

## Children's Social Care

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Bi-Annual Report to Members

February 2016

## Contents

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	4 – 5
<b>Introduction</b>	5
<b>Hackney Corporate Parenting Board</b>	7
<b>National Context</b>	7 – 10
<b>Children’s Social Care in Hackney</b>	10
- City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board	
<b>Financial performance</b>	11 – 12
<b>Service Area Trends</b>	
Access & Assessment, Troubled Families & Family Support Services	12
- First Access and Screening Team (FAST)	12
- The Assessment Service	13
- Family Support Services	14
The Children in Need Service	16
- Child Protection Plans	17
- Social Work in Schools Project (SWiS)	18
The Corporate Parenting Service	20
- Educational attainment of looked after children	22
- Health of looked after children	26
- Placement activity	27
- Foster carers	31
- Clinical Services support for looked after children	32
- Adoption	33
- Leaving Care	37
Young Hackney	38
- Universal services	39
- Adventure playgrounds and play streets	39
- Youth and school sports	40
- Universal plus and targeted support	40
- Custody Triage	41
- Reparation	41
- Substance Misuse Team	42
- Participation	42
- School support	43

The Disabled Children Service	43
<b>Quality assurance framework</b>	44
- Management and audit oversight	
- Hearing from children and families	
- Workforce development	
<b>Other priorities for Children’s Social Care</b>	
- Exploitation of children and young people	48
- Children missing from home and care	50
- Young carers	51
- The Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care	52
- Children and young people’s publications	52
- The Children’s Rights Officer	53
Appendix 1: Children’s Social Care – Case Flow Chart	54
Appendix 2: Useful Links	55
Appendix 3: The Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care	56

## Executive Summary

The Bi-Annual Report is produced to update elected councillors on developments and key performance trends within Children's Social Care in Hackney during the first half of 2015/16 (April to September 2015). For the first time, this report also covers some aspects of the work of Young Hackney.

This report demonstrates continued improvement in services for children and young people. Stable leadership allows the Service to continuously develop and respond to national changes. Bringing Children's Social Care, the Youth Offending Team and Young Hackney closer together is impacting on the quality and consistency of services, as recently recognised by inspectors.

Developments and areas of note in the period April to September 2015 include:

- As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Hackney was responsible for looking after 347 children and young people. Despite gradually rising numbers of looked after children over the past 3 years, Hackney continues to have a lower number of children in care per 10,000 of the population under 18 than comparable local authorities.
- Hackney's GCSE results (Key Stage 4) for looked after children remain significantly better than the national and statistical neighbour average, and results improved again in 2015. 33% of Hackney looked after children achieved 5 GCSEs including English and maths in 2015, compared to the most recent national average of 12%.
- 17% of Hackney's care leavers were in higher education in Summer 2015, compared to 6% nationally, and 13 care leavers started university courses in September 2015.
- Hackney was involved in a pilot Joint Targeted Area Inspection in November/December 2015 focused on multi-agency 'front door' arrangements and the response to child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care and education. Inspectors identified examples of very strong practice in Hackney and commented that: "*the partnership in Hackney is highly effective overall in addressing child sexual exploitation and responding when child abuse and neglect are first identified*".
- The number of statutory social work assessments increased in 2014/15. The increase is likely to have been influenced by the integration of services across CYPS and the increased information sharing opportunities this has brought, for example related to the Youth Offending Team and gang services. This trend has continued in 2015/16 and the number of completed assessments in 2015/16 is on track to be comparable with the figure for 2014/15.

- The number of children on Child Protection Plans increased in the first half of 2015/16 from 216 children in March 2015 to 248 children as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.
- The Social Work in Schools project expanded to four more schools in autumn 2015, bringing the total number of Hackney schools involved to twelve schools. The projects provides effective family intervention to children and families at the earliest stage of signs of difficulties to prevent children from needing to be protected through statutory processes or becoming looked after.
- Recruitment of foster carers continues to be a priority for Children's Social Care and the foster carer recruitment and retention strategy is leading an ongoing drive to increase the number of in-house foster carers available to provide care for our looked after children. A priority within this is ensuring rigorous assessment of foster carers and an improved training offer for foster carers including the Head Heart Hands social pedagogy programme.
- The exploitation of children and young people, whether sexual, gang-related or through radicalisation, continues to be a high-profile matter for local authorities across the country. The Children and Young People's Service is making strong progress in both defining and tackling the various and often connected issues affecting our children and young people, with an innovative campaign recently launched in conjunction with the NSPCC and the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, as well as continued efforts around understanding and addressing the impact of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Children and young people, through our Children in Care Council (Hackney Gets Heard), led work in 2015 to develop and re-design the previous Hackney Pledge. This was re-launched in a comic book format as the 'Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care' in summer 2015. Children and young people have also been involved in developing a series of leaflets and booklets designed for, and approved by, children and young people to explain areas of the service in a child-friendly way.
- 9,173 activities were delivered by Young Hackney in 2014/15, with approximately 143,000 attendances from young people throughout the year.
- Various strands of Young Hackney's work was recognised in 2015. The Play Streets project was shortlisted for a 'Play Award' by the national Children and Young People Now Awards in 2015 and was highly commended. The Youth and School Sports Unit was shortlisted for a 'Public Sector Children's Team' award by the Children and Young People Now Awards in 2015. Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground was awarded 'London 2015 Adventure Playground of the Year' at the London Play Awards.

## Introduction

This report principally highlights activity in Hackney Children's Social Care (CSC) and Young Hackney for the first half of the financial year 2015/16 (April 2015 – September 2015 inclusive) and outlines priorities moving forward. The current reporting structure to Members includes bi-annual reports in July and January/February. This report incorporates updates on all service areas.

Elected councillors have a crucial role to play in setting the strategic direction of Council services and in determining policy and priorities for the local community. All elected councillors share a responsibility to safeguard children and young people within the borough. This includes a corporate parenting responsibility towards the children the Council looks after. Councillors champion the cause of looked after children and care leavers when carrying out their duties, keeping themselves apprised of important national issues and developments in policy and practice. Recent reports, including the Casey report and the Jay report on the situation in Rotherham, highlighted the need for effective challenge of Children's Services by elected councillors. The Casey report suggested that *"Challenge means setting aspirational targets, knowing how far to stretch the organisation, asking searching questions, drilling down into information and data, ensuring targets are kept to and agreed actions implemented."*

This report is produced to support councillors in discharging their responsibilities towards children and families. The report will be tabled for discussion at the Corporate Parenting Board, Cabinet, Full Council, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission, and City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

The priorities for Children and Young People's Services in 2015/16 are outlined below:

- Continue to invest in the workforce across Children and Young People's Services, recruiting people of the highest calibre, supporting their development and progression, and promoting leadership at all levels
- Focus on safeguarding adolescents in different contexts outside the home, including in their peer group relationships, school environments and the community
- Ensuring resources for looked after children are used efficiently and targeted effectively including working with other local authorities, for example through the North London Children's Efficiency Programme (related to placements for looked after children) and the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium

These priorities are covered in more detail in this report.

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

*Details of, and links to, published reports referenced in the report are included in Appendix 2.*

*Most data provided covers the period up to 30 September 2015, except where more recent information is available. In all cases, the timeframe of the data is provided.*

## **Hackney Corporate Parenting Board**

Corporate parenting requires ownership and leadership at the most senior levels. In Hackney, the Corporate Parenting Board, chaired by the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Bramble, plays a key strategic role in ensuring that the Council and its partners meet their corporate parenting responsibilities. In the last 6 months, the Corporate Parenting Board focussed on a number of important topics: the Independent Reviewing Officer annual report; a new looked after children review process; foster carer recruitment; the development of the Corporate Parenting Strategy; the safeguarding and education of looked after children; hearing from the Hackney Foster Carers Council; the Head Heart Hands social pedagogy project for Foster Carers; the newly launched Hackney Promise (our pledge to children in care); hearing from children and young people in Hackney's Children in Care Council (Hackney Gets Heard) and overseeing progress against the actions that came out of the last youth-led Pledge inspection.

## **National Context**

Key topics that continue to receive attention nationally include child sexual exploitation, children leaving care, missing children, looked after children placed 'at a distance' and adoption recruitment. These topics are covered in more detail in this report.

### **Adoption**

As in previous years, there continues to be an explicit government drive to widen adoption recruitment, improve support for adopters and to place more children with adoptive families quicker. This is being driven by the Adoption Leadership Board, a national board with a remit to drive significant improvements in the English adoption system. London continues to drive forwards improvements in adoption services through the London Adoption Board (LAB), which is chaired by Sheila Durr, Hackney's Assistant Director of Children and Young People's Services. The London Adoption Board brings together London local authorities, the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies (CVAA), Cafcass, which represents children in family court cases, and adopters, with the purpose of creating more opportunities for children within the region to have timely access to secure permanent homes and to provide children with the best possible life chances.

In May 2015, the Government outlined proposals in the Education and Adoption Bill to increase the scale at which adoption services are delivered by encouraging regional collaboration. This was followed in July 2015, by the Department for Education (DfE) paper '*Regionalising Adoption*' which set out the government's ambition that all local authorities will be part of regional adoption agencies by the end of the current

Parliament. The paper invited expressions of interest and offered start-up funding to support the development and implementation of new delivery models. It is hoped this will speed up matching and markedly improve the life chances of vulnerable children, improve adopter recruitment and adoption support, and reduce costs. Where local authorities are not forthcoming in developing regional approaches, the Education and Adoption Bill will give the Government the power to force 'failing' authorities to take action to merge services.

The London Adoption Board is currently leading work on the development of a regional adoption agency after submitting a successful expression of interest to the Department for Education regionalisation programme in September 2015. The Board secured funding which is being used to scope and define a new operating model which will deliver an innovative regional service primarily focusing on providing high quality adoption recruitment, marketing and adoption support.

Hackney has been part of the 6 Borough North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium since 2013. The 6 boroughs already share resources and join together in supporting targeted recruitment of adopters for specific children as well as joint provision of post adoption support. This 6 borough initiative includes our colleagues in Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington.

## **Radicalisation**

Radicalisation of young people continues to be a high-profile topic nationally, especially with media reports of the recent Paris terrorist attacks and British nationals travelling overseas to join the Islamic State group.

In July 2015 under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, a new duty was placed on local authorities to have due regard in the exercise of their functions of the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorist activity. Children's Social Care has worked with Hackney Learning Trust to develop an action plan to help safeguard against the radicalisation of children and young people. This includes identifying and meeting the training needs of practitioners, including social workers and Young Hackney workers, as well as ensuring all staff understand the Channel process, which is an early intervention multi-agency panel designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into extremist behaviour.

The Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) and NSPCC helpline (see page 49 for further details), which is supported by City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, is also an important aspect of our attempts to safeguard children and young people from radicalisation, recognising it as a form of exploitation.

## **Mandatory duty to report Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for under 18s**

A new mandatory duty to report female genital mutilation (FGM) came into force on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015 under the Serious Crime Act (2015). Regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales, including those working in private education and healthcare, are now required to report known cases of FGM in under 18-year-olds to the police.



This is a personal duty (i.e. the responsibility is that of the individual not the organisation) and requires social workers to report a disclosure of FGM from a girl or young woman to the police, with failure to report meaning the professional is subject to disciplinary measures. All CYPS staff have been sent a briefing on the specifics of the requirement. This important new duty will be reinforced through unit meetings in January 2016.

### **Ofsted Single Inspection Framework**

In September 2013, Ofsted launched the single inspection framework (SIF) for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. As at January 2016, 22% of local authorities inspected under the single inspection framework have been judged as 'good'. A number of thematic inspections have been run alongside the SIF inspection programme. The inspectorates (Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation) have remained committed to developing a joint inspection model during this period. A shorter joint targeted inspection model has been developed looking specifically at how well agencies work together to protect children in a locality area and targeted on specific areas of concern, such as the sexual exploitation of children and young people. Following an initial pilot inspection, a programme of joint work will be launched in 2016, with up to six joint inspections due to take place in locality areas (including the pilot inspection) by September 2016. Ofsted will continue the inspection of local authority children's services under the single inspection framework alongside this new multi-agency model.

### **Pilot Joint Targeted Area Inspection**

Children and Young People's Services agreed to take part in a pilot of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection framework in November/December 2015. Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation undertook a joint inspection of Hackney's multi-agency response to abuse and neglect of children and young people, with a 'deep dive' focus on the response to child sexual exploitation and those missing from home, care and education. The Safeguarding and Learning Service in CYPS took a lead in coordinating the local partnership response and a great deal of the inspection's focus was on work conducted by the directorate.

This new inspection model provides a narrative judgement for a local area rather than a graded judgement. The inspectors identified some examples of very good practice in Hackney.

Inspectors found that:

- "the partnership in Hackney is highly effective overall in addressing child sexual exploitation and responding when child abuse and neglect are first identified"
- "The partnership has promoted a highly effective and comprehensive approach to child sexual exploitation....children and young people's needs and views are

central to this approach and creative and innovative practice is evident across agencies”

- “workers know young people well, are sensitive to their specific needs .....this was seen to be making a significant difference for young people and in many cases risk is reduced”
- “the commitment of the local area partnership to providing high-quality services to children is modelled by the multi-agency FAST, which provides a swift and effective response to children in need”

Inspectors identified some areas for development across the Hackney partnership that will enable us to further strengthen the support provided to children, young people and families.

Further information about Hackney’s response to child sexual exploitation and children missing from home and care is included on pages 48 - 50 and on the First Access & Screening Team (FAST) on page 12.

## **Children Social Care (CSC) in Hackney**

Children’s Social Care (CSC) works with families to support safe and effective parenting where, without that support, the welfare and safety of a child would be compromised. The core focus of the service is child protection, supporting families where children are on the edge of care, securing positive long-term life chances for children permanently looked after by the Council and supporting care leavers.

Hackney’s model of social work continues to demonstrate how social work intervention, when built on evidence-based methodologies and delivered by small units of high calibre practitioners keeping the child at the centre of planning, can improve the lives of children and families cost effectively. Hackney’s Consultant Social Workers and Practice Development Managers are pro-active leaders. They are specifically recruited for their ability to manage a complex balance of risk management, empathy, accountability and performance management.

Whilst we continue to develop our ways of working, there are some key principles and beliefs that continue to underpin our approach. These include:

- That children are best cared for within their families wherever this can be safely achieved.
- That investing in providing services that are able to promote change within families is frequently more effective and efficient than removing children and placing them in alternative care.
- That collaborative approaches to working with families (‘doing with’ rather than ‘doing to’) are more likely to be effective in sustaining long term change than more directive interventions.
- That, in most cases, decisions about interventions should be made by those who understand the child and their family/carers best, which will normally be the practitioners who are working with them. However, responsibility for decisions that have life-long implications for the child (for example, the decision

to remove a child from the care of their family) should be carried by senior managers.

- That social work is a skilled and highly responsible task and that, to perform well, practitioners need to feel well supported within their work setting and to have opportunities to reflect on their interventions with others.
- That having more than one person's perspective on a situation enhances assessments and helps to mitigate risk by ensuring that alternative viewpoints are explored.

For further information on Children's Social Care, please see the Case Flow Chart at Appendix 1 which demonstrates how cases move through the service.

### **The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB)**

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) is the key statutory body overseeing arrangements for safeguarding children and young people across the City of London and Hackney.

Hackney Children and Young People's Services are represented on the Board by the Assistant Director - Children and Young People's Services and the Head of Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and Learning as well as on several sub-committees, ensuring joined up working across various Board priorities. The Head of Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and Learning chairs the Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children Working Group and is a member of the Hackney Executive Group and Serious Case Review Sub-Committees. The Training and Development Sub-Committee and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee are each attended by Service Managers from the Safeguarding and Learning Service. The Lead Member for Children's Services is an observer on the Board.

### **Financial performance**

The Children's Social Care gross budget including recharges totals £45.9m for 2015/16 and forms part of the overall budget of the Children and Young People's Service of £57.6m. The forecast outturn 2015/16 as at the end of October 2015 for Children's Social Care is £319k overspend against budget after the planned use of reserves. There has been a requirement to draw down from the Commissioning Reserve since 2012/13 due to the increased number of children in care and the shortage of in-house foster carers. Forecast draw down for 2015/16 is £1,274k.

The increase in commissioning costs has been driven by an increase in the number of looked after children since 2011/12, although this has remained steady throughout 2015/16. There has also been a change in the profile of fostering placements with a greater proportion of fostered children now placed with independent foster agencies (IFAs) due to a shortfall of in-house foster carers. The marginal cost of an IFA placement is significantly greater than that of an in-house placement. These pressures have been recognised by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources and total growth of £1.6m was included in the base budget across 2012/13 and 2013/14 with a further £1m added in 2015/16.

There is also pressure from an increase in the number of young people placed in semi-independent accommodation in both the 16-18 and the 18+ age categories.

The Children in Need Service has continued to experience a pressure on its Section 17 budget in 2015/16, mainly resulting from increased accommodation costs and providing regular support to families. 2015/16 has also seen increased usage of secure remand centres by the Youth Justice Service (YJ) and an increase in demand for complex care packages within Disabled Children Services (DCS). The resulting overspends in YJ & DCS are £594k and £869k respectively.

Notwithstanding ongoing and emerging pressures, Children's Social Care has continued to make significant contributions to the efficiency agenda of the Council. Over 2013/14 and 2014/15 the service delivered a further £1,184k of reductions (in addition to £6.3m of savings delivered between 2009/10 and 2012/13) from measures such as realignment of management and administrative support and further development of the service. In 2015/16, £350k of efficiency savings were made in respect of streamlining the business support structure and for 2016/17 the service is on course to successfully complete the first tranche of the 1CYPS transformation. This is delivering £2,350k across Children's Social Care and involves re-configuring the 'front door' of the service whilst innovatively aligning resources to where they will have maximum impact across other areas such as Young Hackney, the Youth Justice Service and Family Support, preventing escalation to statutory need.

## **Service Area Trends**

### **Access, Assessment & Family Support Services**

The Access, Assessment & Family Support Service joins together referral and screening activity and statutory assessments for children in need and at risk with a broad range of family support and clinical services at the 'front door' of Children's Social Care. This configuration of services facilitates rapid information sharing and decision making whilst enabling specialist and targeted resources to be provided to children and families at the earliest point of contact.

#### First Access & Screening Team

The First Access & Screening Team (FAST) acts as a single point of contact for children in need of support or protection. Screening activities are undertaken by skilled researchers and supported by co-located partners from Health and the Police. The team also works closely with Probation and specialist resources for children at risk of exploitation or who are missing. The team undertakes 'go look' visits to determine which early help services would best meet a child's needs. The team went live on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015 following a Children's Social Care restructure that merged Partnership Triage and the First Response Team.

FAST ensures children are quickly allocated resources to meet their needs or safeguard their welfare, working to a principle of right service, first time. All contacts with FAST are immediately progressed as a referral to Children's Social Care if the threshold for a statutory assessment is met. As with Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs

(MASH) across London, FAST works alongside co-located partners to share information, jointly risk assess and promote access to services. This joined-up approach enables proportionate and timely decisions about the type and level of services children need and facilitates timely access to resources.

*FAST received a referral from a school nurse with concerns about Jodie's mood and its effect on her learning. Jodie is 16 and disclosed that she had been in a relationship with an 18 year old boy who she described as controlling. Following their break up, the boy had been harassing her, mainly through text messages and phone calls.*

*The social worker contacted Jodie's father about the concerns that had been raised and established that he was working in partnership with the school and wanted additional support for his daughter. The social worker spoke to Jodie on her own in the family home and explored her concerns about her ex-boyfriend, and her relationships with family members. Jodie told the social worker that she had not heard from her ex-boyfriend for a while, however she felt that she had betrayed her family as she had not been completely open and honest about her relationship. Jodie described loving and positive relationships with her family members but expressed that it can be difficult to talk to her family as they are very religious. Jodie said that she would like someone to talk to and a place to go as she mainly stays at home.*

*The outcome of the home visit was for Jodie to receive support from Young Hackney; she wanted to engage with young people of her own age and wanted a trustworthy, non-judgmental adult to talk to. Jodie also needed support to manage relationships and the emotional impact of these on her. The FAST Social Worker presented Jodie's case to the Children and Young People's Partnership Panel, where it was agreed that Jodie would receive further support from the Young Hackney Service to meet her needs. With support, Jodie is developing into a more confident young woman who is able to understand and develop healthy relationships and manage the impact of these on her emotional state.*

FAST also supports children and young people to access universal and targeted provision including provision of support via the allocation mechanisms of the Children's Centre Multi-Agency Team (MAT) meetings and the Children and Young People's Partnership Panel (CYPPP).

### The Assessment Service

The Assessment Service undertakes statutory assessments of children in need and child protection investigations for all new referrals to Children's Social Care. 3,534 statutory social work assessments were completed in 2014/15 which is an increase on the two previous years: 2,246 in 2013/14 and 2,658 in 2012/13. The increase in 2014/15 is likely to have been influenced by the integration of services across CYPS and the increased information sharing opportunities this has brought, for example related to the Youth Offending Team and gang services. This trend has continued with 1,786 assessments completed in the first half of 2015/16, and the number of

completed assessments in 2015/16 is on track to be comparable with the figure for 2014/15.

'It was really good....My social worker has been really excellent. She let me down once and was really apologetic and put herself out to make other arrangements for me.'

**Comment from family member regarding assessment**

The table below shows Hackney's rate of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral is in line with our statistical neighbour average and much lower than the national average. Hackney's lower than average repeat referral ratio is likely to be indicative of consistently high quality assessments coupled with timely access to a range of specialist and targeted support services during and following statutory assessments.

**Table 1: Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral**

	<b>31 March 2013</b>	<b>31 March 2014</b>	<b>31 March 2015</b>	<b>As at 30 Sept 2015</b>
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>
<b>Statistical neighbour average</b>	16.6%	14.8%	13.3%	n/a
<b>England</b>	24.9%	23.4%	24%	n/a

Hackney continues to exercise dispensation agreed by the Department for Education for statutory assessment timescales which has enabled the Assessment Service to adopt a proportionate and flexible approach with families during assessment.

The average length of assessment in 2014/15 was 53 days which remains in line with the 50 day average recorded in 2013/14. Hackney continues to complete high quality and proportionate assessments in timescales that remain close to the national 45-day timeframe, which also now includes flexibility to extend with management agreement.

### Family Support Services

Family Support Services (FSS) is an umbrella term for a range of services that includes Contact Services, Targeted Family Support Services, the Troubled Families programme, Family Network Meetings and Clinical Services. A recent Family Support Service restructure led to the development of 8 Family Units led by Consultant Social Workers which went live on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

The Family Units deliver targeted family support to families in need of additional and/or intensive support to achieve their potential, including those identified as Troubled Families. The shift in leadership to qualified Consultant Social Workers enables the

Family Units to undertake statutory interventions with families, where they become necessary, thus minimising the need for families to transition to other service areas.

As part of the Troubled Families initiative, in 2012, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) tasked Hackney with identifying and turning around 1000 families who met a minimum of two of three national criteria: out of work, out of education and anti-social or offending behaviour over a 3-year period. Referred to as Phase 1 of the Troubled Families Programme, at programme end on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015, Hackney had identified 1,542 families meeting the criteria and achieved a 96.4% success rate in turn around. This had increased to 100% by June 2015.

Hackney joined the Expanded Troubled Families Programme on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 and has agreed to work with 3,720 families over a 5-year period. The families must meet a minimum of 2 of the following 6 criteria:

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

A full update will be provided in the Bi-Annual Report in July 2016.

### *Family Coach Programme*

The Family Coach Programme was launched on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015 with funding from the Justice Reinvestment Fund and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). The Programme is a one-year research project that aims to provide intensive and evidence-based interventions for a group of up to 15 children aged 7-12 years old who have been identified as at risk of future gang involvement. The programme is located within the Family Support Service alongside the Family Units and Troubled Families Programme which enables resources within the Family Support Service to support families on accessing the programme and other services such as the Domestic Violent Intervention Project (DVIP) and Ways into Work.

The Family Coach Programme has selected 15 children and their families to work with and are working intensively with them through one to one, group work and family focussed interventions. The programme aims to promote pro-social behaviours at home, in school and in the community and will be clinically evaluated in April 2016. Improvements in school attendance and behaviour have been achieved early into the programme, with children and parents engaged with Family Coach giving positive feedback.

### *Clinical Services*

The Clinical Service continues to provide specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) support to young people and their families including looked

after children, care leavers, children in need and children made subject to Child Protection Plans. The Clinical Service operates on an outreach basis in order to promote accessibility for families, and does not have a waiting list. Approximately one-third of the children and young people open to Children's Social Care received support from the Clinical Service in 2014/15 (916 cases) along with their families. This included the provision of specialist child and family mental health assessments, a range of therapeutic interventions and group work.

The Clinical Service provided over 4,700 hours of clinical consultation in 2014/15 to social work staff in addition to delivering training to foster carers around child mental health issues. Clinical supervision has also been provided to social work staff, including group supervision for Independent Reviewing Officers. The Clinical Service has well-developed links with local NHS CAMHS and in 2014/15 co-developed joint specialist care pathways for the assessment and treatment of young people with autism, harmful sexual behaviours and self-harm.

The service is accessed via four Clinical Hubs located in different service areas. There are three Clinical Hubs in Children's Social Care, covering Access and Assessment, Children in Need and Corporate Parenting. The Targeted Support Clinical Hub covers Young Hackney, Family Support and the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and has been operational since October 2015. Clinicians within the Hubs are from a variety of mental health professions including Clinical Psychology, Family Therapy, Forensic Psychology and Occupational Therapy. The Clinical Service undertakes specialist assessments of parenting, child mental health, attachment relationships, autistic spectrum conditions, ADHD, self-harm, harmful sexual behaviour, learning and neurodevelopmental difficulties, and trauma. A significant number of these assessments are completed as expert psychological assessments for the Family Courts. These assessments support social work assessments of need and risk and interventions.

A number of short and long-term therapeutic interventions are provided to children and families to address a range of presenting mental health concerns, learning difficulties, parenting issues and family relationship difficulties. In 2014/15 these interventions included family therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR), dyadic developmental psychotherapy (DDP), video interaction guidance (VIG) and specialist group interventions including New Beginnings (a parent-infant group run in partnership with the Anna Freud Centre) and multi-family group therapy.

### **The Children in Need Service**

The Children in Need Service is responsible for the safeguarding of children and young people assessed as being in need of social work intervention or protection through statutory processes that include child protection work, court proceedings and statutory family intervention to help children remain at home safely. Over the past six months, the service has focussed on strengthening plans for children, targeted CSE and risks associated with gang involvement and improving timescales for achieving permanency.



## Child Protection Plans

Children deemed at risk of significant harm are presented to an Initial Child Protection Conference to determine the need for a Child Protection Plan. A Child Protection Plan is made following a multi-agency Child Protection Conference and assessment that a child is at continuing risk of significant harm or impairment of health and development.

**Table 2: Number of Child Protection Plans**

<b>31 March 2013</b>	<b>31 March 2014</b>	<b>31 March 2015</b>	<b>30 Sept 2015</b>
225	221	216	248

**Table 3: Rate of Child Protection Plans per 10,000 population aged under 18**

	<b>31 March 2013</b>	<b>31 March 2014</b>	<b>31 March 2015</b>	<b>30 Sept 2015</b>
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>41.3</b>
<b>Statistical neighbour average</b>	40.0	40.9	44.3	n/a

As at September 2015, there were 248 children subject to a Child Protection Plan, an increase from March 2015. This figure is being monitored. The rate of Child Protection Plans in Hackney in September 2015 was 41.3 children per 10,000. This is an increase from the rate of 36.0 children per 10,000 in March 2015, but still lower than the statistical neighbour average of 44.3 children per 10,000 at March 2015.

### *Duration of Child Protection Plans*

Child Protection Plans lasting two years or more are carefully monitored to ensure the effectiveness of the Child Protection Plan in eliminating or significantly reducing the risk of significant harm. The percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plans for more than 2 years increased from 4% at September 2014 to 8% as at March 2015. As a result of this increase, a robust monitoring process was developed to quality assure planning in all long-term cases and this is resulting in a gradual decrease in longer Child Protection Plans, and this has decreased to 4% lasting over 2 years as at September 2015.

**Table 4: Duration of Child Protection Plans**

Duration of Child Protection Plan	30 Sept 2014	31 March 2015	30 Sept 2015
Under 3 months	20%	34%	25%
3 – 6 months	19%	19%	30%
6 – 12 months	30%	25%	27%
1 – 2 years	27%	13%	14%
Over 2 years	4%	8%	4%

It is evident that in the last six months, a number of children and families moved through child protection interventions in a timely manner. The number of cases remaining on Child Protection Plans for less than 6 months has increased slightly from 53% at the end of March 2015 to 55% in September 2015. This indicator continues to be monitored closely.

*Children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time*

This measure indicates whether a Child Protection Plan was successful in effectively reducing risks over time in comparison to the necessity for a further Child Protection Plan. In practice, this is determined by work undertaken with parents and children through the plan, the quality of assessment of risks of significant harm, and the provision and accessibility of any support services subsequent to the child protection plan. For this performance indicator, a low score is generally seen as indicative of good performance.

The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time decreased from 17% in 2012/13 to 14.1% in 2013/14 and this trend continued in 2014/15 to a rate of 11.4%. In comparison, the national average for this indicator has steadily increased over the last three years. For mid-year 2015, the percentage has increased to 17.4%. The percentage is high as the figure is calculated from the number of children that have become subject to a Child Protection Plan so far this year which has itself been high. This figure will continue to be monitored.

**Table 5: Percentage of children who became the subject of a child protection plan who became the subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time**

	31 March 2013	31 March 2014	31 March 2015	31 Sept 2015
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
<b>Statistical neighbour average</b>	12.7%	13.0%	13.6%	n/a
<b>England</b>	14.9%	15.8%	16.5%	n/a

Social Work in Schools Project (SWiS)

The Children in Need Service launched the Social Work in Schools Project (SWiS) in eight Hackney schools in November 2014 in order to provide effective family intervention to children and families at the earliest stage of signs of difficulties to

prevent children from needing to be protected through statutory processes or becoming looked after.

In its first year, the project worked with 2 secondary schools (City Academy and Bridge Academy) and 6 primary schools (Morningside Primary School, Berger Primary School, St Dominic's Catholic Primary School, Hoxton Garden Primary School, Whitmore Primary School, and De Beauvoir Primary School). Since the start of the 2015/16 academic year, the project has expanded to work with 4 more schools: Mandeville Primary School, Daubeney Primary School, Gainsborough Primary School and Cardinal Pole Catholic Secondary School.

At the end of October 2015, the project was providing interventions to 216 children with varying needs and complexities. An evaluation of the project is currently underway and an update will be provided in the Bi-Annual Report in July 2016.

*The Social Work in Schools (SWiS) team received a request from a secondary school in relation to a 14 year old boy who had recently stopped attending school. The school were worried about him as this was a sudden change. Aidan resides with his grandmother of his own choice and has infrequent contact with his mother and siblings. The SWiS social worker visited the home immediately to investigate and found the grandmother to be very depressed and unwell. Two years previously Aidan's brother had died, and it appeared that the family had not dealt with the grief that his death had caused.*

*The social worker visited Aidan's grandmother weekly for three hours to slowly develop trust and create an opportunity for the grandmother to talk through her experiences, feelings and grief which were preventing her from parenting Aidan effectively. Each session ended with a few agreed practical tasks for Aidan's grandmother to complete. The intervention was gentle, consistent and enabling which resulted in the grandmother's mood lifting and her slowly gaining confidence to manage her family. Being co-located within the school enabled the social worker to keep the school well informed of the reasons for school absences, the approach she was taking with the family and of progress being made. This supported the school in their decision making and enabled collaborative thinking on how best to get Aidan back into school.*

*Aidan was resistant in meeting with the social worker and she used a light touch, checking in with him when visiting his grandmother. SWiS involvement resulted in the grandmother being able to become more proactive about getting Aidan to school, having more energy to manage his resistance and in time being able to regain a positive power balance between adult and child. This work continued over the summer term and summer holiday and Aidan's school attendance is now almost 100%. The social worker remains involved with the family to a lesser extent and her relationship with the family has resulted in the family, who are very resistant to professional involvement, agreeing to access professional grief counselling for one of Aidan's siblings at the school.*

Provisional feedback from schools is that they find the project to be:

- Rapid and responsive, supportive and informative
- Focussed on family needs and family relationships
- A chance to strengthen school/social work relationships
- Enabling of effective signposting by being community-based
- An opportunity to develop and 'up-skill' school professionals

The ambition for the project is to demonstrate that more cases with children on Child in Need plans can be held safely within schools by experienced social workers.

## **The Corporate Parenting Service**

The Corporate Parenting Service is responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of children who are in the care of the local authority. This includes planning for their placements through fostering and adoption, supporting rehabilitation home whenever possible, and supporting young people who have previously been in care up to the age of 21, or 25 for those remaining in education. Adoption and post-permanency services are currently managed within the Children in Need Service but are covered in this section of the report.

The Service works very closely with Hackney Gets Heard, the Children in Care Council, to develop and improve the services and support that looked after children and care leavers receive. More detail about Hackney Gets Heard's work over the past 6 months is provided on page 46.

Hackney's current Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2013-15 is being updated to incorporate the pledges made in the Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care (page 56) and the Corporate Parenting Board will agree the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2016-18 in March 2016. A workshop which was attended by representatives across services including Public Health, Housing, Foster Carers and 4 elected Members was held in November 2015 to identify key priorities for the service. These priorities will be refined with children and young people in early 2016 and the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy will be in place for April 2016.

'I have been looked after better and there are so many opportunities.'

**Looked after young person**

## Overview of care population

One of our key principles is that children are best cared for within their families wherever this can be safely achieved. We are always striving to improve practice in respect of care planning to ensure that we can say confidently which children need to come into care and identify which children's outcomes will be improved by entering the care system. We continue to have lower numbers of children in care per 10,000

population under age 18 than our statistical neighbours (other local authorities with similar profiles).

**Table 6: Children looked after per 10,000 population aged under 18**

	31 March 2013	31 March 2014	31 March 2015	As at 30 Sept 2015
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>
Statistical neighbour average	72	71	65	n/a

**Table 7: Number of looked after children at 31<sup>st</sup> March**

	2013	2014	2015	As at 30 Sept 2015
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>347</b>
Statistical neighbour average	433	428	394	n/a

**Note** *Historical data has been rounded to the nearest 5 (as published by DfE).*

As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Hackney was responsible for looking after 347 children and young people, an increase of 31% since 2011. There has been a gradual increase in the number of looked after children from 320 in 2013 to 343 in 2015, and there has been a further slight increase in the first half of the 2015/16 financial year to 347 children. Key to understanding this rise is consideration of the profile of looked after children, including the age of children entering care and ages and reasons for leaving care.

**Table 8: Age breakdown of children entering care by age on starting**

Age	2013	2014	2015	As at 30 Sept 2015
<b>Under 1</b>	25 (14%)	15 (10%)	25 (15%)	7 (7%)
<b>1 – 4</b>	25 (15%)	15 (9%)	20 (12%)	11 (12%)
<b>5 – 9</b>	25 (15%)	30 (19%)	15 (10%)	13 (14%)
<b>10 - 15</b>	50 (28%)	60 (36%)	60 (36%)	30 (32%)
<b>16 and over</b>	50 (28%)	40 (26%)	45 (27%)	34 (36%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>95</b>

**N.B.** The table above includes data published by DfE. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 (excluding Sept2015 figures) and percentages rounded to the nearest whole figure.

The number of over 16's and the percentage of this age group within the total number of children entering care has remained fairly consistent since 2013 and accounts for a large proportion of the new admissions to care each year. The significant increase from 5 young people aged 16 and over entering care in 2010/11, 5% of the total number entering care, to the current position is attributable to the acceptance of young

people with housing needs as being looked after and the correlation with an increase in the use of Section 20 (Children Act 1989) accommodation. There has also been a recent trend in unaccompanied asylum seeking males aged 17 years presenting for services. The increase in the number of young people over 16 entering care also has an impact on the numbers of care leavers when this cohort turn 18. Since December 2012, all young people remanded to custody automatically become looked after children, and this has also had an impact on the number of young people entering care, particularly in the older age range.

34 young people aged 16 and over entered care in the first half of 2015/16 (36% of the total number). This is the highest percentage of the total number of young people entering care so far.

The table below includes an age breakdown of the total number of looked after children at year end which also illustrates the impact of the increase in the over-16 age group on the total number of looked after children between 2011 and 2015. This impact has continued during the first half of this year, with one third (33%) of the total number of looked after children as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 aged 16 and over.

**Table 9: Age breakdown of total number of looked after children**

Age	31 March 2013	31 March 2014	31 March 2015	As at 30 Sept 2015
<b>Under 1</b>	20 (6%)	10 (4%)	17 (5%)	16 (5%)
<b>1 – 4</b>	45 (14%)	35 (11%)	38 (11%)	35 (10%)
<b>5 – 9</b>	60 (18%)	60 (18%)	52 (15%)	48 (14%)
<b>10 - 15</b>	120 (37%)	125 (38%)	141 (41%)	134 (39%)
<b>16 and over</b>	80 (24%)	95 (30%)	95 (28%)	114 (33%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>347</b>
<b>Total statistical neighbour average</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>n/a</b>

**N.B. The table above includes data published by the Department for Education. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 (excluding 2015 figures) and percentages rounded to the nearest whole figure.**

### Educational attainment of looked after children and young people

The Virtual School for looked after children works with children and young people from early years to the age of twenty five. It prioritises the individual learning or training needs of a child or young people in care, identifies the skills necessary for participation in an education, training or work environment and supports young people to acquire and adapt these skills for learning and for life. The Virtual School began working with young people on youth justice orders in 2014/15 to support their engagement in education and assisting them to make more positive choices.

The educational results for looked after children in Hackney rely on established integrated partnership working between the Virtual School, social workers, schools and carers. This is supported by robust education and training plans and the provision of additional targeted support together with the understanding of how the day to day realities of being in care can affect a young person’s capacity to learn and participate.

### *Educational attainment*

The Department for Education educational attainment data for looked after children does not record results for cohorts that are below 9 children. Data for 2015 is currently un-validated.

In 2015 in Hackney there were 10 pupils in the Key Stage 2 (KS2) cohort who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months. 5 (60%) achieved at least level 4 in maths, 5 (50%) received at least level 4 in reading and writing.

**Table 10: KS2 Pupils achieving level 4 or above in maths, reading and writing (performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months)**

	2013				2014				2015			
	No.	Maths	Re.	Wr.	No.	Maths	Re.	Wr.	No.	Maths	Re.	Wr.
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Statistical neighbour average		66%	70%	67%		58%	69%	63%		Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published
England		59%	63%	55%		61%	68%	59%		Not yet published	Not yet published	Not yet published

**N.B. Local Authority figures are rounded to the nearest 5.**

**x = number less than or equal to 5 or the percentage where the numerator is less than or equal to 5 or the denominator is less than or equal to 10.**

Reading and Writing results are below the national average at Key Stage 2 for last year. This is in part due to the high percentage of children with special educational needs statements in this cohort at 50% of the total number of pupils. Over the next year the Virtual School will have a stronger focus on assessment and planning and ensure that challenging goals are set. The primary intervention teacher will plan individual programmes for young people, taking into account the Hackney approach to assessment.

In 2015 in Hackney there were 27 pupils in the Key Stage 4 (KS4) cohort who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months. 37% achieved 5 GCSEs graded A\* – C, while 33% gained 5+ GCSEs graded A\* – C including English and maths.

**Table 11: KS4 Pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs A\*-C with English and maths (performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months)**

	2013			2014			2015		
	No.	5 GCSEs	5 GCSEs with Eng & Maths	No.	5 GCSEs	5 GCSEs with Eng & Maths	No.	5 GCSEs	5 GCSEs with Eng & Maths
<b>Hackney</b>	25	34.8%	x	25	37.5%	25%	27	37%	33%
<b>Statistical neighbour average</b>		45.6%	24.8%		22%	17%		Not yet published	Not yet published
<b>England</b>		36.6%	15.3%		16.3%	12.0%		Not yet published	Not yet published

**N.B. Local Authority figures are rounded to the nearest 5.**

**x = number less than or equal to 5 or the percentage where the numerator is less than or equal to 5 or the denominator is less than or equal to 10.**

Outcomes for this cohort of pupils are especially strong, being almost three times the national average for last year and an increase from 25% to 33% in the number of Hackney young people with 5 GCSEs including English and maths this year.



*Abigail is an 11 year old girl who recently completed her primary education. She experienced several care episodes and found the deterioration in the relationship with her mother distressing. She was placed with a foster carer in Essex and commuted into Hackney to attend school. Due to the challenges in her life Abigail was finding school difficult and her grades began to drop. As a result, she received one to one teaching from the Virtual School Primary Intervention Teacher to help prepare her for her Key Stage 2 tests in year 6.*

*Throughout this time there was some uncertainty as to whether Abigail would return to her mother's care. This was further complicated by her upcoming transition to secondary school, as she had received an offer for a secondary school place in Hackney.*

*By the time the summer arrived it was decided that Abigail would remain with her foster carer in Essex. An application for a local school was made but unfortunately Abigail was refused a place.*

*The Virtual School Primary Intervention Teacher liaised closely with the professional network in Hackney and Essex to establish the most effective way of securing a school place for Abigail in her preferred school. Working with Abigail, her social worker and the foster carer, an appeal was submitted detailing why the school should reconsider its decision.*

*The appeal was successful and Abigail secured a place at her chosen school. She also went on to achieve excellent Key Stage 2 results which placed her in a strong position to begin her secondary education.*

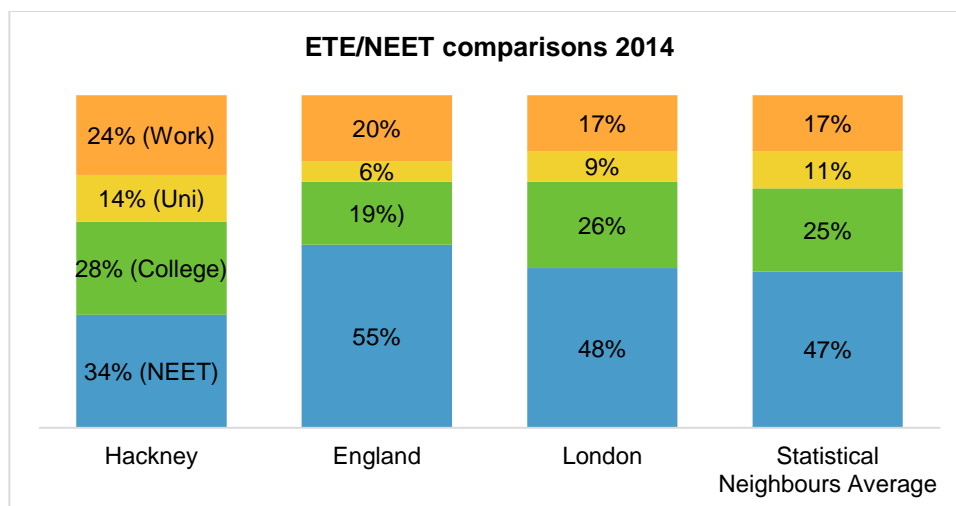
*The Virtual School Intervention Teacher was not only able to work with Abigail to increase her academic achievement, but was also able to work with the surrounding professional network to support her wider educational issues and ensure a successful outcome.*

### *Education, employment and training*

The Virtual School ensures that young people who leave statutory care at the age of 18 receive good quality support and advice to ensure that they can continue with their education and training.

The raising of the participation age has meant that all young people now need to be engaged with education or training until they are 18. In response to this, the Virtual School has needed to increase the number of providers and the range of opportunities available to support young people to remain engaged in their studies. The number of young people on apprenticeships and traineeships has increased and it is hoped that in future young people will be able to get involved in the Hackney 100 scheme that is providing work experience opportunities for young people in Hackney companies.

The graph below shows comparator data for all young people now aged 19, 20 and 21 who were looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday including some time after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday year ending 31 March 2014.



Hackney compares very favourably with the national picture with 34% of care leavers not in education, employment or training, compared with 55% of care leavers nationally. Hackney had more than twice the number of young people at university (14%) than the national average (6%) and is above the London (9%) and statistical neighbour averages (11%).

In Summer 2015, the percentage of Hackney care leavers aged 18 and above engaged in education and training was 74%. This is well above the national average for care leavers. 35 young people were attending university which was 17% of the total cohort. This is almost three times the national average which is 6%. 7 young people signed up to apprenticeships in various fields such as Business, Building Surveying, Hairdressing and Construction.

13 care leavers started university courses in September 2015 on courses including Accounting and Management, Sports Development and Nursing. 7 care leavers graduated from university in Summer 2015 in a range of subjects including Business Management, Fashion and Photography and Early Childhood Studies. This included one care leaver who achieved a first class degree.

### Health of looked after children

Since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 the looked after children's health service has been provided by Whittington Health (the service was previously provided by Homerton University Hospital Trust). The Looked After Children health team is co-located with the Virtual School in order to provide children and young people with a more holistic and integrated service. The service is delivered by a dedicated team closely aligned with Hackney's new universal school-based health service. We expect that integration of the Looked After Children health service with the Virtual School and closer links with the new universal school-based health service should provide a better health service to our looked after children.

A full end of year report on the health of looked after children in Hackney will be included in the July 2016 Bi-Annual Report.

## Placement activity

### *Placement stability*

On the whole, placement 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 each child are essential if well-matched stable placements are to be achieved. Inappropriate or poorly planned placements can lead to frequent moves. The indicators below are important measures of the stability of care that children looked after by the local authority experience.

**Table 12: Percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in one year**

	<b>31 March 2013</b>	<b>31 March 2014</b>	<b>31 March 2015</b>	<b>As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015</b>
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>
Statistical neighbours	12%	14%	Not published yet	n/a
England	11%	11%	Not published yet	n/a

For this indicator a lower score is indicative of good performance. Performance against this indicator is strong in Hackney when compared to statistical neighbours and the national average in previous years. The criteria for this national indicator changed for 2014/15: previously when a child returned from a missing episode this was classified as a new placement, even if a child returned to the same placement. These incidences are no longer included in this indicator. The percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in one year during 2014/15 is a significant change in comparison with last year's performance at 12% and this is largely attributable to the change in criteria, a trend that has continued in the first half of 2015/16. It is expected that the national and statistical neighbour averages will also decrease as a result of this change to the indicator.

'I get looked after very well.'

**Looked after child**

### *Placement location*

There are many reasons why some looked after children are placed away from Hackney. Some may need to live out of the area to keep them safe from harm or from dangerous influences closer to home. Others may need specialist care that is not

available in the local area, or specialist long-term foster placements to match specific needs that may be in short supply. Some looked after children move out of the area so they can live with siblings or be cared for by relatives. Others may have been placed with adoptive parents who live at some distance from Hackney. It is noteworthy however that, in the London area in particular, transport links are such that children placed in, what are now termed, 'distant' placements are able to travel readily and easily to the Hackney area.

Of the 347 children looked after by Hackney at the end of September 2015, 70 were placed within Hackney. 279 (80%) looked after children were placed in London local authorities (including Hackney, and neighbouring and non-neighbouring boroughs). 71 children (20%) were placed in neighbouring local authorities (Waltham Forest, Newham, Haringey, Islington, Tower Hamlets or City), and 206 (59%) were placed in non-neighbouring local authorities, classified as being 'at a distance'. The majority of looked after children in placements classified as being 'at a distance' are placed in other London local authorities or local authorities adjoining London, such as Essex, Kent and Hertfordshire. These figures are consistent with other London boroughs.

**Table 13: Placement location of looked after children, as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

Placement location	Number of looked after children
Hackney	70 (20%)
Neighbouring London local authority	71 (20%)
Other London local authority	138 (40%)
Local authority adjoining London	39 (11%)
Other 'at a distance' local authority	29 (8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>

It is recognised that children placed away from their home area may need additional support and the quality and impact of care and support they receive is carefully planned and closely monitored. Much work has taken place to identify the support provided to this group of looked after children.

#### *Looked after children placed at a distance*

Managing and supporting looked after children placed outside of their home authorities, including those children and young people placed at a distance, is a high priority for the service. A thorough process is in place to ensure that the views of a range of professionals, including the Virtual School, the Looked After Children Health team and the Independent Reviewing Officer, are gathered when planning a new placement. This provides the Nominated Officer (the Head of Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and Learning) with the necessary information to judge whether a placement is in a child's best interest and to ensure that proper consideration has been

given to the impact of the placement location on the child’s welfare, including their education provision and contact with family and friends where appropriate. If a potential placement is defined as a ‘distant placement’, the statutory guidance states that consultation should take place with the host authority about the benefits of a planned placement, the benefits of living in the neighbourhood where the placement is located and the potential for local services to respond appropriately to the needs of the child concerned. This information is also shared with the Nominated Officer when making a decision to approve a new placement outside of Hackney. There is no requirement for the Nominated Officer to provide approval for placements outside of Hackney where this is with an in-house foster carer, with parents, or with family or friends. This also applies to children who acquire looked after status as a result of remand, as the placement location decision is not made by the local authority.

The current placement location profile of Hackney’s looked after children has been a key consideration in developing the revised Sufficiency Strategy and future plans regarding commissioning semi-independent accommodation. It has also influenced the current foster carer recruitment drive that aims to recruit more in-house foster carers in Hackney and the surrounding area. There will always be situations where it is appropriate and necessary to place some looked after children outside of their local area and potentially at a distance due to safeguarding considerations, for example related to gang involvement, child sexual exploitation or risks from family members. The range of placement options available will continue to be developed to ensure we can best match a child’s needs to the most appropriate placement.

*Placement costs*

**Table 14: Average weekly marginal cost of selected placement types as at 31 October 2015**

<b>Placement type</b>	<b>Average weekly cost as at 31 October 2015</b>
In-house foster placements	£389
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements	£789
Residential & Secure placements	£2,596

The table above shows the difference in the average weekly costs in payments for in-house foster placements, Independent Fostering Agency placements and residential placements.

There is forecast to be a reduction in the volume and total cost of in-house foster care in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15 and this has corresponded with an increase in spend on Independent Fostering Agency placements.

Table 15: Comparative analysis of actual spend in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years

<b>Looked After Children</b>	<b>2014/15</b>		<b>2015/16 Forecast Outturn</b>		<b>Difference</b>	
<b>Placement activity</b>	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Outturn (£)
In-house Foster Care	76.9	1,818,091	73.8	1,621,118	-3.1	-196,973
Independent Foster Carers	153.1	6,459,836	160.2	7,015,524	7.1	555,688
Family & Friends	26.9	467,609	26.1	483,206	-0.8	15,597
Residential Care Placements	15.1	2,305,912	12.5	1,903,853	-2.6	-402,059
Semi Independent (<18)	30.9	1,099,288	21.8	814,845	-9.1	-284,443

<b>Permanency</b>	<b>2014/15</b>		<b>2015/16 Forecast Outturn</b>		<b>Difference</b>	
<b>Placement activity</b>	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Outturn (£)
Adoption Allowances	146.75	1,262,417	135.6	1,177,057	-11.2	-85,360
Residence Order Allowances	82.93	298,686	73.7	268,401	-9.3	-30,285
Special Guardianship Allowance	163.21	1,440,367	168.2	1,437,912	5.0	-2,454

<b>Leaving Care</b>	<b>2014/15</b>		<b>2015/16 Forecast Outturn</b>		<b>Difference</b>	
<b>Placement activity</b>	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Outturn (£)
Semi Independent (18+)	87.8	1,455,161	80.7	1,275,600	-7.1	-179,561
Staying Put	14.0	181,298	14.1	205,044	0.1	23,746
Overstayers	20.4	316,708	14.7	229,965	-5.7	-86,743

## Foster Carers

### *Recruitment and retention*

In common with other London local authorities, Hackney continues to be reliant on Independent Fostering Agencies to provide services for many of its looked after children. Financial constraints mean there is growing pressure to recruit more in-house foster carers which, as well as having a significant financial benefit also facilitates better coordination of support to children.

Nine mainstream fostering households were approved by Hackney in 2014/15. Four new mainstream fostering households have been approved in the first half of 2015/16. Two further new fostering households were approved in October 2015.

The fostering marketing, recruitment and retention strategy continues to develop on progress on the strategy's deliverables are monitored monthly by the Fostering Recruitment Group. Current marketing materials are being refreshed and a new recruitment campaign has been developed in consultation with Hackney foster carers which concentrates on the 'little things' that make a difference to a child's life. The strategy also focuses on improving the use of social media and delivering targeted recruitment campaigns and 'drop-in' sessions supported by existing foster carers and members of the Fostering Service held in the community.

Hackney's partnership with the North London Fostering and Adoption Consortium continues to strengthen and this is supporting the recruitment of foster carers. A joint initiative is underway to recruit, train and support foster carers specifically for teenagers, with the ambition of developing a pool of specialist carers that can be used across the consortium. There will be continued work with the North London Fostering and Adoption Consortium to produce key campaigns throughout the year, including a campaign to encourage those within the Muslim faith to consider fostering.

Hackney is committed to strengthening the Fostering Service and providing an extensive and competitive offer to foster carers which includes access to a range of support including: the Virtual School; therapeutic clinicians; social pedagogues; consortium resources; and regular fostering support groups with other foster carers. Hackney offers a wide range of structured professional development opportunities including core courses, specialist training, consortium training and a recently introduced advanced study programme which allows foster carers the freedom to select courses to further enhance their qualifications.

Specialist training provided to foster carers over the first half of this year has included: online safety; promoting self-esteem; understanding self-harm; and understanding sensory difficulties in autism and ADHD. Foster carers were also invited to attend the CYPS Practice Development Day on child sexual abuse and a follow up training session has been organised for foster carers on 'parenting a child who has experienced sexual abuse'. The course is scheduled for 2016 along with courses on: preparing young people for independence; child sexual exploitation; foetal alcohol syndrome; and children that go missing from care.

Hackney foster carers attended the annual 'celebration event' in August 2015. The event was planned in conjunction with Hackney Foster Carer Council and involved dinner, an awards ceremony and dancing. The event was a great success with very positive feedback from foster carers, including that it was a 'good way of celebrating' and the event 'built a sense of community and coming together between foster carers and staff'.

The Corporate Parenting Board monitors fostering recruitment closely. Detailed information is regularly reported to the Board.

### *Head, Heart, Hands programme*

Hackney's foster carers have benefited from our inclusion in the 'Head Heart Hands' social pedagogy programme. Social pedagogy is an academic discipline that draws on core theories from education, sociology, psychology and philosophy. It is concerned with wellbeing, learning and growth. This was a 3 year project to evaluate the impact of a social pedagogic approach to foster care and was run in conjunction with the Fostering Network and five other sites across the country. The project ended in December 2015, but much work has taken place to ensure social pedagogic developments in Hackney are sustained beyond this date, including plans to run accredited in-house training for those foster carers who were not part of the initial programme, to ensure all our in-house foster carers are trained in social pedagogic principles. Training will be facilitated by the social pedagogues and the Service Manager responsible for the Head Heart Hands programme.

Three social pedagogues have been recruited and their roles are now well embedded within Hackney Children's Social Care, with at least one further social pedagogue role being planned. 47 foster carers have been trained through the programme and this has been followed up by a number of action learning sets to support foster carers to embed their learning from the programme.

Foster carers are pioneering social pedagogic practice and actively disseminating learning at conferences, training sessions and forums, and through newsletters. The new fostering recruitment and retention strategy was developed with social pedagogue involvement to ensure that the preparation and training that prospective foster carers receive is underpinned by social pedagogic principles.

In order to build sustainability for the Head, Heart, Hands programme, social pedagogy will be reflected in the revised CYPS Workforce Development Strategy and further events are planned on a 6-monthly basis for social work staff, foster carers and senior managers.

The Head Heart Hands programme is being evaluated by Loughborough University and The Colebrooke Centre and this will be completed by June 2016.

### Clinical services support for looked after children

Hackney's in-house Clinical Service provides specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) support to looked after children and care leavers. Clinicians work with children and young people where there are concerns about a child's



emotional wellbeing, behaviour, development or mental health; within the context of highly complex presenting difficulties including previous abuse and neglect, developmental trauma, relationship and attachment difficulties, parenting difficulties, deliberate self-harm and substance misuse problems.

The Clinical Service has close links to City and Hackney CAMHS and has implemented clear processes for accessing NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services when a looked after child lives outside of Hackney.

Since April 2008 all local authorities in England have been required to provide information on the emotional and behavioural health of children and young people in their care. Data is collected through a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). The SDQ is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire about 3-16 year olds. A summary figure for each child (the total difficulties score) is submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) annually.

The average SDQ score for Hackney’s looked after children in 2014/15 was 14.7. This is slightly above the national average score for looked after children of 13.9 for 2014/15. The scoring range is between 0-40. On an individual basis a score of 13 or below is normal and 17 and above is a cause of concern (14 -16 is borderline). Every child whose SDQ score was of concern has received additional support from the Clinical Service.

### Adoption

#### *Children placed for adoption*

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, 9 Hackney children were adopted. While this is equal to the total for the whole of 2014/15, this is due to the number of court adjournments that were carried over from the last period.

**Table 16: Number (and percentage) of looked after children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted**

	<b>31 March 2013</b>	<b>31 March 2014</b>	<b>31 March 2015</b>	<b>As at 30 Sept 2015</b>
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>10 (6%)</b>	<b>15 (10%)</b>	<b>9 (6%)</b>	<b>9 (10.5%)</b>
Statistical neighbour average	21 (10%)	25 (11%)	20 (10%)	n/a

Of the 9 children adopted in Hackney between April and September 2015, 3 were girls and 6 were boys. An age breakdown is included below of the children’s age at the time of the adoption order being granted (this will be different from the age when the children were placed with their adopters).

**Table 17: Age breakdown of children's age at the time of the adoption order being granted (as at September 2015/16)**

Age (in years)	Number of children
1	1
2	4
3	2
4	1
5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, 11 children were placed with their adoptive family but an adoption order had not yet been granted. 9 children had a formal plan for adoption but had not yet been placed with an adoptive family.

*Soon after her birth, Tara's parents were assessed as unable to care for her adequately and keep her safe. As no other member of the family and friend network was able to meet the needs of baby Tara, permanency planning was undertaken. Hackney's Adoption Unit decided that Tara's needs for safety, security and permanency could only be met through adoption and this care plan was agreed by the Court at the final hearing.*

*However, within a month of the final hearing, Tara's birth mother was due to give birth to a second child. This situation presented a challenge for the family finding team in the Adoption Unit in ensuring there was no delay in finding an adoptive family for Tara, whilst considering the possibility that the second baby may also have a care plan of adoption and would benefit from being placed with their older biological sibling.*

*Family finding was urgently undertaken for Tara, and any adopters unable to consider adopting a second unborn child were not pursued further. A potential adoptive family was quickly identified and the arranged visit consisted of extensive discussions regarding the situation with the unborn sibling and the family's ability to potentially meet the needs of two babies as well as managing the uncertainty present in the care plan for the unborn baby.*

*The visit resulted in both the adoptive parents and the social workers feeling positive about committing to the adoptive placement. This successful family finding activity meant that the adoptive placement would be prepared without delay for Tara who, in line with her care plan, will achieve permanency through adoption. The placement was also identified to ensure that if the unborn sibling also has a care plan of adoption, the two biological siblings will be able to grow up together in one adoptive family from a very young age.*

### *Recruiting adopters*

Ten adoptive families were recruited in 2014/15. Recruiting the right adopters for children remains a challenge for all local authorities and the situation in Hackney is no different. Considerable efforts have been made to attract prospective adopters to Hackney through advertising/marketing, increased activity through the consortium, and building partnerships with private organisations. Our profiles of children are carefully designed, up to date and use good quality DVDs. Responses to requests for information about children are made in a timely way, and the matching process is reviewed to be the most effective for each individual child.

Hackney is a member of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington) which benefits from joint recruitment of adopters with increased capacity for targeted recruitment for specific children, centralised training for staff, adopters and foster carers and joint commissioning of services which is effective and provides financial savings for all boroughs. Support for adoption is commissioned by the Consortium and is easily accessible to adopters, diverse in what is on offer, and provides comprehensive services to families whenever they may need it.

### *Adoption support*

The post-permanency service provides support to adoptive parents, their children and birth family members to enable them to remain in touch after an adoption order is granted. The letterbox system administers a regular indirect exchange of information between birth families and adopters. The team also provides support to help to maintain direct contact arrangements for adopted children and their birth relatives where this is in the child's interests and ongoing therapeutic support is provided for adoptive families before and after an Adoption Order has been granted.

Financial reviews are undertaken with families in regard to adoption allowances provided by the service, and adoptive families' needs are assessed when there is a change in circumstances (post three years). The post-permanency service will also intervene whenever necessary to prevent the disruption of an adoption for the duration of three years post-order period, after which the duty to provide support will fall to the local authority where the child resides. A support phone line is provided to adopters and the service undertakes Adoption Support Reviews three years after an Adoption Order has been granted. The service works with children to undertake life story work, offers support to adopted adults to access their records and works as part of intermediary services with birth families and adopted adults. More recently, and in line with the changes for descendants of adopted people, the service also now offers an intermediary service for this client group.

The adoption support commissioned with our Consortium partners is easily accessible to families, diverse in what is on offer and provides therapeutic services to families. The post-permanency service works with Consortium partners to provide support groups for adopters, including specific groups for the parents of adopted teenagers, groups for adopted adults and training for adoptive families. Training is available to newly approved adopters and specialist training is available for adopters of children with behavioral needs. A comprehensive education support service is also provided to

adopters and special guardians through the Consortium which includes an advice line, consultation sessions, a monthly support group and an annual training course all focusing on education. The education support service is intended to complement the support already organised for adopted children via the Pupil Premium.

Support is also provided to adoptive families through the Post Adoption Centre. This support includes helplines, counselling, independent support groups, training and outreach centres.

### *Adoption Support Fund*

Hackney has been successful in obtaining funding from the Adoption Support Fund for a new Therapeutic Life Story Project (TLSS) which is delivered by Social Workers within Post Permanency and Adoption Plus. This fund has enabled 32 children to have access to this service and will provide ongoing support to a larger number of children throughout the coming year.

As part of the Consortium Hackney is also in the process of applying for a therapeutic teenagers group which will be delivered by 'Body and Soul' who are experts in delivery groups for this age group. If successful we have an ongoing group for our children which will be commissioned for a full year's programme.

As well as the above applications the service has assessed seven families for the Adoption Support Fund with three being successful.

### *Special Guardianship Order support*

The post-permanency service works with families who are caring for children under Special Guardianship Orders. A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) means that while parental responsibility remains with the parents, a carer (including foster carers) or relative can apply for the child to live with them, and make day to day decisions on behalf of the child. Furthermore, the service works with all SGO cases for 3 years following an order being granted, undertakes annual financial reviews and convenes permanency planning meetings. Over the past year the service has developed the support for Special Guardians and now offer the following:

- Monthly topic-based support groups
- Preparation groups for Special Guardians pre order
- Specialised training for social workers completing SGO assessments
- Assessments of need (post 3 years)
- Annual financial assessments
- Counselling, information and advice line
- Access to PAC-UK counselling services
- Help with behavioral, attachment and other problems
- Help with contact between a child and their birth family
- Meetings and other events to enable groups of special guardianship children to get together
- Training to help Special Guardians meet the needs of their child
- Help where a Special Guardianship Order arrangement breaks down
- Advice with education

All SGO families (where the child was previously in the care of the local authority) are also entitled to priority access to a £1,900 Pupil Premium for state-funded schools to help meet each child's educational needs. The service also provide support through correspondence with schools for the children to access this premium.

The post-permanency service also support Special Guardians to access the following where appropriate:

- Free early education for a child from the age of two
- Selection of a school that best meets a child's needs
- Priority access to council housing if the home is overcrowded.

### Leaving Care Service

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. This can make the difference between achieving independence and requiring long-term help. The local authority keeps in touch with care leavers until they are aged 21, or to the age of 25 if they are engaged in a full-time course of education.

'You always help me the best you can. Even when I'm almost literally asking for the impossible. Or aggravated and annoyingly rude. I can always talk to you whether it be formally or general and you always have great advice. Thanks for putting up with me at my worst.'

**A care leaver about her social worker**

The Leaving Care Service was supporting 209 care leavers aged 18 and over as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The social work units provide support to care leavers working closely with colleagues in other service areas to ensure a good transition at the age of 18, when a child's 'looked after' care status ends. Young people in Hackney often receive more frequent contact and intervention than is usual in other authorities. Whilst in most local authorities, leaving care support is provided by personal advisors who are not required to have a professional qualification, the Leaving Care provision in Hackney is led and delivered by social work qualified staff, ensuring that young people receive a high quality professional service.

A booklet for care leavers taking them through financial matters was produced in summer 2015 and has been distributed to all care leavers (see page 52).

### *Staying Put arrangements*

When a young person reaches the age of 18, they are no longer considered to be "looked after". Foster carers play an important part in ensuring that young people are

prepared for the move to independent living if this is what they choose, or by continuing to support them after the age of 18 through schemes such as Staying Put, where a young person's foster care placement can be extended beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The transition to adulthood is complex for all young people, and Staying Put arrangements enable young people to experience a transition from care to independence and adulthood that is more similar to that which most young people experience, and is based on need and not on age alone.

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a new duty on local authorities in England to facilitate, monitor and support Staying Put arrangements for fostered young people until they reach the age of 21, where this is what they and their foster carers want, unless the local authority considers that the Staying Put arrangement is not consistent with the welfare of the young person. Hackney has offered the option of staying put arrangements to young people up to age 21 for a number of years.

As at 30 September 2015, 15 young people were living in Staying Put arrangements, similar to the 14 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

Leaflets providing more information on Staying Put arrangements were produced in autumn 2015 and have been distributed to care leavers and foster carers (see page 52).

## **Young Hackney**

Young Hackney is the Council's early help, prevention and diversion service for children and young people aged 6-19 years (and up to 25 years if disabled and/or engaged with the substance misuse team). 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.

While the service is open and universal in terms of youth hub activities and participation, there are priority groups that the service works with on a targeted basis, including:

- young people who offend, are at risk of offending, or who are victims or perpetrators of youth violence
- those at risk of child sexual exploitation
- young people presenting with additional needs/special educational needs or a disability (SEND)
- those not in education, training or employment or at risk of exclusion or disengagement from learning
- young carers
- those at risk in terms of their physical or emotional health and well-being
- looked after children and care leavers
- young black men, and other culturally specific groups.

## Universal services

Universal provision is delivered through Young Hackney's Youth Hubs where a range of activities take place such as group work, cooking classes, boxing, wheelchair basketball and sessions specific to juniors and seniors. Two of the Youth Hubs are managed by Young Hackney (Forest Road and The Edge) and three are commissioned to the voluntary and community sector (Hoxton Hall, Stoke Newington and Concorde). Positive activities are also delivered through Adventure Playgrounds and voluntary and community sector youth clubs. All children and young people are able to access Young Hackney's universal services regardless of their additional needs. In 2014/15, 9,173 activities were delivered by the service with approximately 143,000 attendances from young people throughout the year.

## Adventure Playgrounds and Play Streets

Adventure playgrounds are spaces dedicated solely to children's play with activities that explore the physical environment such as digging, making fires, building and demolishing dens; activities not usually provided in other settings where children play. There are a total of 7 Adventure Playgrounds in Hackney which are open all year and attended by young people aged 6 to 15. The provision is award winning, having previously won 'Adventure Playground of the Year' (Shakespeare Walk), 'Most Open Adventure Play Setting' (Hackney Marsh) and most recently 'London 2015 Adventure Playground of the Year' (Hackney Marsh) from the London Play Awards.

'I think it's a fantastic resource; my daughter has been coming here for about 4 years and whilst she has complicated SEN needs, the playground has been brilliant in offering us support and letting her be independent'.

**Parent of 10 year old who attends Shakespeare Walk Adventure Playground.**

The Play Streets project was also shortlisted for a 'Play Award' by the Children and Young People Now Awards in 2015 and was highly commended by the Panel. The Play Streets project is a local initiative that supports residents to use Hackney Council's 'Play Street Order' (PSO) to organise regular 'playing out' sessions on their street. In 2014, the project supported parents to run 380 hours of play street and estate play sessions in 29 locations reaching around 1,600 children and nearly 800 families. Currently there are 40 locations providing regular playing out sessions.

'I feel like it's my second home'.

**Boy, aged 7 about Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground**

## Youth and School Sports

Government statistics report that almost 15% of children in Hackney are obese compared to the national average of 9.5%, demonstrating the need for sport based activities in the borough. The Youth and School Sports Unit was set up in 2013 to serve as a legacy of the 2012 London Olympic Games and provides sport participation opportunities that would be rare for young people to participate in otherwise. There are a number of different curriculum based programmes for 6-19 year olds including primary school sports and holiday programmes, after school sports participation and Leadership and Ambassador programmes. The impact of the Youth and School Sports Unit has been significant in engaging close to 10,000 children and young people in the borough over the past 2 years and providing them with activities, competitions and volunteering and leadership opportunities. The Youth and School Sports Unit were shortlisted for a 'Public Sector Children's Team' award by the Children and Young People Now Awards in 2015.

## Universal Plus and Targeted Support

Where young people are experiencing some emerging challenges and are at risk of not reaching their full potential, a Universal Plus service is provided. This is a time limited one-to-one, school based or targeted group based intervention that involves working with the young person and their low level additional needs. Targeted support is offered to children and young people who are demonstrating significant needs which may be persistent, serious and/or complex in nature. These needs may affect their ability to achieve and reach their full potential. At any one time, Young Hackney work with approximately 500 young people. The most common presenting issues include:

- Risk of sexual exploitation
- Behaviour, attendance and truanting
- Risk of offending
- Risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Different cultural expectations within the family



*Kyle is a 10-year old boy who lives in Hackney with his parents and 4 older sisters. Kyle has a diagnosis of ADHD and ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder) and is not currently able to attend mainstream school. The youth support workers at Forest Road Hub requested targeted support for Kyle following a number of incidents at the hub related to Kyle's aggressive and uncontrollable behaviour. As a result of these behaviours Kyle was experiencing some social isolation.*

*Both Kyle and his family asked Young Hackney to support Kyle with attending activities at Forest Road Hub as this is a place where he is able to socialise with peers and enjoy structured activities during the evenings. Work with Kyle focused on improving his sense of self-control and insight into his behavioural outbursts and emotional state. The hope was that MI could begin to positively engage with group activities while safely managing his own behaviour.*

*As a result of the targeted support from Young Hackney, Kyle has been able to increase his attendance at hub sessions. He is excited to be spending time with his peers, and to have the opportunity to engage in fun activities at the centre. When asked to reflect on his progress, Kyle has rated his sessions as "10 out of 10!". Kyle has reported that he is now better able to follow instructions and listen to staff and he appears to have developed greater insight into his behaviour and emotions. Kyle's family are very pleased with these improvements and have also noticed progress at home. Episodes of defiant and disruptive behaviour have decreased, resulting in an improvement in family relationships and overall wellbeing.*

### Custody Triage

Custody Triage takes place at the point when a young person enters police custody following arrest for a low level crime for the first time. It seeks to use police custody areas as a 'gateway' whereby young people can be rapidly assessed to ensure that they are dealt with swiftly and effectively and Police can agree to deal with the matter outside of court. Custody Triage interventions are delivered as a 6-week intensive one-to-one programme focusing on restorative justice, knives and weapons awareness, substance misuse awareness and crime prevention. The team also manage orders such as Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions. As at 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015 there were 46 young people being worked with through the Custody Triage Team.

### Reparation

Reparation is an important component of Young Hackney delivery for the prevention and diversion of youth crime, combining elements of payback to the community and to the individual victims of crime, with opportunities for young people to develop new skills that will help them understand the consequences of their actions, develop their moral reasoning and desist from criminal behaviour. Where victims do not wish to be involved in the process, Young Hackney facilitates young people to carry out activities that prove beneficial to the local community.

*Michael is an 18 year old boy who was referred to Young Hackney by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) after he was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This diagnosis was received after a series of incidents where Michael was the victim of crime targeted by other young people in a case of mistaken identity linked to local gang activity. This included being attacked in a local park, and as a result Michael became housebound due to his fear of a further attack.*

*Michael agreed that alongside weekly therapeutic sessions with a CAMHS worker, he would also benefit from support from a Young Hackney worker to build up confidence going out in his local area, and to consider safety while still keeping his job as an apprentice and moving forward with his life. Michael met with his Young Hackney worker once a week at his home before work and the two would walk in the local community, reflecting on his experience as a victim and putting into practice the strategies gathered from his CAMHS sessions. As his support continued, the Young Hackney worker was able to encourage Michael to try different routes and also discussed strategies for meeting people in the street and what to do if he did feel threatened in the future. They also discussed different activities to try such as joining a gym.*

*Michael has received support from Young Hackney for four months, and during this time his mother has commented that he is 'growing in confidence'. Michael's CAMHS worker has reiterated this and the Young Hackney worker has observed Michael is blossoming into a more confident young man. Michael meanwhile has said himself that he 'feels more confident' and can now undertake independent travel again including travelling to and from his apprentice job, taking visits to a busy local shopping centre and enjoying a meal out. Most encouragingly, Michael has also recently started to play football again with peers in the park where he was attacked. The Young Hackney worker will continue to support Michael to ensure he can maintain these positive steps and will help him find independence in the long term via new activities.*

### Substance Misuse Team

The specialist substance misuse team supports young people up to the age of 25 and works directly with young people who are misusing, or at risk of misusing substances, by raising awareness about the dangers of substance misuse and drug dealing and supporting them with clinical plans. The service transferred over to Young Hackney in October 2015.

### Participation

Co-production is valued strongly in Young Hackney as a means to achieve a child-centred and focussed provision. Opportunities are sought to support young people to become directly involved in service review and delivery as inspectors, peer educators, peer mentors, recruitment panelists, volunteering or through establishment of their own social enterprises. Engagement of young people at a local level is driven through the Hackney Youth Parliament, Hackney Gets Heard (Hackney's Children in Care

Council), Youth Forums, Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) Panels and youth-led inspections and can be facilitated at any level (universal, universal plus, or targeted support). These opportunities are the platform for young people to be involved in decision making and social action locally, regionally and nationally, for example through the UK Youth Parliament and National Citizen Service. Young Hackney was also involved in the Hackney 100 scheme, providing part-time paid employment opportunities for young people.

### School support

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

### **The Disabled Children Service**

The Disabled Children Service offers a universal plus/targeted service for all children with disabilities who require additional support. The service focuses on providing the additional support required by families with disabled children and was fully integrated into the Special Educational Needs Service within Hackney Learning Trust in autumn 2015 to advance the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms.

The service consists of 2 units: the Care Reviewing Team (CRT) and the Family Focus Intervention Unit (FFIU). The service also includes the management of the disability register, short breaks service, Hackney Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information, Advice and Guidance Service and Post 16 (transitions service).

At the end of September 2015, the service was working with 219 children. This is an increase compared to the end of March 2015 when the service was working with 190 cases. Of the 219 children, 157 are male and 62 are female.

**Table 18: Age and disability breakdown for cases open to the Disabled Children Service, as at 30 September 2015**

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	6
3 – 5	25
6 – 8	35
9 – 11	42
12 – 14	54
15+	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>

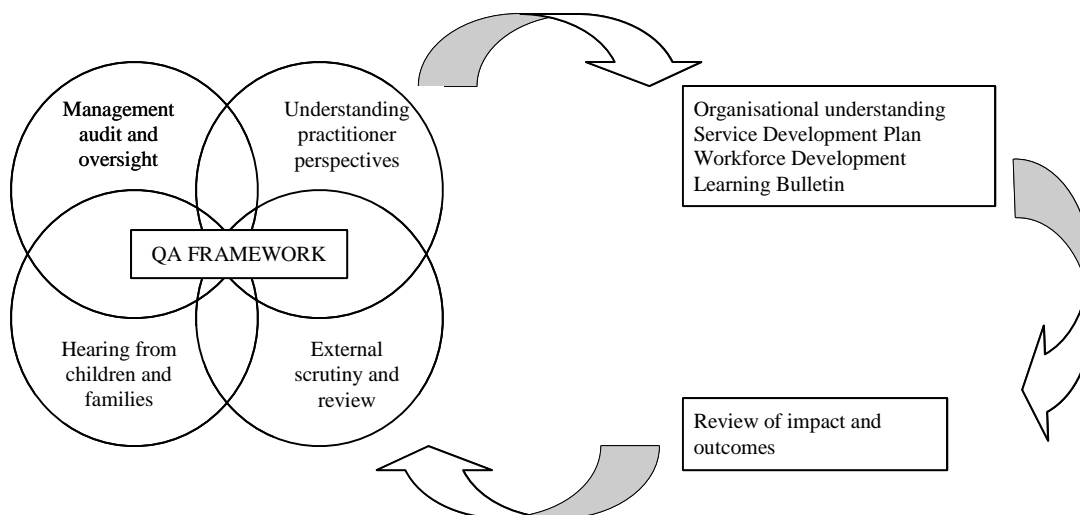
Type of disability	Number of children
Physical disability	37
Learning disability	132
Both learning and physical disability	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>

The Disabled Children’s Service is able to manage low level safeguarding concerns through the means of an Intervention Plan, working in a time-limited focussed way with a family. Where there are increased concerns or it becomes evident that a parent is placing the child at risk of significant harm or unable to safeguard their child from harm, the service will make a referral to the First Access & Screening Team (FAST). The Disabled Children Service remains involved throughout the assessment process while the safeguarding matter is being investigated and provides information as part of the process.

A more detailed report on Disabled Children Service activity will be provided in the Bi-Annual Report in July 2016.

## Quality assurance framework

Children’s Social Care is a complex system and we use many tools to understand learning opportunities, themes and trends within the service to enable the service to continue to adapt and change to new demands. This ensures that we are a responsive and learning service.



The Safeguarding and Reviewing Team plays an important role in the quality assurance and improvement of all services within Children and Young People’s Services.

## **Management and audit oversight**

From April to September 2015, the audit programme has continued with regular audits being completed by Service Managers and Heads of Service across Children's Social Care. The audit programme is designed to provide robust management oversight of practice and to provide a high level of challenge that reflects the organisation's high expectations of staff. Trends identified are used to inform themes for future case review days and specific actions arising from audits are incorporated into the Service Development Plan to drive forward service improvement.

As part of our commitment to organisational learning in Hackney, regular case review days are held within Children's Social Care, during which the senior management group reviews practice across a specific area of the service or in relation to a particular issue. The day also involves dialogue with practitioners about how we can transform learning into improvements to practice.

A case review day in June 2015 focussed on the involvement of fathers (and other significant males) in assessment and ongoing interventions. A number of learning points were identified including the importance of having fathers' details recorded and updated regularly, clarity when describing family relationships, working with fathers who are perpetrators of domestic violence and exploring the quality of relationships. The learning from this case review day has been shared with practitioners through internal communications and lunchtime seminars.

In July 2015, a trial inspection audit was held as part of the ongoing preparation for an Ofsted inspection. The trial inspection audit required Service Managers to audit 20 cases, chosen based on Ofsted criteria, within 5 working days. The audits go through 2 levels of quality assurance, 1 by another Service Manager and the second by a Head of Service. Trial inspection audits will continue on a regular basis.

A peer audit programme was introduced in 2014/15 that involves all Consultant Social Workers, Practice Development Managers and Independent Reviewing Officers in regular audit activity as part of the continuous development of the service. This programme has continued with a new process being piloted in the next 6 months to increase participation.

The audit programme for 2015/16 will continue with monthly audits and more targeted themed audits as well as quarterly case review days and a fuller account of activity will be included in the Bi-Annual Report in July 2016.

## **Hearing from children and families**

The views of children and families using our services are collected in a variety of ways and there are a number of mechanisms in place to ensure that children are supported to express their views. The role of the Children's Rights Officer (see page 53) is key to empowering children and young people to communicate their wishes and feelings.

## Hackney Gets Heard – Hackney’s Children in Care Council

Hackney’s Children in Care Council gives looked after children the opportunity to shape and influence the corporate parenting that they receive at every level. It allows young people a say about the things that really matter in their lives, helping to shape the overall strategy for looked after children and young people in Hackney.

The young people involved in Hackney Gets Heard have a year-long work programme that includes a mixture of fun and interesting activities and opportunities to influence matters related to the care they receive. Over the last six months, events have included the annual summer activities programme as well as a trip to Thorpe Park theme park.

Hackney Gets Heard engaged with 100 young people aged between 8 and 19 years between April and September 2015, with social work units supporting to encourage more young people to get involved on a regular basis. Hackney Gets Heard are also looking at ways to better include looked after children living outside of the borough in Hackney Gets Heard activities.

Key activities for Hackney Gets Heard in 2015 include the development of the new Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care (more information on this is included on page 52) and the development of new publications for children and young people (more information is included on page 52).

### Family feedback programme

The family feedback programme continued in the first half of 2015/16. Feedback is largely garnered through surveys and interviews with children and families across the range of Children’s Social Care activity. Quotations in this report are taken from Family Feedback respondents. A full account of themes and consequent learning from the programme will be included in the Bi-Annual Report in July 2016.

### Complaints and compliments

Children Act complaints continue to be monitored for thematic learning and to ensure the voices of children, young people and families feed into service improvement. A full account of complaints activity will be made in the statutory end of year report and in the Bi-Annual Report in July 2016, but learning already derived in the period April – September 2015 includes having the Overstaying Family Intervention Team (OFIT) review their approach when discussing sensitive subjects with service users; ensuring leaving care units monitor care leavers who will be graduating to enable efficient forecasting of their expenses; and implementing training for staff at the Ferncliffe Contact Centre in developing their understanding and support for children and young people with diabetes, should a diabetic episode occur whilst they are at the centre.

### **Workforce development**

The Council continues to face unprecedented reductions in funding. In response to these reductions and the challenges they bring CYPS has taken a fresh look at services provided. In doing so the Service has assessed its functions in terms of what it must do and what it is able to stop doing, to ensure opportunities are created that

demonstrate the greatest impact. In fulfilling the broad range of statutory duties and responsibilities which include protecting children, providing care for children who are unable to be safely cared for within their families, preventing and tackling crime and providing a range of youth services, the Service must ensure that it fulfils those duties well and ensures a positive impact is made on outcomes for all children and young people. The need for accountable, flexible and highly skilled practitioners and support staff remains paramount in the pursuit of excellence.

A significant restructure recently took place across Children's Social Care with the aim of bringing services closer together, improving accessibility, reducing duplication and consolidating staffing and service resources to create high quality, seamless experiences for children, young people and families. The changes listed below came into effect in October 2015:

1. A single point of contact was created - **Front Door** - for Children's Social Care, providing a single referral and screening service, delivered by the First Access & Screening Team (FAST).
2. A **single governance framework for family support** was created enabling families to receive both statutory and non-statutory services from a single delivery point.
3. A strengthened **delivery model for Youth Justice** was created to align crime prevention, early help and diversion activities to existing universal and targeted youth support services.
4. A new **delivery framework for Young Hackney Services** was created to strengthen our range of engagement, participation, prevention and diversion activities.
5. **Our Social Work Unit Model** and the role of the Qualified Children's Practitioner (QCP) within Children's Social Care was developed
6. Our **substance misuse service for young people** was redesigned with Hackney Council's Public Health Service to expand coverage within a clear specification.

From September 2014, under the Director of Children's Services' 1CYPS initiative, the Young Hackney and Youth Justice services were aligned with Children's Social Care under one leadership team with Heads of Service carrying wider portfolios led by the Assistant Director for Children and Young People's Services.

Tina McElligott is Head of Access, Assessment, Youth Justice and Family Support Services. Youth Justice has come under this remit to better align the service with Children's Social Care to ensure analysis of offending includes a safeguarding perspective.

Brigitte Jordaan is Head of the Children in Need Service, which now includes Adoption and Post-Permanency Services.

Sarah Wright is Head of the Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and Learning Service, combining the previously separate services of Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding and Learning, which includes the Safeguarding and Reviewing Service.

Pauline Adams is Head of Young Hackney.

## Other priorities for Children's Social Care

### Exploitation of children and young people

#### Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) continues to be a priority for Children's Social Care. Over the last 6 months we have further strengthened the understanding of the extent and nature of CSE taking place in Hackney and our response to it.

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy was finalised in February 2015. Progress against the accompanying action plan has been monitored through the CHSCB CSE Working Group which is chaired by the Head of Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and Learning. In September 2015 the Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group and Missing Children Strategic Group merged to form the CSE and Missing Children Working Group in recognition of the strong link between these two issues.

The monthly multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) meeting continues to play a pivotal role in Children Social Care's response to CSE. The MASE monitors all young people at risk of CSE and subject to Multi Agency Planning (MAP) meetings and identifies themes and trends which inform service development.

A specialist CSE data analyst has been in post since July 2015 and is collating and interrogating data and mapping links between children who go missing, gang affiliation, offending behaviour and risk of CSE, as well as identifying specific locations of concern. This analysis continues to reaffirm that there is no single profile of CSE activity in Hackney. While we are aware of a number of young people experiencing or at risk of sexual exploitation by older males the most widespread form of CSE in Hackney remains the exploitation of young people (mostly young women) by male peers or those slightly older than them demonstrating harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). This is consistent with the profile across much of London.

Work continues to assess the prevalence of harmful sexual behaviour in Hackney and to develop our response to this behaviour. Many of these young people are known to Children's Social Care, Young Hackney or Youth Justice Services, come from complex backgrounds and may have experienced abuse or been exploited by peers before demonstrating HSB. Whilst youth justice interventions may be appropriate for some young people and in some circumstances, a range of responses that can match the intervention to the young person's behaviour and needs is required.

Following a multi-agency HSB workshop in May 2015, a multi-agency HSB task and finish group has been established. The HSB task and finish group will develop an action plan and oversee its initial implementation. Key areas for development include:

- further interrogation of HSB data and the strengthening of our understanding of the profile of HSB in Hackney
- multi-agency training to ensure professionals are able to recognise and respond to HSB with confidence
- strengthening sex and relationship understanding



- raising public awareness of HSB;
- ensuring a range of interventions are available
- ensuring professionals have a shared understanding of how to refer concerns about HSB.

Multi-agency planning (MAP) meetings are now being convened for young people demonstrating harmful sexual behaviour. As with MAP meetings for young people at risk of CSE, these meetings assess the level of risk (in this instance, both to the young person and posed by the young person), and identify an intervention plan. All young people subject to HSB MAP meetings are monitored at the monthly MASE meeting.

Operation Makesafe, launched in Hackney in March 2015, continues to raise awareness of CSE within the business community including hotels, taxi companies and licensed premises. Following consultations with young people an awareness raising campaign for young people will be rolling out over the next few months focusing on encouraging identification of friends who may be at risk of or experiencing CSE.

### Hackney, NSPCC and CHSCB Exploitation Helpline

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2015, Hackney Council and the NSPCC, in conjunction with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, launched a helpline aimed at encouraging parents/carers, families, friends, members of the public and professionals to call with concerns or information about the exploitation of children and young people, especially around:

- sexual exploitation/abuse
- extremism
- gang involvement or activity

The helpline is designed to enable individuals to report concerns and seek advice on the actual or possible exploitation of children through an alternative route to social services or the police. The timing of the project is apposite given popular and media attention on the exploitation of children and young people, from events in Rochdale to the Government's Prevent agenda. It is anticipated that the helpline media campaign and associated publicity will capitalise on the attention exploitation is already receiving and thereby encourage individuals to talk to us.

The helpline is staffed by the NSPCC with some calls anticipated to generate referrals to FAST and intelligence also being gathered to contribute to building a picture of exploitation in the borough. Intelligence will be both individualised in regard to particular calls and analysed on an ongoing basis to determine patterns or trends that will help us to tackle exploitation in the borough. Public posters were displayed at 63 prominent sites around the borough and supported by a large-scale media campaign including leaflets going out to over 100,000 households with *Hackney Today*, as well as to local schools, GPs, clinics and other agencies or services.

The helpline is currently aimed at adults, with children and young people making contact regarding their own experience redirected to Childline. Operating staff will send all referrals through FAST where appropriate decisions on thresholds, signposting etc. will be made. They will record and report individualised intelligence

regarding calls from which Children's Social Care will be able to determine patterns or trends to inform its approach to the exploitation of Hackney children and young people, as well as supporting any individuals identified.

Monthly management information and tracking of FAST referrals will form the basis of a review of the helpline early in 2016 and a full report will be included in the next Bi-Annual Report in July 2016.

### **Children missing from home and care**

Over the last 6 months much has been done to strengthen our understanding of the profile of young people who go missing from home and care and our responses to this behaviour. Children's Social Care also work closely with Hackney Learning Trust's Children Missing Education Team to ensure children who go missing from education are appropriately safeguarded.

The Missing Children Strategic Group, governed by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and chaired by the Service Manager for the Safeguarding and Reviewing Service in Children's Social Care, has maintained oversight of the missing children strategy and action plan. In September 2015, the Missing Children Strategic Group merged with the CSE Working Group to form the CSE and Missing Children Working Group in recognition of the strong link between these two areas.

The Missing Children Lead Professional is the Safeguarding and Reviewing Service Manager in Children's Social Care and this role is also the lead professional for CSE and sits on the CHSCB CSE and Missing Children Working Group. To ensure robust senior management oversight of children who go missing from care and home, the Missing Children Lead Professional scrutinises plans in place for these children on a weekly basis. Fortnightly updates are provided to the Assistant Director of CYPS on all children missing from home and care.

The Independent Return Interview Service has been in place since February 2015. The majority of independent return interviews have been conducted with young people who have gone missing for the first time and who are often not known to Children's Social Care. This work has generated valuable learning about the reasons young people go missing and identified patterns and themes which feed into wider service development. Following a review of the Independent Return Interview Service, there will be an increased focus on the provision of independent return interviews for children known to Children's Social Care, including those looked after by the local authority. This will maximise the impact of the Independent Return Interview Service and enable closer collaboration with social workers, who conduct return home interviews where a young person has declined an independent return interview.

The specialist CSE data analyst has been in place since July 2015. One of the focuses of this role is to map the links between children who go missing, gang affiliation, offending behaviour and risk of CSE. This analysis, together with the themes identified through return interviews, has contributed to a stronger understanding of the profile of children who go missing from home and care.

## Young carers

Young carers are children and young people under 18 who help look after a member of the family who is sick, disabled or has mental health problems, or is misusing drugs or alcohol.

Their day to day responsibilities often include:

- cooking
- cleaning
- shopping
- managing the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions
- administering medication
- providing nursing and personal care
- giving emotional support and/or interpreting due to a hearing or speech impairment or because English is not the family's first language
- looking after or "parenting" younger siblings

With so many adult responsibilities, young carers often miss out on opportunities that other children have to play and learn. Many struggle educationally and are often bullied for being 'different'. They can become isolated, with no relief from the pressures at home and no chance to enjoy a normal childhood. They are often afraid to ask for help as they fear letting the family down or being taken into care. A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, impacting on his or her emotional or physical well-being or educational achievement and life chances.

All young carers are entitled to an assessment of their needs from the local authority. The purpose of assessment is to identify individual needs and how these affect the young carer's wellbeing and to establish the outcome that the person who is assessed wishes to achieve in their day-to-day life. This new provision works alongside measures in the Care Act 2014 for transition assessment for young carers as they approach adulthood, and for assessing adults to enable a 'whole family approach' to providing assessment and support.

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

At the end of September 2015, the Hackney Young Carers Project, funded by Children Social Care, was working with 148 young carers and providing a variety of support services which include group work, homework club and one-to-one work with children in more complex situations. Positive activities and fun holiday sessions are well attended by the young people. There is a dedicated mental health worker who provides one-to-one support to young carers and a young carers support group running in a Hackney secondary school. Work is in progress for this to be expanded to three more secondary schools in the next quarter.

## **The Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care**

As well as consulting children and young people on the design and language of our publications (see below), Children and Young People's Services spoke to children and young people in the Children in Care Council, Hackney Gets Heard, about revising and refreshing the Hackney Pledge (as it was known). This was a key recommendation from the last youth-led Pledge inspection in 2014. The result was the Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care, a greatly simplified document that sets out our commitment as corporate parent to all looked after children and young people across 7 categories, from coming into care to education. The Promise launched in summer 2015 and has been given to all children and young people in care.

The standards established by the Promise will form part of our self-evaluation of services as well as providing children and young people with a series of straightforward expectations to which Children's Social Care can be held accountable.

Children and young people wanted the Promise to be colourful and in the form of a comic book. Part of the Hackney Promise is included in Appendix 3.

### **Children and young people's publications**

Following consultation with children and young people through Hackney Gets Heard in early 2015, Children's Social Care produced a series of leaflets and brochures designed to inform and explain aspects of its services. The design templates, images and language were all guided by the feedback received from children and young people and each booklet comes with a Hackney Gets Heard 'stamp of approval'. These include:

- *Coming into Care*: a booklet in two versions, one for children and one for young people and designed for those that have just become, or are about to become, looked after. The children's version of the leaflet, as well as using more child-friendly language, comes with a set of pencils to colour in some of the images and help practitioners engage children with the content.
- *Being in Care*: going into more detail than Coming into Care booklet and again in two versions, this booklet explains various aspects of being looked after, from the professionals involved in a child's life to answering important questions such as 'Can I stay over at a friend's house?'
- *Leaving Care Finances*: this booklet was produced in response to requests from care leavers for clear explanations of financial matters at this crucial point in their lives. It explains the Leaving Care Financial Policy in an accessible way for young people.

- *Staying Put*: a booklet in two versions, one for care leavers and the other for foster carers, to accompany the Staying Put policy (further information is included on this policy on page 37).
- *The Children's Rights Officer*: a simple booklet informing all children and young people of this new service and their right to advocacy support, as detailed below.
- *Living in Hackney*: primarily intended for looked after children and young people from other local authorities being placed in Hackney, this booklet provides an overview of the many things the borough has to offer, from Youth Hubs to skate parks and the Hackney City Farm.

Booklets have been given to all children and young people as relevant and practitioners discuss content with them. Going forward, services will issue booklets at the appropriate juncture of a child or young person's interaction with services.

### **The Children's Rights Officer**

Various laws and statutory guidance highlight the requirement or importance of advocacy for children and young people in social care contexts. In particular, The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and The Adoption and Children Act 2002 require the local authority to ensure children and young people have access to independent advocacy services to support them through complaints procedures.

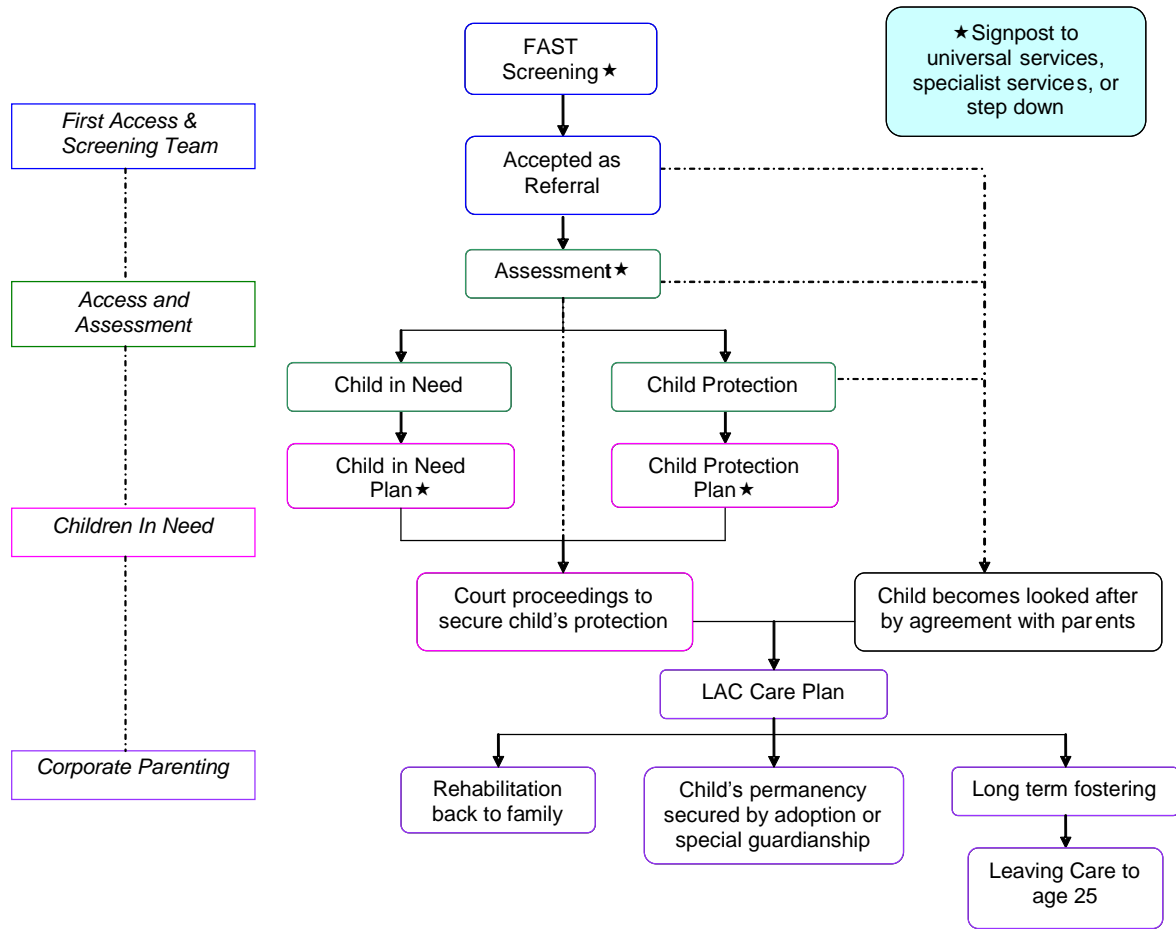
In June 2015, Children's Social Care replaced its commissioned advocacy provider, Coram Voice, with in-house provision: the Children's Rights Officer (CRO). The rationale for the establishment of the post was to give advocacy more immediate access to practitioners in the interests of resolving issues for children and young people, to increase the focus on resolution rather than escalation of issues and to promote service development on the basis of learning derived from the experiences of children and young people.

The post sits in the Safeguarding and Reviewing Service to ensure a degree of independence from case holding units, with the role's line manager having a dotted line to the Assistant Director of CYPS to further underline independence from services.

An annual report will be completed at the end of the financial year with a view to determining the efficacy of the service and monitoring it alongside themes and data from complaints reporting.

# Appendix 1

## Children's Social Care - Case Flow Chart



## Appendix 2: Useful Links

Casey L., *Report of Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council* (February 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-inspection-of-rotherham-metropolitan-borough-council>

Department for Education, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (March 2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)

Department for Education, *Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care* (January 2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

Home Office, *Channel Duty Guidance. Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism: statutory guidance for Channel Panel members and partners of local panels* (April 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Home Office, *Prevent Duty Guidance* (July 2015)

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/9780111133309/pdfs/ukdsiod\\_978011133309\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/9780111133309/pdfs/ukdsiod_978011133309_en.pdf)

Home Office, *The Serious Crime Act* (June 2015)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/part/5/crossheading/female-genital-mutilation/enacted> (link to section on Female Genital Mutilation)

Jay A., *Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, 1997 – 2013* (August 2014)

[http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent\\_inquiry\\_cse\\_in\\_rotherham](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent_inquiry_cse_in_rotherham)

London Borough of Hackney, *City and Hackney Health and Wellbeing Profile* (2014)

<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/jsna.htm>

Ministry of Justice, *Family Justice Review: Final report* (November 2011)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-justice-review-final-report>

Ofsted, *Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers (single inspection framework) and reviews of Local Safeguarding Children Boards* (October 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-framework>

## Appendix 3: The Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care

### **THE HACKNEY PROMISE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE**

WE PROMISE THAT WHEN YOU BECOME A LOOKED AFTER CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON, WE WILL LOOK AFTER YOU THE BEST WE POSSIBLY CAN.

#### **COMING INTO CARE**

WE PROMISE THAT WE WILL BE HONEST WITH YOU ABOUT THE REASONS FOR BEING LOOKED AFTER BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND TELL YOU ABOUT DECISIONS THAT ARE BEING MADE.

WE PROMISE WE WILL SHARE AS MUCH INFORMATION WITH YOU AS WE CAN ABOUT YOUR FUTURE CARERS.

WE PROMISE WE WILL LISTEN TO YOU ABOUT WHERE AND WHO YOU WOULD LIKE TO LIVE WITH. IF WE CAN'T PROVIDE EXACTLY WHAT YOU HAVE ASKED FOR WE WILL EXPLAIN WHY THIS IS.

#### **BEING IN CARE**

WE PROMISE THAT WE WILL LISTEN TO YOU AND TAKE TIME TO GET TO KNOW YOU AND DO OUR BEST TO MAKE SURE YOU FEEL SUPPORTED BY US.

WE PROMISE THAT, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, YOU WILL KNOW ABOUT AND BE READY FOR ANY CHANGES THAT ARE COMING.

WE PROMISE THAT WE WILL TALK TO YOU AND DISCUSS IF AND HOW YOU CAN BE SUPPORTED TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

#### **EDUCATION**

WE PROMISE TO LISTEN, RESPECT AND SUPPORT YOU IN WORKING OUT YOUR DREAMS AND AMBITIONS AND IN HELPING YOU ACHIEVE THEM, INCLUDING THROUGH MAKING SURE THAT YOU GET GOOD EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT MATCH YOUR NEEDS.

#### **GETTING WELL AND STAYING WELL**

WE PROMISE TO DO OUR BEST TO HELP YOU TO GET BETTER WHEN YOU ARE UNWELL AND TO HELP YOU TO STAY WELL.

WE PROMISE TO HELP YOU TO LEARN TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AS YOU GET OLDER.

#### **MEETINGS**

WE PROMISE TO MAKE SURE THAT YOUR NEEDS, THOUGHTS AND IDEAS ARE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, THAT YOU ARE AT THE CENTRE OF ALL MEETINGS ABOUT YOU (EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND) AND THAT YOU ARE SUPPORTED TO TAKE PART IN A WAY THAT YOU FEEL HAPPY WITH.

#### **YOUR RIGHTS**

WE PROMISE THAT AT EVERY STAGE IN YOUR LIFE, YOU WILL KNOW WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU TO BE ABLE TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES.

WE PROMISE THAT WE WILL HELP YOU TO FIND SOMEONE WHO YOU CAN SPEAK TO IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT ANYTHING, INCLUDING ANYTHING THAT WE ARE DOING OR HAVE DONE.

#### **BECOMING AN ADULT**

WE PROMISE THAT WE WILL PREPARE YOU TO BECOME AN ADULT AND SUPPORT YOU TO MAKE THE DECISIONS THAT ARE RIGHT FOR YOU.

WE PROMISE THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE SOMEONE TO TALK TO.