statutory services has fallen in many local authority areas. The NAO report into children's social care found that for England as a whole, spending on preventative services by local authorities (as a proportion of all money spent on children's social care services) fell from 41% in 2010/11 to 25% in 2017/18. In addition, data from the DfE indicates that spending on non statutory services has decreased by 35% in real terms between 2012/3 and 2019/20.⁵ Thus whilst the cost of children's care is increasing, spending is increasingly skewed toward acute services rather than providing effective early help.
- 2.20 Aside from spending pressures within statutory children's social care services, the fall in spending on prevention is also attributable to the decline in the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) which has been used to fund a range of preventative interventions for children and young people. Total funding to local authorities through the EIG was £2.37billion in 2012/13 but this has reduced significantly since this time. Total funding through the EIG in 2019/20 was £1.03 billion, which represents a 57% reduction over this 7 year period.
- 2.21 EIG funding to Hackney has also fallen from £11.4m in 2016/17 to less than £9m in 2019/20, a 22% reduction.



Independent Review of Children's Social care

- 2.22 A commitment to review children's social care provision was made as part of the Conservative Party manifesto for the General Election of 2019. Josh MacAlister was appointed to lead this review in 2020 and commenced work in January 2021. The review is known as The Independent Review of Children's social care in England which aims to:

⁵ DfE, Statistics: Local Authority and School Finance

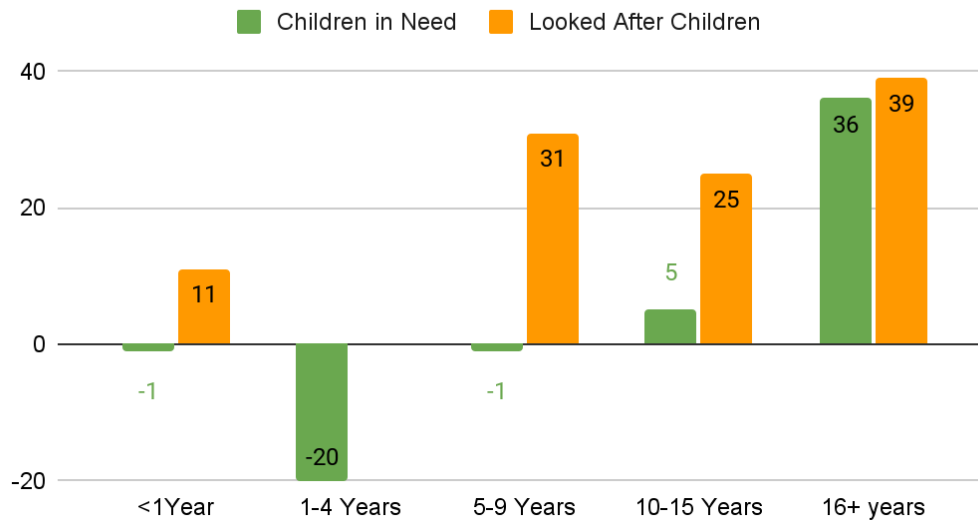
'Look at the whole system of support, safeguarding, protection and care and children's journey into and out of care systems, including relevant aspects of preventive service that are provided to children and families as part of early help'

- 2.23 The review aims to address 7 key questions:
1. The nature and level of support needed to improve long-term outcomes of children referred to or in receipt of social care support;
 2. How can children be supported to stay safely with their families and enable them to thrive thus avoiding the need to enter care?
 3. How can service accessibility and timeliness of social care interventions be improved for those children that need them;
 4. How can services ensure that children have a positive experience of care that prioritises stability;
 5. What are the key enablers to deliver improved social children's care and how can these be supported (e.g. stable and resilient workforce, system leadership and partnerships)
 6. What is the most sustainable and cost-effective way of delivering services, including high-cost services?
 7. What accountability arrangements are necessary to which balance is needed for the state to protect and promote the welfare of children with the importance of parental responsibility, and how local authorities oversee and discharge their duties.
- 2.24 The Independent Review of Social Care has set out its 'case for change' in a [report](#) published in August 2021. As well as highlighting the increased numbers of young people within the social care system, the report also noted the significant change in the demographic profile of children in care. The review is ongoing and is not expected to report until late 2022.

Adolescents entering care

- 2.25 One of the most significant changes in children's social care has been the changing demography of children being supported by or looked after by local children's social care services. Analysis of demographic data for Children in Need and Looked After Children between 2010/11 and 2019/20 demonstrates that children's social care services have seen a greater increase in the number of adolescent aged children they are supporting.

Changes in Age Profile - % change 2010/11-2019/20



2.26 Nationally, teenagers are the largest growing cohort of children in relation to both child protection and social care. Over the period 2010-2020⁶:

- The number of looked after children:
 - aged between 10-15 increased by 25%
 - aged 16 and over increased by 39%
- The number of children on a Child Protection Plan:
 - Aged 10-15 increased by 58%
 - Aged 16 and over increased by 258%.

2.27 The underlying reasons for this increase in the number of adolescents being supported by local children's social care services are clearly complex, but it is apparent that the understanding of the risks that teenagers face has evolved, particularly in relation to those risks that they face outside the home. Local Authorities now have an improved understanding of the risks that adolescents face in relation to:

- Criminal exploitation and young people drawn in to drug supply;
- Child sexual exploitation and trafficking;
- Serious youth violence and gang associations and involvement;
- Peer on peer abuse;
- Young people going missing from home;
- School exclusion.

2.28 In a report by the Children's Commissioner⁷ into the characteristics of teenagers entering care, it was found that there were an increasing number of adolescent young people who, despite being in contact with local services, were not getting the support that they needed. The report suggested that approximately 120,000 young

⁶ DfE: Statistics: Children in Need and Child Protection

⁷ [Characteristics of Teenagers Entering Care](#) Children's Commissioner 2021

people aged 13-17 may be falling through the gap and not getting the care and support that they needed, specifically referring to the following cohorts;

- Those referred to social care multiple times but who were not allocated a social worker;
- Children who were absent from school or who had permanently excluded;
- Children with special educational needs and who had multiple exclusions from school;
- Children who had missed large portions of school or dropped out of the school system in Year 11.

2.29 There is an acknowledgement that teenagers and other adolescents entering care do so with more complex needs and as they are often exposed to multiple risks. Supporting adolescents in care can therefore be challenging, particularly as there may be exacerbating factors:

- Adolescents may face harm from multiple sources, both within and external to the family home;
- Adolescents may be involved with different agencies (e.g. health, youth justice, police, education) who may have different approaches to supporting them;
- With multiple agencies involved with different approaches to young people, accountability for supporting young people can be diffuse.

2.30 The cost of meeting the needs of this group of adolescents entering care is significant with many complex packages of care, often requiring placements in high cost residential or semi-residential care settings or with specialised foster carers. [National research](#) indicates that unit costs vary between £1,000 and £8,000 per week, with concerns around limited supply driving up costs and the quality of care arrangements. This is widely recognised to be contributing to significant pressures within children's social care budgets.

2.31 As part of its Social Care innovation programme, the DfE has established a workstrand to investigate adolescents with complex needs and who require social care support. This aims to identify and share good practice in supporting this cohort of young people requiring social care support. A number of projects have been identified through this project which have/ are contributing to new understanding or improved practice in supporting adolescents on the edge of care or in receipt of care.

[Child sexual exploitation project: Wigan and Rochdale evaluation](#) The project's effectiveness at reducing the number of young people affected by sexual exploitation being placed in high-cost or secure accommodation that doesn't always meet their needs. (March 2017)

[B Positive Pathways](#) Combining 4 tried and tested models (No Wrong Door, Mockingbird, Signs of Safety and PACE) into an integrated support service. (March 2020)

[Sefton Community Adolescent Service](#) A single, integrated service to support young people at risk of gang involvement, child sexual exploitation and youth crime. (July 2017)

[Contextual Safeguarding Pilot](#) A new approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their home environment.

[Enfield family and adolescent support service \(HUB\)](#) Review of the family and adolescent support service (FASH), which aimed to change the way support for children and adolescents is provided.

[Gloucestershire Adolescent Innovation Project](#) A unified, authority wide approach for adolescents including dedicated multi agency teams, integrated attachment theory and restorative practice.

[Inside Out Project](#) A personalised intervention for children who have had multiple moves combining a range of placement options with intensive coaching support. (March 2020)

[No Wrong Door](#) A report on the programme's effect on improving support for young people who are in care or on the edge of care. (July 17)

[The Right Home](#) Multi agency support for 16- to 19-year-olds at risk of homelessness, including flexible accommodation options and personalised support. (March 17)

[North London Children's Efficiency Programme](#) An evaluation of the North London children's efficiency programme (NLCEP) where 5 boroughs worked in partnership to improve care placement. (2016)

3. The Hackney Context

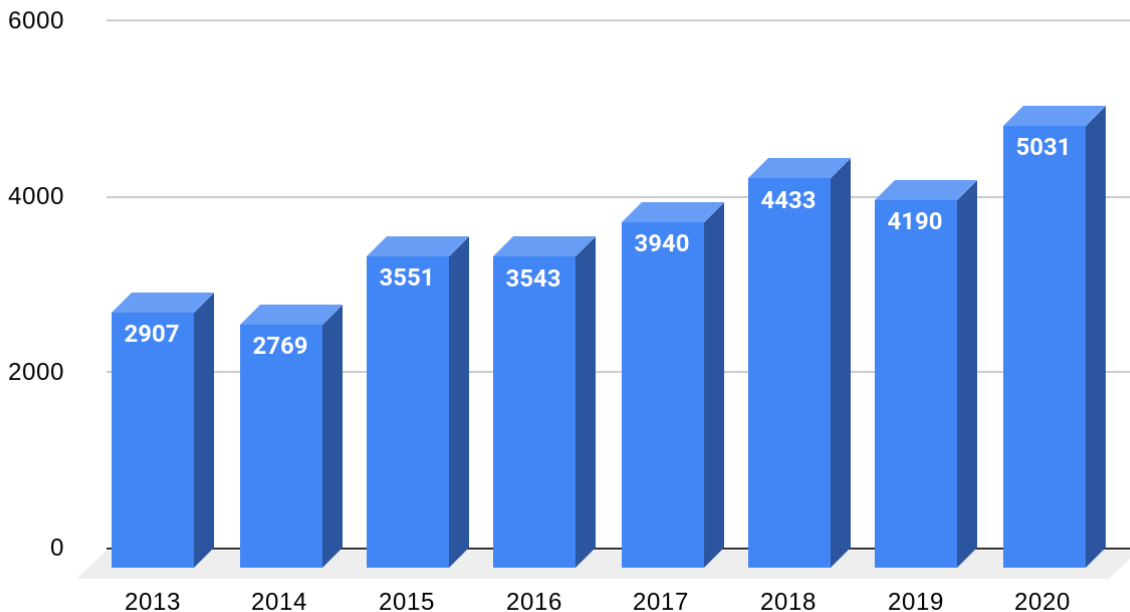
3.1 A summary of children's social care activity over the period 2013-2020 in Hackney is provided in the table below. This mirrors national data, where increased activity is recorded in every aspect of children's social care. In Hackney in the 8 year period to 2020:

- The number of referrals to children's social care have increased by 73%;
- The number of Children in Need has risen by 40%;
- The number of children on a child protection plan has increased by 9%;
- The number of 'looked after children' has risen by 27%.

Summary of children's social care activity 2013-2020 in Hackney (Activity at 31/3)									
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% +/-
Referrals to Children's Social Care	2,907	2,769	3,551	3,543	3,940	4,433	4,190	5,031	+73%
Children in Need	2,206	2,465	2,848	2,821	3,133	2,806	2,904	3,094	+40%
Child Protection Plans	225	221	216	226	330	200	194	245	+9%
Looked After Children	-	340	340	325	371	382	405	432	+27%

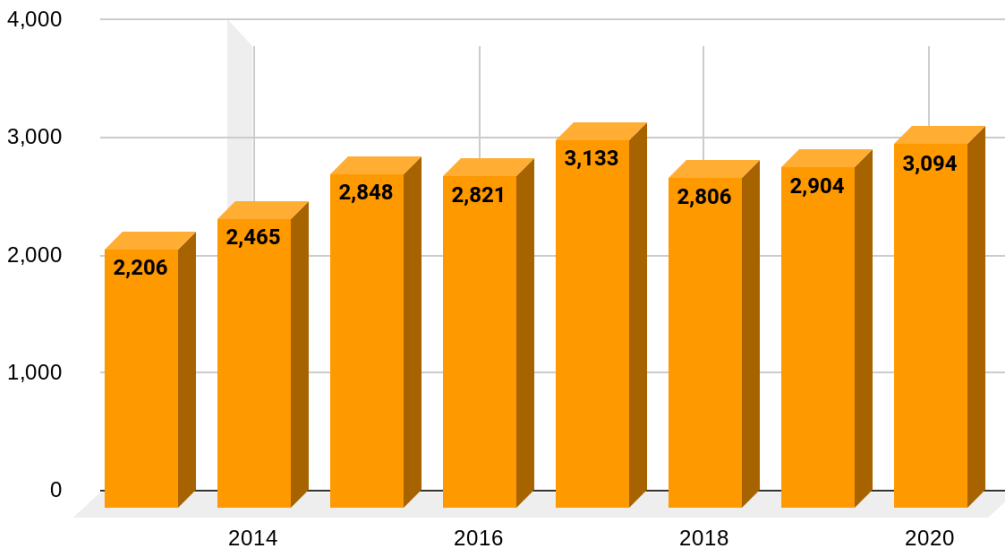
3.2 Referrals to children's social care in Hackney totalled 2,907 in 2013, but have risen to 5,031 in 2020. There has been a year-on-year increase except for 2019. This represents a 73% increase.

Annual children's social care referrals in Hackney (2013-20)



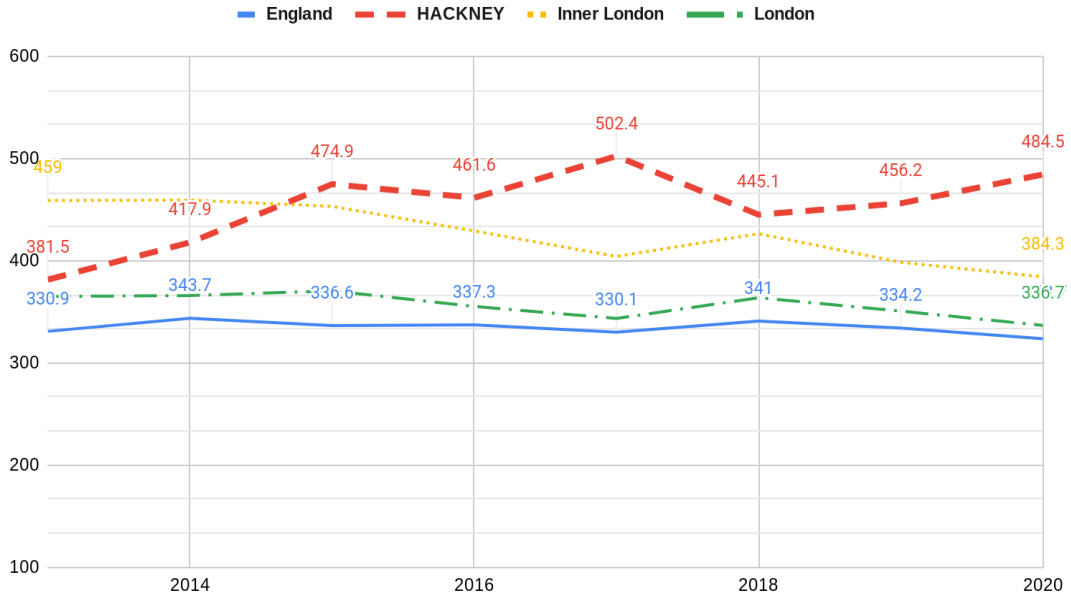
3.3 The number of children assessed to be 'Children in Need' has risen from 2,206 in 2013 to 3,094 in 2020, a 40% increase. Numbers of 'Children in Need' have fallen back from a peak of 3,133 in 2017.

Number of children in need in Hackney 2013-2020



3.4 From the most recently available data, the rate of Children in Need in Hackney is 484.5 (per 10,000). The current rate of Children in Need is significantly higher than national, regional and sub regional averages.

Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000) at end of March.

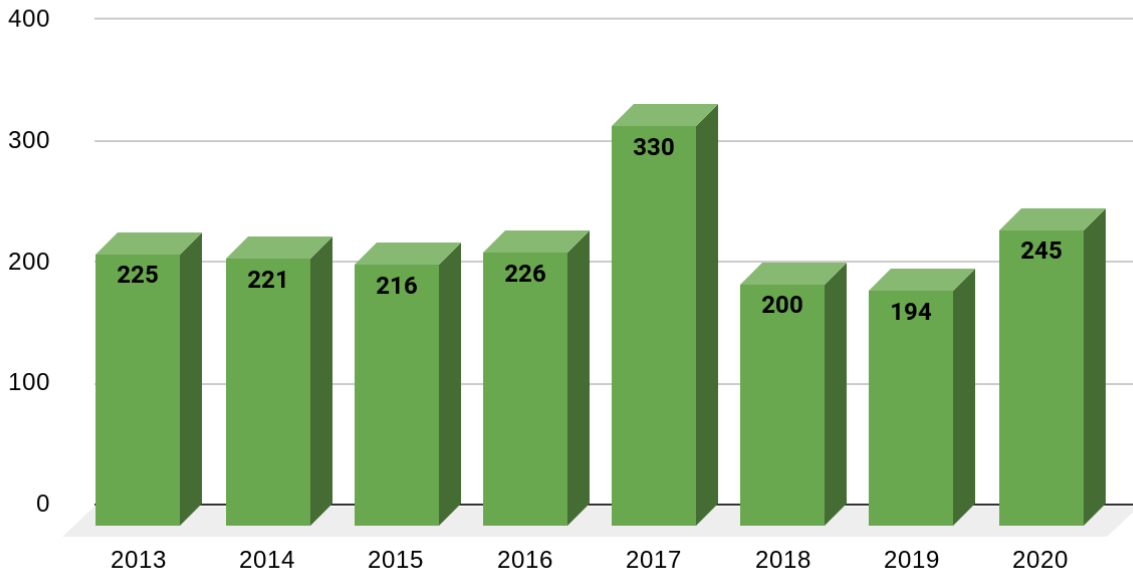


3.5 In terms of the assessed needs of Children in Need in Hackney, this also broadly mirrors national data (in 2.5) where Domestic Violence and Mental Health (of the parent, child or another person) figure prominently. Domestic violence (child, parent or another person) figured in 38% of assessments. Neglect was mentioned in 1,319 (27%) assessments for Children in Need.

Children in need factor identified at end of assessment 2020 (Hackney) from 4,844 number of episodes with assessment factor information.	
Domestic Violence (Child, Parent, Person)	1,838 (282, 1,310, 246)
Mental health (Child, Parent, Person)	1,413 (401, 894, 118)
Neglect	1,319
Physical Abuse	811
Emotional Abuse	588
Learning Disability (Child, Parent, Person)	542 (439, 78, 25)
Physical disability (Child, Parent, Person)	519 (236, 225, 58)
Drug misuse (Child, Parent, Person)	449 (142, 251, 56)
Socially unacceptable behaviour	313
Alcohol Misuse (Child, Parent, Person)	312 (24, 261, 27)
Gangs	178
Sexual abuse	148
Self-harm	137
Going /being missing	116
Child Sexual Exploitation	114
Young Carer	103
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker	34
Private Fostered	30
Trafficking	9

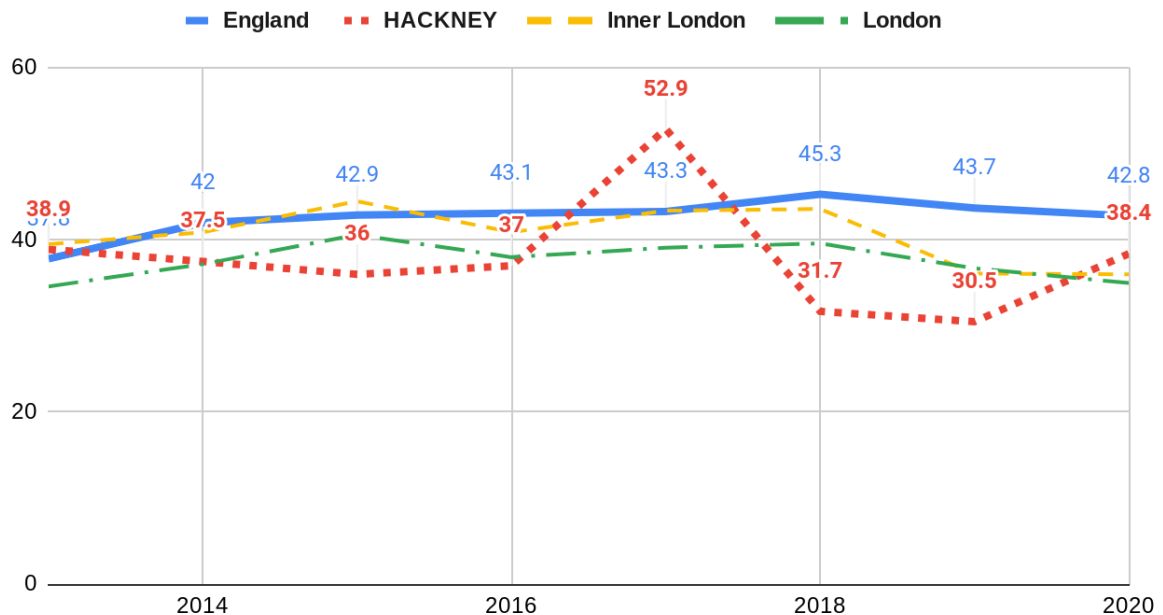
- 3.6 The number of children placed on a Child Protection Plan in Hackney (with the exception of 2017) had been falling over the 8 year period to 2019, where 194 children were on such a plan. In 2020 however, the number of children on a Child Protection Plan in Hackney rose to 245.

Number of Child Protection Plans (as of 31/3) Hackney 2013-2020



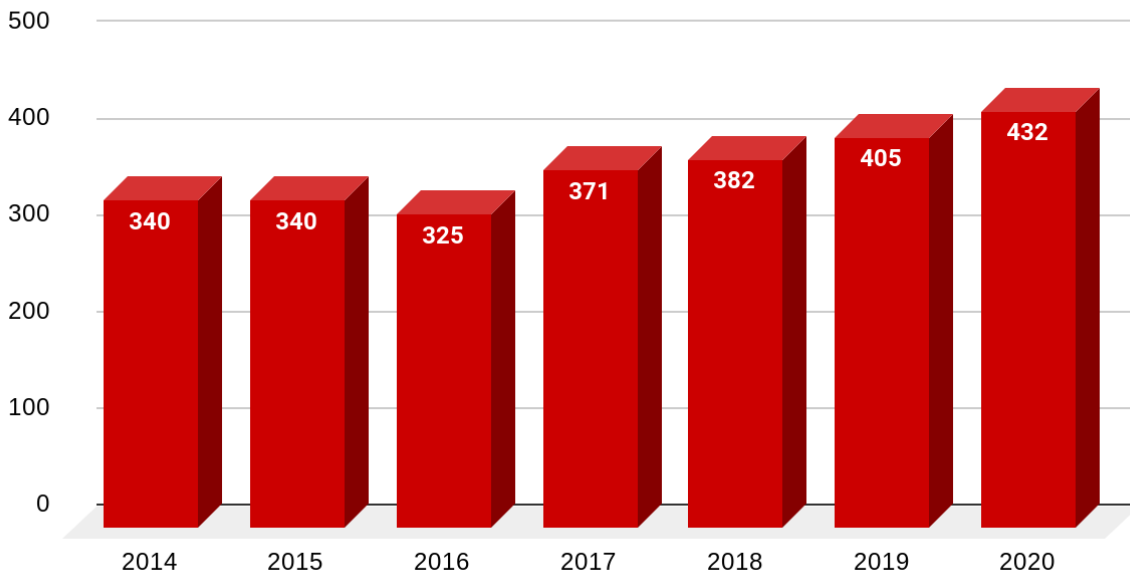
3.7 The rate of children on a Child Protection Plan is 38.4 (per, 10,000) which is lower than the national average (42.8). Comparatively, the rate of children on a Child Protection Plan (with the exception again being in 2017) has broadly been below national, regional and sub-regional averages over the period 2013-2020.

Rate (per 10,000) of Child Protection Plans (2013-2020)



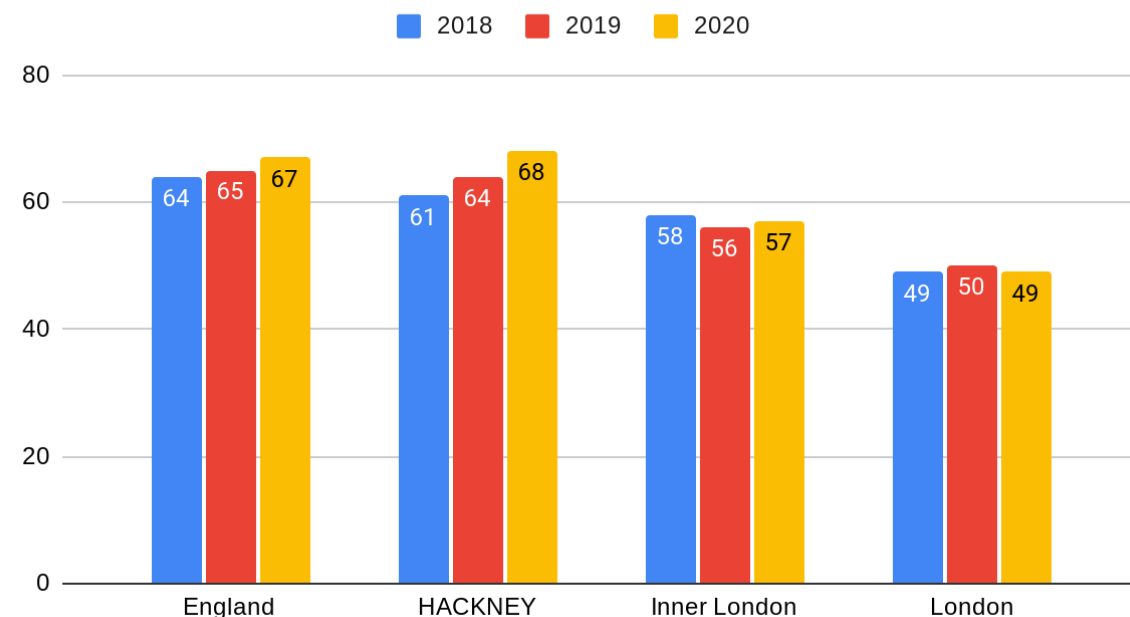
3.8 The most recent nationally collated data (from 2020) indicates that the number of looked after children (as of 31st March) in Hackney (2020) is 432. The number of looked after children in Hackney has increased year on year since 2016, and overall by 27% since 2014.

Number of Looked After Children in Hackney (as of 31/3) 2014-2020



3.9 The rate of looked after children in Hackney in 2020 was 68 (per, 10,000) which was higher than national, regional and sub regional averages. The rate of looked after children in Hackney has increased over the three year period to 2020, going against regional and sub-regional across and within London.

Rate (10,000) of looked after children 2018-2020



3.10 In the most recent Annual Report of the Children and Families Service in Hackney, it was noted that 119 young people aged 14-17 years entered care in 2019/20, which represented 52% of the total number of children entering care. The table below provides a summary of the age group of children entering care for the three year

period to 2020 and which demonstrates that young people aged 16+ years consistently accounted for in excess of $\frac{1}{3}$ of young people entering care in Hackney.

Age group of children ENTERING CARE						
	2018		2019		2020	
Age	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney
Under 1	19%	32 (15%)	19%	24 (11%)	-	22 (10%)
1-4	18%	22 (10%)	18%	22 (10%)	-	28 (12%)
5-9	18%	23 (11%)	18%	19 (9%)	-	26 (11%)
10-15	28%	68 (31%)	28%	58 (27%)	-	71 (31%)
16+	17%	72 (33%)	18%	89 (42%)	-	81 (36%)
Total		217		212		228

- 3.11 In terms of the number of young people actually in care in Hackney (as of 31/3), approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ are aged 10 years and above and $\frac{1}{3}$ aged 16 years and over. Data for the three year period to 2021 would appear to confirm the increasing numbers of adolescents being looked after in Hackney.

Age Group of Children IN CARE AT 31/3						
	2018		2019		2020	
Age	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney
Under 1	6%	25 (7%)	5%	19 (5%)	-	11 (3%)
1-4	13%	28 (7%)	13%	26 (6%)	-	36 (9%)
5-9	19%	64 (17%)	18%	58 (14%)	-	55 (13%)
10-15	39%	143 (38%)	39%	153 (38%)	-	163 (40%)
16+	23%	121 (32%)	24%	149 (37%)	-	148 (35%)
Total		381		405		413

- 3.12 In line with national findings, many of the adolescents who enter care in Hackney often have multiple and complex needs. Given the needs of such young people, it may be difficult to place them with in-house or independent foster carers and as a consequence more likely to be placed within a residential care home or semi-independent accommodation.

- 3.13 Demand for these placements has been growing year on year which has been exacerbated by Covid; in 2020/21 there was almost 3 fold increase in residential placements and doubling of semi-independent placements. The most recent data from September 2021 (table below) indicates that there were 39 young people in residential care, and 136 in semi-independent care (25 for under 18's and 111 over 18's).
- 3.14 The Children and Families Service undertook a review of children placed in [residential care homes](#) . Of a sample of 37 of those children placed in residential care:
- The average age was 15.2 years (range 11.4 to 17.7 years);
 - 60% were male and 40% female;
 - 40% were Black African or Black Caribbean, 32% dual heritage, 26% white;
 - 82% had an EHCP;
 - 21% have ADHD, 18% have autism and 11% have a learning disability.
- 3.15 In terms of the support provided to this same cohort young people in a residential care home:
- 19% had an education cost (range from £600-£1,673 per week);
 - 16% had a therapy or health cost (range £190-£2,596 per week);
 - The total average cost was £4,608 per week (range £2,300-£10,500).
- 3.16 The Children and Families Service undertook a review of children placed in [semi-independent care](#) . From this review of a sample of 28 young people within this cohort;
- 43% had been looked after by the Council for a number of years and 57% had entered care at age 16 or 17 years;
 - Of those in care for a longer-term, 50% had been moved into semi-independent provision from a residential care home, whilst 25% had moved following multiple foster carer breakdowns;
 - Of the young people who entered care at age 16 or 17 years, 43% were allocated semi-independent when they entered care within an emergency situation and 25% following multiple foster care breakdowns.
- 3.17 Increased numbers of children placed in residential and semi-independent care has contributed to ongoing budget pressures within corporate parenting and more willey across children's social care. According to the most recent Overall Financial Position of the Council (September 2021) forecast the total spend on residential care and semi-independent care for year end 2021/22 to be £9.4m and £3.5m respectively. After the application of reserves (£4.2m) and Social Care Grant (£4.5m), corporate parenting is forecast to overspend its budget of £26m by £2.4m at year end 2021/22.

Service Type	Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	Funded Placements	Current Placements
Residential	4,981	9,425	4,445	22	39
Secure Accommodation (Welfare)	-	234	234	-	1
Independent Foster Agency	7,688	7,125	(563)	155	139
In-House Fostering	2,400	1,809	(591)	102	73
Semi-Independent (Under 18)	1,570	1,847	277	23	25
Semi-independent (18+)	1,370	2,673	1,303	88	111
Family & Friends	869	1,030	162	44	54
Residential Family Centre (P & Child)	300	340	40	2	2
Other Local Authorities	-	135	135	-	6
No Recourse to Public Funds (18+)	290	377	87	19	14
Staying Put (18+)	500	532	32	36	33
Supported Lodging	-	49	49	-	4
Extended Fostering (18+)	-	76	76	-	2
UASC (Under 18)	-	(136)	(136)	26	23
Former UASC (18+)	-	748	748	22	58
Expenditure	19,967	26,265	6,297	539	584

Placement Type	Annual Forecast £ 000	Weekly Cost £ 000	Weekly Unit Cost (Avg)	Current YP No	Last month YP No
Residential Care	9,425	167	4,275	39	40
Secure Accommodation (Welfare)	234	-	0	1	1
Independent Foster Agency	7,125	-	952	139	133
In-House Fostering	1,809	3	459	73	81
Semi-Independent (Under 18)	1,847	1	1,325	25	30
Semi-independent (18+)	2,673	7	299	111	115
Family & Friends	1,030	-	379	54	45
Residential Family Centre (P&Child)	340	-	3,599	2	1
Other Local Authorities	135	20	252	6	6
No Recourse to Public Funds (18+)	377	4	292	14	12
Staying Put (18+)	532	13	406	33	41
Supported Lodging	49	1	228	4	4
Extended Fostering (18+)	76	1	692	2	4
UASC (Under 18)	(136)	115	757	23	24
Former UASC (18+)	748	6	297	58	59
Total	26,265	339	14,213	584	596

- 3.18 The tables above taken from the November 2021 OFP (September position) provide a summary of the budgetary position of children's social care placements including budgets, forecast variance, unit costs and numbers of placements.

Service Response

- 3.19 The children and families service have developed a number of responses to identify and address the number of adolescents entering care. These are briefly summarised here, as these will form part of the review process in which members question officers on the response to local needs.

Contextual safeguarding

- 3.20 In April 2017, the Council was awarded £2m by DfE to help improve the way that local authorities approach child protection. The funding, from the Department for Education's Children's Social Care Innovation Fund has allowed the Council to develop a radical new approach to safeguarding, which shifts the focus of social work from the family home, to consider much wider influences.
- 3.21 The Contextual Safeguarding project aims to identify ways in which children can be protected from risks outside the family home, recognising that young people are increasingly being influenced by their peer groups and surroundings, which are outside the control of their families and cannot necessarily be addressed by traditional social work interventions, which focus on individual children and families. The Contextual safeguarding approach will help to understand the risks that adolescents face outside the home and support children and their families appropriately.
- 3.22 A [national evaluation](#) of the Hackney Contextual Safeguarding Project has concluded that this approach helps to develop a framework to address extra-familial risk and harm (EFRH) and has had some positive impact on social work practice. It was still too early however, to identify robust evidence of improved user experience or outcomes and that it would take an additional time to fully bed in this approach to local practice.

Edge of Care Project

- 3.23 The Edge of Care Project was established in response to the increasing numbers of young people entering care in Hackney, particularly young people aged 14-17 years of age. Over the past 18 months, this scoping exercise has accumulated local data and knowledge of this cohort entering care as well as evidence from other practice models used in other local authorities.
- 3.24 Learning from the above scoping exercise has informed the development of a pilot service which will work with young people and their families who are at risk of entering care. This commenced in November 2021. There are three key objectives to the service:

- To prevent young people from coming into care;
- Enabling children and young people to step down from care;
- Supporting children to remain in settled care arrangements.

3.25 It is expected that the new service will offer additional support and capacity to existing social care units and develop an evidence-based model of intervention that is effective with this cohort. The new service will be a multi-agency (social care and clinical practitioners) to help address the complex and often entrenched issues that young people may face, and tackle local disproportionalities in those young people accessing or referred to social care.

3.26 The Edge of Care pilot service is being evaluated by What Works Centre for Social Care, which will help determine the scope, nature and scale of future service provision.

4. Aims and Objectives of the Review

4.1 The Children & Young People's Scrutiny Commission is proposing to undertake an in-depth review of adolescents entering care as part of its work programme for 2021/22.

Aim

4.2 It is suggested that the overarching aim of the review should be:

'To further understand the needs of adolescents entering care and that local services are supporting these both effectively and efficiently.'

Objectives

4.3 Within the above overarching aim, there are a number of key objectives that the review will aim to address.

4.3.1 Demographic profile /needs

To review the demographic profile and adolescents pathways into care to help understand the individual and collective needs of young people and the demands these place on local social care services:

- Are there common risk factors, or patterns of needs or previous service contact of those adolescents' 'pathway' into care which may help services to plan and respond to need?
- Are there any disproportionalities within this demographic profile of adolescents entering care and how can these be addressed?
- To further understand on what legal basis are adolescents entering care (e.g. under section 17 or section 20);
- What are adolescents' perspectives of their journey into care?

4.3.2 Service response to adolescent needs

To assess of the needs of adolescents entering care are being effectively addressed by local services:

- How do the needs of adolescents guide and inform the care arrangement decisions of children in different care settings (e.g. residential care, semi-independent care or foster care)?
- What is the service response to this cohort of children entering care, and how well equipped are local children's social care structures and workforce to respond to the new and emerging needs of adolescents entering care?
- How effective are local partnerships (social care, education, health) in collectively identifying and supporting adolescents in need?
- What do adolescents think about the care and support they receive?
- What can Hackney learn from approaches taken by other local authorities in tackling this and similar issues?

4.3.3 *Commissioning*

How effective are local commissioning processes that underpin care and support packages to support adolescents in care?

- What are the range of care and support options available for this cohort of adolescents and what does the 'market' for these care options look like and how effective is it in meeting local needs (short-term demand, placement shortage, location, etc)?
- What financial and other governance controls are in place to ensure that commissioned social care placements meet the needs of adolescents in a cost effective way?
- What quality standards and service priorities underpin the commissioning of social care placements?
- What are the options for developing more localised or collaborative solutions to meet these social care placement needs of this cohort of adolescents (e.g. joint commissioning, investment in infrastructure)?

4.3.4 *Early help to prevent adolescents entering care*

To assess what opportunities there are for early help and prevention to reduce the risk of adolescents becoming looked after children:

- What role do current (Contextual Safeguarding) and future developments (Edge of Care project) have in addressing risks and preventing children from becoming looked after?
- What can be learnt from case analysis of adolescents entering care which could inform early help and prevention opportunities?
- How will the emerging Early Help Strategy target address areas of unmet need earlier and prevent adolescents entering care?
- What can Hackney learn from approaches taken by other local authorities in taking a preventative approach?

Key elements to the review

4.4 There are a number of elements to the planned review which are set out below with some potential contributors.

Objective	Contributor
National policy framework - statutory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Director of Children & Families & Head of Corporate Parenting - Expert independent input
Local Policy and Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director of Children & Families - Head of Corporate Parenting - Data / Illustrative case studies from CFS - Edge of Care Team - Early Help Review - Partner Agencies (education, health, CVS)
Comparative assessment / best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Approach of Local Authorities / projects - Expert independent input: 'What works for children's Social Care', Children's Commissioner.
Effectiveness of local provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of young people (and their families) - Children's Care Council - Views of front line staff
Priorities for improvement and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment and review of the evidence from a range of contributors.

Outline work plan

4.5

January 19th 2022 (CYP Scrutiny Commission)	Agreement of scope, aims and objectives and plan of work (Commission)
Late January (informal meeting, date TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National context, and local policy & practice (CFS, specialist organisations)
Mid February (informal meeting, date TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparative Assessment (Other LA's or projects)
Late February (informal meeting, date TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commissioning social care placements (CFS/ other external contributors)
14th March 2022 Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission

report to (CYP Scrutiny Commission)	
Final report to the first meeting of the new municipal year.	- Commission

Possible Site Visits

4.6 To clarify whether it is practical to undertake any site visits to supplement data collection processes outlined above:

- Semi-independent care settings?
- Residential care settings

Further clarification and input

4.7 The Commission would welcome further clarification and input on the following:

- How has the cyber attack impacted on child records and will this present a challenge in developing case study data?
- How will the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care (MacAlister Review) impact the care and support of this group of young people?
- Which local partners should be involved?
- What other local authorities could be invited to develop comparative assessments and inform best practice?
- Specialist input / academic and or national organisations would help to add value to this review?

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Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission 19th January 2022 Item 8 - Work Programme 2021/22	Item No 8
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Outline

The work programme for the Commission is published at each meeting to enable members to review and monitor progress.

Reports

CYP Scrutiny Work Programme report 2021/22

Members of the Commission are invited to review and agree the attached report.

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Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

One Page Overview

June 14th 2021	July 12th 2021
School Admissions (Standing Item)	Ofsted Action Plan - Progress
Pupil Attainment (Standing item)	CFS Budget Monitoring (Standing Item)
Childcare Sufficiency (Standing Item)	Commissioning Independent SEND
Work Programme Discussion	
October 6th 2021	November 1st 2021
CFS Ofsted Inspection Report (Following focused visit 7/21)	School Estates Strategy (Pre-decision)
HMI Probation Inspection - Youth Justice (Following group inspection 7/21)	Early Help Review (Pre-decision)
Adolescents Entering Care (Scoping Report)	Early Years Strategy - Reconfiguration of Children' Centres - Parents Voice
Early Years Strategy - Reconfiguration of Children' Centres consultation	
December 6th 2021	January 19th 2022
Cllr Woodley Q & A - topics to be agreed (Mid October) (Standing Item)	CHSCP - Annual Report - Outcomes of SCRs and Adultification
Budget Monitoring HES (Standing Item)	Unregistered Educational Settings - Update
Outcome from school exclusions - Final report of the Commission	Sexual harassment in schools
	Adolescents Entering Care
February 28th 2022	March 2022
Addressing inequalities HFS/HES	Attainment gap - School Improvement Partners
CFS Annual Report (Standing Item)	Parental Involvement in education Project
Children Centre Consultation Report (TBC)	Cllr Bramble Q & A - topics tba (Mid January (Standing Item)

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 1	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: 14th June 2021</p> <p>Deadline for reports: 1/6/21</p> <p>Publication 4/6/21</p>	<p>School Admissions – to review sufficiency of primary and secondary school places ahead of September 2021 school entry. (Standing item within the work programme)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marian Lavelle, Head of Admissions and Pupil Benefits, HLT • Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT 	
	<p>It is a statutory requirement for members to review the sufficiency of childcare in their local authority area and a report is produced every two years. The Commission to review an update for this year 2021 in light of the impact of Covid 19. (Standing item within the work programme)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years, Early Help & Well-being • Tim Wooldridge, Early Years Strategy Manager • Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT 	
	<p>Pupil Attainment: Annual Review of performance of educational attainment in Hackney. Usual scrutiny is not possible due to the impact of Covid and school closures and use of school assessments instead of exams. Update and overview.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Hall, Head of School Improvement • Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT 	
	<p>Development of new CYP Work Programme for 2021/22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission/ Scrutiny officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consult local stakeholders • Meet with service Directors • Collate topic suggestions

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 2	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: Monday 12th July</p> <p>Papers deadline: 29/6/21</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 2/7/21</p>	<p>Ofsted Inspection Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to receive and update on progress to meet the recommendations from Ofsted. - To note changes to the Hackney Unit model of Social Work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diane Benjamin, Director of Children’s Social Care ● Annie Coyle, Interim Director of Children's Social Care 	
	<p>Commissioning Independent SEND Provision to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the commissioning framework for independent SEND provision; - Quality monitoring and outcomes; - Arrangements for financial and contract monitoring. Commissioned; - Costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fran Cox, Head of High Needs and School Place ● Joe Wilson, Head of SEND ● Wendy Edwards, SEND Contracts Consultant ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education 	
	<p>CFS Budget Monitoring: review of CFS budget for year end to March 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Naeem Ahmed, Director of Finance Children, Education, Adults, Health & Integration ● Diane Benjamin, Director of Children’s Social Care 	
	<p>CYP Work Programme 2021/22</p>	<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.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 3	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: October 6th 2021</p> <p>Papers deadline: 12.00 27/9/21</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 28/9/21</p>	<p><u>Outcome of Ofsted Focused Visit July 2021).</u> To review the outcome and service response to the Ofsted focused visit of services for Children in Need Children on a Child Protection Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jacquie Burke, Group Director for Education & Children’s Services ● Diane Benjamin, Director of Children’s Social Care 	<p>- Publication of report timing in preparation for the meeting - expected 7th September 2021.</p>
	<p><u>Outcome of HMI Probation Inspection of Youth Justice Services</u> To review the outcome and service response to the HMI Probation Inspection visit in July 2021. Service update to be considered alongside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pauline Adams, Principal Head of Service, Early Help and Prevention ● Brendan Finnegan, Service Manager Youth Justice ● Diane Benjamin, Director of Children’s Social Care 	<p>- Publication of report timing in preparation for the meeting.</p>
	<p><u>Early Years Strategy</u> (and reconfiguration of Children’s Centres). The Early Years Strategy was confirmed at Cabinet in September 2021 and Hackney Education is now consulting on the planned reconfiguration of Children's Centres (to mid Nov 2021).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education ● Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years, Early Help & Well-being 	
	<p>CYP Work Programme 2021/22: updated version from July 2021.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scrutiny Officer / Commission 	

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 4	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Officers
<p>Meeting Date: November 1st 2021</p> <p>Papers deadline: 19th October 2021</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 22nd October 2021</p>	<p><u>Early Years Strategy & Reconfiguration of children’s centres:</u> To hear from parents and carers of children impacted by the proposed closure of two children’s (Fernbank/Hillside) to contribute to the Commission's formal response to the consultation on the Early Years Strategy.</p>	
	<p><u>School Estates Strategy:</u> a review of how the Council will manage its maintained education estate in relation to projected falling pupil rolls and increased demand for in-borough SEND provision.</p> <p>This is an opportunity for the CYP Scrutiny Commission to contribute to this review before its finalisation by the Executive (December 2021) in relation to principles for reform, prospective impact on services and for young people and their families and service budgets.</p> <p>As part of this scrutiny exercise it would be useful to understand the demographic of children with SEND who are currently supported in mainstream educational settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Fran Cox, Head of High Needs & School Places • Joe Wilson, Head of SEND
	<p><u>Early Help Strategy:</u> a review of the Council’s early help offer which has incorporated Family Support, Targeted Support, Young Hackney and Children’s Centres.</p> <p>This is an opportunity for the CYP Scrutiny Commission to contribute to this review before its finalisation by the Executive (January 2022) in relation to principles for reform, prospective impact on services and for young people and their families and service budgets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacquie Burke, Group Director for Education and Children’s Services
	<p>CYP Work Programme 2021/22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Officer

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 5	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: 6th December 2021</p> <p>Papers deadline: 23rd November 2021</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 26th November 2021</p>	<p><u>Hackney Education Service Budget Monitoring:</u> To review in-year spending within the Directorate. (Standing item)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naeem Ahmed, Director of Finance Children, Education, Adults, Health & Integration • Annie Gammon, Director of Education 	
	<p><u>Cabinet Q & A:</u> Cllr Caroline Woodley Annual Question Time for the Cabinet member for Families, early years, parks and play. (Standing item)</p> <p>Focus is on SEMH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks and Play. 	Topics to be scrutinised to be agreed 6 weeks in advance of the meeting in consultation with CYP SC (25th October 2021)
	<p><u>School Exclusions Final Report:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree and confirm recommendations of the Commission's investigation; - To agree on follow up monitoring arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission 	
	CYP Work Programme 2021/22	- Scrutiny Officer	- To review and monitor progress.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 6	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: 19th January 2022</p> <p>Papers deadline: 7th January 2022</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 11th January 2022</p>	<p><u>Sexual Harassment in Schools</u>: to receive a report on the nature and level of sexual harassment recorded in local schools and the support provided to young people affected and those efforts to prevent this in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership • Local Head Teachers - tbc 	
	<p><u>Unregistered Educational Settings</u>: a brief update from Hackney Education Service and City & Hackney Safeguarding Partnership on previous recommendations of the Commission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Gamble, The Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner • Rory McAllum, Senior Professional Leader, CHSCP • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Chris Roberts, Head of Wellbeing & Education Safeguarding 	
	<p><u>City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Annual Report</u>: With a focused discussion on how to address adultification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Gamble, The Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner • Rory McAllum, Senior Professional Leader, CHSCP 	Meeting with CHSCP to agree scope and focus of this item
	<p><u>Adolescents Entering Care</u>: to discuss and agree the Scoping Report for the Commission's planned review for 2021/22.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview & Scrutiny Officer/ Members of the Commission 	
	<p>CYP Work Programme 2021/22</p>	Scrutiny Officer	To review and monitor progress

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 7	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
<p>Meeting Date: 28th February 2022</p> <p>Papers deadline: 15th February 2022</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 18th February 2022</p>	<p><u>Addressing Racial Inequalities across Children's Services</u> HE and CFS to provide an update on work to address racial inequalities and disproportionality in both policy and practice: - Details of strategies, plans and priorities for children's services and relation to corporate wide antiracist strategies - Ethnic diversity of workforce data - representation in CFS, HE and local schools; - How antiracist plans strategies and plans inform and influence local practice and, how/what baseline data is being used to assess the impact of anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice; - How LBH leads across local partnerships to address issues like adultification; - Outline of governance / infrastructure on how this work is being overseen?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diane Benjamin, Director of Children's Social Care ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education ● Jacquie Burke, Group Director Education and Children's Services ● Jo Larkin 	<p>Further clarify focus and reporting requirements with Directors by December 2021</p>
	<p><u>Children and Families Services Annual Report.</u> To report on the full outturn of children's social care activity for the year end March 2021 (Standing item)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jacquie Burke, Group Director for Education and Children's Services ● Diane Benjamin, Director of Children's Social Care 	
	<p>CYP Work Programme 2021/22</p>	<p>Scrutiny Officer</p>	

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Meeting 8	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: 14th March 2022	<u>Parental involvement in education</u> : Hackney Education to report on the project to enable parents to be more involved with local schools, colleges and their children's education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Project Worker (TBC) 	
Papers deadline: 2nd March 2022	<u>School Improvement Partners</u> : the role of school improvement partners in improving quality provision and closing the attainment gap between pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • School Improvement Partners 	<i>Meet school improvement partners ahead of the meeting</i>
Agenda dispatch: 4th March 2022	<u>Cabinet Q & A</u> : Cllr Anntionette Bramble, Annual Question Time for the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for education, young people and children's social care. (Standing item)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Anntionette Bramble 	Topics to be scrutinised to be agreed 6 weeks in advance of the meeting in consultation with CYP SC (7th February 2022)
	Work Programme Review 2021/22; members to feedback on scrutiny work programme for the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Commission 	
	CYP Work Programme 2021/22	Scrutiny Officer	To review and monitor progress

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission (jointly with CYP Scrutiny)

Meeting A	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting date: October 11th 2021	<p>Disparities in Maternal Mental Health Outcomes: session to explore the current position in relation to maternal emotional mental health screening, disparities in diagnosis and treatment and the possible problems created downstream when this issue is not adequately addressed early on.</p> <p>(60 mins)</p>	<p>a) Context and background briefing paper - Amy Wilkinson (Workstream Director - Public Health)</p> <p>b) Overview of existing provision (ideally in briefing paper) - Ellie Duncan (CYP&M Workstream in Integrated Commissioning CCG-LBH-Col)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health Visitors Service - ELFT Perinatal Service - HUHFT maternity services? - Family Nurse Partnership (antenatal support for under 25s) - Maternity Voices Partnership (replacement for Maternity Services Liaison Cttee?) including BME subgroup and Charedi subgroup <p>Who else??</p> <p>c) Clinical overview - Clinical Psychiatrist from ELFT Perinatal Service (name TBC)</p> <p>d) Service user/support group lead - Representative from the BME Sub Group of the Maternity Voices Partnership (name TBC) to provide a service user input.</p> <p>e) Q&A led by the Councillors</p>	

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With Skills, Economy & Growth Scrutiny Commission (jointly with CYP Scrutiny)

Meeting B	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Skills, Economy & Growth	Priorities, policies and approach to developing cleaner and greener	As part of the session the SEG Commission will aim to hear from CYP about their views of cleaner and greener transport.	

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

Commission meeting date: <u>December 15th 2021</u>	transport for Hackney for 2022 and beyond.	The Commission to work with HYP to facilitate engagement with young people and conduct other focus groups where necessary.	
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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission (jointly with CYP Scrutiny)

Meeting C	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Living in Hackney Meeting Date: <u>24th February 2021</u>	Housing support for young people leaving care. What are the housing options for young people leaving (or about to leave) care and seeking accommodation in Hackney and elsewhere? What is the council doing to increase housing supply and options for this vulnerable group of young people?	Local Policy & Practice: Corporate Parenting Team, Housing Supply (and Needs) Housing Needs of Young People: Hold focus group with Leaving Care group - Children's Social Care Council (Hackney Tomorrow) Specialist/ legal input: what are the duties and obligations of LA in supporting housing needs of young people leaving care (in and out of borough) Comparative assessments: other Local Authorities in respect of Corporate Parenting offer / housing supply for care leavers.	Scoping this item: Meeting with Housing Needs and Corporate Parenting (completed) Meeting with Housing supply Prepare brief and agree with Chairs and Officers.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2021/22

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Long list of scrutiny issues from suggestions (to be added if space develops in the programme or added to next year)	
Supporting children in temporary accommodation, particularly those placed outside the borough. Is there any impact on the consistency or coordination of education, care or support available to such children? What disproportionalities are there in this cohort and how does this impact/ drive delivery?	
Contextual Safeguarding - implementation and embedding of this across the council and partner agencies.	Possible incorporation with review of adolescents in care
Young Futures Commission: implementation of YFC recommendations? The YFC is currently being reconfigured and an update on progress/ plans.	
Integrated Commissioning (CYP and Maternity Services) - usually taken as a joint item on HiH agenda (not scheduled for 2021/22)	
Impact of Covid on the mental health of young people	Possible focus for Cabinet Q & A
Effectiveness of Kickstart in supporting young people back into work -providing high quality opportunities	

Planned Site visits	



Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission 19th January 2022 Item 9 - Minutes	Item No 9
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Outline

The DRAFT minutes of the last meeting are reviewed and agreed at the following meeting.

Reports

Minutes of 6th December 2021

Members of the Commission are invited to review the minutes, note and agree any actions.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission

DRAFT Minutes of 6th December 2021

Official Attendees for the record

Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair)
Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice Chair)
Cllr Katie Hanson
Cllr James Peters
Cllr Anya Sizer
Cllr Lynne Troughton
Cllr Sarah Young
Jo Macleod (Co-opted member)
Salmah Kansara (Co-opted member)

Connected Virtually

Cllr Caroline Selman
Shabnum Hassan
Steven Olalere (Co-opted member)

In attendance:

- Cllr Anntionette Bramble, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care
- Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years, Parks & Play
- Cllr Soraya Adejare
- Jacquie Burke, Group Director of Children and Education
- Annie Gammon, Head of Hackney Learning Trust and Director of Education
- Mizanur Rahman, Head of Finance, Children & Education
- Naeem Ahmed, Director of Finance (Children, Education, Adults, Health & Integration)
- Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years, Early Help & Wellbeing
- Joe Wilson, Head of SEND

Cllr Sophie Conway in the Chair

The Chair welcomed members and officers to the meeting and those members of the public who were viewing the livestream.

The Chair reminded those attending that this was a hybrid meeting, with members of the Commission and officers attending both in person and connecting virtually and that the meeting was being broadcast live via the internet.

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Commission:

- Cllr Humaira Garasia
- Cllr Anna Lynch
- Michael Lobenstein
- Ernell Watson

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 The following declarations were received by members of the Commission:
- Shabnum Hassan, was a Governor at a primary school in Hackney and a parent of a child with SEND;
 - Cllr Sizer was a trustee of Ivy Street Family Centre and also a parent of a child with SEND;
 - Jo McLeod was a Governor at a primary school in Hackney and a parent of a child with additional needs;
 - Cllr Peters was a Governor at the Garden Special School in Hackney.

3. Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 3.1 There were no urgent items and the agenda was as had been published.

4. Hackney Education Budget Monitoring

- 4.1 Budget monitoring is a key responsibility of the overview and scrutiny function. For this purpose, the Commission undertakes annual reviews of education and children's services budgets, including Hackney Education Service. Hackney Education submitted a report which represented the in-year budget position for Hackney Education Service for the financial year to April 2021 to September 2021.
- 4.2 The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care introduced the item. Although Hackney Education has a total budgeted income in excess of £220m the majority of this is passported directly to local schools. Hackney Education has a net budget of around £23m, the majority of which is spent on early years (Children's Centres), high needs and operational services. SEND continues to represent a significant cost pressure within Hackney Education, and the Council alongside other boroughs and national organisations has continued to lobby central government for increased funding. Whilst Hackney Education will introduce measures that will help to ensure that local spending on SEND becomes more aligned to national funding, financial pressures within this service remain acute.
- 4.3 The Head of Finance, Children & Education introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:
- Hackney Education was forecasting a £5.2m net overspend at the end of the 2021/22 financial year;
 - The most significant pressures lay within the High Needs budget (including SEND) where an overspend of £6.4m was recorded. The Council would be spending £5m more on SEND this year than last, an increase that is being driven by the growth in Education and Health Care Plans. Whilst the government had indicated that this overspend should not impact on Local Authority General Funds, additional funding has not been forthcoming.
 - Education Operations budget was forecast to overspend by £375k mainly as a result of costs for maternity cover and the loss of income from the Tomlinson Centre. Early Years was also forecasting an overspend of approximately £330k mainly due less income derived from childcare fees.
 - Hackney Education has a vacancy factor savings target of £850k to be achieved through staff turnover and recruitment for 2021/22. There is a likelihood that this target will not be achieved given lower than expected staff turnover.

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- Cost reduction proposals for SEND are being developed which include additional in-borough provision which will reduce costs over the longer term. The borough was also planning to benchmark local SEND transport provision against other local authorities.

Questions from the Commission

4.4 Aside from increased demand for EHCPs, can further detail be provided on the cost pressures within the SEND budget and how this is impacting on other services in the directorate? What reassurance can be provided that local EHCPs are being met in full despite budget pressures?

- The main overspends in the SEND budget were as a result of increasing costs within independent non-maintained schools, where costs were expected to reach £15m this year. Other areas of spend within the SEND budget included maintained special schools (£13m), mainstream schools (and additional resource provisions) (£8m) and other out of borough LA SEND provision (£4m). Whilst the government has indicated that the SEND overspend should not affect the main LA balance sheet (General Fund), there was a risk that this money might not be fully reimbursed. It was noted that this is a nationwide problem where in London alone a £300m deficit across LA SEND budgets had accumulated.
- The Commission was reassured that every child would get what they were assessed to need under their EHCP as this was statutorily required. Where there are multiple options which can meet the needs of young people with SEND, then costs do become a factor in such decisions.

4.5 What work has been undertaken to assess the impact of trying to achieve the target vacancy rate saving? What is the impact of holding vacancies open? How is Hackney Education monitoring the impact that this is having on staff and services, and how are any effects being mitigated?

- Hackney Education was currently reviewing its position in relation to the vacancy rate where it was noted that it was unlikely to achieve the required target. Requiring staff to cover for vacant positions had evidently created additional service pressures, even when this has been on a temporary basis (1-3 months). After a number of years of budget savings, there was limited scope for further savings without more substantive reorganisation.

4.6 Whilst additional funding is expected from the central government in the longer term, cost savings were required more immediately. How are short-term cost pressures being managed in the interim ahead of possible increased funding and service re-organisations?

- In the short term, it is likely that spending on SEND will continue to increase as savings proposals will take some time to take effect. The local government settlement was due to be announced before the end of 2021 which would shed further light on how much additional funding might be available for this aspect of service provision. The continued growth in the number of local EHCPs agreed for children and young people is outstripping any increased government funding which was likely to result in growing deficits (both yearly and accumulated) for Hackney Education.
- Given the inadequacy of central government funding for SEND, there has always a strong emphasis on cost reductions and to find savings within this

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budget. To provide more financial certainty, it was expected that the Council would move away from responding to individual 1 year financial settlements and to develop a 3 year financial strategy. This would help Hackney Education to strategically address some of the cost pressures within the SEND service.

- With a £5m overspend predicted for this year (21/22), the accumulated deficit in Hackney for SEND provision would be approximately £14m. Central government was introducing a 'safety valve' to provide additional funding for local SEND services facing acute operational pressures and significant accumulated deficits. It was noted that the government had required development plans similar to what was being implemented in Hackney as a condition for additional funding. Council's were however understandably nervous about what conditions might be applied by the government for clearing accumulated SEND deficits.

4.7 Can further detail be provided on the £15m spent each year on commissioning Independent and Non Maintained SEND provision? How does this spend in Hackney compare to other boroughs? Whilst it was acknowledged that there were longer term plans to restructure SEND provision to reduce the need for commissioning independent provision, what other plans were there to reduce spend on SEND?

- The annual cost of SEND provision through an independent and non-maintained school was approximately £50k as compared to £35k for maintained specialist provision within the borough. Data on the comparative spends on commissioning independent provision was not at hand at the meeting but could be provided at a later date.

4.8 What can be done to help schools to identify those children with SEND earlier, and maybe prevent the need for parents to apply for an EHCP or indeed, prevent more costly interventions later on (e.g. school exclusions, AP placement).

- Schools were still referring children for assessment for EHCP as was indicated by the numbers plans being authorised. This is a statutory requirement which is unaffected by budgetary constraint.
- In relation to school exclusion, it was clear that children who may have been experiencing behavioural difficulties may not have been assessed for additional support. With the new Early Help offer being developed it is hoped that schools will utilise multi-agency assessments to help identify young people in need earlier and to provide them with required support.

4.9 What factors were driving demand for increased levels of commissioning independent and non-maintained SEND provision? Was it that there is insufficient capacity locally, or the needs of young people could not be met through the range of provision available locally (or both)? What role does parental choice play in this situation, with parents simply choosing to send their children to out of borough provision?

- Given the range of individual needs of children with SEND, there will always be a requirement for some level of independent commissioning for more specialist educational and support needs. There are children with ASD who could be supported locally if there was additional capacity.

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- 256 children who attend out of borough settings were from the Orthodox Jewish community, and thus attend these for religious reasons as well as for SEND needs.
- Some parents may prefer to send their children to independent provision when their needs cannot be met locally, in particular those children who have dual diagnoses of needs (ASD/SEMH). Excluding children from OJC, the majority of externally commissioned independent provision was for children with SEMH.

4.10 What modelling has been undertaken around forward projections for SEND needs and independent provision? Also, what does the service understand about levels of unmet needs in SEND, particularly in relation to the OJC in primary educational settings?

- Hackney was in a relatively unique position in relation to the OJC. It was acknowledged that in some school settings, the SEND response was underdeveloped and further work was necessary to improve provision. Whilst the service was working with mainstream schools to upskill staff to help them develop a more graduated response in supporting children with SEND, Independent schools (which support the OJC) are not required to participate. There is more work to be done with these independent settings.

4.11 Given the lower than expected income derived from childcare fees for Children's Centres, are there any plans to revisit the fee structure for this service?

- This would be addressed by the Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks and Play in the next item.

4.12 There is very little detail on the cost reduction proposals for 2021/22 within the report for SEND, particularly the value of identified cost savings. Whilst it was noted that the majority of independent and non-maintained schools commissioned, were to support children with complex SEMH, does the SEND team envisage this type of provision increasing in-borough?

- It is hoped there will be new specialist provision for children with SEMH in-borough as a result of the emerging School Estates Strategy. Although this additional capacity will not enable all young people with SEMH to attend in-borough provision, it will be substantially more children than are supported now.
- It was likely that such additional SEMH provision would be provided through an additional resource provision (ARP) within a local school. Here it was noted that Gainsborough Primary had recently opened an ARP for children with SEMH and that a further ARP of this nature was expected within the School Estates Strategy.
- It was also hoped that additional SEMH capacity could be provided through New Regents College as this provision had considerable experience and expertise in this area of provision.

4.13 It was noted that SEND transport was an important issue for local special schools, as many children required additional support to enable them to access provision. Is the benchmarking exercise a prelude to service reduction?

- There was a perception that the current local SEND transport offer to local families was generous and that there were a number of young people who,

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with the correct support, could access SEND provision independently. It was acknowledged that high spend in this area was attributable to the volume of placements which were commissioned external to the borough.

- The review would seek to develop and extend travel training for young people, to ensure that young people can operate independently wherever possible. The review would also assess external travel arrangements to identify whether improvements can be made for commissioned bus/ taxi services. In addition, there would also be a sustainability aspect to the review to assess whether there were more greener less polluting transport methods suitable for young people (e.g. walking groups for summer months).

4.14 In the [Council Budget for 2021/22](#) an additional £300k was earmarked to 'improve attainment of young people over the next four years, specifically for groups that have historically underachieved, to reduce exclusion and assist with the transition from primary to secondary'. Can Hackney Education outline how this additional investment has been used and which groups of young people have been supported?

- Hackney Education has created a Systems Leadership role centred around improving parental engagement for those cohorts of students who have traditionally underachieved. Specifically, the Systems Leader will engage and support parents who may not have a detailed understanding of English Education Systems or who themselves may have had poor experiences of education or where there is a poor relationship between the school and the parent. This role was focused on providing additional support to schools in their engagement and involvement with parents, rather than any additional capacity for front facing support for children. This was a 4 year project and an appointment had been made, and an update was planned at the March meeting of the Commission. The appointee has already begun work and has met with a number of local parent groups.

4.15 The Chair noted by concluding that it was important for the Commission to continue to monitor and review budget spending in children services as these are areas of high expenditure for the Council, and overspends in both SEND and children's social care are significant and that these overspends impacted not only on other children's services, but on other services across the Council. The Chair thanked officers for attending and responding to questions from members of the Commission.

5. Cabinet Q & A

5.1 The Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks & Play is invited to attend each year to respond to questions within this portfolio. The Commission has sought to focus questioning on two areas as set out below:

1. Children's Centres

The planned closure of Hillside and Fernbank Children's Centres in September 2022 was paused on 17th November 2021. The Commission have therefore asked the Cabinet member to update in respect of:

- The plan and time frame for future decision making;
- Plans for future consultation and engagement to underpin the above.

2. Social, Emotional Mental Health (SEMH)

The diagnosis of SEMH in children represents an increasing proportion of local

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SEND needs.

- What is known about the social and demographic profile of young people diagnosed with SEMH?
- Are there any intersecting factors or issues which may underpin increasing prevalence of children diagnosed with SEMH?
- How are local SEND services responding to the SEMH needs of young people?
- How are the cumulative SEMH needs of this cohort of young people driving / shaping service provision?

5.2 The Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks & Play responded to questions on local Children's Centres:

- The consultation on the Early Years Strategy and the reconfiguration of local children's centres closed on 16th November. The consultation team were analysing responses which would be ready by the end of December 2021. The final consultation report will be published and distributed to local parents, staff and other local stakeholders.
- The emerging headlines from the consultation were summarised as follows:
- There were almost 900 responses, and whilst there were many positive comments about Children's Centre provision there was a lot of criticism of the survey and the consultation process.
- The proposed closure of both Fernbank and Hillside Children's Centres had been paused to enable a fuller consultation to take place. The Mayor and Cabinet member would also be visiting both centres in the New Year to hold discussions with parents and staff.
- Plans for the development of Early Years hubs would continue as would the conversion of 5 children's centres into Family and Welfare Hubs (0-19 years).
- There would be a further assessment of the fees and income for children's centres as part of a wider council review of fees and charges.
- A minimum 3.1% inflationary increase was likely to be applied for all childcare provision in children's centres for 2022/23. This would generate an additional £100k for the service.
- Part 2 of the revised fees structure agreed in 2019, would be implemented in 2022 (having been delayed by the impact of Covid). This would reduce the childcare subsidy to parents on a sliding scale.
- The cost of running 11 children centre nurseries was £4.5m and childcare costs were subsidised up to 63% for lower income families (below £35k) reducing to 28% for parents earning over £100k. These subsidies would be reduced if part 2 of the fees restructure was implemented.

SEMH

5.3 The Cabinet member presented a short report to the Commission. Key data from the cohort of young people with a SEMH primary SEND need:

- The greatest primary SEND need was ASD for all age groups (under 5, 5-10 years, 11-15 years and 16+ years).
- SEMH comprised of 16% of primary SEND need of 5-10 year olds, 27% of 11-15 year olds and 27% of 16+ years;
- The number of children on SEND support (with SEMH) has decreased from 1,068 to 942, an 11.8% fall. Comparative figures show a smaller decreases

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across London (-2.5%) whilst there has been a corresponding increase nationally (16.5%);

- The number of children with EHCP for SEMH has increased from 117 in 2016/17 to 184 in 2020/21 (+57.3%), which corresponded to regional and national figures;

- 5.4 The most common causes of SEMH are believed to include attachment history: lack of emotional response and positive feedback by a caregiver. SEMH may also be related to trauma history such as abuse, domestic violence, bullying, exclusion and crime.
- 5.5 Hackney has high aspirations for all young people. It was noted that two dedicated ARPs for 20 children have been developed at Gainsborough and Queensbridge Primary Schools, the former being dedicated to children whose primary SEND need is SEMH. 50 additional places have been developed at The Garden School and 14 at Ickburgh meaning that there has been a net gain of 84 SEND places in Hackney to 2022.
- 5.6 There are 474 pupils placed in independent and non-maintained special schools at a cost of £13.8m. Of these around 150 children and young people have SEMH as a primary SEND need. Using an invest to save model, Hackney Education will seek to reconfigure provision where there is more internal capacity. Data is projecting an increase of around 400 additional EHCPs every year until 2026.
- 5.7 There is also a new vision for New Regents College to include early help placements to avoid exclusion, utilisation of additional capacity in the school to deliver SEMH support, an outreach response to prevent exclusions in primary schools and the creation of a nurture unit on a mainstream school site.

Questions from the Commission

- 5.8 What preventative work is being undertaken locally to address the underlying factors which may be behind the rise in children with SEMH? What is being done to address maternal mental health issues which may precipitate attachment issues?
- The Council was in the process of developing an Early Help Strategy which would help identify and support children in need much earlier. This would eventually be a partnership strategy (Education, Social Care and Mental Health) with a multi-disciplinary assessment at its core. The aim is to eventually divert spending away from acute support to more early help and preventative work with families.
 - Attachment is a key aspect of the approach of early years services and there is work taking place to ensure that local settings and staff are attachment aware and trauma informed. There is also emerging evidence in relation to racial trauma and local practice development is being informed by this.
 - In relation to maternal mental health, the HWB, WAMHS and Public Health understood the pressures in early parenthood, this has been picked up by relevant teams with a view to improving perinatal services. The Cabinet member for Health and Social Care would also respond to this issue further.
- 5.9 Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder can be an area which may be overlooked in addressing children's mental health issues, particularly as this may be confused with

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ASD. What is being done to identify such cases locally and what support is available?

- This issue was acknowledged as an area of concern by officers and had been highlighted in other forums and would be investigated further.

5.10 Is there any additional data for Early Years or nursery provision and children with SEMH? Is there any preventative work being undertaken with families in the Early years sector?

- There was little data for under 5's (Early Years) as the EHCP's are funded through two different processes. Additional needs are supported through the Early Years Inclusion Fund (top-sliced from High Needs budget). The EYIF supported 260 children across a range of settings during the last financial year. Any of these early years settings can apply for funding to support children with emerging needs to provide adjustments to enable them to access the curriculum or provide additional support. This is often a precursor for more formal EHCP. In reviewing the EYIC it was apparent that settings were not applying early enough for an EHCP to support the child's transition to school and the guidance is being adjusted accordingly.

5.11 Children with SEMH may exhibit a wide range of behaviours (withdrawn, isolated, challenging, disruptive) which reflect a number of underlying mental health difficulties (e.g. anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders etc). In this context, what role can positive behaviour management strategies play in local schools (as well as early years) in helping to identify and support children with SEMH?

- Schools are being supported to develop a graduated response to SEND which is based around a broad holistic support offer which does not see such needs in isolation. This was crucial in helping to identify and support children and families in a wider way.
- It was noted that the WAMHS project has been instrumental in raising awareness and supporting schools to develop their mental health and broader wellbeing offer to pupils. WAMHS has been important as it has helped a broader range of professionals to contribute to decisions around children's education, learning and welfare. It was noted that WAMHS work could develop further through a lens of race.

5.12 How many schools were accessing training around ACE and does this training encompass the connections between mental health, neuro-diversity and unconscious bias?

- There has been a good engagement by local schools and headteachers with recent SEND events hosted by Hackney Education, which underlines their commitment and support for this work (e.g. SEND Conference).
- All schools have a WAMHS worker on site regularly to support their work and all schools have had access to ACE training.
- Hackney Education has also been working with HiP to develop more inclusive behaviour policies in schools and that these recognise the needs of children and young people with SEND. It was hoped that if a gold standard can be developed, this could guide and inform development across schools, including local academies.

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- 5.13 Is there any further detail on children with SEMH with other demographics such as temporary accommodation?
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- 5.14 Is Hackney using any of the voluntary programmes which aim to develop emotional language and literacy in families via experienced parents? There are a number of schemes in other neighbouring boroughs, and as these schemes are not directly connected to schools, parents may engage more openly.
- Hackney has been using Homestart, a charity to support parents in the home environment. A number of housing providers and charities such as Shelter and other similar organisations have dedicated family and outreach workers which support families in the home on local housing developments. Many of the statutory services available to support local families are firmly embedded within a wider voluntary offer of support.
- 5.15 The Chair thanked officers for attending and responding to questions from the Commission.

6. Outcome from School Exclusions

- 6.1 The Commission has completed its review into the outcome of school exclusions and the final report was submitted for review and agreement.
- 6.2 The Chair of the Commission thanked officers, local agencies and of course parents and young people for their support for this work on school exclusions. The Chair highlighted the following key issues from the report:
- The report also notes that within this cohort of permanent exclusions some groups of young people are disproportionately represented. There are self-evident disproportionalities in Hackney's exclusion data - in terms of SEND, ethnicity and gender. In terms of ethnicity the rate of black Caribbean children excluded in Hackney has been rising - against national and regional trends. In addition, almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of excluded young people have an SEND (many with SEMH) which should lead us to question the effectiveness of interventions to support these children in the mainstream settings. Given that these disproportionalities are longstanding, there needs to be a more fundamental and systemic challenge to those exclusion processes which create such inequalities
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 - From this work, the Commission is aware that many of the young people who are permanently excluded from school often have unmet needs (educational, behavioural, emotional) which may have contributed to their exclusion from school. In the deep dive undertaken by Hackney Education 60% of children who were permanently excluded had some form of special educational need. But critically, what the Commission learnt from our discussions with parents, the Pupil Referral Unit and with individual Alternative Providers, was that in many cases these additional needs are not diagnosed until after their exclusion. This would suggest that more can be done earlier to help young people and maybe prevent them from being excluded in the first place.
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- As an authority we now have a greater understanding of those children who are at risk of exclusion from school and we need to work with schools and other local services to support children earlier to help address additional needs / and or vulnerabilities which can enable children to stay in mainstream education. The report clearly shows that targeted help does work given the success of the Re-Engagement Unit in Primary Schools. This approach now needs to be applied to secondary schools, as this can help to identify and support young people in need, help them re-engage with school, help them re-build relationships with schools and maintain their place in mainstream education.
- Schools not only improve education and learning outcomes of children, they are an important part of the safeguarding framework for children. Schools help to maintain oversight of children, they keep children connected to statutory support services and they help to keep them safe. A recent serious case review has shown that children who have been permanently excluded have not been effectively safeguarded which has led to serious harm to young people. The report makes clear that a more detailed safeguarding assessment needs to happen before an exclusion decision takes place in school.
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- Given that Alternative Provision is looking after some of our most vulnerable children, as the responsible authority we need to be sure that we are providing all the support necessary to meet the needs of these children. To this end, the Commission recommends that Alternative Provision is more included within the family of local education services, so that their learning and understanding can be shared with the wider schooling community, and to encourage schools to engage with and be more involved with AP providers. The authority has a system of Local Improvement Partners which work to develop and improve local schools and the Commission would like to see these working with local Alternative Provision to support the quality of local provision. Furthermore, as a Local Authority we are too reliant on what AP is actually available rather than what is needed to support local young people. The Commission therefore recommended that the LA take a more active role in shaping and supporting the local AP landscape so it can best respond to the needs of excluded young people.

6.3 Members of the Commission also responded to the report. The following is a summary of key issues raised.

- The report provides a strong and clear narrative for the voice for children and young people who have been excluded. The experiences detailed in the report clearly show the trauma that they feel at being excluded from school and that this for many was a life changing event.
- Additional training and support should be given to the school governors for their role in the school exclusion and providing challenge.
- There should be a much wider examination of best practice to school exclusion across London.
- The report needs to ensure consistency in references to 'national' and regional data.

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- It was hoped that an update from Hackney Education would be brought to the Commission in the next municipal year on the progress in implementing the agreed recommendations.

6.4 The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care welcomed the report and thanked the Commission for its work on this issue.

- Although Hackney had some of the best schools in the country, more needed to be done to reduce local school exclusions.
- Given the disproportionalities in school exclusion data, the authority must be more comfortable talking about race and racial inequality. Local school exclusion data which showed higher levels of black children being excluded could not be ignored.
- Primary schools have a good track record with no exclusions for the past few years. The emphasis to drive down exclusions now needs to move to secondary schools.
- The fact that many young people who are excluded from school are subsequently diagnosed with SEND demonstrates that there were failures within the system, with young people, particularly young black boys, not getting the right help that they need.

6.5 The Group Director for Children and Education welcomed the report, and highlighted the following in response and to the recommendations.

- The report highlights disproportionalities in exclusion data, an issue which the Council was very much concerned about and was responding to. These disproportionalities are evident across a range of services and it was important that the Council develop a system wide response. The Council has a key role to play in shaping and influencing the values which underpin local systems e.g. anti-racist practice, tackling unconscious bias.
- An important theme in the report was the need to provide early help and ensure young people get the right help sooner.

6.6 The Director of Education made the following points in responding to the report and its recommendations.

- The report highlighted many areas of good practice already in place in the authority in tackling school exclusions, but also noted areas where further improvement and action was necessary. It was recognised that a small minority of young people were not well served by local education systems and that this disproportionately included black boys.
- Hackney Education would respond to the review and recommendations with the Cabinet member and draw up an action plan to support the implementation of the recommendations.
- Recommendations which support earlier multi-disciplinary assessment and support for young people in need were particularly welcomed, as this would help more young people to maintain their placements in mainstream schools.
- A number of recommendations were already in-hand and Hackney Education would welcome the opportunity to report back to the Commission.

6.7 The Chair thanked members and officers for their comments on the report. The Executive would now develop a response to the report which would be presented for agreement at the next meeting of Cabinet. The Cabinet response would be

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published in a future agenda of the Commission, at which time members would agree monitoring arrangements.

Agreed: The Commission agreed the report on the Outcome of School Exclusions.

7. Response to Children Centre Consultation

- 7.1 A public consultation was launched on the new Early Years Strategy and the proposed reconfiguration of Children's Centres on 15th September 2021. As has been noted in an earlier item, this consultation has since been paused. For transparency, the Commission's response to the consultation was published for members to note.

8. Work Programme

- 8.1 The latest version of the work programme for the Commission was presented where it was noted that there were no additions to the work programme for January to March 2022.
- 8.2 The scope for the Commission's review 2021/22 on adolescents entering care was being finalised and would be presented at the next meeting (January 2022) for agreement by the Commission. Members have been sent a draft outline of the scope and comments and suggestions were welcomed. Work would commence in late January and throughout February. It was hoped that this would be 'scrutiny in a day' exercise, but this may now need to be held over a series of meetings. The Commission will work with members and officers to agree dates and times of sessions.

Agreed: Work Programme 2021/22

9. Minutes of the last meeting

- 9.1 The minutes of the 1st November 2021 were agreed.

Agreed: Minutes of the 1st November 2021.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 There were no other items of business.

Meeting closed at 9.50pm

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