

Children and Families Service

2016-17 Full Year Report to Members

October 2017

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Executive Summary

The Full Year Report is produced to update elected councillors on developments and key performance trends within the Children and Families Service in Hackney during 2016-17.

Developments and areas of note in the period April 2016 to March 2017 include:

- Hackney Children and Families Service overall effectiveness was judged as 'good' during Ofsted's July 2016 inspection, placing it in the top quartile of local authorities nationally that have been inspected to date.
- The Children and Families Service (CFS) was officially renamed in April 2017 from 'Children and Young People's Service' to reflect its broadening remit, which now includes the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) as part of the Early Help and Prevention Service.
- There have been a number of leadership changes throughout the year, with Mayor Glanville replacing Jules Pipe following the September 2016 by-election, the Lead Member for Children's Services becoming the Deputy Mayor, Sarah Wright appointed as Director of Children and Families in October 2016 and Anne Canning appointed as Group Director for Children, Adults and Community Health in December 2016.
- In March 2017, Hackney's bid to the Department for Education to implement a contextual safeguarding framework to work with vulnerable adolescents was successful. This project will seek to introduce systemic change that will radically shift the focus of social work with adolescents and build on research, practice evidence and feedback from young people using our services.
- Over 2016/17, there has been an increase in service pressures with an increase in the number of referrals, assessments completed, children on Child Protection Plans and children entering care.
- Hackney's GCSE results (Key Stage 4) for looked after children continue to be exceptional. Hackney achieved the third best results in the country for 5 GCSEs with English and maths at 34.8% compared to a national average of 17.5%.
- 10% of Hackney's care leavers are in higher education in 2016, compared to 7% nationally.
- Recruitment of foster carers continues to be a priority for Children's Social Care and the foster carer recruitment and retention strategy is steering an ongoing drive to increase the number of in-house foster carers available to provide care for our looked after children. 18 in-house carers were recruited during 2016-17 compared to 11 in 2015/16.
- In January 2017, Hackney Children and Families Service was successful in a bid for Department for Education funding to develop a 'North London Teaching Partnership'. Hackney is the lead local authority in this development working with Middlesex University, Barnet, Haringey, Enfield and Norwood (a Jewish charity that supports vulnerable children and families). The 2 year project funding will be used to embed change and deliver improvements across the partner organisations.

A summary of key performance information is included on the next page.

Summary of key information, April 2016-March 2017:



3,940 referrals were received in 2016/17– an 11% increase compared to last year when 3,543 referrals were made.



13.4% re-referrals were made within 12 months of a previous referral during 2016/17 – a slight increase compared to the rate at March 2016 of 13.3% (but still significantly below the national average of 22.3%).



3,668 assessments were completed in 2016/17 – a 7% increase compared last year when 3,434 assessments were completed.



330 children were on Child Protection Plans at 31st March 2017 - a 46% increase since March 2016 when there were 226 children on Child Protection Plans.



16% of children became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time during 2016/17 - a decrease compared to 18.6% at March 2016 and lower than the national average at 17.9%



149,527 attendances at Young Hackney provision, including commissioned services, by children and young people during 2016/17, a 24% increase compared to 120,503 during 2015/16.



371 children were looked after – a 14% increase compared to 325 children in care at March 2016 (although this number was lower than throughout most of the previous year).



246 children entered care in 2016/17- a 29% increase compared to 2015/16. 190 children entered care during 2015-16.



123 children aged 14-17 entered care in 2016/17, a 26% increase compared to last year, when 98 children aged 14-17 entered care. The 14-17 year old cohort represented 50% of the total number of children that entered care in 2016/17.



265 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported at 31st March 2017, a 6% increase compared to the end of March 2016 when 250 were being supported.



64 care leavers aged over 21 years were being supported at the end of March 2017. This is a slight decrease compared with the same point in March 2016 when 66 care leavers aged over 21 years were being supported by leaving care services.

Introduction

This report highlights activity in Hackney Children and Families Service in 2016/17 and outlines priorities moving forward. The current reporting structure to Members includes an end of year report in October and a mid-year summary report in February. This report incorporates updates on all service areas and includes our six monthly adoption report, annual looked after children report, and annual private fostering report.

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. 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 stated 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 the Children and Families Service in 2017/18 are outlined below:

- Continue to invest in the workforce across the Children and Families Service, 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
- Ensure that we have the right placements to ensure stability for our more complex adolescents
- Ensure that our care leavers are well supported in all aspects of their lives, that there are clear plans in place to support each young person's progression and independence, and that we have an appropriate range of creative, dynamic and high quality resources in place to support our care leavers
- Continue to deliver a comprehensive range of integrated targeted early help interventions through our Family Support services and Young Hackney to ensure that young people can access the support they need when they need it
- Continue our drive to recruit and retain more in-house foster carers
- To monitor, manage and understand the increasing demand for services
- Developing our understanding of the community with which we work, ensuring that our interventions are well-targeted to respond to need and building on strengths and resources available

- Ensure that issues relating to identity, diversity, inequality and discrimination are considered and addresses in all aspects of our work

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.

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. Throughout 2016/17, the Corporate Parenting Board focussed on a number of important topics: foster carer recruitment; the Sufficiency Strategy to ensure placements meet the needs of our looked after children; outcomes for looked after children by ethnicity; the outcomes of the Ofsted Single Inspection Framework inspection in July 2016; the Adoption Service; the safeguarding, health and educational attainment of looked after children; the progress of care leavers; the Independent Reviewing Officer annual report; hearing from the Hackney Foster Carers Council; hearing from Hackney Gets Heard and the Family Learning Intervention Programme.

National Context

Key topics that continue to receive attention nationally include child sexual exploitation, missing children, and female genital mutilation and these topics are covered in more detail in this report.

Ofsted social care inspection changes

The Ofsted Single Inspection Framework cycle of inspections will finish at the end of December 2017, with all local authorities having received a full inspection at this point. Ofsted have consulted on plans for the new inspection framework that will replace this. The new inspection framework will be published in autumn 2017, ready for implementation in January 2018. The framework will introduce proportionate inspections every three years, with a graded judgement, and focused visits between inspections to evaluate strengths and weaknesses and support local authorities to deliver good and better services.

Ofsted are proposing that annual self-evaluations will be completed by local authorities and submitted to Ofsted. A sector group is currently developing and piloting this. The self-evaluation will help Ofsted to understand how effectively the local authority evaluates the impact of its work with individual children and how it learns lessons from the wider range of audits. This information will inform the timing of inspections and visits and the lines of enquiry that inspectors will pursue.

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 became an Act of Parliament in April 2017 and enshrines in law a series of changes to the social work profession, including: the creation of a new organisation, Social Work England, to take over from the Health and Care Professionals Council as the profession's regulator; a requirement for the new regulator to obtain the education secretary's approval for professional standards; new powers for the education secretary to set 'improvement standards' for social workers, and introduce assessments for practitioners; a mandatory requirement for schools to provide sex and relationships education; a requirement for councils to provide personal advisers to all care leavers up to the age of 25 (currently this is provided until age 21, or 25 if they are in full time education); the abolition of the current Local Safeguarding Children Board arrangements, and replacement by new guidance/expectations.

The only part of the Act that came into force immediately following Royal Assent related to the placement of children in secure accommodation in Scotland (for local authorities in England and Wales), and the placement of children in secure accommodation in England and Wales (for local authorities in Scotland). The other provisions of the Children and Social Work Act will come into force at a future date as determined by the Secretary of State.

National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS)

The Department for Education (DfE) consulted from December 2016-March 2017 on their intention to deliver a national assessment and accreditation system for child and family social workers as part of wider reforms of children's social care. The DfE expect that the introduction of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) will ensure a consistent way of providing assurance that child and family social workers, supervisors and leaders have the knowledge and skills required for effective practice. As at August 2017, the DfE have not yet published the results of the consultation, although a number of organisations have published their consultation responses, including the Association of the Directors of Children's Services.

Following the response from sector bodies, the Government has announced plans to scale back the accreditation assessments of children's social workers. This means that assessments will now be initially rolled out at six local authorities, instead of the 31 councils the DfE had promised would run the tests over the next year. The DfE has stated that it still intends to eventually roll out the scheme nationally but targets for at least 8,000 children's social workers to be accredited by December 2018, and all 30,000 to be accredited by 2020, have been dropped.

The Queen's Speech

The Queen's speech in June 2017 included two impending bills relating to children and families. Firstly, draft proposals will be published to update the law to help tackle domestic abuse and violence. The draft measures will bring forward proposals to establish a Domestic Violence and Abuse Commissioner that will stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of statutory agencies and local authorities and hold the justice system to account in tackling domestic abuse; to

define domestic abuse and create a consolidated new domestic abuse civil prevention and protection order and to ensure that if abusive behaviour involves a child, then the court can hand down a sentence that reflects the devastating life-long impact that abuse has on the child.

Financial performance

For 2017/18 the Children's Social Care net budget including recharges totals £46m and forms part of the overall budget of the Children and Families Service of £56m.

The Children and Families Service as at May 2017 is forecasting an overspend of £637k after an assumed total use of reserves and drawdown of grant of £4.6m, including full use of the Commissioning Activity Reserve of £2.5m.

The Children's Social Care net budget including recharges totalled £46m for 2016/17 and forms part of the overall budget of the Children and Families Service of £56.8m. The outturn for 2016/17 for Children and Families Service is a slight underspend of £25k after the planned use of grants and reserves of £3.7m. There has been a requirement to draw down from the Commissioning Reserve since 2012/13 due to the increased number of children in care and a shortage of in-house foster carers. The Commissioning Activity Reserve drawdown for 2016/17 was £1.9m.

The increase in commissioning costs has been driven by an increase in the number of looked after children since 2011/12, and this trend looks to continue through 2017/18. There is a continuation of a large proportion of children being placed with independent foster agencies (IFAs) due to a lack of suitable in-house foster carers. The marginal cost of an IFA placement is significantly greater than that of an in-house placement. Hackney has a strategy in place to recruit and retain in-house foster carers and was successful in reaching recruitment targets last year, however this has not yet translated into a significant increase in in-house foster placements and improvements are not expected to be significant in the short to medium term.

There has been a significant increase in residential placements since 2015 adding considerable budget pressures with an average weekly unit cost of £3.5k. 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. These pressures have been recognised by the Group Director - Finance & Corporate Resources with a total growth of £4.3m included in the base budget between 2012/13 to 2017/18.

The Children in Need Service is forecasting an overspend £448k for 2017/18 arising from a number of vacant posts being covered by agency staff. Recruitment activity is taking place to fill these posts.

The Overstaying Families Intervention Team (OFIT) is forecasted to overspend by £83k for 2017/18 after use of available reserves due to a high level of Section 17 activities forecasted based upon worked activity data. It is anticipated that this will reduce as a result of the Home Office now prioritising applications where families are receiving financial support from the local authority.

Young Hackney are forecast to underspend by a total of £212k. This is due to combination of vacant posts, delayed recruitment to a number of posts and employees opting out of the pension scheme.

The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) is forecast to overspend by £75k (after use of reserves) due to a budget shortfall when the service transferred to the Children and Families Service from the Chief Executive's directorate in April 2017.

The Children and Families Service has continued to make significant contributions to the efficiency agenda of the Council. Over the previous seven years the services have delivered £10.1m savings with further £0.9m being delivered in 2017/18.

Leadership changes

2016/17 saw a number of changes in Hackney Council's corporate structure, with Anne Canning appointed as permanent Group Director for Children, Adults and Community Health in December 2016, joining together the Children and Families Service, Adult Services, Public Health and Education Services (delivered through Hackney Learning Trust). 2016/17 also saw changes in Hackney Council's political structure following the September 2016 by-election, with Mayor Glanville replacing Jules Pipe, and the Lead Member for Children's Services becoming the Deputy Mayor, ensuring that the Children and Families Service remain a priority for the Council.

Sarah Wright was appointed as Director of Children and Families in October 2016 and there have been a number of changes in the CFS management structure, including the Youth Justice Service and Family Support Services moving under Young Hackney to become the Early Help and Prevention Service, Clinical Services moving under the Director of Children and Families, and Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding and Learning becoming two distinct service areas.

Throughout these changes, the high quality of services delivered by practitioners and leaders in CFS has been maintained and continues to strengthen and develop.

Progress since Ofsted Single Inspection Framework inspection July 2016

Hackney Children's Services was inspected by Ofsted over a four-week period in July 2016. The inspection focused on services for vulnerable children, young people and families provided by the local authority, and any services commissioned by the local authority. Hackney's overall effectiveness judgement of 'good' places it in the top quartile of local authorities nationally that have been inspected to date.

The report recognised a number of strengths in the Children and Families Service including; leaders have high aspirations for children which leads to good outcomes; children and families receive good-quality services that provide effective help and support including from a wide range of early help services when needs and concerns first emerge; children are well protected through robust child protection processes; children have detailed assessments of their needs that lead to interventions that improve their outcomes; there are high aspirations for looked after children and care leavers who benefit from good-quality placements and adoption support is comprehensive, with permanence achieved for a broad range of children. Inspectors

highlighted the Clinical Service and the Leaving Care Service as areas of particular excellence.

Following the inspection, the Children and Families Service has undertaken development work to: revise the housing protocol for 16/17 year olds who present as homeless; reduce assessment timescales over the past year; implement mandatory case recording training for all practitioners, with identity training planned throughout 2017/18; ensure senior managers attend unit meetings on a regular basis and developed a recording template to support better documentation of key decisions and progress of plans.

Service Area Trends

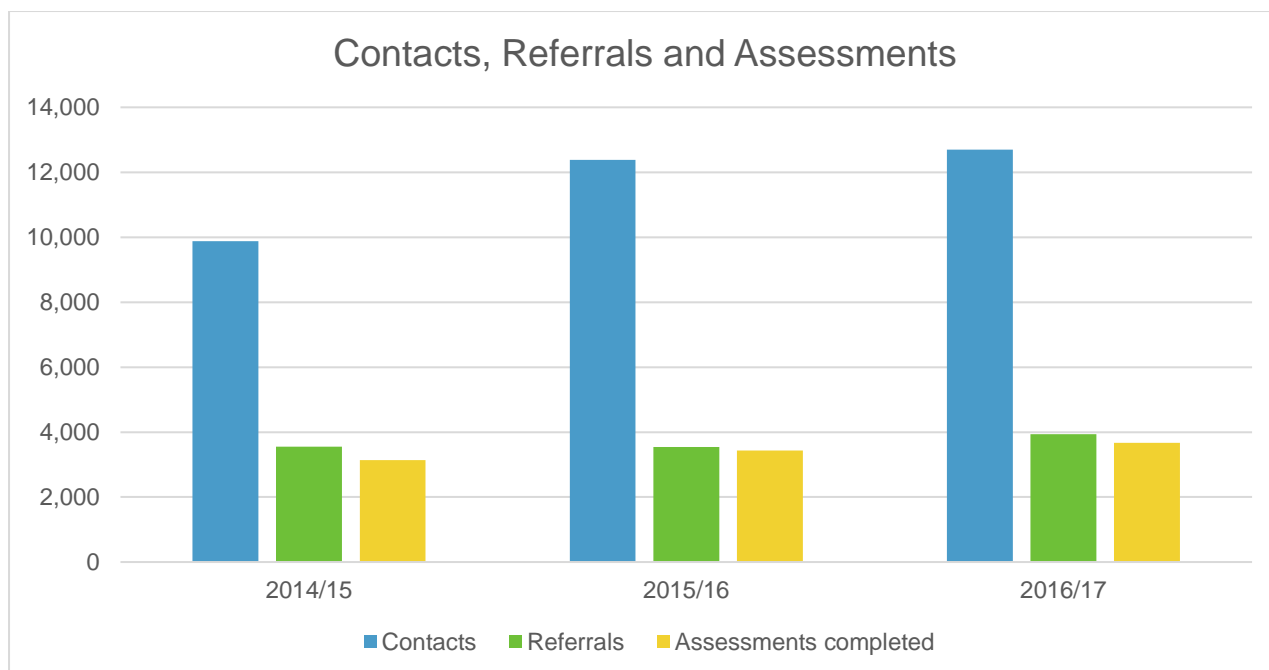
The Access and Assessment Service

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

Contacts, Referrals and Assessment

In 2016/17, FAST received 12,699 contacts from sources including schools, health, housing, local authority services, the police, individuals and other legal agencies of which 3,940 were accepted as a referral to Children’s Social Care; this was an 11% increase in the number of referrals compared to 2015/16. The number of referrals per 10,000 increased in Hackney from 578.6 in 2015/16 to 660.9 in 2016/17. This is higher than the referral rate for our statistical neighbours (503.9) and the national average (532.2) in 2015/16 (the most recent published data).

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Contacts	9,875	12,386	12,699
Referrals	3,551	3,543	3,940
Assessments completed	3,140	3,434	3,668



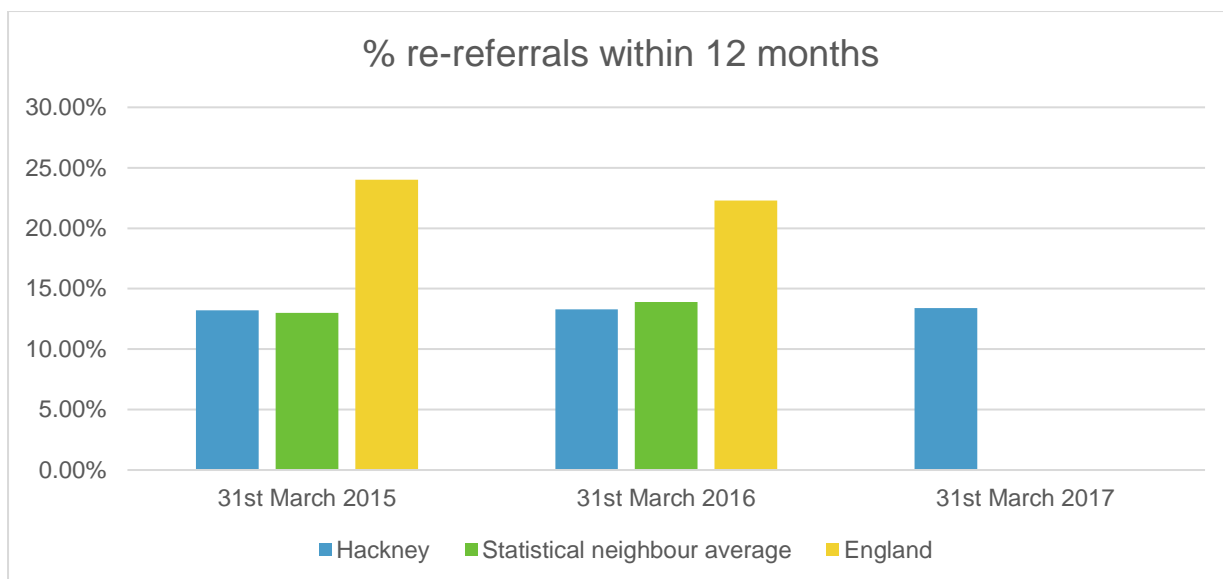
Contacts that are not progressed to a statutory social work assessment but require early help or targeted support continue to be diverted to the Family Support Service, Young Hackney, Children’s Centres or are referred to the Children and Young People’s Partnership Panel and Multi-Agency Team panel.

3,668 statutory social work assessments were completed in 2016/17, a 7% increase compared to 2015/16 and this is higher than the number completed in the two previous years: 3,140 in 2014/15 and 3,434 in 2015/16.

The percentage of re-referrals has increased slightly from last year to 13.4%, although it remains significantly lower than the national average at 22.3%. Hackney’s lower than average repeat referral ratio is suggestive of consistently high quality assessments and timely access to appropriate support.

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

	31 st March 2015	31 st March 2016	31 st March 2017
Hackney	13.2%	13.3%	13.4%
Statistical neighbour average	13.0%	13.9%	Not yet published
England	24%	22.3%	Not yet published



Hackney continues to exercise dispensation agreed by the Department for Education for statutory assessment timescales which has enabled the Access and Assessment Service to adopt a proportionate and flexible approach with families during assessment. The average length of assessment in 2016/17 was 47 days, a decrease from 2015/16 at 49 days.

A workstream to manage the increase in service demand has been established as a result of the increase in contacts, referrals and assessments, to both understand and try to mitigate against the impact of these increases across the Children and Families Service.

Mary was 13 and living with her mother and 3 siblings. Mary was arrested by the Police at her home after she hurt her sister with a knife during an argument over a phone charger. The Police referred Mary and her family to the Access and Assessment Service for an assessment. Access and Assessment also undertook a piece of work with the family to draw up an agreement around how they would prevent similar incidents happening again, with both sisters and their mother agreeing to their part of the contract.

Access and Assessment handed the case over to Young Hackney who allocated a worker to engage with Mary. The worker noticed that Mary had a unique way of understanding information and events and that she was also frequently getting detentions at school. When discussing life with Mary, it was clear that she often did not understand why her siblings were getting frustrated with her and why she was getting in trouble at school. It was evident that Mary was very sorry for hurting her sister, however she also found it very difficult to stay calm during disagreements because she felt people wouldn't listen to her and she could not make herself understood.

Young Hackney supported Mary to explore her communication with a Speech, Language and Communication Therapist (SALT) within the team. The Therapist provided practical communication advice to Mary and the key people in her life. Mary preferred not to share her SALT assessment with her teachers but agreed for her Young Hackney worker to speak to Rose (the School Safeguarding Officer). Rose did not share Mary's assessment but worked with her teachers to understand Mary's specific communication needs.

In addition to the SALT work, Mary completed 7 sessions with her Young Hackney worker; these sessions focussed on developing Mary's ability to recognise her emotions and use strategies to help her handle emotions in a positive way. At the end of the work with Young Hackney, Mary was able to demonstrate ways she had put her learning to good use, particularly at times when she was getting upset or angry. Mary was also pleased that, as agreed with her family, they had been giving her alone time to calm down when she was upset. Mary was also getting fewer detentions at school.

Despite Mary committing a very serious initial offence, Young Hackney was able to de-escalate and divert Mary away from the criminal justice system. Young Hackney met Mary's needs at a lower and less costly level by providing a short and diverting intervention, addressing the causes of her offence and working with Mary's family. Her worker addressed the causal factors rather than trying to treat the symptoms, this increases likelihood of sustained positive outcomes. Also important, Young Hackney carried out interventions with both family and school alongside work with Mary, this avoids individualising the problem and focusses on work with the child and the systems around the child, to create sustainable changes.

Responses to potential family breakdown with 16 and 17 year olds

In 2016/17 the Access and Assessment Service undertook 17 homeless assessments of 16/17 year olds, following which 9 young people were provided with accommodation by the Council. The remaining 8 young people either returned home or were supported to live with wider family members. This has been achieved through a strong focus on reparation of familial relationships when teenagers are facing exclusion from the family home and family life and by facilitating access to parenting support at the point of referral, as well as local provision of rapid response Family Network Meetings (further information on Family Network Meetings is included (on page 14 below).

It remains our strong belief that children and young people achieve better outcomes when they remain living within their families. The service maintains a strong track record in achieving stability in families and in successfully rehabilitating children and young people back to their families when it is safe to do so, thereby reducing the risk of young people entering care unnecessarily.

Following the Ofsted inspection in July 2016, there has been considerable focus with the Access and Assessment Service on 16/17 year old homeless young people. Hackney's protocol was updated and has been operational since December 2016. All assessments take place within a 6 week timescale and additional senior management oversight process have been put in place.

Family network meetings (FNM)

Family Network Meetings are based on the Family Group Conference model that was developed in New Zealand to allow social work practice to work with Maori values and culture regarding the extended family network.

The FNM Service aims to rapidly mobilise existing support networks in families to prevent family breakdown and enable children to remain living within their family networks by offering a flexible and swift response.

Between April 2016 and March 2017 the service received 133 referrals, a decrease from the 150 referrals in the previous year although the number of Family Network Meetings (FNMs) was 102, compared to 103 held in 2015/16. The FNM Service has also held 5 Pre-FNMs and 13 additional meetings with key family members, in order to assist families to develop an appropriate family care plan. In addition to this, 3 second FNMs were held.

Family Network Meeting outcomes 2016-17

As the table below indicates, 80 of the 102 FNM's held in 2016/17 resulted in children remaining within their immediate or extended family network.

Outcomes for 102 FNM's held:	
April 2016 – March 2017	
Children remain in family home	53
Reunification with family from foster care	4
Kinship placement	13
Kinship placement maintained	10
Foster care placement	15
Adoption placement	0
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - semi-independent (with family support) - supported accommodation - prison - mental health unit 	7
Total	102

Contact Services

The Ferncliff Contact Service is a purpose-built environment for children to have supervised contact with their family members. The centre provides a safe and welcoming environment where contact sessions can take place. Children's Social Care have commissioned Family Solutions to deliver contact services since 2012 which has resulted in savings for the Council without compromising on quality.

In 2016/17 the centre provided 208 children in 151 families with supervised contact and facilitated, on average, 460 contact sessions between children and their families each month which equates to 813 hours of contact time.

Out of Hours Social Work Service

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

Demand for the service can vary considerably from day to day. On average, between 500 – 700 calls are logged each month. Referrals usually require extensive liaison with children and their relatives in addition to a range of other individuals and organisations including friends and neighbours, foster carers, residential establishments, police, hospitals, other local authorities, housing providers, solicitors, courts and voluntary sector providers. The service provides advice in both simple and complex situations and also initiates child protection investigations and/or protective services including admission into care.

The Children in Need Service

The Children in Need Service is responsible for the safeguarding of children and young people assessed as being ‘at risk’ including child protection work, court proceedings and statutory family support to help children remain at home safely.

‘She is direct, straight forward, honest and polite. She takes pride in her work, she is very dedicated. She is a problem solver – can zero in on the cause of problems and kindly offers creative solutions. She is prompt, and accurate in communications. She [...] has truly changed the picture I always had about Social Services, a big thank you from me [...] and my family.’

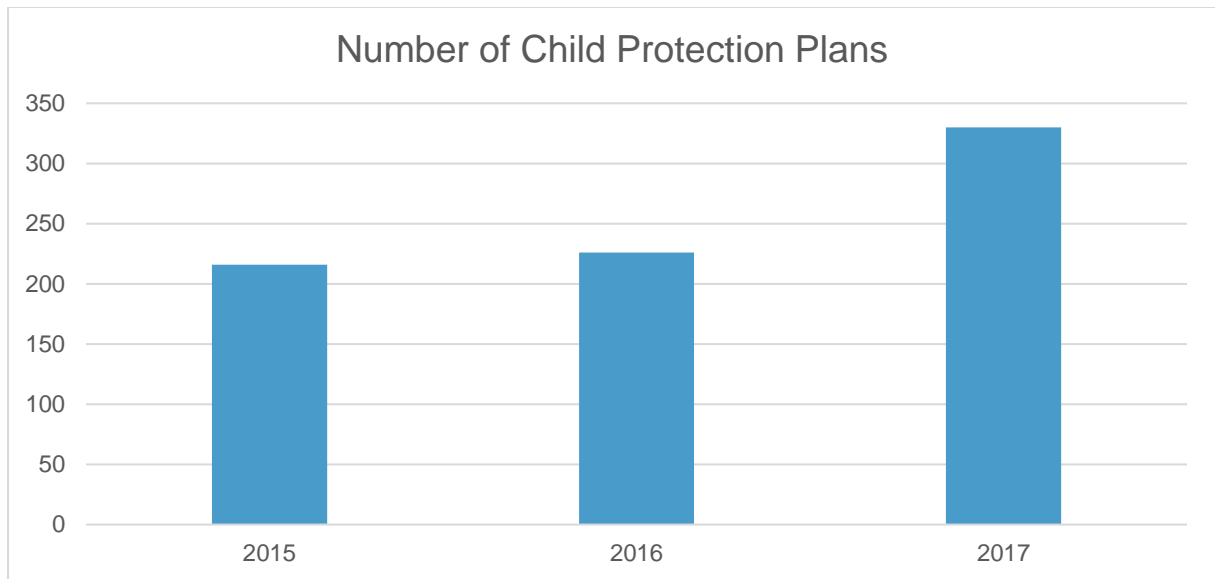
Parent about their Children in Need social worker

Child Protection Plans

Children deemed at risk of significant harm are considered at an Initial Child Protection Conference to determine the need for a Child Protection Plan – a Child Protection Plan will outline the intense multi-agency interventions and support that will be put in place around the child and family to reduce the risk of harm and to achieve significant change within the family. Child Protection Plans are reviewed at regular intervals, and will end when the multi-agency group agrees that the child is no longer at risk of significant harm.

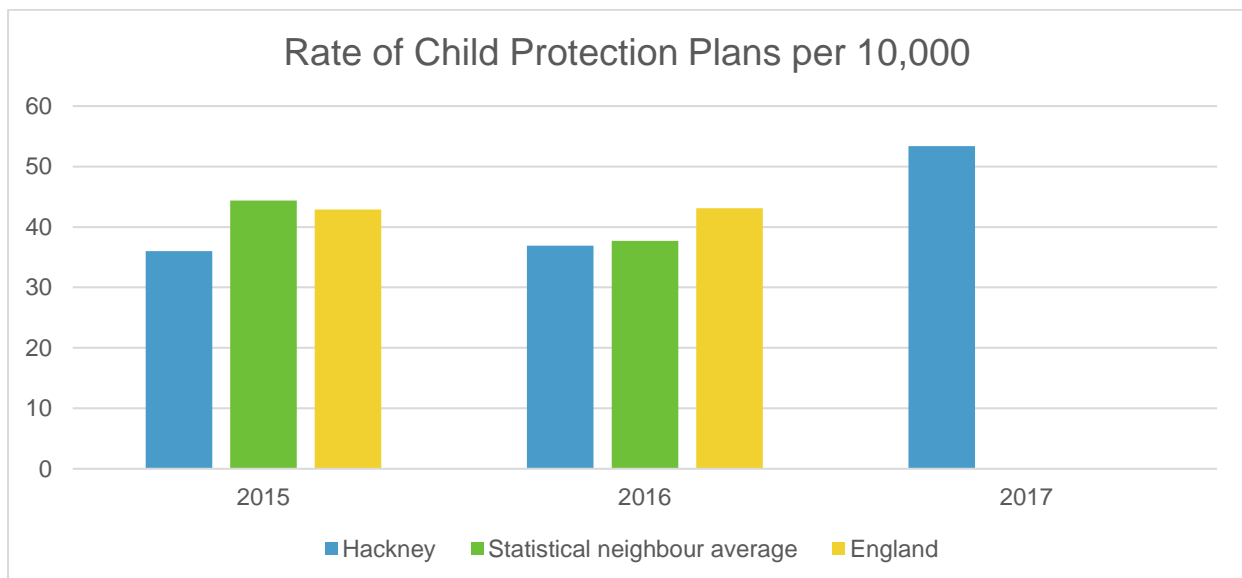
Number of Child Protection Plans (at 31st March)

2015	2016	2017
216	226	330



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

	2015	2016	2017
Hackney	36.00	36.9	53.4
Statistical neighbour average	44.36	37.7	Not yet published
England	42.9	43.1	Not yet published



As at March 2017, there were 330 children subject to a Child Protection Plan, a 46% increase from 226 in March 2016.

The rate of Child Protection Plans in Hackney in March 2017 was 53.4 children per 10,000. This is a significant increase from the rate of 36.9 children per 10,000 in

March 2016. This is higher than statistical neighbours (2016 figure of 37.7 per 10,000 children) and the national average (2016 figure of 43.1 per 10,000 children).

Following a deep dive audit into Child Protection Plans, it became clear that some children were on plans not due to their individual risk, but because of the risks presented to one of their siblings. Also there were a number of cases that were ready to be stepped down to Child in Need or early help services, or where proceedings to take children into care were being considered. Following a review of all cases, the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at the beginning of August 2017 was 271, an 18% decrease from March 2017. Further analysis is continuing into the trend, but there is also a recognition that external factors may be having an impact on levels of need within the local community. This will continue to be closely monitored by senior managers as part of the workstream to manage the increase in service demands.

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 has decreased from the end of March 2015 at 8% to 3% at the end of March 2017. This significant decrease is a result of the robust monitoring process that has been put in place to quality assure planning in all long-term cases, and ensure that action is taken to escalate intervention where progress has not been made in reducing risk.

Percentage of children who were the subject of a Child Protection Plan at 31 March, by length of time as the subject of a plan

Duration of Child Protection Plan	31 March 2015	31 March 2016	31 March 2017
Under 3 months	34%	28%	36%
3 – 6 months	19%	20%	22%
6 – 12 months	25%	35%	27%
1 – 2 years	13%	14%	12%
Over 2 years	8%	3%	3%

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

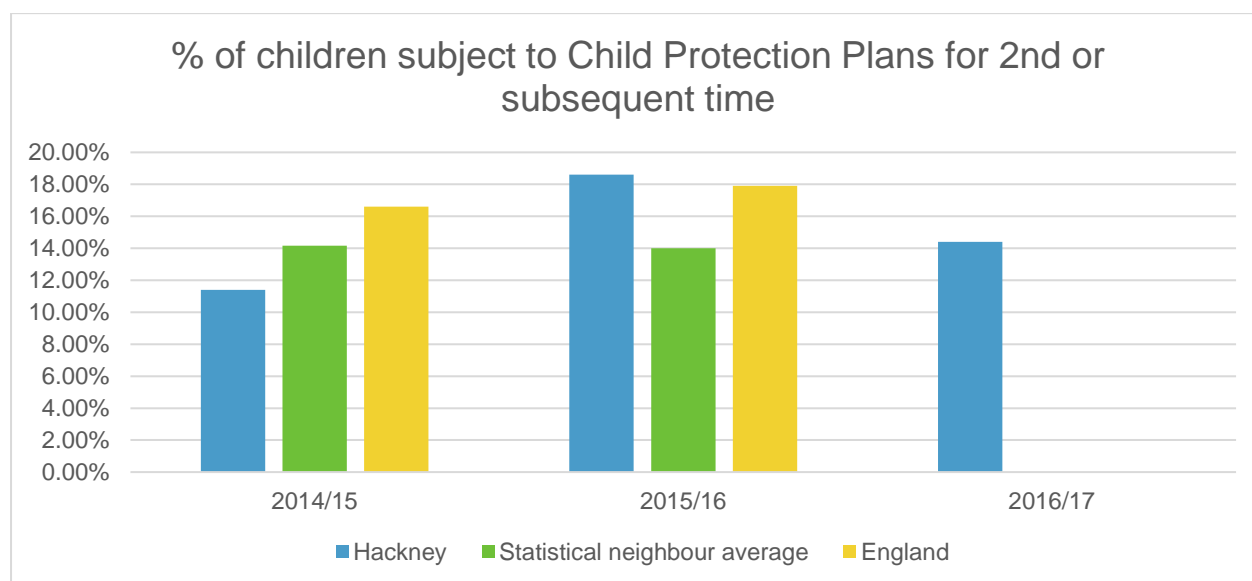
This measure indicates whether a Child Protection Plan was successful in effectively reducing risks over time in comparison to the necessity for a further Child Protection Plan. In practice, this is determined by work undertaken with parents and children through the plan, the quality of assessment of 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, although there are complex factors that effect this.

The percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time decreased from 18.6% in 2015/16 to 16% in 2016/17, this is lower than the most recently published national average of 17.9%. The decision for a child to

become subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time is subject to a robust oversight process, with a decision only taken on consultation with the Head of Service, and it is clear that this is having an impact on repeat plan numbers.

Percentage of children who became the subject of a Child Protection Plan during the year ending 31 March who became the subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Hackney	11.4%	18.6%	16%
Statistical neighbour average	14.17%	14%	Not yet published
England	16.60%	17.9%	Not yet published



The Family Courts

The Government implemented the Family Justice Review (FJR) in 2011 in an attempt to significantly reduce delay within the family courts and in care proceedings. In June 2013, the national average length for the completion of care proceedings was 46 weeks. As a result of the FJR, the expectation is that all care proceedings should be completed within 26 weeks. It is accepted that in exceptional circumstances, cases may need to be extended for a further 8 weeks.

The overall average length of proceedings in Hackney during 2016-17 was 25 weeks. This is 1 week under the target 26 weeks, and 9 weeks shorter than the overall average for 2015/2016 which was 34 weeks. The significant decrease in average case duration is partly due to making greater efforts to ensure rigid case management and not allowing cases to go over the recommended 26 weeks unless necessary. The decrease is also due to a greater number of cases which went into court following a review of the use of Section 20. Some of these cases involved children who had already been looked after for some time with the agreement of their families, with cases usually uncontested by parents, meaning that some proceedings were able to conclude very quickly. It is likely that the average duration of care proceedings from April 2017 onwards will increase, partly due to the pressures on courts within London.

The public law outline (PLO) is a process that all local authorities have to follow in their conduct of care proceedings. In most cases the Public Law Outline requires Children's Social Care to arrange a meeting with the parent(s) to see if it is possible to reach agreement about what needs to happen to protect the child from harm, so that court proceedings can be avoided.

For care proceedings to run smoothly and efficiently, it is essential that as much work as possible is done in the preliminary stages before care proceedings are issued. The family courts expect that a Family Network Meeting (FNM) must have been held prior to issuing care proceedings (further information on Family Network Meetings is available on page 14). The role of the FNM is becoming increasingly important in care proceedings. Prospective family members who may be considered as an alternative long-term carer for a child should be identified at the earliest possible stage to ensure assessments commence in a timely manner.

The London Family Justice Board agreed to implement the new care proceedings timescales from 5th August 2013. Every local authority has responsibility for tracking its own performance in relation to pre-proceedings decisions, assessments and planning, care proceedings duration and permanency planning for each child.

During the pre-proceedings process parents are made aware of the concerns and local authority's intention to issue proceedings if specified improvements are not made.

From April 2016 to March 2017, pre-proceedings agreements and assessments were initiated in Hackney for 35 children (26 cases). 28 (19 cases) of the 35 children did not go to court as a result of intervention and improvements made by their parents and the pre-proceedings process remained ongoing or ended. Care proceedings were issued in relation to the 7 remaining children (7 cases).

'The guardian, the mother and the court said that the local authority had conducted outstanding social work.'

Feedback from Counsel about a court case

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 signs of difficulties to prevent children from becoming subject to child protection processes or becoming looked after. In September 2015, the project expanded into a further 4 schools in Hackney.

In March 2017, it was agreed that the project would draw to a close. It had been hoped that funding could be secured to continue SWiS into 2017 and beyond, but this was unsuccessful, and staff seconded to the project have returned to their substantive posts in the Children and Families Service. All open cases continue to be supported by early help, social care or schools to ensure families' needs are being met. Families

that are identified as requiring support by schools previously part of the SWiS project are now referred to FAST in the usual way. Learning and strengths from the SWiS project are being taken forward through wider work to develop and evolve the Children and Families Service.

The Clinical Service

The Hackney Children and Families Clinical Service is an integrated and specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for children accessing Children's Social Care Services, the Family Support Service, Young Hackney and the Youth Justice Service. It works in partnership with the City and Hackney CAMHS Alliance and is accountable through integrated CAMHS commissioning arrangements. Outcomes for the Clinical Service are also monitored via the national CAMHS Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC). The recent Ofsted inspection in July 2016 found that: *'A noteworthy area of service is the local authority's excellent in-house clinical service, which provides swift access to child and adolescent mental health support for those children who need this support. The service has an impressive range of therapeutic options for children and their families and these are leading to demonstrable benefits in children's lives.'*

The Clinical Service operates on an outreach basis in order to promote accessibility for families, and does not have a waiting list. In 2016/17, the Clinical Service provided over 12,000 hours of casework and practice-related consultation to frontline practitioners, and offered 1,240 episodes of care (i.e. clinical assessments or interventions working directly with children and families).

As part of its remit to support the wider CFS workforce, the Clinical Service delivered over 230 hours of training to social workers, foster carers and other frontline practitioners. This included topics such as managing self-harm risk, and recognising and responding to the attachment needs of looked after children. The Clinical Service also provided postgraduate training programmes in Systemic Practice to Children and Families Service social workers. In order to further embed clinically-informed and reflective practice, regular clinical group supervision was also offered to Independent Reviewing Officers, Consultant Social Workers, the Young Hackney Substance Misuse Service and the Youth Justice Service.

'[...] made me understand things, she helped me out'

Young person about their clinician

The Clinical Service has well-developed links with local NHS CAMHS and in 2016/17 continued to deliver joint specialist care pathways for the assessment and treatment of young people with autism, problem-sexualised behaviours and self-harm. There is also an active partnership with the Anna Freud Centre to develop the New Beginnings Parent-Infant Mental Health programme for at-risk babies and their families, which was recognised at the recent national Infant Mental Health Awards.

Clinical Services activity data: April 2016-March 2017

Number of new cases	461
Total number of cases	1,084
Number of appointments in hours	3,647
Number of consultations in hours	12,007
% of positive CHI-ESQ feedback	100%
% of positive SDQ improvement	68%

Maddox

Maddox was a 7 year old boy who came from a home environment where parental substance misuse and domestic violence had been commonplace. He was placed with a foster carer and referred to the Clinical Service. Maddox presented as unhappy, often tearful, and anxious about getting things wrong. He lacked resilience and would disengage whenever he felt challenged. He told lies in an attempt to negate conflict and consequently had no real friendships.

Following a clinical assessment Maddox was offered weekly individual Child Psychotherapy for a period of one year. Much of this work focussed on helping Maddox develop an increased awareness of his emotional states and develop his resilience. In his sessions he played with toys provided, often enacting violent scenes. The therapist offered interpretation of his play, naming how they imagined the different characters in his play must feel. Maddox was initially rejecting of these ideas and would hide, ask to leave the room or insist on changing the play to something less threatening. However, he grew to value the experience of having a space in which some of his thoughts and feelings could be expressed and thought about. The therapist gradually linked Maddox's play to his own actual and emotional experiences. In doing so, Maddox's play developed further, with many sessions spent using Lego to build a house of increasing sophistication and strength. Maddox and the therapist thought about this as Maddox's 'therapy home'; a place of safety that was both an external and real thing but also symbolised his own internal state of safety and increased resilience. Maddox's mistrust and perception of adults as dangerous and unreliable changed and he was increasingly able to talk to other adults around him when he needed comfort and support. At the end of his treatment Maddox was better able to regulate his emotional states and instead talked about his difficulties, resulting in a reduction in his sometimes extreme behaviour or outbursts.

Jacob

Jacob was 6 and came to live with his father after his mother became unable to care for him. Jacob's father has a diagnosis of Schizophrenia, for which he takes medication. Jacob's social worker had concerns that Jacob's father's ability to tune into, and respond to Jacob emotionally might be inhibited by the medication; and Jacob's teachers were concerned that the changes in his home life were impacting on his behaviour and ability to concentrate at school. Jacob's social worker therefore referred the family to the Clinical Service for help with assessing and strengthening the relationship between Jacob and his father.

The Clinician worked with Jacob and his father for 5 months using Video Interaction Guidance; a therapeutic intervention that involves sharing short, edited video clips of parent-child interactions to understand and strengthen communication within the relationship. The

Clinician helped Jacob's father to identify his goals for the work in accordance with his own parenting values. The Clinician made short films of Jacob and his father playing and talking together, and then edited the films to demonstrate the most powerful moments of 'emotional attunement'. The Clinician showed these clips to Jacob's father, so that together they could look at exactly what Jacob's father was doing to enable Jacob to feel understood and loved. Through this process Jacob's father's skill in communicating with his son developed further, and his confidence in himself and his parenting were significantly enhanced. He also expressed that his trust and confidence in professionals had increased through doing this work.

By the end of the intervention, the positive impact on Jacob was noted by his social worker, and his teachers, who reported that Jacob was now flourishing at school, both socially and academically.

The Corporate Parenting Service

The Corporate Parenting Service is responsible for all areas related to the safeguarding and welfare of children who are in the care of the local authority. This includes planning for their future placements via fostering and adoption, supporting rehabilitation home whenever possible, and supporting young people who have previously been in care up to the age of 21, or 25 for those remaining in higher education. Adoption and post-permanency services are 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 year is provided on page 63.

Following work with Hackney Gets Heard in March 2016 to confirm priorities, Hackney's current Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2016-19 was approved by the Corporate Parenting Board. This strategy is based on the Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care (see appendix 3) developed by young people, and puts outcomes for children at the heart of work to improve services.

'I want to show my gratitude to Hackney social services for their support towards me and my foster family. I am grateful for all the support all this years... Also, many thanks to every hand that wrote on that lovely card for my birthday.'

Feedback from a looked after young person to her social work unit

Overview of care population

Number of looked after children at 31st March

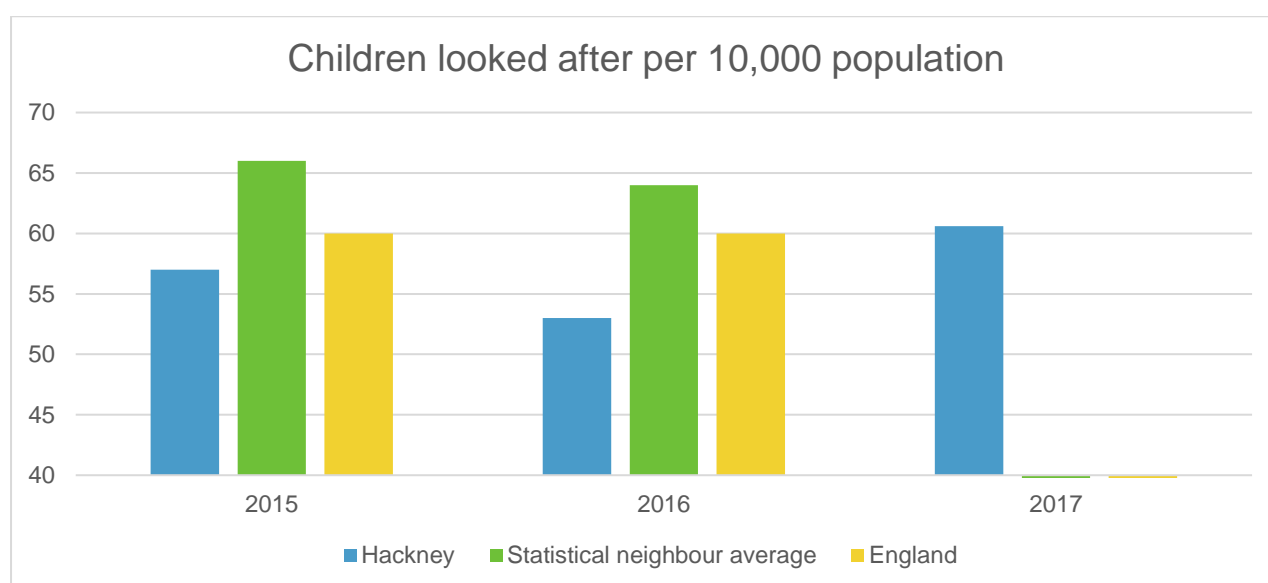
	2015	2016	2017
Hackney	340	325	371

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

As at 31st March 2017, Hackney was responsible for looking after 371 children and young people, this is a 14% increase in the number of looked after children since March 2016. The snapshot figure at March 2016 is, however, misleading in terms of representing the trend in the number of looked after children during 2015/16 – the monthly figure for the total number of looked after children throughout the rest of the year ranged from 336 to 345 children. However, the number of looked after children at March 2017 is still a significant increase, and the rate of looked after children per 10,000 is at its highest for recent years.

Children looked after per 10,000 population aged under 18 at 31st March

	2015	2016	2017
Hackney	57	53	60.6
Statistical neighbour average	66	64	Not published yet
England	60	60	Not published yet



Although Hackney continues to have a lower number of children in care per 10,000 than its statistical neighbours, this has increased from 53 per 10,000 in 2016 to 60.6 per 10,000 in 2017. Hackney's rate of children in care in 2017 (60.6) is now in line with the most recently published national average (60) after many years of being below the national average.

246 children entered care in 2016/17. This is a 29% increase compared to the number of children than entered care in 2015/16.

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

Age	2015		2016		2017	
	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney
Under 1	19%	25 (15%)	18%	20 (10%)	Not published yet	28 (11%)
1 – 4	19%	20 (12%)	18%	20 (9%)		27 (11%)
5 – 9	18%	15 (10%)	17%	30 (15%)		43 (17%)
10 - 15	29%	60 (36%)	29%	65 (33%)		73(30%)
16 and over	16%	45 (27%)	18%	60 (33%)		75(30%)
Total		165		190		246

Note The table above includes data published by DfE. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 (excluding 2017 figures) and percentages rounded to the nearest whole figure.

75 young people aged 16 and over entered care in Hackney in 2016/17 - 30% of the total number, compared to the national average of 18% in 2016. This has had a significant impact on the stability of placements as there are fewer options to meet the needs of older children, and also adoption figures, as older children are far less likely to be adopted. The number of over 16's and the percentage of this age group within the total number 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 of 30% at March 2017 is in part 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, (there is more detail about this on page 69). 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.

The number of adolescents within the total number of children entering care has increased consistently since 2014 and accounts for a large proportion of the new admissions to care each year. These young people often present with more complex needs. During 2016/17, 123 young people aged 14 or over entered care representing 50% of all children entering care. The largest single cohort of children entering care were aged 17 years old, representing 20% (48 young people) of the total cohort.

The increase in the number of young people over 16 entering care also has an impact, when this cohort turn 18, on the numbers of care leavers the Service is supporting.

The percentage of children and young people becoming looked after for the second or subsequent time within the last 12 months was 11.8% between April – March 2017, a slight increase compared to 11.5% for 2015/16.

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 2015 and 2017. Nationally, at the end of March 2016, 23% of children in care were aged 16 and over. The older profile of children entering care in Hackney has an impact across the service as it adjusts to

meet the more complex needs of this cohort, including on placement stability (see page 38).

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

Age	2015		2016		2017	
	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney
Under 1	5%	15 (5%)	5%	10 (3%)	Not published yet	14 (4%)
1 - 4	15%	40 (11%)	13%	30 (9%)		27 (7%)
5 - 9	21%	50 (15%)	20%	45(14%)		61 (16%)
10 - 15	38%	140 (41%)	39%	140 (43%)		153 (41%)
16 and over	22%	95 (28%)	23%	100 (31%)		116 (31%)
Total		345		325		
Total statistical neighbour average		394		385		Not published yet

Note The table above includes data published by the Department for Education. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 (excluding 2017 figures) and percentages rounded to the nearest whole figure.

The table above includes an age breakdown of the total number of looked after children at the year end point which also illustrates the impact of the increase in the over-16 age group on the total number of looked after children between 2015 and 2017, with approximately one third (31%) of the total number of looked after children as at 31st March 2017 being aged 16 and over, compared to 23% nationally.

Young people aged 14 years and older made up 49% (181) of the total cohort of children in care at the end of March 2017. These young people often have complex needs requiring greater levels of support and appropriate placements to match these needs are often difficult to source. 73 of these young people were aged 17 years, representing 20% of the total cohort of looked after children at the end of March 2017.

The number of children leaving care during 2016/17 was 212. Of these, 81 (38%) returned home to live with parents, relatives or another person with parental responsibility. A further 71 (33%) left care due to turning 18, 15 (7%) left care due to Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangements Orders (previously known as Residence Orders) being granted, and 19 (9%) were adopted.

Alexa is 13 years old with significant complex emotional and behavioural needs that her parents were unable to meet, and has been looked after by a foster carer for the past year. Alexa's school have struggled to meet her needs and recently approached her social work unit to recommend that she moves from a mainstream setting to a specialist school. Alexa has found the uncertainty around whether or not she will move school distressing, and her behaviour while at home with her foster carer has deteriorated, creating a lot of pressure on the placement.

Despite the uncertainty created by Alexa's school, her relationship with her carer was positive. Alexa's carer has a strong support network, and regular respite care was already in place which has given Alexa's carer the chance to take breaks. The social work unit ensured that there was therapeutic provision in place from the in-house Clinical Service, to support Alexa and her carer, as well as the unit.

Alexa's social work unit have strongly advocated that she should remain at her school as she is a bright and able child and is capable of thriving in a mainstream setting with the right support. The social work unit met with the Virtual School and Clinical Service to explore different strategies to work with Alexa and support the school to have a better insight into her needs. The unit met with the school over several sessions to advocate for Alexa to remain.

As a result of the extra support put in place and advocacy by the social work unit, Alexa stayed at her school, and an allocated teacher now leads on supporting her. Alexa is aware she can approach this teacher whenever she needs to or feels distressed. Alexa's performance at school has improved considerably, she is achieving well in most of her subjects and her behaviour at home has been more settled and positive.

Returning home/to family network

During 2016/17, 81 children and young people returned home or to live with a relative or wider member of their family support network. The high proportion (38%) of these young people of all of those that leave care, correlates to the increase in adolescents aged 16+ entering care who subsequently return home or to a relative or member of their family support network, often as a result of family support work or family network meetings. A child will usually return home as a result of changes that the family have made, either as a result of intervention by Children's Social Care, or by the family making alternative support arrangements for example as a result of the plan created at a Family Network Meeting that will mean their child's needs are being met. These plans and changes may not always be sustained by families despite the support put in place, so if children are referred back again to Children's Social Care, any previous looked after child episodes are considered as part of the assessment (as are prior Child Protection Plans) and a Service Manager will approve any decisions or plans made in relation to these children to ensure children are not left in neglectful or abusive environments.

Use of Section 20

Over the past few years, there has been judicial and sector concerns about the use of Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (under which children can be accommodated by the local authority by agreement with their family). These concerns about the use of Section 20 are the result of a number of cases in England where local authorities: failed to get informed consent from parents from the outset; there was not recording of parental consent in writing; allowed Section 20 arrangement to continue for too long, meaning that children did not have a clear plan to either return home or for court proceedings to be initiated; or were slow to return the child to the parent(s) immediately after parental consent was withdrawn. These concerns were highlighted again in July 2017 by the Family Rights Group report '*Co-operation or Coercion? Children coming into the care system under voluntary arrangements*' which concluded that some parents were finding themselves subject to 'soft coercion' when agreeing to have their children accommodated under Section 20; with social workers not explaining fully the implications of Section 20 in terms of their parental responsibility.

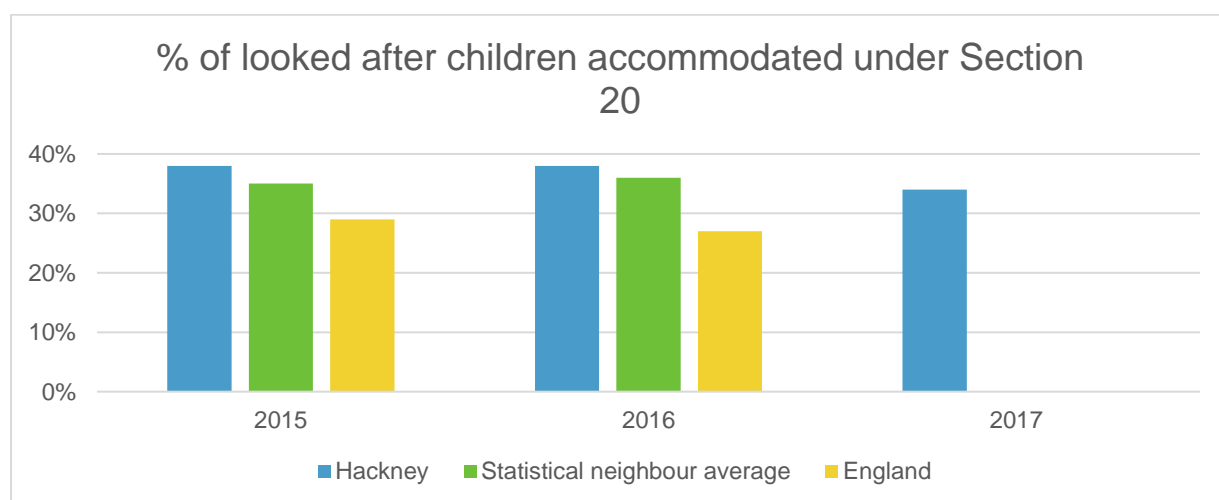
All cases where a child or young person was looked after under Section 20 in Hackney were reviewed over the spring and again in the winter of 2016 to ensure that this remained the most appropriate current legal option and framework for these children. As a result of this review, revised guidance around the use of Section 20 arrangements was developed in collaboration with the legal department with parental understanding and consent at the core of this guidance, and a stronger management oversight process for all Section 20 cases has been put in place. This will ensure that the rationale and decision-making for Section 20 cases is clearly recorded, consistent and in accordance with the guidance.

At the end of March 2017, there were 126 children accommodated under Section 20, accounting for 34% of all children who were looked after. Some of these young people are aged 16 or 17 years old, who can choose to come into care under Section 20. This is a decrease in the proportion of children looked after under Section 20 compared to the previous two years, and similar to the proportion in our statistical neighbour authorities in 2015/16. The use of Section 20 will continue to receive senior management oversight over the coming year.

Number of looked after children accommodated under Section 20 at 31st March

	2015	2016	2017
Hackney	130 (38%)	125 (38%)	126 (34%)
Statistical neighbour average	143 (35%)	137 (36%)	Not published yet
England	19,850 (29%)	18,730 (27%)	Not published yet

Note The table above includes data published by DfE. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 (excluding 2017 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 to do work with young people on youth justice orders in 2014/15 to support their engagement in education and assist them to make more positive choices.

The 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.

The Virtual School management committee has been recently strengthened by the addition of a foster carer on its board to contribute to the strategic function of its work.

Early years

Children in reception class are assessed in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Schools report this data to the Department for Education but they are not part of the national indicator set for looked after children. In order to track the educational progress and attainment of our youngest children, the Virtual School collects data in a number of areas. Children are judged against the criteria of emerging expectations, meeting expectations and exceeding expectations. This year data collected will be in the following areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and language
- Maths
- Literacy

As at May 2017, there are 21 pupils (age 2-5) in early years settings including 11 children in the reception year, which is a similar profile to previous years. This year the early years learning mentor has continued to develop the home school support strategy to ensure foster carers are well equipped to support early years educational attainment. Sensory books are available for foster carers to develop speaking and listening skills and visits to the cinema and activities in the park are encouraged to support children who are not yet school age.

The early years social pedagogue has been active in ensuring that when appropriate, children are accessing the 15 hours of free nursery support that they are entitled to. This is a valuable additional resource that supports the holistic education of the child. An occupational therapist continues to provide support to early years settings and carers, and develops intervention packages that can be delivered in the child's nursery and school, or in the home.

Educational attainment

The Department for Education educational attainment data for looked after children does not record results for cohorts that are below 10 children. This is reflected in the information below.

Key Stage 2

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

All pupils are offered support for the transition to secondary school and wherever possible additional visits are arranged. Links with designated teachers are made before the children transition to their new school and since the new process was introduced in March a member of the Virtual School staff will attend their first Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting.

In 2016 in Hackney there were 14 pupils in the Key Stage 2 (KS2) cohort who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months. 6 (43%) achieved the required standard in maths, 8 (57%) achieved the required standard in writing and 6 (43%) achieved the required standard in reading.

% of KS2 Pupils achieving the required standard or above in maths, reading and writing (performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months)*

	Reading	Writing	Maths	Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	Reading, Writing and Maths
England	41%	46%	41%	44%	25%
Statistical neighbour average	46%	59%	47%	51%	33%
Hackney	43%	57%	43%	43%	X

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 were above the national average and generally in line with the statistical neighbour average at Key Stage 2 for the last year. Over the next year the Virtual School will continue to develop more creative approaches to supporting these young people, delivered by the Virtual School intervention teacher.

A new measure was introduced this year to measure average progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A child that makes average progress receives a score of 0. Above average progress is indicated by numbers above 0 and less than average progress indicated by numbers below 0.

Key Stage 2 Average Progress Score

	Reading	Writing	Maths
England	-0.5	-1.0	-1.3
Statistical neighbour average	0.3	0.6	-0.9
Hackney	-1.5	-0.3	-2.8

Whilst the cohort achieved the same percentage of children reaching the required standard in maths as statistical neighbours, this indicator suggests they did not make as much progress as they should have. This is an area that will be prioritised this year.

Key Stage 4

Pupils in Key Stage 4 are offered additional sessions of one to one tutoring in maths and English in both years 10 and year 11. Their progress is monitored throughout by a dedicated Key Stage 4 mentor who provides individual targeted support for the young people, often performing the role of critical friend and advocate as well as ensuring clear and effective communication between schools, carers and the relevant local authority.

All pupils receive a laptop to support them with their studies and the Virtual School carefully monitors progress towards a young person's GCSE targets. This year there are a number of high achieving students in the cohort and the Virtual School is hopeful for a positive set of results in summer 2017.

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

In 2016 in Hackney there were 23 pupils in the Key Stage 4 (KS4) cohort who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months. 38.5% achieved 5 GCSEs graded A* – C, while 34.8% gained 5+ GCSEs graded A* – C including English and maths.

Comparing results for those young people who are in Hackney with those that are living outside of Hackney shows that for those young people who gained English and maths at GCSE, 1/3 (1 of 3) living in borough were successful and 1/3 (7/20) of those living outside of Hackney were successful.

There is a new measure for this cohort of young people: the percentage of young people entered for and achieving the English Baccalaureate (EBac). Hackney had too few numbers in either of the new categories to be reported nationally, however the percentage entered for the EBac was 17.4% and 4.3% achieved it.

Percentage of KS4 Pupils achieving A*-C in both English and maths (performance of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months) in 2016

	A* - C in both English and maths at GCSE	Entered for EBac	Achieved EBac
England	17.5%	8.2%	2.8%
Statistical neighbour average	25.3%	14.5%*	6.8%*
Hackney	34.8%	x	x

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. *= Inner London average used in place of statistical neighbour due to low numbers entered for EBac.

Outcomes for this group of pupils are very good. Hackney's looked after children achieved the third best GCSE results in the country. This is the result of a cohort of young people who were dedicated to their studies and received good support from their schools, foster carers, social workers and the Virtual School.

There are two new additional measures for the GCSE cohort.

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

Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 in 2016

	Attainment 8
England	22.8
Statistical neighbour average	24.5
Hackney	27.5

Hackney performed well in this measure achieving better results than England and the statistical neighbour average and came 20th overall in the country.

The second new measure for this cohort is Progress 8 which measures progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. A child who makes average progress receives a score of 0. Above average progress is indicated by numbers above 0 and less than average progress is indicated by numbers below 0.

Key stage 4 Progress 8 in 2016

	Progress 8
England	-1.14
Statistical neighbour average	-0.97
Hackney	-0.81

Hackney again achieved well with this measure attaining results better than England and statistical neighbour average and came 28th overall in the country.

Attendance and exclusions

The results published for the last academic year have shown a decline in performance from the previous year.

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

	2014	2015	2016
Hackney	12.8%	6.8%	12.2%
Statistical neighbour average	9.8%	11.1%	11.1%
England	8.9%	9%	9.1%

*A low percentage represents better attendance

The Virtual School has worked hard over the last year to improve this figure by sending out attendance leaflets to all foster carers and monitoring every young person's attendance every 2 weeks. It is hoped that this will have a positive effect on the results.

The number of young people who have had fixed term exclusions has increased this year to 51 from 34 the year before. This appears to be a national trend, the causes of which are in part down to a zero tolerance to poor behaviour approach being implemented by an increasing number of schools.

19 of the pupils who received an exclusion attend either special schools or alternative provision selected specifically because these types of provisions should be able to manage more complex behaviour. Social pedagogues and learning mentors within the Virtual School have supported the majority of these young people and the school settings to minimise the disruption to their education.

The percentage of children with at least 1 fixed term exclusion shows that Hackney achieved better results than the statistical neighbour average and worse results than the national average.

	% of children with at least 1 fixed term exclusion	% of children permanently excluded
England	10.42%	0.14
Statistical neighbour average	12.1%	X
Hackney	10.95%	0

There were no permanent exclusions during 2016/17.

Pupil Premium

Each looked after child is entitled to pupil premium funding worth £1,900 annually to provide them with additional educational support. Young people are eligible to receive this additional funding from their first day in care and the Virtual School Headteacher is responsible for distributing and monitoring the funding. For the financial year

2016/17 the Virtual School spent £518,000 through pupil premium funding. The majority of the money was put into schools with the remainder being used to provide additional support centrally, such as tutoring.

Each school provided a spending plan for how this additional support was to be offered and a range of interventions including maths and literacy catch-up programmes, tutoring, additional equipment, and counselling were identified.

EPIC (Exceptional People in Care) Awards

In February 2017, the EPIC Awards took place at Hackney Empire to celebrate the achievements of Hackney's looked after children and care leavers. Children and young people were nominated for a range of reasons including improved performance at school, achievements in sport and music, and having a positive attitude in spite of difficulties such as changing school or placement.

Care leavers engaged in education, employment and training activities also received an award as it is recognised that for some of our young people engagement in education and positive activities remains challenging.

A total of 234 young people were nominated for an award in recognition of their hard work and commitment to their education. Lemn Sessay was a guest and gave a motivational speech that was very well received.

Education, employment and training

The Virtual School supports young people, who have left statutory care at the age of 18, into education, employment and training opportunities.

The consistent support offered by the team has again last year resulted in a low number of young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training).

% of looked after children and care leavers in education, employment or training (EET)

Care Leavers aged 17 and 18 at 31st March 2016

	In higher education	In other education	Training or employment	Overall EET	NEET illness	NEET other	NEET pregnant
England	3%	40%	19%	61%	4%	25%	4%
Inner London*	4%	44%	16%	63%	2%	22%	4%
Hackney	x	51%	30%	84%	X	13%	x

*Inner London average used in place of statistical neighbour average as low numbers mean an average cannot be calculated

The overall EET figure for the cohort of 17 and 18 year olds is more than 20% higher than our statistical neighbours.

Care Leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 at 31st March 2016

	In higher education	In other education	Training or employment	Overall EET	NEET illness	NEET other	NEET pregnant
England	7%	18%	24%	49%	10%	23%	7%
Inner London*	12%	20%	21%	53%	4%	28%	5%
Hackney	10%	23%	31%	65%	x	17%	X

*Inner London average used in place of statistical neighbour average as low numbers mean an average cannot be calculated

Currently 8 young people are undertaking apprenticeships in a range of areas such as building surveying, business administration and app design (IT).

At July 2017, 76.1% of young people were successfully engaged in education, employment or training, the same percentage as at July 2016. These results show that there has been no variation in the overall NEET figure for this group of students over the last three years. When compared to the national figures Hackney performs very favourably.

Higher education

The national average for care leavers attending university in 2016 was 7%. Hackney performed very strongly with 10% of care leavers in higher education, higher than the national average.

41 young people were attending university in June 2017 which remains statistically high. There are potentially 18 young people due to start university in September 2017 and support will be provided by the 16+ team in the Virtual School to ensure they are fully prepared.

Health of looked after children

The Hackney Looked After Children (LAC) health service was re-commissioned during 2014 and from September 2014, the service has been provided by Whittington Health. The service was previously provided by Homerton University Hospital Foundation Trust (HUHFT); the Designated Doctor and paediatric support for looked after children's health continues to be provided by HUHFT.

The service is delivered by a dedicated team closely aligned with Hackney's universal school-based health service and is co-located with the Virtual School to promote the delivery of a more holistic and integrated service to our Looked After Children and Young People. A Specialist Occupational Therapist works with the Health and Virtual School team to provide additional support to Looked After Children.

The health team work in partnership with the other Whittington LAC teams in order to pursue and achieve excellence in their practice. Peer to peer observation, support and auditing is currently in progress, along with a strong focus on the voice of the child to encourage and empower children and young people and promote an interest in following a healthy lifestyle.

Looked after children and young people have the same health risks and concerns as their peers. However, they are known to have a higher level of vulnerability as they often enter into care with unidentified health issues as a result of receiving poorer parenting, histories of abuse or neglect, having an unknown health history and higher levels of mobility. Therefore, they generally have poorer long term health outcomes than their peers. The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) reported in 2013 that about 60% of children and young people who are looked after in England are reported to have emotional and mental health problems and a high proportion experience poor health, educational and social outcomes after leaving care.

Initial Health Assessments for looked after children in Hackney are completed by members of the Community Paediatric Team from HUHFT under the supervision of a Senior Paediatrician in a weekly, dedicated clinic.

Over the past year Children’s Social Care and the looked after children health service have worked to ensure that referral pathways and information sharing processes between CSC and LAC health providers are robust so that children and young people receive their initial health assessment within statutory timeframes.

It is a statutory requirement for children and young people coming into care to have an initial health assessment within 28 days of entering care and subsequent review health assessments every 6 months up to the age of 5 then annually thereafter.

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

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Hackney	89%	84%	90%
Statistical neighbour average	92%	94%	Not published yet
England	89%	90%	Not published yet

90% of children and young people had their review health assessment completed on time in 2016/17, an increase from 84% last year and in line with the national average from 2015/16. This reflects the efforts to increase stability in the staffing of the team over the year. There will always be a small number of young people who do not attend or refuse a health assessment. The looked after children nursing team follow up all non-attendance and attempt to arrange further appointments at venues convenient for young people, as well as offering vouchers to encourage them to attend their health assessments.

The looked after children health team have signed up to the Hackney Promise for Looked After Children and will be working with Hackney Gets Heard over the coming year to understand the views of children and young people about the current service.

% looked after children whose immunisations are up to date

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Hackney	87%	86%	79%
Statistical neighbour average	81%	78%	Not published yet
England	89%	84%	Not published yet

79% of children and young people received the appropriate immunisations for their age in 2016/17, a decrease from the figure of 86% in 2015/16 and lower than the national average of 84%. Work is ongoing to improve the immunisation uptake particularly with older children. The looked after children health team are reliant on obtaining children and young people's immunisation status from a variety of health partners which can be challenging as they may have experienced multiple changes in address before coming into care.

The looked after children health team co-ordinates the health needs of looked after children, ensuring that they have access to the Healthy Child Programme (Department of Health 2012), which provides a framework of universal and targeted services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. Comprehensive initial health assessments and developmental reviews provide opportunities to identify and address any developmental delays.

Where particular health needs are identified the child or young person may be supported by the looked after children health team or where necessary referred on to specialist services. Children with emotional needs are referred to the Clinical Service within the Children and Families Service.

In addition to completing statutory health assessments, the LAC health team offer a range of health-based interventions, health promotion, advice, signposting and referrals. Information is offered to looked after children and their carers to improve their health and well-being. These include dental health, referral and accompaniment of young people to sexual health clinics, support and training to foster carers, smoking cessation and monitoring of weight, growth and development.

The looked after children health team also provides drop-in sessions to social workers on a fortnightly basis, attends panels within Children's Social Care to advise on children's health status and needs and ensures every child has a health plan which clearly sets out how any identified health needs will be addressed.

% looked after children who had an up to date dental check

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Hackney	87%	83%	74%
Statistical neighbour average	90%	85%	Not yet published
England	86%	84%	Not yet published

74% of looked after children had an up to date dental check in 2016/17, a decrease from 83% in 2015/16 and lower than the statistical neighbour average of 85% and the national average of 84%.

Advice about dental health and hygiene is considered and promoted at each health assessment. The date of the last dental check is sought from the carer and young person. Further work is taking place in 2017/18 to improve performance against this indicator.

Placement activity

Placement stability

On the whole, placement stability is associated with better outcomes for children. The indicators below are important measures of the stability of care that children looked after by the local authority experience.

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

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Hackney	9%	13%	18%
Statistical neighbours	10%	11.6%	Not published yet
England	10%	10%	Not published yet

For this indicator, a lower score is indicative of good performance. The percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in one year has increased to 18% in 2016/17, in comparison with last year's performance at 13%. This is higher than the statistical neighbour and the national averages.

Further analysis related to children who experienced multiple placement moves showed that they were generally aged over 13 (40% of this group) and their placement changes were associated with higher levels of need and complexity related to adolescence. Hackney's profile of looked after children continues to change towards an older and more complex group, and placement stability is likely to become more challenging to maintain. Young people in this age group, increasing numbers of whom are entering care for the first time, often come into care at a point of crisis, frequently

at night or at the weekend and are placed in an emergency. Resulting placement changes often happen as a result of carers being unable to meet the complex needs of young people in this age group

26% of the children who experienced 3+ placements had siblings who also moved as placement decisions were made in order to keep siblings together. 13% of the group were under 1 years of age when they became looked after, meaning that for most, their first placement was the hospital where they were born. Subsequent moves can include one move to a mother and baby assessment facility, then a move to a foster carer.

Providing appropriate placements to meet the needs of complex adolescents is a national issue and one which the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium, which Hackney is a member, is working to address by training specialised carers and putting in place better support for these carers.

A placement stability strategy is in place and being implemented throughout 2017-18. The strategy is focusing on: exploring support options across the Children and Families Service; regular reporting on placement stability; undertaking audit activity; strengthening policies and procedures around placement planning and stabilising placements; and developing business cases for new initiatives to provide additional support to young people at risk of placement changes. Placement stability continues to be a challenge for the service in the current year and will remain an area of focus into next year. The impact of this strategy will be closely monitored.

Percentage of looked after children aged under 16 looked after continuously for at least 2½ years who have been living in the same placement for at least 2 years (or placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with previous placement lasting for at least 2 years) as at 31st March

	2015	2016	2017
Hackney	61%	60%	69%
Statistical neighbours	66.5%	68.5%	Not published yet
England	68%	68%	Not published yet

Please note that due to changes to the definition in 2014/15 by the Department for Education, data for 2015 onwards is not comparable with previous years.

The purpose of this indicator is to demonstrate the long-term stability for children. For this performance indicator a higher score is indicative of good performance. Instability for children is associated with poor outcomes, often disrupting children’s education, their access to services and threatening friendships established in a previous placement or school. It is important that placements are sufficiently matched to children’s needs, are of sufficient quality, and are well supported, if placement breakdown is to be prevented.

Hackney’s performance for this indicator in 2017 has increased to 69% compared to performance in 2016 at 60%. This is higher than the national average of 68% and the

statistical neighbor average of 68.5% in 2016. Most placement moves are carefully planned, with the majority of children continuing to reside in their new placement more than 12 months after the move.

When this indicator is viewed alongside the indicator for children who experienced 3+ placements within one year, it seems surprising that long term stability is increasing, while there is a greater incidence of children experiencing 3+ placement moves. However, a greater number of children are entering care for the first time at an older age, and these children are experiencing higher levels of placement moves. Those children who have entered care at a younger age, are experiencing more stable placements.

Placement location and type

There are many reasons why some looked after children are placed away from Hackney. Whilst availability of placements is a factor, some young people need to live out of area to help keep them safe from harm or from dangerous influences closer to home. Others may need specialist care that is not available in all local authority areas, or long-term foster placements that may be in short supply. Some looked after children move out of area so that they can live with brothers and sisters, or to be cared for by relatives who are approved as foster carers.

Of the 371 children looked after by Hackney at March 2017, 91 (25%) were placed in Hackney - compared to last year, this is an increase in the number of children at 82, but the same proportion of 25%. 298 (80%) of the total looked after children were placed in London local authorities (including Hackney, and neighbouring and non-neighbouring boroughs). 68 children (18%) were placed in neighbouring local authorities (Waltham Forest, Newham, Haringey, Islington, Tower Hamlets or City), and 212 (57%) 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 Surrey. These figures are consistent with other London boroughs.

Placement location of looked after children, as at 31st March 2017

Placement location	Number of looked after children
Hackney	91 (25%)
Neighbouring London local authority	68 (18%)
Other London local authority	139 (37%)
Local authority adjoining London	35 (9%)
Other 'at a distance' local authority	38 (10%)
Total	371

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.

Number of looked after children by placement type, as at 31 March 2017

Placement type	Number of looked after children
Foster placements	288 (78%)
Placed for adoption	10 (3%)
Placement with parents	7 (2%)
Residential (children's homes)	21 (6%)
Secure unit	1 (0%)
Semi-independent	38 (19%)
Youth Offender Institution*	3 (0%)
Family Centre or Mother & Baby Unit	1(0%)
Residential school	0 (0%)
Other	2 (1%)
Total	371

** Since December 2012 all young people remanded to custody automatically become looked after children (under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012).*

The vast majority of looked after children are in foster placements (78%). Hackney has a low number of children in residential placements (children's homes), with 21 children in residential placements at 31st March 2017. There has however been an increase in the number of children in residential placement compared to last year, with 21 children in residential placements at 31st March 2017, compared to 13 children at 31st March 2016

The use of residential placements is linked to the number of older young people coming into care, some with very concerning behaviour who struggle to adapt to living in an alternative family environment and for whom it is very difficult to find the right accommodation. Hackney has fewer young people in residential care than the national average due to a conscious decision to only use residential care where we cannot offer a placement in a family setting. There are no children's homes in Hackney therefore any residential placements used will be outside of the borough and carefully matched to a young person's needs. Where a residential placement is considered the 'best fit' for a young person, the service aims to move them on as soon as possible through careful care planning with a long term ambition for family life (at home or within a foster placement). The use of residential placements is continually monitored, which includes regular visiting, and scrutinised by senior managers within the service.

One young person was placed in secure accommodation on welfare grounds during 2016/17. The young person was very vulnerable to sexual exploitation and was placed in secure accommodation for their own safety and to reduce the risk of them absconding. During this time the Service was carefully planning the young person's next placement to match their needs. The Service continues to evaluate the effectiveness of using secure accommodation.

Placement costs

Average weekly marginal cost of selected placement types as at 31 March 2017

Placement type	Average weekly cost as at 31 March 2017
In-house foster placements	£436
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements	£886
Residential placements	£3,554
Secure welfare placements	£5,310

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

There was a slight reduction in the volume and total cost of Independent Fostering Agency placements and in-house foster care in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16.

There has also been an increase in cost of semi-independent under 18 and over 18 placements, although the numbers have remained steady for under 18 and slightly decreased for over 18 between 2015-16 and 2016-17. The impact of these and other changes are indicated in the tables below.

Comparative analysis of actual spend in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial years

Looked After Children	2015/16		2016/17 Outturn		Difference	
	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Outturn (£)
In-house Foster Care	72	1,639,553	72	1,541,460	0	-98,093
Independent Foster Carers	156	6,966,295	151	6,865,545	-5	-100,750
Family & Friends	27	512,224	30	533,765	3	21,541
Residential Care Placements	10	2,178,980	20	3,660,697	10	1,481,717
Semi Independent (<18)	24	956,714	24	1,009,312	0	52,598

Permanency	2015/16		2016/17		Difference	
Placement activity	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Outturn (£)
Adoption Allowances	132.16	1,139,760	126	1,097,862	-6.16	-41,898
Residence Order Allowances	73.95	274,250	72	309,608	-1.95	35,358
Special Guardianship Allowance	170.73	1,489,635	190	1,446,394	19.27	-43,241

Leaving Care	2015/16		2016/17		Difference	
Placement activity	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Final Volume	Final Outturn (£)	Volume	Outturn (£)
Semi Independent (18+)	53	1,187,405	47	1,434,179	-6	246,774
Staying Put	16	249,388	20	309,812	4	60,424
Overstayers	16	290,491	22	419,235	6	128,744

Foster carer recruitment

Recruitment of foster carers continues to be a priority for Children's Social Care and the foster carer recruitment and retention strategy is steering an ongoing drive to increase the number of in-house foster carers available to provide care for Hackney's looked after children. A priority within this is ensuring rigorous assessment of foster carers and a strong training offer for foster carers including access to social pedagogy training.

The foster carer recruitment and retention strategy's deliverables are monitored monthly by the Sufficiency Strategy Board.

In 2016/17, the Service recruited 18 new mainstream in-house foster carer households against a target of 20. This is an increase on the 11 new mainstream in-house foster carer households recruited in 2015/16. 5 'connected person' carers (a family member or friend with a prior connection to the child) were approved by Hackney in 2016/17.

The number of resignations and terminations of mainstream in-house foster carers was low, with only 8 during 2016/17 compared to 15 during 2015/16.

Foster carer recruitment and retention continues to be regularly monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board.

Additional support for looked after children

Independent visitors

An independent visitors service is available to Hackney looked after children, whether they are placed in Hackney or outside of the borough. The service is provided by Action for Children and there were 30 children matched to visitors at the end of March 2017. There are currently 9 children waiting to be matched to an independent visitor, however there are a number of approved volunteers ready to be allocated, so it is anticipated that children will not be waiting for an extended period.

The independent visitor service recruits volunteers who befriend, support and advise looked after children and young people. A careful matching process takes place to understand the interests of the young people and the independent visitor - they may share a hobby, sport or interest. The project provides induction, training, support groups and supervision for the volunteers. A monthly drop-in session is held at the Hackney Service Centre for staff to discuss referrals or share information with the Referral Coordinator from Action for Children.

Social workers refer young people to the service when they think a young person would benefit from developing a supportive relationship with an independent person. The service is explained to young people and the young person makes the final decision about whether they would like to be matched with an independent visitor.

Independent visitors have contact with a young person at least once a month including telephone calls, text message conversations and taking part in fun activities. Many of the young people currently matched with an independent visitor are teenagers. Most matches last a few years and usually come to a natural end point as young people get older and lead more independent lives themselves. Some of the relationships with independent visitors that the current group of young people have developed will continue after these young people have turned 18 by agreement.

Clinical services

Hackney's in-house Clinical Service provides specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) support to looked after children and care leavers.

The Clinical Service undertakes specialist assessments of parenting, child mental health, attachment relationships, autistic spectrum conditions, ADHD, self-harm, problem sexualised behaviour, learning and neuro-developmental difficulties, and trauma. A significant number of these assessments were completed as expert psychological assessments for the Family Courts. These assessments support social work assessments of need and risk and interventions. Further information about the Clinical Service can be found on page 21.

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 2016/17 was 15. This is slightly above the national average score for looked after children of 14 for 2015/16. 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

In 2016/17 a total of 19 Hackney children were adopted; an increase from the 16 children adopted in 2015/16.

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

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Hackney	10 (6%)	15 (8%)	19 (9%)
Statistical neighbour average	20 (9%)	19 (9%)	Not yet published

Note *The table above includes data published by the Department for Education. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 (excluding 2017 figures).*

Of the 19 children adopted in Hackney last year, 8 were boys and 11 were girls. 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). Hackney has increased the number of children being adopted over the past three years, even considering that children entering care in Hackney are older than the national profile, with more complex needs (see page 25), and the judiciary continue to show reluctance in granting Adoption Orders, preferring to keep children within their families.

Age breakdown of children’s age at the time of the Adoption Order being granted (2016/17)

Age (in years)	Number of children
1	10
2	1
3	1
4	2
5	3
6	1
7	1
Total	19

As at 31st March 2017, 16 children were placed with their adoptive family but an Adoption Order had not yet been granted (please refer to appendix 4 for further

information). A further 20 children had a formal plan for adoption but had not yet been placed with an adoptive family.

As at 31st March 2017, there were 10 children in adoptive placements. 5 had Adoption Order applications before the court and 4 had been placed within the last few months and therefore an application for an Adoption Order could not be made as the child must be placed for 10 weeks with an adoptive family before this can happen. 1 child was placed in September 2016 and the family are receiving additional clinical support prior to submitting their application.

During 2016/17, the children who have been adopted have generally been placed quickly with adopters, with most children waiting on average 4 months from the time the Placement Order (please refer to appendix 4) has been granted to the date they moved in with their adoptive families. For one sibling group of 4 children and one child with complex health needs, finding families to meet their needs took longer, but these children have now been successfully placed with their adoptive families.

Recruiting adopters

6 adopters were approved in 2016/17. As at 31st March 2017, 8 Hackney adoptive families who were previously approved by the Adoption Panel have had Adoption Orders granted for their children. 3 adoptive families are currently being assessed at Stage 1, and 2 at Stage 2 of the adoption assessment process. 4 adoptive families who have children placed with them are being supported and there are 5 adoptive families who are approved but do not yet have children placed with them. These families are actively 'family finding'. All other families currently being supported by the Adoption Unit have either had children placed with them or are linked to children and are waiting for the placement to be approved.

Since November 2013 Hackney has been a member of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington). The consortium 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.

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 well-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.

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 team provides support to adoptive parents, their children and birth family members in a variety of ways, for up to three years post-Adoption Order. Following this, the duty to provide support is the responsibility of the local authority where the child resides. This support includes: supporting birth families to remain in touch where this is in the best interests of the child; ongoing therapeutic support; financial reviews in regard to adoption allowances; intervention to prevent the disruption of an adoption; a support phone line; Adoption Support Reviews three years after an Adoption Order has been granted; life story work with children; support to adopted adults to access their records and intermediary services with birth families and adopted adults. The Service also commissions support with Consortium partners in the form of therapeutic services, training, and education support to families. Support is also provided to adoptive families through the Post Adoption Centre. This support includes helplines, counselling, independent support groups, training and outreach centres.

Regionalisation of adoption services

Detailed proposals are being developed for the regionalisation of adoption services in London. As at August 2017, 26 London local authorities have formally committed to participate in a regionalised service; most of the remaining authorities are considering partnerships with neighbouring authorities outside of London. The regional adoption agency will be responsible for the recruitment and preparation of prospective adopters together with the provision of post-adoption support. It is envisaged that the regional arrangements will be in place by 2019.

Special Guardianship Order support

The Post-Permanency team works with families who are caring for children under Special Guardianship Orders. During 2016/17, 15 children and young people became subject to Special Guardianship Orders, the same number as last year. 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.

The service works with all SGO cases for three years following an order being granted and provides support by: making SGO support payments; undertaking financial reviews until the child is 18; providing contact support; preparing carers for SGOs; establishing an SGO support group for families and training staff on SGOs and support plans. The Post-Permanency team is working with Consortium partners to provide training for families with an SGO. The Adoption Support Fund includes SGO applications. The Post-Permanency team and The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust have developed an intervention programme named Video Intervention, Positive Parenting, which will support SGO and adoptive parents in the early stages of placement.

'I personally want to take this time to thank you all for the support, encouragement and training you have given myself to support and care for [my child] throughout the past two years.'

Thank you from a Special Guardian to the Post Permanency team

The Therapeutic Life Story Project

Life story work is important for adopted children and those who will become adopted, to help them and their families understand their history, including how they came to be in care. It can be used as a therapeutic tool for those families with a high level of need.

A Therapeutic Life Story Project in Hackney has been funded through £150,000 from the Government Adoption Support Fund. This was granted in order to provide training to adopters; produce life story books for adopted children whose book needed updating or creating; and in cases with a high level of need, offering direct therapeutic intervention for adoptive families.

Adoption Plus, a specialist adoption support organisation, was commissioned to run the project with Hackney Post Permanency and Adoption Services. The project focused on training parents, providing a new life story book completed by a social worker from Hackney with regular consultation provided by Adoption Plus and direct therapeutic work led by one of two specialist life story practitioners from Adoption Plus.

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. The July 2016 Ofsted SIF inspection found that *'the support that care leavers receive is outstanding'*.

265 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported by the Leaving Care Service, as at March 2017, a 6% increase compared to 250 at the same point in March 2016.

64 care leavers aged over 21 years were being supported at the end of March 2017. This is slightly lower than the end of March 2016 when 66 care leavers aged over 21 years were being supported by the Leaving Care Services.

Housing is a significant issue for care leavers and the Leaving Care Service has been active in a number of areas to ensure young people are accommodated in suitable provision, with an established working group to ensure that Hackney continues to provide excellent support for young people as they transition to independence. This group includes membership from other services across the Council as well as partner agencies such as the Housing Service, Job Centre Plus, health, Hackney Learning Trust, Probation and Young Hackney. The working group delivers a number of

initiatives to benefit young people across a range of issues they need most support with, such as housing, probation and benefits. The Setting-Up Home Allowance of £2,000 helps young people purchase required items for their permanent home, including white goods and furniture.

The percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 who were in suitable accommodation in 2016/17 was 75%, a decrease from 80% last year and lower than the statistical neighbour and national averages, both of which were at 83% for 2015/16.

Staying Put arrangements

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 31st March 2017, 17 young people were living in Staying Put arrangements, compared to 27 young people at the end of March 2016.

Permanent social housing

Each year the Leaving Care Service is provided with a quota of permanent housing stock which young people are able to bid for. Care leavers are nominated for a tenancy as they become ready, being offered a probationary tenancy for 1 year. Care leavers are offered support sessions in Young Hackney hubs to manage the transition to independent living, with Housing Service representatives on hand to guide them through housing processes. It is possible that the quota for Council housing tenancies for care leavers may reduce in future years due to the lack of available social housing stock in Hackney. The Children and Families Service are currently working with the Council's Housing Service to ensure that housing for care leavers is prioritised within any future changes.

Young Hackney

Young Hackney is the Council's early help, prevention and diversion service for children and young people aged 6-19 years old and up to 25 years if the young person has a special education need or disability. The service works with young people to support their development and transition to adulthood by intervening early to address adolescent risk, develop pro-social behaviours and build resilience. The service also encompasses Troubled Families and the Youth Justice Service (see page 56).

While the service is open and universal in terms of youth hub activities and participation, there are priority groups that the service places an emphasis on engaging, including:

- Those displaying persistent disruptive behaviour
- Those at risk of disengaging from learning or who are at risk of exclusion from school

- Young people not in education, training or employment (NEET)
- Young people who offend, are at risk of offending or who are victims or perpetrators of violence
- Those who display harmful sexual behaviour or who are at risk of sexual exploitation
- Those whose physical or emotional health and wellbeing are at risk
- Those missing from home or education
- Looked after children and care leavers
- Young people with additional needs
- Young carers
- Culturally-specific groups (Young Hackney also commissions culturally specific work, for example from Interlink, North London Muslim Community Centre and London Gypsy and Traveller Unit)

Young Hackney's approach to early help is based on a systemic understanding of the key relationships in a child or young person's life and, in particular, the critical influence of peers and family members. The service offers outcome-focused, time-limited interventions through universal plus and targeted services designed to reduce or prevent problems from escalating or becoming entrenched and then requiring intervention by Children's Social Care. Children and young people are also encouraged to engage with universal opportunities through Young Hackney's network of youth hubs and commissioned projects. This allows them to join a range of peer groups engaged in positive activities and allows staff to monitor progress and sustain support. Young Hackney's approach of early help in the context of youth work has been commended by Ofsted and Partnership for Young London. Young Hackney is also contributing to the Council-wide work on improving outcomes for young black men, focusing on how to raise aspirations through youth work and work-related learning.

'I also want to mention what a change myself and [my colleague] have noticed in James since his weekly meetings with [...] Young Hackney. He is much more focused and is dealing with his emotions in a mature manner which is also having a positive impact on his work. Furthermore, there have been situations where I have expected him to answer back, be rude and get himself into trouble but he has surprised me, stayed calm and dealt with them sensibly. Thank you again, it really does make a big difference.'

Feedback from a school about Young Hackney

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. Staff at the youth hubs offer structured activities to aid children and young people's social and emotional development and help develop their decision-making and critical-thinking skills. Two of the youth hubs are managed by Young Hackney (Forest Road and The Edge) and

three are commissioned to the community and voluntary sector (Hoxton Hall, Stoke Newington and Concorde). Positive activities are also delivered through adventure playgrounds and community sector youth clubs. All children and young people are able to access Young Hackney's universal services regardless of their needs.

During 2016/17, there were 68,599 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years recorded at the 5 Young Hackney Hubs, a 17% increase compared to 58,656 for 2015/16. There were 149,527 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years during 2016/17 at the wider youth provision delivered through Young Hackney and commissioned services for young people. This is a 24% increase compared to 2015/16 when there were 120,503 attendances by named children and young people.

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 5 adventure playgrounds in Hackney which are open all year and attended by young people aged 6 to 15. In 2016/17, there were 19,255 attendances from children and young people at Hackney Marsh and Shoreditch adventure playgrounds.

Youth and school sports

Government statistics report that almost 15% of children in Hackney are obese compared to the national average of 9%, 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 and Paralympic 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. There is a focus on inclusive, and non-traditional Olympic and Paralympic sports and the unit delivers and manages sports sessions all over the borough based on the needs of young people.

The impact of the Youth and School Sports Unit has been significant in engaging children and young people in the borough, providing them with activities, competitions and volunteering and leadership opportunities. In 2016/17, 9,033 attendances by children and young people were recorded. There are significantly more young people participating but these are not yet reflected in figures due to the nature of delivery and accessibility of schools data; this reporting mechanism is currently being developed. The Council's Public Health service has also commissioned the Unit to deliver all health and sport related work with children and young people, such as the Health Heroes and Personal Best programmes which focus on healthy eating and encouraging the least active students to exercise

Individual Support - 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 300-350 young people through the Early Help team providing tailored individual support. In 2016/17, there were 786 attendances across secondary schools and alternative education providers in Hackney. 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

Sayid was referred to Young Hackney from the Children and Young People's Partnership Panel after coming to the attention of the Police as part of a group linked to mobile phone theft. Sayid's school noted that Sayid was intelligent, but his attendance was very low. Young Hackney were asked to work with Sayid to divert his from the risk of offending and increase his attendance at school.

Sayid was allocated a Young Hackney Worker, who met with the whole family. Sayid's family were open to support, and at the first visit by the worker explained that Sayid was staying out late, not contacting his parents and his father in particular found it very difficult that Sayid was not attending school regularly. Sayid was reluctant to engage with his worker who noted that Sayid was a good footballer. The worker initially tried to undertake fitness sessions with Sayid as well as look into football opportunities to build a rapport between them.

The intervention plan focussed on keeping Sayid safe and increasing his school attendance. Sayid's school decided that a new start might help reframe his experiences and arranged a placement at the Boxing Academy. This placement worked very well, Sayid was very motivated by sports and the opportunity to play football. Sayid was also very academic and through his regular attendance at school, was able to catch up with GCSE's. Through the Boxing Academy the Young Hackney Worker was able to gain Sayid's trust and met him for community based sessions, working to keep himself safe and stay away from gang associated young people.

The intervention plan then shifted to focus on his future and his relationship with his parents. The worker carried out careers sessions with Sayid to support his ambition to become a football player, but also supported him to understand his academic potential. Sayid responded positively to these sessions and has since completed college applications.

The worker was also able to reflect with Sayid on his relationship with his parents. The worker suggested Sayid learned about the country where his parents grew up, as well as cultural and language differences. These sessions allowed Sayid to understand his parents' journey to the UK and their efforts to work and provide for him. From this work Sayid has a deeper respect for his parents and a better understanding of their expectations. This work

coupled with Sayid's positive behaviour reports from school have contributed to a much calmer and happier home environment. Sayid completed his GCSEs and received an offer from a Football Club to attend their BTEC sports course.

Prevention and diversion

Prevention and diversion 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 the police can agree to deal with the matter outside of court. Prevention and diversion 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. In 2016/17, the team supported young people through 192 out of court disposals compared to 171 in 2015/16.

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 are beneficial to the local community.

Substance Misuse Team

The Substance Misuse Team supports children and young people aged 6-25 years, both those who are directly affected by substance misuse, or affected through their parent's misuse. The team raises awareness about the dangers of substance misuse and drug dealing and develops targeted support plans for young people. Interventions take a tailored and holistic approach that builds young people's resilience and addresses issues of family and relationships, finances, education and housing, while liaising with other services and partners as necessary. Over 2016/17, the Team worked with 216 people on a targeted basis and delivered outreach sessions that attracted 3,199 anonymous attendees.

Health and Wellbeing Team

In October 2016, Young Hackney set up a Health and Wellbeing Team to deliver a holistic, child-centred, prevention-focused health and wellbeing education service. The service aims to build the knowledge, self-esteem and resilience of all children and young people in Hackney and the City of London aged 5-19 years, and up to 25 years for those with additional needs, to enable them to lead healthier and safer lives both now and in the future. The team provides a universal and targeted service, delivering advice and information; signposting; health promotion and awareness raising; and health education.

The Health and Wellbeing Team supports the Council in relation to statutory duties to provide sexual health services by delivering a comprehensive Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) offer for young people.

There were 1,031 attendances by named individuals and 3,065 anonymous attendances at the outreach education sessions delivered by the Health and Wellbeing Team in 2016/17.

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 panellists, 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, 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.

Work related learning and accreditation

Work related learning broadens young people's perception of the options open to them after they leave school or college. Staff provide workshops, events and individual support to enable young people to explore potential routes to employment and develop additional skills that will help them in the job market. Many programmes link to accreditation, leadership or volunteering opportunities, which help young people develop a greater sense of purpose, belonging and self-worth. Young Hackney participated in the Hackney 100 scheme, offering work experience and apprenticeships to young people in the field of communications, youth work and business operations. Young Hackney continue to offer apprenticeships to young people as a means to advance their skills and support entry to working life.

Through Young Hackney, young people also gain qualifications through Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses, National Governing Bodies (NGB) sports awards or the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

The Young Hackney volunteer programme was launched in June 2016 and as at the end of March 2017, 61 volunteers have supported one-off events organised by Young Hackney, and there were 6 volunteers working across Young Hackney teams.

At the end of March 2017, Young Hackney offered 3 students from London Metropolitan University placements as part of their BA in Youth Studies. 8 young people aged 14-16 completed 2 weeks of work experience with Young Hackney and Young Hackney have successfully trained 5 apprenticeships in Youth Work (level 3) as part of the Hackney apprenticeship scheme.

School support

Young Hackney works closely with schools to support the delivery of the core Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme as well as to support behaviour management interventions. A curriculum has been developed that is delivered in schools and focuses on topics such as healthy relationships, substance misuse, e-safety and youth participation and citizenship. The majority of secondary schools in Hackney have an allocated Young Hackney team who will work with them to identify students who require additional support to participate and achieve. If schools identify students who would benefit from individual support, Young Hackney will create an appropriate intervention with the school.

Family Units and the Troubled Families programme

On 5th October 2015 the remodelled Family Support Service became operational. The Units are primarily social work led delivering targeted support to families in need of additional and/or intensive support, including those identified as 'Troubled Families'.

At the end of 2016, the Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) was launched to deliver support to families under the Hackney Troubled Families programme. MAST offers support to families for 6 months on a voluntary basis, with a tailored support package to help families with health services, learning services, parenting support, relationship services, and employment. MAST is staffed by multi-agency specialists from Family Support, probation, primary health, adult mental health and adult substance misuse services

In September 2015 Hackney joined the Expanded Troubled Families Programme which requires Hackney to identify, work with and turnaround 3,720 (reduced to 3,510 in May 2015) families meeting a minimum of two of six headline criteria:

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

Hackney agreed to work with 1,896 families in year 1 and 2 (September 2015-March 2017), and has met this target. This leaves 1,614 families to be worked with until the programme concludes in March 2020.

The multi-agency Troubled Families Steering Group meets quarterly and has overseen a number of service developments including the Troubled Families Outcomes Plan which sets out the measurement of significant and sustained progress against met criteria, service transformation and data sharing.

Domestic violence

From April 2017, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) joined the Children and Families Service as part of the Early Help and Prevention Service. DAIS works with anyone experiencing domestic abuse who is living in Hackney, aged 16 or over, of any sex and gender, and of any sexual orientation. The service assesses need; provides information and support on legal and housing rights; supports service users with court attendance; supports service users to obtain legal protection; and works with service users and other professionals to address their needs. The service also works with perpetrators of domestic abuse to try to reduce risk. Information about the DAIS will be included in future reports.

Youth Justice Service

The Youth Justice Service works with all young people in Hackney who are arrested or convicted of crimes and undertakes youth justice work including bail and remand supervision and supervising young people who have been given community or custodial sentences. The Service covers all aspects of post-court youth justice processes, from bail supervision to life licence supervision and all statutory orders in between, and young people are supported by a multi-agency team including a Forensic Psychologist, the Virtual School, Speech and Language Therapists, the Police, a Nurse, Probation Services, a Substance Misuse Worker and a Dealing Officer. A focus on crime prevention and diversion activities throughout the year, alongside the extensive Young Hackney and community based provision offer, has helped to divert young people before they enter the youth justice system and has helped to keep the rate of first time entrants (FTE) per 100,000 young people below the rates seen by our comparator London YOTs.

The number of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time in Hackney has increased from 103 young people in 2015/16 to 114 in 2016/17. There is a growth in crime across London, and a growth of FTEs in younger teenagers aged 13-15, and this is also reflected in the rise experienced in Hackney. There has been a rise in offences including weapon carrying and more parents are using the police to respond to domestic incidents.

Overall, Hackney has a relatively low proportion of 10-18 year olds involved in the youth justice system, and a low number of remands and custodial sentences. The number of young people re-offending in Hackney within a 12 month period has fallen over the last year, from 75 at the end of March 2016 to 68 at the end of March 2017 cohort. Similarly, the number of re-offences per offender has decreased compared to last year. However the number of re-offences per reoffender is slightly higher at the end of March 2017 at 3.1, compared to 3.0 at the end of March 2016; this is due to a small number of young people with complex problems who reoffend more frequently.

The use of custodial sentences has decreased in 2016/17 with only 6.6% of all sentences being custodial in 2016/17, compared to 10.3% in 2015/16. This can be attributed to young people at risk of custody being provided with robust community sentence proposals and extended curfews. This has increased the confidence of the court that the Hackney Youth Justice Service can offer effective alternatives to a custodial sentence.

Education can be a strong protective factor for young people at risk of offending. The Youth Justice Service has a strong focus on securing access to education, training and employment and is supported the Virtual School. At the end of March 2017, 94.7% of young offenders were attending and engaging in full time education, training or employment.

The Youth Justice Service Book club began in September 2016, and is a simple, low-cost project that aims to enrich the daily experiences of children and young people in custody, offering an alternative form of engagement. Initially available to young people aged 12-17 held in an institution whilst on remand or whilst serving a custodial sentence, at any one time, up to 15 young people in Hackney fall within this criteria and all have engaged with the Book Club. The young people read more than they had previously and share the material with other inmates. The club has now begun to expand to children who are supervised in the community, extending the reach of the club to 140 young people.

The Disabled Children Service

The Disabled Children Service (DCS) is part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) service within Hackney Learning Trust. It operates a social model of disability in offering assessment and intervention in line with the Children Act to families who are experiencing crises due to the disability of their child and or social isolation as a result of their child's disability in accessing universal or targeted services. All referrals for an assessment from DCS are made through the First Access Screening Team (see page 11).

At the end of March 2017, the service was working with 248 children and young people. This is an increase compared to March 2016 when the service was working with 233 children and young people.

The following tables show breakdowns by age group and type of disability for the 248 children that were open to the service at the end of 2016/17. Of the 248 children, 173 were male and 75 were female.

Age and disability breakdown for cases open to the Disabled Children Service, as at 31 March 2017

Age	Number of children
5 or under	29
6 - 8	44
9-11	40
12-14	58
15+	77
Total	248

Type of disability	Number of children
Physical disability	137
Learning disability	55
Both learning and physical disability	41
Down's syndrome	15
Total	248

Personalised budgets

Personalisation remains a cornerstone in providing service users with choice and control over their lives, particularly in how their needs are met within the DCS, as many families want more control over their lives and the opportunity to choose their own provision to meet family circumstances when it best suits them.

The Children and Family Act 2014 advocates the use of personal budgets, so that disabled children, young people and their carers are supported to be able to plan and spend their budget as they choose. The service uses a Resource Allocation System (RAS) for first time entrants to the DCS to support with transparency in personal budgets and support planning. The aim is to use the RAS for all families at review stage once further training for staff has occurred.

Number of families choosing to use Direct Payments as personalised budgets to receive care through the Disabled Children Service

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Number of families	70	64	82

There has been an increase in Direct Payment allocation and usage this year compared to 2015/16, reflecting an increase in families who want more freedom to choose how to manage their care package.

The DCS works closely with the Children's Community Nursing Team (CCNT) from Homerton University Hospital and many of their Personal Health Budgets are joint-funded with the DCS. There were 23 CCNT packages in place at the end of March 2017.

Short breaks

Short breaks are defined as any service or activity outside of school hours which gives the family of a disabled child or young person a break from their caring responsibilities, and gives the disabled child or young person an enjoyable experience. Eligible provision therefore includes both targeted and specialist provision and mainstream activities outside school hours, for example holiday play schemes, after school clubs or one to one outreach support. There are currently seven commissioned short break providers in Hackney, including providers offering support specifically within the Orthodox Jewish community.

Although there has been a year on year increase in the uptake of Short Breaks in Hackney as shown in the table below, further analysis of the data for 2016/17 shows that not all families who have been assigned to a provision are actually accessing and using this provision. In 2016/17, of 1,193 young people known to Short Breaks, 769 were accessing provision. Letters have been sent to families who are not using provision to understand the reasons for this and prompt those families who have not selected provision to do so.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Number of young people accessing Short Breaks provision	840	1,081	1,193

There has been increased demand for Individual Budgets, as families opt to receive a personalised budget direct from the Council to purchase provision to suit their family situation. More than half of the families currently receive funding through the Individual Budgets programme in Hackney. This is a cash value amount for families to buy their own provision which they record in a receipt book for audit purposes. Families use the Short Breaks website and a list of providers that other families have used to help get ideas and decide how to spend their budgets. Families have used Individual Budgets to tailor activities to their child including: driving lessons, swimming sessions, music lessons, visiting Legoland, drama clubs, dancing lessons as well as paying for a carer.

Transition

During 2016-17, 18 young people transitioned from children's to adult's services as they reached the age of 18. Work is underway to strengthen transitions processes to ensure that joint planning is effectively managed.

If a young person is not likely to be eligible for support from Adult Services then the Disabled Children Service will link the family with transition health services to provide other support.

Private Fostering update

A child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) who is cared for, or proposed to be cared for, and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or close relative for 28 days or more is described as being privately fostered. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. They may also be from extended family such as a cousin or great-aunt.

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

Overview of activity 2015/16

As at the end of March 2017 there were 18 children in private fostering arrangements in Hackney. This is a decrease from the figure of 29 private fostering arrangements in March 2016.

Of the 18 children in private fostering arrangements, 7 were new arrangements which began in 2016/17.

Total number of children in a private fostering arrangement between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, by age

Age (at 31 st March 2017)	Number of children
Under 1	0
1 – 4	0
5 - 9	7
10 - 15	10
16 and over	1
Total	18

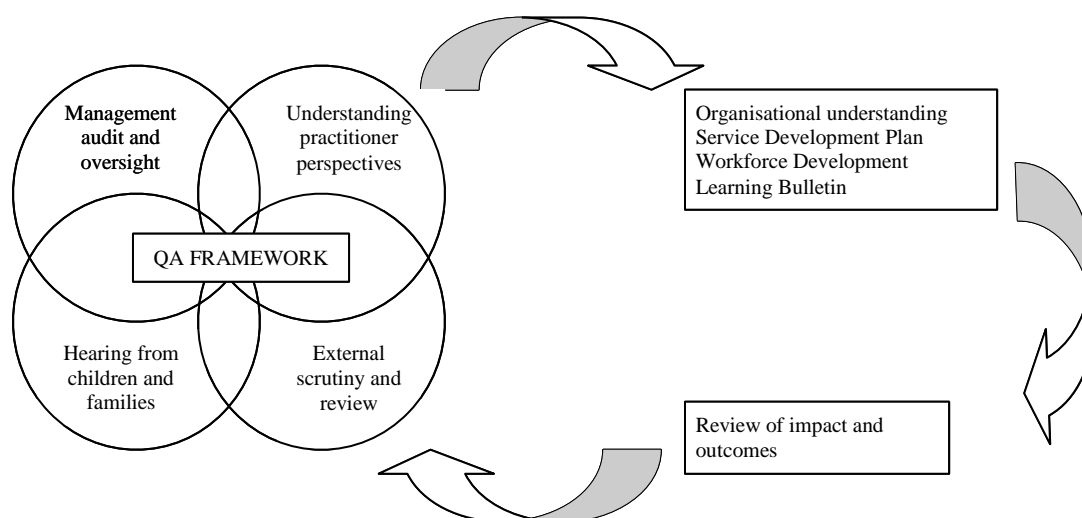
Total number of children in a private fostering arrangement between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, by place of birth

Place of birth	Number of children
UK	5
Europe (other)	5
Africa	7
Asia	1
Middle East	0
Oceania	0
Canada and USA	0
Caribbean, Central and South America	0
Other	0
Total	18

Hackney's leaflets on private fostering for professionals, parents and carers and young people are distributed on a regular basis to relevant groups including schools, GPs, children's centres, faith groups, housing offices and libraries. Lunchtime seminars for the Children and Families Service staff on private fostering continue to take place on a regular basis, and multi-agency private fostering training events are organised through City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

Quality assurance framework

The Children and Families Service is a complex system and many tools are used 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's Social Care. Further information on the activity of this team in 2016/17 is included in the separate Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) annual report.

Management and audit oversight

2016/17 audit programme

The audit programme for 2016/17 has continued with a regular programme of audits being completed by Service Managers and Heads of Service across the Children and Families Service, with a total of 677 audits completed during the year. There has also been an increased focus on themed audits completed within each service area. Trends identified are used to inform themes for future case review days and specific actions arising from audits are incorporated into the Children's and Families 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, (with one joint Children and Families Service case review day held annually, bringing together early help, social care and youth justice services) 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 September 2016 focussed on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). Reviewers found that assessments were thorough and care plans

were outcome-focussed and were reviewed regularly. It was noted that there was not a Personal Education Plan (PEP) on file for each young person. The PEP process was relaunched by the Virtual School in 2016-17 and the use of PEPs is being closely monitored, with significant improvement noted so far.

A case review day in January 2017 looked at placement stability. Reviewers found good examples of partnership working and good clinical support offered to the young people and their carers. Placement planning and placement stability meetings were highlighted as areas requiring improvement. The learning from this case review day has fed into the Placement Stability Strategy and action plan for 2017-18 to improve placement stability.

In March 2017, a case review day focused on youth violence, and involved managers and practitioners from across Children's Social Care, Young Hackney and Youth Justice. Reviewers found that assessments considered the needs of young people in relation to increased risk of or vulnerability to violence. In some cases it was found that interventions were having little effect on decreasing risks and vulnerability levels for these young people. Improvement actions have been agreed following this case review day and are being taken forward.

The audit programme for 2017/18 will continue with monthly audits and targeted themed audits as well as quarterly case review days and continued evaluation to ensure audits are effective for all staff across the service.

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 represent their views. In Spring 2016, Hackney's in-house advocacy support for children was strengthened through the development of new Children's Rights Service which offers advocacy, support to young people regarding complaints and independent return home interviews when a young person has gone missing. The Children's Rights Service focusses on ensuring children and young people get the support they need in having their voice heard and participating in the development and direction of the Children and Families Service.

Kiara was referred to Hackney's Children's Rights Service for advocacy to initially support her to understand her Section 20 status (see page 27) and to support her to understand why her social work unit was applying for a full care order. Kiara's advocate aimed to involve her in her care planning and ensure that her wishes and feelings were being considered.

At the point of Kiara's initial advocacy session, she had just experienced a breakdown of her foster carer placement and was being cared for in a residential placement. Kiara spoke to her advocate about the sacrifices her mother had made to bring her up and about her feelings of loyalty to her mother. Kiara explained that she had been unable to settle into her previous foster placement as it felt to her like it would replace her mother and she did not want her mother to feel rejected.

The advocate worked with Kiara to help her articulate her needs, which were: to feel connected to her family; to feel safe; to engage in education and for her care plan to include overnight contact with her mother. Kiara was able to articulate this at her Looked After Child

review that took place a couple of weeks later. Kiara made impressive and significant contributions to her care plan, choosing to have less regular visits with her family, but having longer overnight stays during half term holidays.

Kiara's social work unit applied for a full care order and her advocate helped her to write a letter to the judge overseeing her case to express her wishes and feelings. Kiara felt that as a result of her advocacy she has been heard and has been better able to contribute to her care planning.

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 gives young people the opportunity to have 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. In January 2017, the Hackney Gets Heard Juniors group began for children aged 7-12 year, with older young people attending the Hackney Gets Heard Seniors. Since January 2017, the Juniors have attended activities including workshops around friendship, healthy eating, climbing, baking, and wheelchair basketball. Seniors have attended activities including sessions on budgeting, meal planning, healthy eating, healthy relationships, emotional well-being mental health, attended various trips such as to Breakin Escape Rooms and meals out. Hackney Gets Heard continue to look at ways to better include looked after children living outside of the borough in Hackney Gets Heard activities.

Hackney Gets Heard took part in the recruitment of a number of staff positions in the Children and Families Service as 'young people panels'; this will be developed and expanded over 2017/18. Young people have been involved in consultations with Public Health; consultations around the documentation for new Looked After Child reviews, and reviewing how Child Protection Conferences can be made more child-friendly, including suggesting that children's artwork should be displayed in rooms where conferences are held.

Members of Hackney Gets Heard have been consulted on the priorities of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-19 which have been based on meeting the Hackney Promise to ensure it continues to reflect the views of children and young people. The next youth-led inspection will review Hackney's performance against the Corporate Parenting Strategy priorities and will take place in 2017/18.

Family Feedback

The family feedback programme is being relaunched in the autumn of 2017 with the aim of providing a regular and embedded approach to seeking feedback from children, young people and families on their experiences of the Children and Families Service. Consultation will take place with Hackney Gets Heard and the Hackney Foster Carer Council as part of this.

Workforce development

The provision of high quality services for families and the delivery of improved outcomes for children and young people can only be maintained and improved upon through the continued efforts of a committed and skilled workforce. The Children and Families Service is proud of the carefully recruited staff and culture of learning, negotiation and openness in which they work, but remains aware of the need to further cultivate and refine personnel and working practices, especially given the fast moving and ever changing social, statutory and financial environments in which we operate.

Hackney's model of social work intervention continues to develop and the role of Practice Development Manager (PDM) which was introduced in 2013/14 has now embedded well into the service, with a number of new appointments made in early 2017. The PDM role provides a progression to a higher grade for high performing Consultant Social Workers who are keen to develop their leadership and management skills. Within Children's Social Care we aim to 'grow our own' social care workforce, providing a clear progression route from Qualified Children's Practitioner, to Social Worker, to Consultant Social Worker and then on to Practice Development Manager if staff wish to progress within the organisation.

In February 2017, the Department for Education published data on the children's social work workforce as at 30th September 2016, and linked this with the Child In Need census data return as at March 2016 to provide an estimation of caseload per social worker.

Department for Education published information on children's social work workforce

Table to show number of children in need per children's social worker

	2014	2015	2016
Hackney	18	19	21
Statistical neighbour average	17	16	14
London average	16	16	14
England average	16	15	16

The data published by the Department for Education estimates that Hackney had 21 children in need per children's social worker in 2016. This is higher than the statistical neighbour average of 14 and the national average of 16.

All cases are allocated to the Consultant Social Worker (CSW), or the Practice Development Manager (PDM) within the units. A traditional unit comprises of a CSW, Social Worker (SW), Qualified Children's Practitioner (QCP) and a Unit Coordinator (UC), however the unit sizes differ and change as our practitioners' skills develop or new challenges arise. Units also have access to experienced clinicians who provide additional perspectives.

Within Hackney, children's social workers have access to a wide range of in-house services to support them by undertaking direct work with children and families. These include the Virtual School, Parenting Support, Clinicians and the Family Learning and

Intervention Programme (FLIP). This needs to be taken into consideration when comparing the number of cases per social worker with statistical neighbours and nationally, as where caseloads appear higher, the social worker is undertaking direct work with children and families in conjunction with these other services.

Hackney's vacancy rate at the point of submission of this data to the Department for Education was 22.6% in 2016, a decrease of 1.7% from last year. This is higher than the national average at 16.7% but lower than the statistical neighbour average at 24.1%. There has been continued successful recruitment since September 2016 and the current vacancy rate is 20% as at 26th July 2017, with recruitment and staff progression still ongoing to fill vacant posts. At 55, the number of agency workers remains higher than the statistical neighbour average of 47 and is a slight increase from last year's figure of 53. There has been a concerted effort to recruit high quality social work practitioners and to reduce the number of agency workers across the service. As well as covering vacancies, agency workers are providing maternity cover or backfill for staff seconded to other projects within the Children and Families Service.

Hackney's turnover rate for social workers is much lower at 13.9% in comparison to 25% for our statistical neighbours, and lower than the 15.1% nationally – Hackney is one of the top 30 local authorities in the country in regards to performance against this measure. Hackney has worked hard to retain staff and provide development opportunities to encourage staff to pursue career progression internally.

During 2016/17, the Children and Families Service provided an extensive training and learning programme based on our workforce development strategy and in response to feedback from staff and managers about learning needs and areas identified through organisational learning activities including case audits, family feedback and inspections. The training programme seeks to address knowledge and development needs in relation to emerging local and national themes relating to safeguarding children. In 2016/17 this included training or lunchtime seminars on good practice when communicating with children with autism, speech and language needs, leadership and management, genograms, Prevent, Section 47 investigations, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and honour-based violence, and many more.

Two Practice Development Days were held during the year that all practitioners across the Children and Families Service attended. The Practice Development Days focused on a specific subject and featured expert speakers, with one held in September 2016 on the theme of 'Working Systemically with Family Violence' and the second held in February 2017 on 'Working with Diversity'. Both events were very well attended and received positive feedback.

The workforce development strategy for 2016 -19 has been developed to cover all service areas in the Children and Families Service and has five key priorities: to integrate Young Hackney and Children's Social Care workforce development frameworks and practices; continued development of the Professional Development Programme; embedding leadership across all levels within CFS; continuous improvement of recruitment and retention of CFS staff; and development of Hackney as a centre of excellence in practice. The workforce development strategy is reviewed annually and a revised version will be published in autumn 2017.

[...] is a wonderful Social Worker and is fully invested in Kevin's welfare'.

Feedback about a social worker from a residential home manager

Compliments and complaints

Children's Social Care monitors compliments received from children and families, external bodies and internally. In 2016/17, 22 official compliments were received in comparison to 34 in 2015/16. These compliments are utilised to identify excellence in social work practice, promote achievements and share learning from good practice across the Children and Families Service.

Children's Social Care has a statutory duty to respond to complaints regarding services offered to children and families under the Children Act 1989. Children Act complaints are an opportunity to learn about what is not working as well as it could within the service and to implement change and shift to improve practice.

Over the year the service received 102 new representations, 73 of which (72%) were formalised as complaints under the Children Act, Corporate or Child Protection Conference procedures. A total of 68 new Children Act complaints and 5 new corporate complaints were received in 2016/17. 115 complaint-related representations were received in 2015/16 of which 60 (52%) were formalised as complaints. This represents a decrease in the number of complaint-related representations received, but an increase in the number and percentage that progressed to become formal complaints. Reasons for representations not being pursued as formal complaints include issues being resolved through early intervention, the issue falling outside of statutory remits or the complainant no longer wishing to pursue the matter

In line with last year, the majority of complaints came from parents and guardians (33, or 68%). There has been a decrease in the number of complaints made through advocates on behalf of children and young people, decreasing from 10 (15%) in 2015/16 to 4 (27%) in 2016/17. There has been an increase in the number of complaints from foster carers, increasing from 1 in 2015/16 to 6 in 2016/17.

In 2016/17, the service continued to focus on mediation to resolve complaints early and prevent them from escalating. Of 49 completed Stage 1 complaints, 9 (18%) progressed to Stage 2, with 1 (2%) of these progressing to Stage 3. CFS will continue engaging with complainants at an early stage in an attempt to resolve their issues quickly and without recourse to the statutory process.

Learning from complaints is included in the Workforce Development Plan and Service Development Plan and compliments are used in case studies and themes shared with practitioners through the CFS Learning Bulletin.

Other priorities for the Children and Families Service

Ethnicity and Children's Social Care

The population in Hackney is very diverse with significant numbers of Black African, Black Caribbean, Black British, Turkish, Kurdish and Charedi (Orthodox) Jewish children. There are over 100 languages spoken in the borough. Hackney and the City of London have a higher proportion of pupils being educated in independent schools (25%) than across London (10%) or nationally (7%).

The 0-19 population is projected to increase across Hackney over the period 2014-2020, but the increase is not geographically uniform. The greatest increases are projected in the Stamford Hill area of Hackney, where there is a high birth rate, and annual growth of 4.2%.

Ethnicity breakdown of Child Protection Plans and looked after children, at 31 March 2017

Ethnicity	Children subject to Child Protection Plans (2017)	Looked after children (2017)	Total Hackney under 18 population*
White	31%	29%	55%
Mixed	18%	19%	6%
Asian or Asian British	11%	5%	11%
Black or Black British	37%	42%	23%
Other ethnic groups	3%	5%	5%

* Total under 18 population ethnicity breakdown from Hackney 2011 census return

When compared to the percentage ethnicity breakdown of the Hackney population taken from the 2011 census, there is clear disproportionality in the ethnic representation of the Child Protection and looked after children population compared to the general population. Much research has been undertaken about disproportionality in the ethnicity of looked after children in the care system in England compared to the general population. Owen and Statham's report on *Disproportionality in Child Welfare* (2009) is widely referenced in relation to this issue and shows that children from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds are usually over-represented in the care system and in the children in need statistics in England, with children from Asian backgrounds usually under-represented.

Hackney's Child Protection and looked after population follows this national pattern, but also has under-representation of children from white backgrounds. There is a particularly low representation of children from the Charedi Jewish community who make up approximately 20% of the borough's under 18 population overall. It is difficult to establish definitive reasons for disproportionality in the ethnicity of families accessing the Children and Families Service in Hackney, however the Service aims to ensure that it operates within the context of the community and develops culturally competent services that promote good outcomes for all children and families.

The Hackney Young Black Men (YBM) programme has been established to address outcomes for YBM which tend to be disproportionately lower in a wide range of areas including: educational achievement, health and wellbeing, employment and housing

and criminal justice. A partnership group, chaired by the Deputy Mayor (who is also the Lead Member for Children's Services), is working to identify and deliver solutions that address the complex underlying issues that contribute to this disproportionality.

As at August 2017, Young Hackney has successfully delivered Racial Identity Training (from an African Perspective) for all staff as a baseline of understanding, language and framing of what drives inequalities. Parental engagement events were held in June and July in conjunction with the Hackney Council for Voluntary Service. These events were held in order to develop an understanding of trust between parents of black or mixed race children and children and families services, and to generate discussion of hidden barriers to working together to achieve good outcomes for children.

Cultural Competence and Racial Identity training is planned during 2017/18 for all practitioners within the Children and Families Service who have not already received this. This training aims to scope out a leadership programme framed by the Public Sector Equality Duty which will enable us to think in a more multi-dimensional/systematic way about organisational approaches to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality and fostering positive relations.

The aim is to embed the thinking and desire behind cultural competency and identity training into existing policies and practice frameworks, which will be scalable and cost effective – getting the balance between externally facilitated sessions and internally delivered by champions within the service. This will require a focus on institutional leadership and culture, alongside the individual work streams which focus on key identified targets.

Support for migrant families

Hackney, like many London local authorities, has a number of families living within its boundaries who are, or should be, subject to immigration controls as defined by the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999. Such families are excluded from access to welfare benefits, public housing and asylum support and are collectively known as having No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). This group includes adults who have overstayed their visa entitlement in the UK together with their children who have often been born in the UK. Children's Social Care has a duty to assess children's needs under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 if they are at risk of homelessness or destitution, even if their parent has no legal entitlement for services in the UK.

In 2016/17 Overstaying Families Intervention Team (OFIT) assessed 144 families with 294 dependent children. Of these, 114 families were provided with accommodation and/or subsistence during the course of the assessment. This is an increase from 2015/16 when the team assessed 109 families with 209 dependent children. The team spend approximately £145,552 per month supporting families provided with accommodation and subsistence; there were 199 children living in 107 families open to the team as at August 2017. The Children and Families Service assist families to resolve their immigration issues, and in most cases, the support offered is on short-term basis.

[...] from the OFIT Team has worked and done a lot for me. She is so kind and caring. When my sons school the head teacher wanted to throw him out of school she worked with the school and said he deserved a second chance. Sierra fought for me and my family. When things have bothered me I can call her and she provides advice and I can see her face to face. She allows me to live a good life and sent me on a family strengthening course which helped my family life. I now understand my son and his behaviours. She has also helped me with charities and court issues. I appreciate the support she has given me and my son.'

Parent about their OFIT worker

Young people seeking asylum

As at 31st March 2017, 30 unaccompanied asylum seeking children aged under 18 (UASC) were looked after by Hackney Children and Families Service. These young people either presented directly to Hackney Children's Social Care or were dispersed for assessment through the London rota which is administered by the London Borough of Croydon. Most of these were young men aged 16-17 years at the point of referral. Where there is evidence that a young person may have been trafficked into the UK or is at risk of modern slavery, referrals are made to appropriate agencies such as the Police or the National Referral Mechanism.

In the autumn of 2016, Hackney made available to the Immigration Service additional placements for children displaced as a result of the closure of the refugee camps in Calais and accepted responsibility for two young people who were granted leave to enter the UK to join relatives already resident here.

UASC in Hackney are supported in the same way that all looked after children are supported, although their care plans may need to address any needs that arise specifically from their experiences as a UASC. This may include specialised legal advice and support, therapeutic support, educational support from the Virtual School including learning English, addressing their physical health needs including ensuring immunisations are up to date and dental health checks are undertaken. When developing care plans for all looked after children, and especially UASC, practitioners ensure that plans consider young people's identity, including religion, cultural needs, food, sexuality and language. Practitioners provide referrals and information to young people about support groups, organisations and services to meet their needs, and help UASC to meet with other young people. This practical care is essential for young people who are often isolated to help them to integrate into the community and build their support networks. Training for foster carers and staff on understanding the needs of UASC has been delivered throughout 2016/17.

In January 2017, Ela was referred to the Access and Assessment team as an unaccompanied asylum seeker via the London rota, administered by the London Borough of Croydon. The referral from the Home Office queried Ela's age and explained that she was from Eritrea and had travelled to the U.K. alone by lorry, train and bus.

Based on the referral information, it was expected that Ela could probably be placed in semi-independent accommodation. The social work unit in Access and Assessment met with Ela

as part of the assessment process and, on meeting her for the first time, it was clear that she was traumatised by her experiences in Eritrea and also by her journey and needed more support than a semi-independent placement would be able to offer.

An in-house foster carer family was found who were a cultural match for Ela. Clinical support was put in place quickly to support Ela's emotional wellbeing. Ela's foster carers were very nurturing and she felt well supported and safe in their care. Ela's assessment was completed within 4 weeks and at this point, her age was judged to be under 18.

Ela turned 18 in the summer and is currently in a Staying Put placement with her foster carers, while appropriate semi-independent accommodation is sought in Hackney by the Leaving Care team. The Leaving Care team are working with the Red Cross to trace Ela's family and are also liaising with the Home Office around Ela's immigration status. Ela continues to receive Clinical Services support.

Vulnerable adolescents

In September 2016, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) CSE and Missing Working Group's (chaired by the Director of the Children and Families Service) remit expanded to address the needs of 'vulnerable adolescents' more broadly, which include child sexual exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour, missing children, mental health, radicalisation and gang and youth violence. It was identified that the complex vulnerabilities of young people frequently intersect and overlap and agreed that approaching these as separate needs is less effective than considering the complexity of a young person's needs as a whole.

Contextual Safeguarding

In November 2016, the Children and Families Service in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire submitted a bid to the Department for Education (DfE) Children's Social Care Innovation Programme. In March 2017 we were informed that our bid to implement a contextual safeguarding framework to work with vulnerable adolescents was successful.

Our contextual safeguarding project seeks to introduce systemic change that will radically shift the focus of social work with adolescents and build on research, practice evidence and feedback from young people using our services. As a service we have become increasingly alert to the potential for extra-familial contexts and peer relationships to pose risk of significant harm during adolescence. Current child protection systems are primarily designed to respond to risk within families and do not fully support social workers, or the wider system, in addressing extra-familial risk.

To address this, Hackney is applying 'contextual safeguarding' theory (developed by Dr Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire) to our practice and develop approaches to child protection that address extra-familial risk. Contextual safeguarding draws upon theories of situational crime prevention and multi-systemic practices to recognise the relationship between child development, relational safety and environmental risk factors.

As part of this initiative, social work intervention models that address peer and contextual relationships will be developed and piloted, including group work, multi-family therapy and interventions informed by models of detached youth work, social pedagogy, community psychology and restorative justice. Policies, procedures, tools and training are being implemented to ensure contextual safeguarding factors are addressed in each aspect of the child's journey. This includes the development of assessment models and IT systems that capture peer and environmental factors as well as information about the individual young person and their family context. Meeting structures are being developed in which groups of young people or locations of concern could be considered and plans formulated, together with all relevant agencies and organisations to address the specific needs arising from the identified contextual issues. After a period of two years, it is anticipated that there will be a cultural shift across the borough and contextual safeguarding will be fully embedded into everyday working practices within the Children and Families Service and across the multi-agency partnership.

As at August 2017, the core project team has been recruited with recruitment for other posts ongoing; engagement has taken place with multi-agency stakeholders; two training sessions have been held for staff; information sharing has taken place; the Advisory Board and Project Board have been established; the first contextual safeguarding conference has been held in Dalston with multi-agency partners connected to the area looking at how to better coordinate interventions and resources to have greater impact for young people.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

A detailed and comprehensive CSE and HSB dataset has been developed for the MASE (Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation group) by the Vulnerable Adolescents analyst which is being updated and analysed on an ongoing basis. The development of this dataset is in recognition of the ever changing profile of CSE and HSB and acknowledges that traditional, periodically retrospective datasets, do not provide sufficient analysis of the current picture. The ongoing analysis of Hackney's dataset will enable identification of emerging themes which can inform service improvement. These themes are reported at the regular MASE meetings and actions are implemented as a result. During 2016/17, there were 70 Multi-Agency Planning (MAP) meeting referrals, of which 50 met the threshold for a MAP meeting to be held to identify the level of risk and develop an intervention plan for young people at risk of CSE or displaying HSB.

Missing children and Independent Return Home Interviews

In order to ensure young people who frequently go missing are supported and that the Director and senior managers are kept informed, fortnightly missing children meetings are convened whereby practitioners provide an overview of the risk in relation to the child, the circumstances around the current missing episode and actions being taken to address risk.

When a young person returns from an episode of going missing, they are offered an independent return home (IRH) interview by the Children's Rights Service. The most prominent themes in reasons children and young people have been going missing is

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

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

A new mandatory duty to report female genital mutilation (FGM) came into force on 31st 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. A Service Manager for the Children and Families Service sits on the multi-agency FGM Steering Group. Between April 2016 and March 2017, 132 children were the subject of FGM related referrals, the majority of which were identified by health professionals, commonly in maternity care.

Looked after children from other local authorities placed in Hackney

There are more looked after children from other local authorities placed in Hackney, than Hackney looked after children living in the borough. This number includes children from other areas placed for adoption with Hackney families, children from other areas placed with foster carers that work for other local authorities, including friends and family carers, children placed with Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) carers, and young people in semi-independent accommodation in Hackney.

Number of looked after children from other local authorities placed in Hackney, as at 31st March (DfE published data)

Looked after children placed in Hackney	2014	2015	2016
Hackney looked after children	80	65	80
Looked after children from other local authorities	95	110	105
Total looked after children placed in Hackney	175	180	185

There is a statutory duty on local authorities to notify the host local authority area that a looked after child has been placed in their area. As at 31st March 2017, the Service was aware of 140 looked after children and young people from other local authorities placed in Hackney. 31% of this cohort were aged 16 and 17 years.

Reporting systems related to information on children from other local authorities placed in Hackney are currently being improved to enable more useful reports to be run that will allow the Service to understand and monitor this cohort of children more

closely. This will help us better understand the types of placement for this cohort of children and young people, for example if there are carers or placements within the borough that the Service is unaware of or not using.

In line with revised statutory guidance that was published regarding out of authority placements in July 2014, there are processes in place for sharing relevant information with other local authorities when contacted about the appropriateness of potential placements in Hackney.

Young carers

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

A young carer may do some or all of the following:

- Undertake practical tasks, such as cooking, housework and shopping;
- Provide physical care, such as lifting, helping a parent on stairs or with physiotherapy;
- Provide personal care, such as dressing, washing, helping with toileting needs;
- Manage the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions;
- Administer medication;
- Look after or “parenting” younger siblings;
- Provide emotional support; and/or
- Interpret, due to a hearing or speech impairment or because English is not the family’s first language.

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

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

At the end of March 2017, Hackney Young Carers Project, funded by the Children and Families Service and delivered by Action for Children, was working with 209 young carers, compared to an average over 2015/16 of 154 young carers. The project provides a variety of support services which include group work, and one to one work with children in more complex situations. Regular term time clubs take place such as cooking and homework clubs which take place every week, and one additional term time group that varies by term consisting of drama, sewing or cinema club. Positive activities and fun holiday sessions are well attended by the young people, there are support groups in four secondary schools in Hackney.

Family Learning Intervention Programme

In 2014, Hackney successfully applied to the Department for Education’s Children’s Social Care Innovation Programme for funding for the Family Learning Intervention Programme (FLIP). The ambition behind FLIP is to improve outcomes for young

people on the edge of care, through supporting them to remain with their families or within a stable foster placement.

FLIP is a model for a radically different residential facility which provides preventative and responsive interventions for young people on the edge of care and their families. FLIP is staffed flexibly by our own expert practitioners who have the skills and existing relationships to best support our edge of care cohort. It is anticipated that over time costs will be avoided as a result of reduced residential placements either because young people are able to return home or are placed in appropriate foster care supported by FLIP. Each intervention is developed with, and tailored to, the needs of the family, with family members usually attending the property together, alongside key professionals involved in their support as appropriate, undertaking a range of interventions and activities.

A property was purchased in February 2016 located in Oxfordshire and this was refitted. FLIP welcomed the first family at the house in February 2017, with 12 families using the property as at August 2017. In total, the programme has worked with 30 families since August 2015 to August 2017, using alternative provision such as Centre Parcs to provide the facilities and space families need outside of Hackney before the property opened.

Using the property in Oxfordshire, FLIP simultaneously delivered two interventions with two families during one week. The first family was the Abraham family, including mother Ola and daughter Casey, aged 13, who was in care due to the breakdown of their relationship. The intervention aimed to repair their relationship in order to support Casey's transition back home. Ola and Casey were both musically talented and brought their instruments to the FLIP house. The family wrote a song together and then went to a recording studio where they could record this. This was really special for them both, and the week ended with a clear plan agreed for Casey to return home.

The second family was the Sharp family, consisting of mother Beatrice and her children Paul, aged 10, and Alice, aged 12, who had recently returned home to Beatrice's care. The family attended the FLIP house for a follow-up intervention after the children's transition home from care; this was aimed at further strengthening the family's identity and supporting Beatrice to meet her children's emotional and social needs. The week went well. The children are no longer considered to be at imminent risk of harm and continue to live at home with their mother after having spent 2 years in care.

During their free time in the FLIP house, both families shared their learning and experiences with each other in a spontaneous way. Ola taught Paul and Alice how to bake bread from scratch. Paul and Alice talked to Casey about their transition back home and how they have continued to build on their relationship with their mother. FLIP staff took a step back to make space for these interactions to naturally occur and this enabled both families to have positive shared experiences of their time in the house.

North London Teaching Partnership

Hackney Children and Families Service was successful in a bid for Department for Education (DfE) funding to develop a 'North London Teaching Partnership' (NLTP) in January 2017. Hackney Children and Families Service is the lead local authority in this development working with Middlesex University, Hackney Adult Services, Barnet

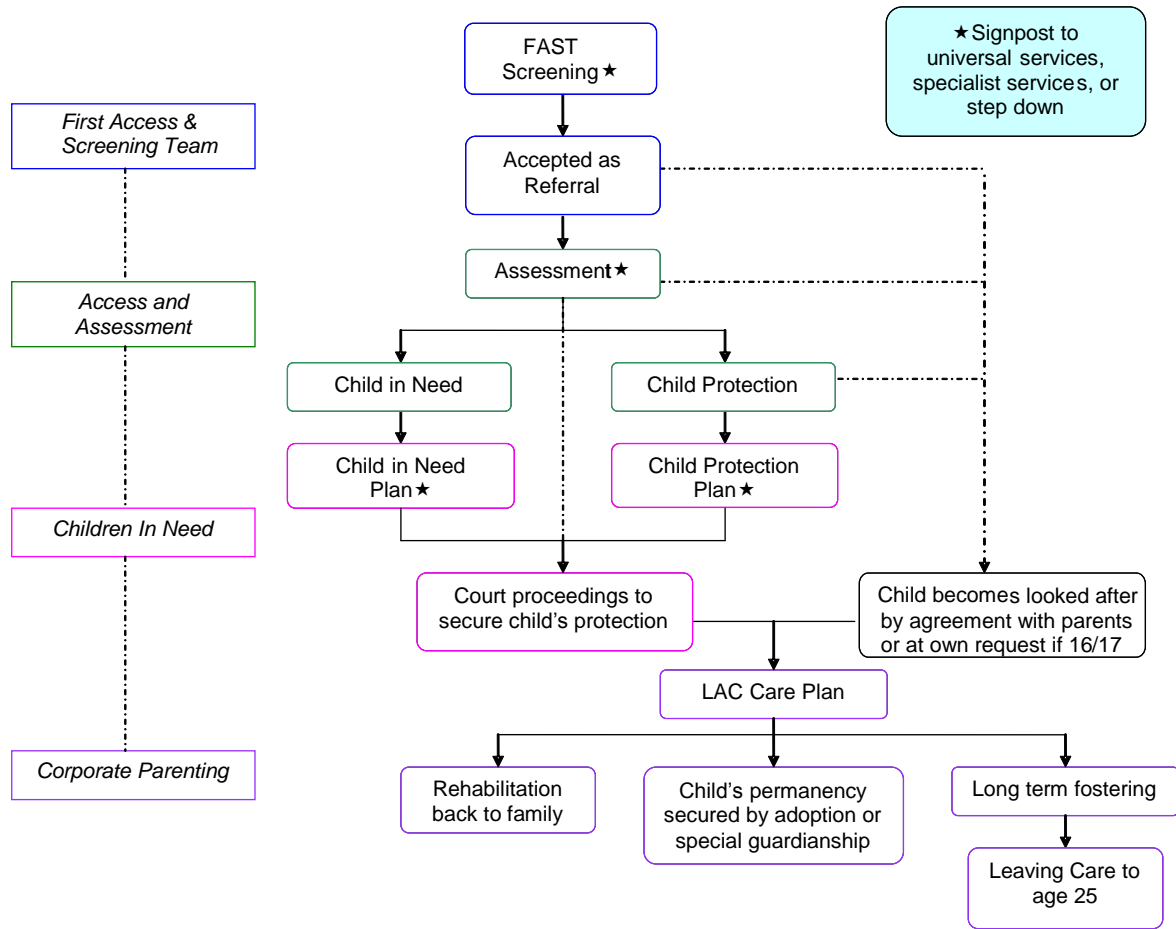
Children and Adult Services, Haringey Children and Adult Services, Enfield Adult Services, and Norwood (a Jewish charity that supports vulnerable children and families).

The 2 year project funding will be used to embed change and deliver improvements across the partner organisations. Partners will take a shared strategic approach to improvement and collaborative working amongst partners will enable mutual learning, innovation and sharing of good practice. Initiatives will be taken to improve the quality and supply of statutory placements for student social workers and to develop career pathways and professional development opportunities for practitioners at all levels. The NLTP will also create a local graduate recruitment pathway into social work, seek to improve retention and progression for social workers and their managers, build capacity for practice based research and encourage more professional interaction between academics and practitioners in all the partner organisations. Ultimately this will produce a stronger workforce, better equipped to meet the needs of our diverse communities and improve service user outcomes.

As at August 2017, the project team has been established; workforce analysis has been commissioned for all partnership local authorities; training needs analysis is underway to understand practitioner development needs around leadership and management; teaching and other academic opportunities have been identified at Middlesex University and applicants are being sought and targets to build capacity for delivering student social work placements have been met through training places for practice educators.

Appendix 1

Children's Social Care - Case Flow Chart



Appendix 2: Useful Links

ADCS response to the consultation on the national assessment and accreditation system (March 2017)

http://adcs.org.uk/assets/documentation/ADCS_response_National_assessment_and_accreditation_system.pdf

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, *Children's Social Work Workforce: Staff employed by children's social services in England as at 30 September 2016* (February 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childrens-social-work-workforce-2016>

Family Rights Group, *Co-operation or Coercion? Children coming into the care system under voluntary arrangements*, (July 2017)

<https://www.frg.org.uk/images/YFYV/KI-Report-10.07-final.pdf>

Government, *The Queen's Speech* (June 2017)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/620838/Queens_speech_2017_background_notes.pdf

Home Office, *28 day pre-charge bail limit comes into force* (April 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/28-day-pre-charge-bail-limit-comes-into-force>

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

Ofsted, *Framework and evaluation schedule: children in need of help and protection and care leavers and Local Safeguarding Children Boards* (February 2017)

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

Ofsted, *Future of social care inspection: Consultation outcome and next steps* (February 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-social-care-inspection>

Ofsted, *Hackney Single inspection of LA children's services and review of the LSCB* (September 2016) <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/hackney>

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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.

Appendix 4: Glossary of key terms

Access and Assessment Service	The Access and Assessment Service joined together referral and screening activity with statutory assessments for children in need and at risk at the 'front door' of the Children and Families Service.
Adoption Order	This is an order giving full parental responsibility for a child to the approved adopters, made on their application to the court. An adoption order severs the legal ties between a birth parent and the child so that the adoptive parent(s) become the child's legal parent(s) throughout life.
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	CAMHS is used as a term for all services that work with children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. Hackney's in-house Clinical Service provides specialist CAMHS support to looked after children and care leavers
City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board	The key statutory board overseeing arrangements for safeguarding children and young people across the City of London and Hackney.
Children in Need Service	The Children in Need Service is responsible for the safeguarding of children and young people assessed as being 'at risk' including child protection work, court proceedings and statutory family support to help children remain at home safely.
Child Arrangement Order	This is a court order regulating arrangements relating to any of the following: (a) With whom a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact; and (b) When a child is to live, spend time or otherwise have contact with any person. This order gives 'parental responsibility' to the person who the order says the child will live with (if they don't already have it) for as long as the order is in force.
Child Protection Plan	A child protection plan is drawn up at the initial child protection conference. It says what support and monitoring will be put in place when a child is considered to be at risk of significant harm because they have suffered, or are likely to suffer physical abuse, emotional abuse or sexual abuse or neglected. The child's situation and the plan will be reviewed after three months and then every six months.
CIN (Child in Need) Plan	If an assessment finds that a child is not at risk but is in need of social work services, a child in need plan involving other agencies involved with the family will be developed and agreed with the child's parents at a child in need planning meeting.
Care Planning Panel	A fortnightly meeting where decisions are made on cases where: a permanency plan is not progressing in line with expectations; a child or young person has entered residential care; long-term fostering matches are being proposed or; decisions need to be made about private fostering arrangements
Children's Rights Officer	The person within the Children and Families Service who is responsible for offering advocacy and support to young people regarding complaints and independent return home interviews when a young person has gone missing.
Children's Resources Panel	A weekly meeting where decisions are made on whether children come into care. Decisions are also made on whether pre-proceedings or care proceedings should be initiated.
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	A type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them. CSE can also include grooming, on-line exploitation and child trafficking

Consultant Social Worker/Practice Development Manager (CSW/PDM)	Children's Social Care units are led by a CSW/PDM and all cases within the unit are allocated to a CSW/PDM
Corporate Parenting	When a child comes into care, the local authority, elected members, employees and partner agencies are responsible for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for that child – they become corporate parents. In Hackney, we have made a commitment to the standard of that care in the Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care (appendix 3).
Emergency Duty Team (EDT)	Forms part of a 24 hour and seamless frontline child protection service delivered by senior social work staff working on a voluntary rota basis. This team provides services outside of normal working hours (after 5pm, at weekends and on bank holidays).
Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP)	Introduced in September 2014 the EHCP is a document which sets out the education, health and social care needs a child or young person has and the support to meet their needs. The 'gateway' for the EHCP is to have special educational needs, although the EHCP itself also covers health and social care needs and provision.
Emergency Protection Order	Used if Children's Services believes a child is in urgent need of protection. An Emergency Protection Order lasts for up to eight days and can be extended by the court once for a further seven days.
First Access and Screening Team (FAST)	A multi-agency team that acts as a single point of contact for contacts and referrals to the Children and Families Service for children in need of support and protection.
Full Care Order	A court order which places a child in the care of Children's Services. It lasts until the child is 18 unless the court ends it before then. When there is a care order, Children's Services share parental responsibility for the child with the parents.
Female Genital Mutilation	A new mandatory duty to report FGM came into force in October 2015 under the Serious Crime Act (2015)
Family Support Service	An umbrella term for a range of services that includes a number of Family Units delivering targeted family support and statutory social work interventions.
Hackney Learning Trust (HLT)	Responsible for Hackney's children's centres; schools and early years; and adult education. The Virtual School for Looked After Children is part of HLT.
Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)	Sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child, young person or adult.
Interim Care Order	An interim care order (ICO) is a temporary order made by the court which says that the child should be looked after in the care system for a temporary period. It means that the court has good reasons to believe a child has been seriously harmed or is likely to be seriously harmed, and that an Interim Care Order is the best thing for the child until there is a final hearing.
Initial/Review health assessment	It is a statutory requirement for children and young people coming into care to have an initial health assessment within 28 days of entering care and subsequent review health assessments every 6 months up to the age of five and annually thereafter

Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) carer	An IFA carer is a foster carer that is employed by an agency. Local authorities use IFA carers to care for children when they do not have any in-house placements available or when they require a carer with specialist skills to meet a child's needs.
Independent Reviewing Officer	Makes sure that the health and welfare of looked-after children and young people are prioritised, that they have appropriate care plans in place (which are regularly reviewed and updated), that any physical, emotional health or wellbeing needs or assessments identified by their care plans are met or completed, and that their views and wishes, and those of their families, are heard.
In-house foster carer	An in-house foster carer is a carer that is employed directly by the local authority. The local authority is responsible for recruiting, training, supervising and paying the foster carer.
Looked after child/ren	Children and young people who are cared for by the local authority under either a voluntary or statutory arrangement.
No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)	Section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) states that a person will have 'no recourse to public funds' if they are subject to immigration control; public funds include welfare benefits and public housing.
Overstaying Families Intervention Team (OFIT)	Established by Hackney to manage the increasing demand for services from adults who have caring responsibilities who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). In October 2013 the service merged with the Housing Needs Overstayers Team to create a single front door for NRPF families.
Practice Development Manager (PDM)	See CSW
Personal Education Plan (PEP)	A document describing the assessment and plan to meet the educational needs of a looked-after child or young person, and help them reach their full potential in education and afterwards. It forms part of a child's care plan.
Placement Order	A Placement Order is an order made by the court which gives social workers permission to go ahead with the adoption plan. This means that the child can go and live with a prospective adoptive family, if one has been matched as being suitable to meet the child's needs. This is called being placed for adoption.
Private Fostering	A child under the age of 16 (or 18, if disabled) who is cared for, or proposed to be cared for, and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or a close relative, for 28 days or more, is described as being privately fostered.
Public Law Outline	This is the system which guides the courts on how to manage care proceedings.
Placement Management Unit (PMU)	Commissions all placements for looked after children and care leavers in Hackney. It seeks the most appropriate placement for each child, whether with an in-house carer, independent fostering agency carer or a residential placement.
Parental Responsibility	Parental responsibility is defined in law as "all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority, which by law a parent has in relation to the child and the administration of his/her property." In practical terms, it means the responsibility to care for a child and the right to make important decisions about the child, for example agreeing to medical/dental treatment.

Safeguarding & Learning Team	Responsible for monitoring and improving the quality of services provided to children and families in Hackney.
Section 17 of the Children Act 1989	This is the part of the law that says Children's Services should provide help to children in need (and their families) to safeguard and promote their welfare. Children's Services do this by offering family support services.
Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (also called voluntary accommodation)	This is the part of the law (Section 20 of the Children Act 1989) that says Children's Services should look after a child when there is no one with parental responsibility for the child or when the person caring for the child is prevented from caring for them, for whatever reason. This requires the consent of those with parental responsibility for the child or if a young person is 16/17, they can give their own consent.
Section 47 of the Children Act (Child Protection Investigation)	Children's Services have a legal duty to look into a child's situation if they have information that a child may be at risk of significant harm. This is called a child protection enquiry or investigation. Sometimes it is called a "Section 47 investigation" after the section of the Children Act 1989 which sets out this duty.
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	Children and young people with SEND all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children and young people of the same age. These children and young people may need extra or different help from that given to others.
Special Guardianship Order (SGO)	A carer (including a foster carer) or a relative can apply to the court for a child to live with them and make day to day decisions on their behalf under an SGO, while parental responsibility remains with the parents.
Supervision Order	A court can ask Children's Services to "supervise" how the parent cares for their child under a supervision order. A social worker will agree a contract or supervision plan with the parent, which will set out what is expected of the parent and the help the social worker will give.
Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)	An unaccompanied asylum seeker is a child or young person who is under 18 years of age, and who travels to a new country alone without a parent, carer or other adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for them
Unit Coordinator	Responsible for administrative duties within each social work unit.
Virtual School for looked after children	The Virtual School works with looked after children and young people from early years to the age of 25 and also young people on Youth Justice Orders. It prioritises their individual learning or training needs, identifies the skills necessary for participation in education, training or work environment and supports young people to acquire and adapt these skills for learning and for life.
Young Hackney	This is the Council's early help, prevention and diversion service for children and young people aged 16-19 years old and up to 25 years if the young person has a special educational need or disability. 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.
Youth Justice Service	The Youth Justice Service works with all young people in Hackney who are arrested or convicted of crimes and undertakes youth justice work including bail and remand supervision and supervising young people who have been given community or custodial sentences.