

March 2019

Children and Families Service







Mid-Year Report to Members 2018/19



Contents

Foreword	page 3	Clinical Service	page 23
Overview of performance	page 4	Corporate Parenting	
Service priorities for 2018/19	page 5	Strengths and Areas for Development	page 25
Developments and innovation	page 6	Looked After Children – data	page 26
Contextual Safeguarding	page 8	Looked After Children – Fostering Service	page 27
Early Help and Prevention		Looked After Children – Placement Activity	page 28
Strengths and Areas for Development	page 10	Adoption and Post-Permanency	page 28
Young Hackney	page 11	Leaving Care	page 29
Family Support Service	page 13	Safeguarding and Learning	
Domestic Abuse Intervention Service	page 14	Local Area Designated Officer	page 30
Youth Justice	page 15	Children’s Rights Officer	page 30
Family Intervention and Support Service –		Independent Chairs	page 30
Access and Assessment		Missing Children and children at risk of	page 31
Strengths and Areas for Development	page 16	exploitation	page 31
Service description and data	page 17	Quality Assurance	
Family Intervention and Support Service –			
Children in Need			
Strengths and Areas for Development	page 19		
Service description and data	page 21		

Legend

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

Foreword



Councillor Anntoinette Bramble

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

I am very pleased to introduce the Children and Families Service 2018-19 Mid-Year Report to Members. Over the past year, our skilled and committed workforce has continued to strive for excellent outcomes for our children and families and maintain their commitment to continuous learning and development in response to changing needs. Recent feedback from Ofsted following a short focused visit identified some areas where we need to take immediate action and will help us to learn and drive forward improvements in our service to children and families. We have a strong, skilled and committed workforce and we will be working with them over the coming months to ensure that the changes needed are embedded quickly.

The Children and Families Service (CFS) has continued its long tradition of innovation this year. The Contextual Safeguarding Project, funded by the Department for Education Children's Social Care Innovation Programme, and focused on reducing the risks young people face in extra-familial contexts, held its first national learning event in December 2018. The event was attended by over 300 delegates from agencies and local authorities across the country and was extremely well received.

In continuing to strengthen our response to extra-familial risks we have created a multi-agency Extra-Familial Risk Panel (ERFP) to ensure a consistent response to risks associated with peer abuse and sexual or criminal exploitation.

Hackney was successful in its bid to the Home Office Trusted Relationships Fund and our Trusted Relationships project is now working to create an innovative and effective outreach and detached youth work project with embedded clinical support. We already know from our Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men in Hackney Programme that some of our most vulnerable children are also the least likely to seek the support they need from statutory agencies – therefore we are doing more to take services to them.

It gives me great pleasure to see that 81% of CFS staff, who completed the council wide staff survey, said they would speak highly of Hackney Council as an employer to people outside the organisation. This is compared to 67% overall for Hackney staff.

CFS received a two-day Ofsted focused visit in February 2019. The visit was on the theme of *children in need and those subject to a child protection plan*. The inspectors recognised and commented on the high morale amongst our practitioners and the commitment to working at Hackney and improving children's lives. However, inspectors also identified areas they felt needed immediate improvement. We take the feedback provided by Ofsted seriously and we have immediately put measures in place to address the priority areas identified. As an organisation we have always been committed to learning and continual development. We have already drafted an action plan in response to the issues raised.

As we reflect on the past year, we are also aware of the challenges that increasing demand for our services brings. We will continue to evolve our approach and explore how we can further improve outcomes for children and families in Hackney.

Overview of Performance



2,002 referrals were received between April-September 2018 – a 6.8% decrease compared to the same point last year.



384 children were looked after as at 30th September 2018 – in line with the 381 children in care as at 31st March 2018.



16.5% re-referrals were made within 12 months of a referral between April-September 2018 – an increase compared to 15.5% in 2017/18.



98 children entered care between April-September 2018 – an 11% increase compared to 88 children entering care between April-September 2017. 217 children entered care in 2017/18.



2,148 assessments were completed between April-September 2018 – a 2% decrease compared to 2,196 at the same point last year.



60 young people aged 14-17 entered care between April – September 2018, 61% of the total number of children who entered care in this period. This is an increase compared to 2017/18 when the number of children aged 14 or over who entered care represented 49% of the total number of children that entered care in that period.



199 children were on Child Protection Plans as at 30th September 2018 – in line with the 200 children on Plans at 31st March 2018.



13% of looked after children had three or more placements in a year as at 30th September 2018 – an increase compared to 11% as at 31st March 2018.



21% of children became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time between April-September 2018 – an increase compared to 13.1% at the end of March 2018. This represents 26 children from 18 families.



66% of looked after children had long-term placement stability as at 30th September 2018, an increase from 62% as at 31st March 2018.



76,265 attendances at Young Hackney provision, including commissioned services, by children and young people between April-September 2018 – a 2% increase compared to 74,749 during the same period last year.



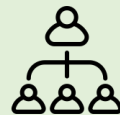
260 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported by the Leaving Care Service as at 30th September 2018, a decrease compared to the 301 being supported at 31st March 2018.

Priorities for the Children and Families Service in 2018/19

Our identified priorities for the year ahead include to:



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



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



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.



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



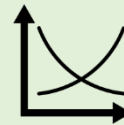
Through our Contextual Safeguarding project, continue to develop our response to adolescents in different contexts outside the home, including in their peer group relationships, school environments and the community



Continue our drive to recruit and retain more in-house foster carers, and provide them with the skills to support our more complex adolescents



Ensure that we have the right placements to provide stability for our more complex adolescents who are looked after



Monitor, manage and understand the increasing demand for services, including careful analysis of demand at the front door and pathways to appropriate services



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



Further strengthen the coordination of domestic abuse services to ensure there is a comprehensive support offer available and early intervention is prioritised – including for perpetrators and for children who have witnessed domestic abuse



Develop our understanding of the communities with which we work, ensuring that our interventions are well-targeted to respond to need and build on strengths and resources available with localities



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



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

Developments and Innovation

Ofsted Focused Visit – February 2019



In February 2019 Ofsted conducted a two-day focused visit in Hackney on the theme of *children on Child in Need Plans and children subject to a Child Protection Plan*. Two inspectors were on site for two days where they spent the majority of their time talking to frontline practitioners.

The visit was not an inspection and was only focused on one area within the wider services provided to children and families. This visit does not result in a graded judgement.

The outcomes letter from Ofsted included two areas for priority action which will require our immediate and urgent attention:

- the timeliness and effectiveness of social work practice and interventions to safeguard children from harm
- the quality and effectiveness of managerial oversight and supervision to ensure that children's circumstances improve within their timeframe

We take the feedback provided by Ofsted seriously and we have immediately put measures in place to address the priority areas identified. We have introduced additional checkpoints within our system to review progress to ensure children do not live in family situations where the risk of harm is not reduced quickly enough. We are also reviewing our processes and documents to ensure they are child focused at every point and reflect some of the positive work that inspectors identified in relation to Looked After Children reviews.

We have taken steps to ensure managers have the tools they need to effectively oversee children's plans, implementing a new performance information system to support practitioners and managers to track their cases and are introducing additional levels of oversight to systematically review decision making on longer term cases. We will be actively identifying further measures that we can take over the coming weeks and months.

Inspectors recognised our commitment to supporting children to remain living in their families and that social workers work hard to engage with families. They recognised that social workers know their children and families well, that great care is taken to understand parental and family histories and that social workers and managers have a thorough understanding about family dynamics. However they felt that, at times, this meant that we delayed taking decisive action to protect children from long term harm and that we needed to be clearer in some cases about what needed to change and by when.

As an organisation we have always been committed to learning and continual improvement. We have already drafted an action plan in response to the issues raised and will refine this action plan further based on the feedback included in the Ofsted letter. We have a strong, skilled and committed workforce and we will be working with them over the coming months to make the adjustments that are needed to get the balance right between supporting families to stay together in a safe environment, recognising when sustainable change is not happening quickly enough and acting decisively at the right time.



Trusted Relationships Project

Hackney was successful in its bid to the Home Office Trusted Relationships Fund and our Trusted Relationships project is now working to create an innovative and effective outreach and detached youth work programme with embedded clinical support. This involves working to build relationships with our most vulnerable young people in the locations they frequent, at times convenient to them, encouraging them to access support and engage with mental health services.

The first shared learning event was held in November 2018 offering an opportunity to hear what others are doing across other successful outreach and detached youth work sites.

Hackney Council Staff Survey 2018

81% of CFS staff who completed the survey said they would speak highly of Hackney Council as an employer to people outside the organisation – compared to 67% overall for Hackney staff.

73% of CFS staff who completed the staff survey said Hackney Council was one of the best /above average when compared to other organisations they had worked for – compared to 60% overall for Hackney staff.

77% of CFS staff, who completed the survey, said they were satisfied with their job – compared to 71% overall for Hackney staff.

North London Social Work Teaching Partnership (NLSWTP)

In April 2018, the NLSWTP received a second tranche of funding from the Department for Education to continue activities in 2018/19. The Partnership has now expanded and comprises of: Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington Councils, the charity Norwood and Middlesex University. Colleagues from across partnership organisations have embarked upon the Leadership & Management programme delivered by the Business School at Middlesex University, including the first ever MBA in Social Work. Initial feedback is positive.

Children’s Social Work Workforce 2018

	England average	Inner London average	Hackney
Turnover rate	15.2%	19.1%	12.4%
Vacancy rate	16.5%	25.9%	20.1%
Agency staff	15.4%	25.5%	27.6%
Absence rate	3.2%	2.3%	1.5%
Caseload	17.4%	15.6%	17.3%

Hackney’s excellent social worker turnover rate of 12.4% in 2018 is significantly lower than the inner London and national average, showing the service’s ability to retain high performing practitioners, in a competitive field. Hackney has the second lowest turnover rate in the Inner London area.

Hackney vacancy rate is higher the national average but lower than the inner London average.

Hackney agency social worker rate is higher than the national and inner London average. Hackney has a younger average age of social worker in the Children and Families Service compared to most local authorities, with a higher number of staff on maternity leave and some of these posts are covered by agency workers.

While Hackney’s published caseload numbers are higher than the inner London average and slightly lower than the national average, our unit model provides a high level of administrative support and access to a range of support services, including the in-house Clinical Service, so practitioners can spend more time with the families they are working with. Caseloads across CFS are monitored closely by senior managers, including via the fortnightly Managing Demands Group, chaired by the Director of Children and Families. The recent Ofsted focused visit highlighted that practitioners reported that their caseloads were manageable: *‘Social workers report to inspectors that their caseloads are manageable and that working in small social work units helps to ensure that the team is well supported.’*

Developments and Innovation

Contextual Safeguarding



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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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



Extra-Familial Risk Panel

Feedback from practitioners and learning from case reviews has shown that, to ensure we have a comprehensive and streamlined response to young people facing extra-familial risks, a systems approach is needed to address the contexts in which harm occurs. A multi-agency **Extra-Familial Risk Panel** (EFRP) has been created to ensure consistent oversight and planning for cases where young people are at risk of experiencing or being involved in harmful behaviours outside the home.

The Panel will take action to reduce extra familial harm (e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Children Going Missing, Criminal Exploitation / Gangs, Modern Slavery) both for the individuals concerned and for the contexts in which the harm occurs (e.g. peers, schools, neighbourhoods, locations).

The EFRP has replaced Multi-Agency Planning (MAP) meetings for Child Sexual Exploitation and Harmful Sexual Behaviour as well as Hackney's Pre-MASE meeting and High Risk Case Forum. The weekly EFRP has been running since 14th November 2018 and has already received positive feedback from social workers and partner agency professionals.

Early Help and Prevention



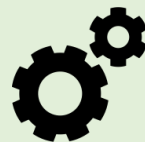
Strengths/Progress

Strong links with local schools - provision of targeted support for young people, as well as provision of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum based delivery and sports activities. Young Hackney continues to have strong working relationships with internal colleagues, including education, health, housing and community safety, which is strengthened through partnerships with the voluntary and community sector and Police.

Young Hackney universal delivery within the community has continued to extend its reach to more young people - between April- September 2018, there were 30,519 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years recorded at the 4 Young Hackney Hubs. There were 76,265 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years between April-September 2018 at the wider youth provision delivered through Young Hackney and commissioned services for young people.

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

Significant growth in the number of accreditations awarded to young people for their involvement in informal learning delivered by Young Hackney universal and early help teams, including the Substance Misuse and Health and Wellbeing teams. In 2017-18 AQA certificates were awarded to 976 learners, with 1,400 young people expected to gain accreditation in 2018-19.



Areas for further development and actions to address

Young Hackney Sports Unit - is working with colleagues in the Regeneration Team to explore opportunities to develop a multi-use games area on the site of the Old Baths at Hackney Wick. This would see the development of a fully integrated sports offer and increase the ability of the team to work in partnership with other local youth providers and to increase access to accredited learning.

Shoreditch Adventure Playground - is currently undergoing redevelopment to improve the safety of the site and to improve the offer to children.

Management Information - There is a need to improve management information and reporting to measure and evidence the impact and effectiveness of early help support. Staff within Youth Justice are also being trained on the use of the ChildView system to improve data capture and improve reporting. Domestic Abuse Intervention Service case recording is transitioning to the Children's Social Care recording system, Mosaic, to further integrate systems and improve information sharing.

Accessing Early Help - Work is underway to review early help pathways and the interface with statutory services to ensure that families are provided with the right level of support to meet their needs as swiftly as possible and to avoid duplication; this includes reviewing early help pathways at the front door, the function of existing panels, and the step up/step down processes between early help and statutory social care services. A flow chart and guidance for school staff is being developed to support the identification and support of young people at risk of exclusion.

Addressing Youth Violence - Serious youth violence, in particular knife crime, remains a significant challenge. Adopting a public-health approach, Hackney has developed a multi-agency Knife Crime Strategy aimed at reducing children's exposure to criminal, violent, and anti-social behaviour. This approach treats violence as a preventable public health issue, using data and analysis to identify causes and focusing on prevention through multi-agency systemic approaches.

Early Help and Prevention

Young Hackney



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

Work with local schools



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



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



Universal Provision delivered through Youth Hubs

Young Hackney universal delivery within the community has continued to extend its reach to more young people. Between April – September 2018, there were 30,519 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years recorded at the 4 Young Hackney Hubs. There were 76,265 attendances by named children and young people aged 6-19 years between April – September 2018 at the wider youth provision delivered through Young Hackney and commissioned services for young people.

Individual Support - Universal Plus and Targeted Support

At any one time, Young Hackney is working with approximately 700 young people through the Early Help teams, providing tailored targeted support interventions. The most common presenting issues include: risk of sexual or criminal exploitation, relationships, emotional wellbeing, behaviour, school attendance, risk of offending, risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET), different cultural expectations within the family.



Substance Misuse Team



The Young Hackney **Substance Misuse Team** supports children and young people aged 6-25 years who are directly affected by substance misuse, or affected through their parent's misuse. Interventions take a tailored and holistic approach that builds young people's resilience and addresses issues of family and relationships, finances, education and housing, while liaising with other services/partners as necessary. Between April – September 2018, there were 867 attendances at outreach sessions, including at schools and youth hubs.

Troubled Families Programme

Hackney has an overall programme target to work with 3,510 families by March 2020, and has successfully identified over 3,510 families who meet the programme criteria of 2 or more presenting needs as outlined in the outcomes plan. To date, Hackney has made 1,255 Payments by Results (PbR) claims and is set to have made 1,800 claims by the end of March 2019.

Hackney's current conversion rate from attachments to PbR claims is 36%, whilst the London average is 28% (national average is 29%). Hackney is now 5th in the London league table for the total number of PbR claims even though it was the last of the London local authorities to go live with phase 2 of the programme. Feedback following a spot check by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government about the quality of Troubled Families work was very positive; noting that cases seen *'demonstrated the high-quality work that Hackney is carrying out with families across a range of services.'*

The Health and Wellbeing Team



The Health & Wellbeing Team continues to deliver PSHE/RSE to all 5-19 years old and for those up to 25 with additional education needs and disabilities. This has been delivered in primary/secondary schools, PRU's, colleges, youth hubs and alternative education providers. 186 sessions have been delivered between April and September 2018 in schools alone. The team are currently on target to deliver more than 800 sessions in schools in 2018/19, exceeding the target of 600. The team have delivered a programme of work at the Ickburgh School, where the majority of children and young people have severe learning disabilities or are profoundly disabled; with significant learning needs, sensory impairment and/or a physical disability.

The Health and Wellbeing Team have increased their work within the Charedi community which has included running 2 stands at the Shomrim event on Clapton Common during the summer. The team are now working in several Charedi schools and at a boys club delivering a number of sessions.

The team also ran 2 stands at the Junior Citizenship Scheme at Hackney Museum, and delivered sessions on 'Dental Hygiene/Sugary Drinks' and 'Emotional Well Being' (5 To Thrive) to more than 2000 year 6 pupils from over 50 primary schools.

Kitchen Social

The adventure playgrounds continue to be well used and are developing their offer to include more environmental work, and to respond to the needs of the young people attending. During the 2018 summer holiday, Hackney Marsh Adventure playground ran the Kitchen Social programme; providing a hot meal for every child or young person who attended the provision. Kitchen Social is a government funded programme aimed at tackling holiday hunger amongst children and young people. The Service has since submitted a funding bid to Department for Education to expand programme coverage across wider Young Hackney provisions during summer 2019.



Trauma Informed Practice and Addressing the Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children

We aim to strengthen the support for children who have witnessed domestic abuse or who have experienced other forms of trauma such as loss, bereavement, adult substance misuse or mental health. Trauma-informed practice is a major focus for this year, and support for children affected by domestic abuse is already being developed with the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service.

A small number of staff have been trained in the Respect Young People's Programme (RYPP), which is a licensed intervention aimed at tackling "adolescent to parent violence". The RYPP is designed to be used where there is an identified pattern of violence and abusive behaviour from a young person towards a parent or carer, or sibling, to control, intimidate or coerce. The training incorporates a practical toolkit for staff working with older adolescents, where they are using violence in intimate relationships. Follow up targeted training is due to be provided later in 2019.

Against Violence and Abuse also delivered training to support the development of group work interventions, designed to address the trauma experienced by children and their mother in the context of domestic abuse, and the work needed to repair any damage caused to their relationship. This group work programme focuses on the validation of the child's experience, understanding abuse, reducing self-blame, safety planning, managing appropriate and inappropriate expressions of emotion, the mother-child relationship and helping to enable mothers to help their children through the healing process. These groups will be supported by the Clinical team and the ambition is that delivery will become embedded across CFS. The first group will start at the end of April 2019.

Family Support Service



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

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

Domestic Abuse Intervention Service



The in-house Domestic Abuse Intervention Service is now integrated and co-located within CFS; strengthening the coordination of domestic abuse services in Hackney to ensure there is a comprehensive support offer available. This now includes a specialist perpetrator programme.

Hackney is part of the East London **Specialist Domestic Violence Court** and co-funds the specialist domestic abuse court co-ordinator post along with Tower Hamlets Council. The court is a specially adapted magistrates' court which seeks to increase the number of successful prosecutions and improve victim safety. A DAIS Intervention Officer is based at the court 2 days a week. Hackney's conviction rate, along with the three other London Boroughs who make up the East London Domestic Abuse Court, is lower than the national average, and this is mainly due to witness attrition. All four Boroughs provide support for victims but this is limited due to capacity within local area domestic abuse services. A comprehensive support for victims would require full time support that worked with the victim from the first charge, right through to the end of trial, which in most cases can last for many months. All four VAWG Borough leads have met with MOPAC to address this concern and MOPAC is currently considering this, with a response likely by the end of March 2019.

The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service successfully supported the Council's **16 Days of Activism To End Gender Based Violence** campaign. This included awareness raising events and a day long practitioner's forum focused on exploring how violence against women and girls can be approached in Hackney. Young Hackney also provided space for young people to talk about healthy relationships, sending a clear message that 'Love Shouldn't Hurt'.

Between April – September 2018 DAIS received **681 referrals**. There has been a year on year increase in the number of referrals the service receives with a 42% increase between 2015/16 and 2017/18. DAIS received 1,165 referrals for the whole of 2017/18.

For those victims of domestic abuse who have been identified and assessed as high risk, Hackney holds a fortnightly **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference** (MARAC), chaired by the police, and scrutinised by the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) lead. Between April-September 2018, 218 cases were heard at MARAC, a decrease of 13% from the same period the previous year when 251 cases were heard. 61 (27%) of the total number of cases heard at MARAC were 'repeat' referrals. In 117 of the 218 cases (54%) there were children in the household.

The team works closely with professionals across the Council and through external partnerships with community and voluntary sector domestic abuse services. The First Access and Screening Team (FAST) now has a dedicated domestic abuse social worker who responds to referrals for early help and safeguarding services for children and families where domestic abuse is a factor.

DAIS has taken over the previously commissioned perpetrator service under the Troubled Families programme, and created the **Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme** (DVPP). The DVPP works closely with the Children and Families service, offering case consultation, treatment viability assessments, and interventions through behaviour change work with perpetrators either through group or one to one sessions. Between April-September 2018 the DVPP received 53 referrals, undertook 24 assessments, delivered 1-2-1 interventions with 4 individuals and ran a group-work programme attended by 8 individuals.

Youth Justice



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

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

First time entrants (FTE)

Despite a rise in London wide crime, the rate of first time entrants in Hackney, to the youth justice system has remained low. In 2017/18 Hackney witnessed a small decrease in the overall numbers of First-Time Entrants (FTE) after three years of growth (decreasing to 111 from 114 in 2016/17). Cumulative FTE for 2018/19 in quarters 1, 2 and 3 currently reports 68 young people as FTE, projecting 91 young people by the end of March 2019 if current trends continue.

The focus on crime prevention and diversion activities, 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) low. Young people are offered Triage (voluntary engagement) for minor offences in order to divert them from the formal youth justice system and crime. The conversion rate into the youth justice system for young people offered a Triage intervention is approximately 18% - this means that for 82% of those offered Triage, they do not become involved in further offending.

Education, Employment and/or Training

Education can be a strong protective factor for young people at risk of offending. The Youth Justice Service has a strong focus on securing access to education, training and employment and is supported by the Virtual School. At the 30th September 2018, 88% of young people on youth justice orders were attending and engaging in full time education, training or employment.

The Youth Offending Team has also been awarded the **SEND Quality Mark** from Achievement for All and the Association of Youth Offending Team Managers, for its embedded speech, communication and language therapy to help young people navigate the justice system. The work follows research that showed that 60% of the young people supported by Hackney's Youth Offending Team experience difficulties in communicating, and over half did not use vocabulary commonly used in the justice system, such as 'breach' or 'comply'.

Overall, Hackney has a relatively low proportion of 10-18 year olds involved in the youth justice system, and a relatively low number of remand and custodial sentences for young people who have committed/alleged to have committed grave crimes (9 as of 20/2/19).

Reflective of the smaller number of young people within the cohort and the complex needs these young people present the number of young people re-offending in Hackney within a 12 month period has increased over the last year, from 59 at the end of March 2017 to 70 at the end of March 2018.

Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS)

Access and Assessment



Strengths/Progress

Themed brief audits of the response at the front door

– At the end of 2017/18, the First Access and Screening Team (FAST) Management Team agreed that to aid management oversight and service development, with respect to specific practice areas of work undertaken within FAST, future FAST audits would be themed on a monthly basis. Between April-September 2018, 50 brief FAST audits were undertaken on the themes of domestic abuse, re-referrals, timescales before progressing to assessment, child and adolescent mental health, contextual safeguarding.

Audits that looked at the theme of timescales before progressing to assessment found that over 90% of cases progressed to assessment within 72 hours. In some cases delays were linked to professionals not being able to contact families or were related to new concerns arising during the process. Audits suggested that the recording of management oversight for contacts open for more than a week needed to be improved. A new process was introduced where these cases were flagged each week for Screening Referral Managers to review and record on the file. This has shown an improvement in practice. Audits on cases that had been re-referred to the service found that in all cases, thresholds were appropriately applied each time a case was screened.

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



Areas for further development and actions to address

Assessment timescales - Following the July 2016 Ofsted inspection findings that some assessments took too long, plans and timescales for assessments are set at the start of an assessment and reviewed at unit meetings, to try to ensure that assessments take place within a timeframe appropriate to the individual child's needs. Assessments open for longer than expected are audited by a Service Manager to understand the reasons for any delay. Assessment timescales are also monitored at the fortnightly Managing Demands Group, chaired by the Director of the Children and Families Service.

There has been some progress in achieving reduced timescales and very good engagement from both managers and practitioners on this issue. 76% of assessments were completed within 45 days in November 2018, compared to 56% at the end of March 2018.

The service is supporting staff to undertake briefer assessments, proportionate to children and families' needs, while maintaining the high quality of assessments undertaken. Following the Ofsted focused visit in February 2019, all ongoing assessments will be reviewed after 20 days to check for timeliness and progress.

Increase in re-referral rate - Hackney's re-referral rate increased between April - September 2018, following a number of years of steady performance for this indicator. Nonetheless, this figure remains below the national average and further analysis is taking place to understand and respond to this increase.

Ofsted focused visit findings about assessment - inspectors found that there needs to be greater consideration of men, including abusive partners, in risk assessments undertaken with families. The Children and Families Service will be submitting an action plan to Ofsted before the end of March 2019 to outline the steps the Service will be taking to address this finding.

Access and Assessment

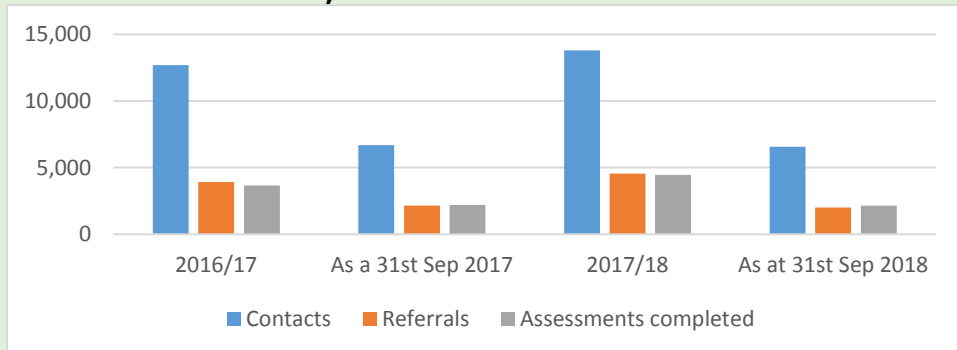


The Access and Assessment Service is part of the Family Intervention and Support Service and undertakes statutory assessments of children in need and child protection investigations for all new referrals to Children's Social Care.

First Access and Screening Team (FAST)

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

Contacts, Referrals and Assessments



	2016/17	As a 31st Sep 2017	2017/18	As at 31st Sep 2018
Contacts	12,699	6,681	13,802	6,562
Referrals	3,940	2,147	4,563	2,002
Assessments completed	3,667	2,196	4,456	2,148

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

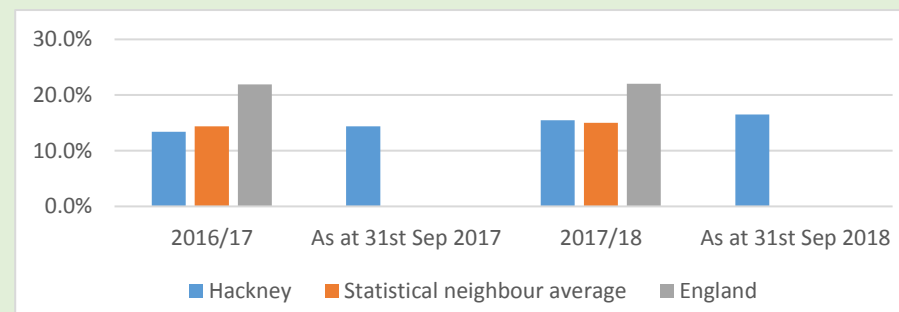
Referral: when a contact is about a specific child and this requires further investigation, the FAST team may progress the contact to a referral.

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

Referrals which do not result in an assessment but indicate that some ongoing support would be beneficial result in families being signposted or referred to Early Help services.

- ↓ 2% decrease in the number of contacts received compared to September 2017
- ↓ 7% decrease in the number of contacts accepted as referrals compared to last year
- ↓ 2% decrease in the number of completed assessments compared to last year

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



	2016/17	As at 31st Sep 2017	2017/18	As at 31st Sep 2018
Hackney	13.4%	14.4%	15.5%	16.3%
Statistical neighbour average	14.4%	n/a	15%	n/a
England	21.9%	n/a	22%	n/a

Average length of assessments

49 days	2015/16
47 days	2016/17
46 days	2017/18

Between April – September 2018, 59% of assessments were completed within 45 days. There has also been a significant decrease in the number of assessments completed in 60 days or more. This is lower than the most recently published statistical neighbour data – 83% of assessments were completed within 45 days over a 12 month period, as at 31st March 2018.

Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS)

The Children in Need Service



Strengths/Progress

Developing new ways of supporting vulnerable adolescents through the Contextual Safeguarding project - Hackney is currently developing new ways of working through the Contextual Safeguarding project which is supporting practitioners to identify alternative types of plans, support and interventions that may be more effective to reduce the risk of extra-familial harm to vulnerable adolescents. For some young people it is clear that the threshold for significant harm in the context of the family are met and in these cases it will be appropriate for a young person to be supported on a Child Protection Plan. However for cases where the risks are related to extra-familial harm, other forms of support and intervention that may be more appropriate are now considered. All cases are discussed at the Extra-Familial Risk Panel.

This is a change of approach in managing risk to young people and the number of adolescents on Child Protection Plans has decreased – at 30 September 2017, 21.1% of Child Protection Plans were for young people aged 13 and over (51 young people), compared to 16% (32 young people) at 30 September 2018.

Creating greater continuity for children and families - co-location of buddy units - The Practice Evolution project during 2018 considered how we could promote a greater sense of continuity for children and families, and minimise the changes they experience so that they do not need to retell their stories, and so that trusted relationships can be built and maintained. As part of this work, A&A and CIN units are now co-located and have been paired to create 'buddy units' - where an assessment unit and an intervention unit work together to share what they know about families. This model of working was developed in consultation with staff through the Practice Evolution project.

The strengthening of the buddy unit working arrangements aims to make transitions as seamless as possible for families, facilitate greater



Areas for further development and actions to address

Promoting a timely and well-rounded response to neglect - Thematic audits identified examples where practitioners could have used stronger strategies to work with parental non-engagement or disguised compliance in relation to neglect. A service-wide Practice Development Day was held in February 2018 for all CFS practitioners on the topic of 'Working with denial and cognitive dissonance' and this has been embedded into the wider staff training programme. A FISS Case Review forum has now been set up to promote cross-service reflective practice and assist social work units in identifying appropriate interventions to break the 'cycle of neglect'. The forum is reflective and social work unit led and focuses on cases where there are issues around long standing neglect, repeat or long term processes (such as CP or CiN Plans) or where there have been multiple interventions. The forum provides practitioners with an opportunity to explore and apply research, identify patterns and possible ways forward, as well as help to manage professional anxiety and expectations and avoid potential drift or delay.

Percentage of repeat Child Protection Plans has increased - The percentage of children in Hackney subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time at 30th September 2018 was 21%. This represents 26 children, from 18 families, being subject to a second or subsequent Child Protection Plan in the first half of 2018/19. This is an increase from 13 children (12.7%) from the same point in 2017-18. Focused audits looking at repeat Child Protection Plans were conducted in December 2018. Initial audit findings suggest that for some families staff changes affected their ability to engage with practitioners and make meaningful change. There was also some indication of cautiousness with regard to the impact of family history meaning that children may have been more readily placed back on a Child Protection Plan when risk may have been better managed on a Child in Need Plan. Actions identified as a result of the focused audits include training to be provided by the in-house Clinical Service to Child Protection Chairs

collaboration and joint working across the services, and promote skills sharing and sharing of practice expertise. This will also mean that families that are re-referred to Hackney CFS will benefit from swift allocation back to units that know them rather than 'starting again' at each referral and assessment; this will ensure greater consistency in the response to re-referrals.

Court tracking processes and positive use of pre-proceedings -

Permanency planning and court tracking processes are increasingly robust, resulting in the decrease in the overall average length of court proceedings in Hackney between April – September 2018, to 27 weeks (from 30 weeks during 2017/18). The use of robust pre-proceedings processes is resulting in positive outcomes for children, with final orders being received that more often match the final care plan presented at court.

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

Feedback received includes: *'I am the children's guardian on [this] case. I thought it was important for me to let you know how well [the Practice Development Manager] has done on this case...She has kept me informed about any significant events and when I have asked her for information her responses have been prompt. I have been so impressed at the standard of her work, her planning and her commitment'.*

Disabled Children's Service - Following a review of Hackney's Disabled Children's Service (DCS) at the end of 2018, arrangements are being finalised to bring this service within FISS in early 2019. Work is also taking place to strengthen management oversight in this service.

regarding understanding whether changes made by families are likely to be sustainable when considering ending a Child Protection Plan.

Consistency of Child in Need Plan processes - The Senior Management Team are exploring ways to increase the consistency of Child in Need (CIN) Planning processes across all FISS units. This includes consistency of meetings, plan review timescales and visits. This work is led by the CIN Processes Task Group and needs to be more closely aligned to Child Protection processes.

Work is being undertaken to ensure effective reporting mechanisms are in place to allow senior managers to track and monitor performance relating to Child in Need Plan processes. Monthly Management Reports for Child in Need Plans are now in place and social work units now have access to live unit dashboards to support with monitoring caseloads and timescales.

Ofsted focused visit findings about Children in Need and Children on Child Protection Plans - inspectors found that plans:

- Plans need to be more specific about what needs to change for children and by when
- Plans should be clear about what happens when risk escalates or changes do not happen in time
- Managerial oversight should ensure plans are effective
- Children's daily lived experiences need to be central to all work

The Children and Families Service will be submitting an action plan to Ofsted before the end of March 2019 to outline the steps the Service will be taking to address these findings.

The Children in Need Service



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



Child Protection Plans

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

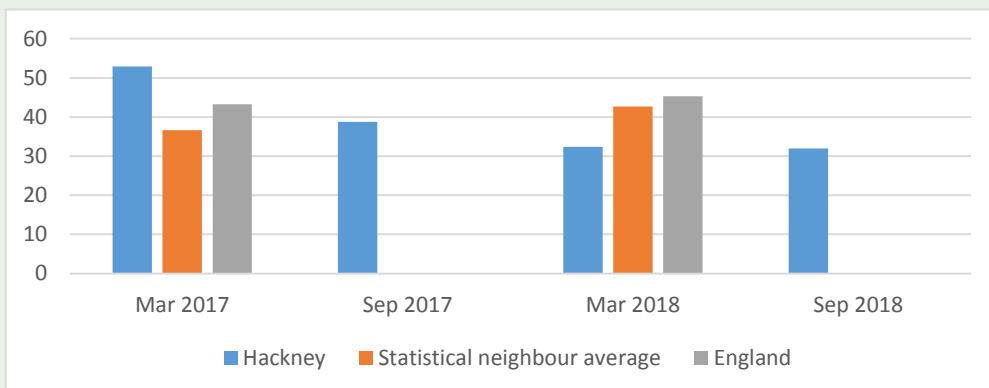


Number of Child Protection Plans at 30th Sep 2018

Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
330	242	200	199

The number of Child Protection Plans, as at 30th September 2018, is in line with the years prior to 2016/17, which saw a significant increase in plans (216 at March 2015, 226 at March 2016). The decrease in the number of child protection plans is a result of the re-introduction of a pre-Child Protection Conference consultation stage and the impact of the Contextual Safeguarding project on approaches to managing risk to young people.

Rate of Child Protection Plans per 10,000 population aged under 18 (at 30th Oct 2018)



	Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
Hackney	52.9	38.8	32.4	32
Statistical neighbour average	36.6	n/a	42.7	n/a
England	43.3	n/a	45.3	n/a



18% decrease in the number of children subject to Child Protection Plans compared to the same point last year

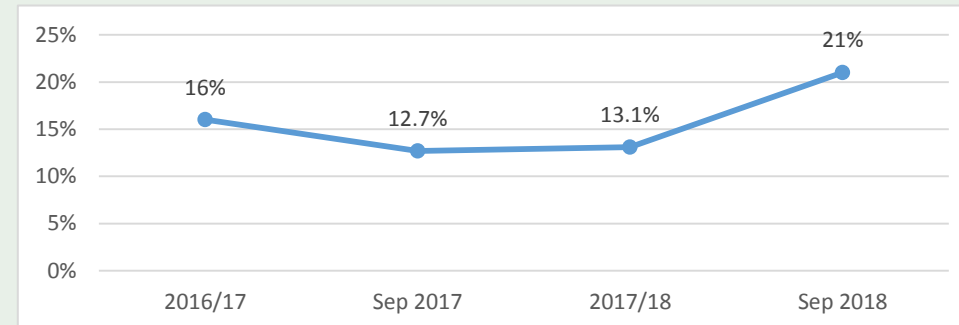


The rate of Child Protection Plans in Hackney at 30th September 2018 was 32 children per 10,000. This is a decrease from the previous year (38.8 per 10,000 at September 2017)

Court Proceedings

The overall average length of court proceedings in Hackney between April-September 2018 was 27 weeks. This is a decrease from an overall average of 30 weeks in 2017/18. This is a result of close tracking of Public Law order (PLO) processes by senior managers.

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



	2016/17	Sep 2017	2017/18	Sep 2018
Hackney	16%	12.7%	13.1%	21%
Statistical neighbour average	15.9%	n/a	15.8%	n/a
England	18.7%	n/a	20.2%	n/a



The percentage of children in Hackney subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time at 30th September 2018 was 21%. This is an increase compared to the same point last year and higher than the most recently published statistical neighbour average (15.8%) and most recently published national average (20.2%).

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

Duration of Child Protection Plan	Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
Under 3 months	36%	17%	32%	31%
3 – 6 months	22%	17%	11%	22%
6 – 12 months	27%	48%	21%	23%
1 – 2 years	12%	16%	33%	19%
Over 2 years	3%	3%	3%	5%

Between March 2018 and September 2018 there was a 14% reduction in the number of children on Child Protection Plans for between 1-2 years (19%) this is comparable with the national average (15%).

Clinical Service



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

The Clinical Service offers a wide-range of evidence based therapeutic support to children and families experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties; relationship issues and mental health issues. Approaches offered include Systemic Family Therapy, Child Psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Video Interaction Guidance (VIG), Art Therapy and Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP).

Clinical Service Activity Data April-September 2018

Number of new cases	195
Total number of cases	431
% of positive CHI-ESQ* feedback	83%
% of positive SDQ** improvement	86%

*The Children Experience of Service Questionnaire (**CHI-ESQ**) was developed by the Health Care Commission as a means of measuring service satisfaction in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
 The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ**) is a brief emotional and behavioural screening questionnaire for children and young people.

Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project

The Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project is a new initiative led by the CAMHS Alliance with support from the Integrated Commissioning Board for Children and Young People Mental Health (CCG) in City & Hackney. This innovative project aims to improve support around mental health and wellbeing for children and young people in schools, colleges and specialist and alternative provision settings in City & Hackney. Hackney Children and Families Clinical Service are one of the providers who are taking part in this Project.

WAMHS is a pilot project that was launched in May 2018 and was in full effect by September 2018 in 40 schools, colleges and education provisions in City and Hackney. As part of WAMHS, each school has a Designated Mental Health lead from within the school, a Wellbeing Framework Partner (a skilled education professional from Hackney Learning Trust), and an allocated mental health practitioner from Hackney CFS and/or Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS) who are based in the school regularly. As part of the project, the Hackney Clinical Service has a team of CFS clinicians currently based in 8 schools (primary, secondary and pupil referral units) to support the embedding of whole-school approaches and increase capacity in schools. The WAMHS project will run for 15 months in the first instance.

Training and consultation to colleagues, clinical assessments and direct work

In addition to direct clinical work and assessments, the Clinical Service delivers training to social workers, foster carers and other frontline practitioners. This includes topics such as managing self-harm risk, and recognising and responding to the attachment needs of looked after children. Consultations are offered to colleagues on request to inform decision-making and ensure children’s mental health needs are met.

Systemic approaches

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



AFT accredited Systemic Training, Foundation level, and Year 2

The Systemic Foundation year training ran for practitioners situated in Children's Social Care between October 2017 and October 2018. Two cohorts were trained simultaneously. In 2018, the Foundation level training was accredited by the Association for Systemic Practice and Family Therapy in the UK (AFT). The training provided a collaborative and enabling learning environment for practitioners to cultivate their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of systemic theories and interventions. The course aimed to help trainees develop a systemic skills base that would enhance their social work practice and further promote self-reflexive, anti-oppressive and empowering practices with some of the most vulnerable children, young people and their families. A year 2 systemic training started in November 2018 and was offered to practitioners that successfully completed the Foundation level in systemic practice. The aim is to have Year 2 also accredited.

Fostering Changes and Nurturing Attachments Group

The Fostering Changes and Nurturing Attachments training for foster carers aimed to develop foster carers skills in managing complex relationships with young people and provided a safe space for foster carers to reflect on their relationships with young people and their own attachment histories. To date 7 foster carer groups have run, with approximately 60 participants attending at least 75% of sessions.

Troubled Families

The Clinical Service has two Clinical Psychologists based in the Troubled Families Programme to focus on parents who present with mental health needs and who may have their own experience of trauma or stressful life events. Parents are seen for individual or group sessions.

Corporate Parenting

Strengths/Progress

A steady increase in the number of looked after children in placements provided by in-house foster carers – there has been a 12% increase in the number of children placed with in-house foster carers between April – September 2018; and a 4% increase in the number of available in-house foster placements during this period. The number of available in-house foster carer placements and the number of children placed with in-house foster carers has continued to increase since September 2018.

Foster carer recruitment activity continues to progress - 6 mainstream foster carers were recruited between April-September 2018, with no resignations or terminations in this period. The service recruited 17 foster carers in 2017/18 compared to a statistical neighbour average of 9.5. The service continues to set ambitious targets for foster carer recruitment.

Children in Care Council – The Virtual School will be taking over participation and managing the Children in Care Council. A Participation Officer started in March 2019, when a plan will be developed to relaunch the Children in Care Council and offer wider participation opportunities.

Supported Lodgings - A supported lodging scheme was launched in January 2019. Two mainstream foster carers have joined the scheme and a further candidate has been approved so far, with further candidates being assessed.

The Mockingbird Model - The Mockingbird Model Project was launched in spring 2018 and aims to set up networks of foster care homes using an extended family model. A 'hub home' and connected foster carer homes will provide respite care, peer support, regular joint planning, training, and social activities. The first hub home will be launched in June 2019.

UASC project - Following a successful application to the Controlling Migration Fund, two posts have been created and recruited to - one working within the fostering service to source placements which can meet the specific needs of our UASC, and one post for a UASC Support Worker who is currently working within a LAC social work unit. The project has also contributed to social groups for UASC in order to reduce their levels of isolation.

Regionalisation of Adoption - All local authorities are required to become part of a Regional Adoption Agency by April 2020. It is envisaged that Hackney will be part of Adopt London North which will consist of 6 local authorities (Hackney, Camden, Islington, Enfield, Barnet and Haringey), with development work being led by Islington Council. Each local authority will need to formally delegate its statutory duty to provide an adoption service to the Regional Adoption Agency. It is expected that Adopt London North will commence work between by June 2019.



Areas for further development and actions to address

Suitable placements for complex adolescents – of the young people who entered care between April-September 2018, 61% were aged 14 years or older. These young people often have complex needs requiring greater levels of support. Appropriate placements to match the needs of these young people are extremely difficult to source. The service continues to recruit more in-house foster carers who are able to provide appropriate placements for these complex adolescents. The Service is also part of the North East London Residential Commissioning Group – looking to improve the quality and reduce the cost of residential placements to meet young people's needs.

Innovation Fund North East London Residential Commissioning Group – Hackney is part of a group of local authorities in North East London, with Havering Council as the lead borough, working on a project to develop a sub-regional approach to commissioning children's homes. Three young people have been closely involved as part of the project board. The feedback given by young people has been invaluable and, following this, the commissioning process is being adjusted to be more child-focused. The project is currently reviewing bids that were submitted in February 2019.

Placement stability – The number of looked after children with three or more placements in the last 12 months, as at 30th September 2018, was 13% compared to 14% at 30th September 2017. There is a slight increase compared with March 2018 when this figure was 11%. The Service has learnt from a number of adolescent placement breakdowns resulting from carers struggling to cope with increasingly complex behaviour and work is underway to put additional support in place for similar placements.

Long-term placement stability for children in care increased in the first two quarters of 2018/19 from 62% to 66%. Long term placements are reviewed at the Care Planning Panel to ensure required support is provided as early as possible.

Increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) – 45 UASC were open to Hackney CFS as at 30th September 2018, compared to 27 as at 31st March 2018. This represents a 67% increase in UASC numbers since March 2018.

Corporate Parenting

Looked After Children

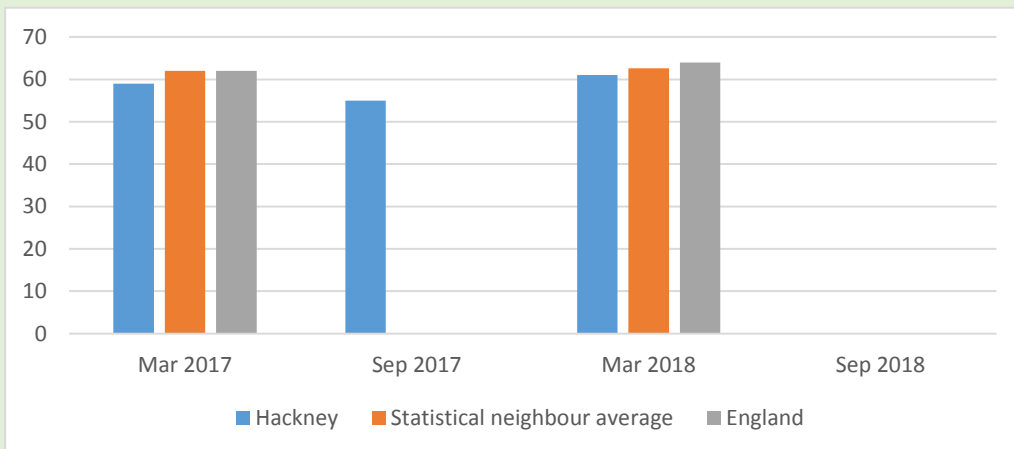


The Corporate Parenting Service is responsible for all areas related to the safeguarding and welfare of children who are in the care of the local authority. This includes planning for their future placements via fostering and adoption, supporting rehabilitation home whenever possible, and supporting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

Number of looked after children

Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
371	345	381	384

Children Looked After per 10,000 population aged under 18 (at 30th Sep)

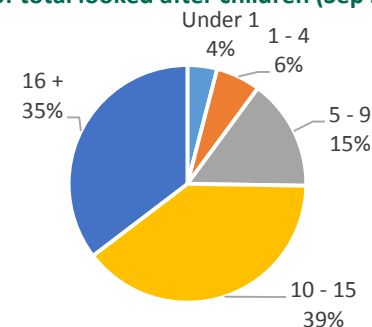


	Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
Hackney	59	55	61	61
Statistical neighbour average	62	n/a	62.6	n/a
England	62	n/a	64	n/a

Age breakdown of total number of looked after children, at 30th September 2018

Age	Sep-17	Mar-18		Sep-18
	Hackney	Eng	Hackney	Hackney
Under 1	16 (5%)	6%	25 (7%)	17 (4%)
1 - 4	25 (7%)	13%	28 (7%)	22 (6%)
5 - 9	58 (17%)	19%	64 (17%)	59 (15%)
10 - 15	142 (41%)	39%	143 (38%)	150 (39%)
16 +	104 (30%)	23%	121 (32%)	136 (35%)
Total	345		381	384
Total statistical neighbour average	n/a		382	n/a

Age of total looked after children (Sep 2018)



A higher proportion of Hackney's looked after children cohort are older young people than the national average – 35% of the total cohort were aged 16+ years as at 30th September 2018, compared to 23% nationally (as at March 2018).

Age breakdown of children entering care during the year as at 30th September 2018, by age on starting

Age	Sep-17	Mar-18		Sep-18
	Hackney	England	Hackney	Hackney
Under 1	13 (14%)	19%	32 (15%)	7 (7%)
1 – 4	13 (14%)	18%	22(10%)	7 (7%)
5 – 9	7 (8%)	18%	23 (11%)	8 (8%)
10 - 15	28 (32%)	28%	68 (31%)	30 (31%)
16 +	27 (31%)	18%	72 (33%)	46 (47%)
Total	88	NA	217	98

More young people come into care at an older age in Hackney. Between April – September 2018, 76 children and young people aged 10 and over entered care – 78% of the total number that entered care.



The percentage of young people becoming looked after for the second or subsequent time within the last 12 months was 16.8% as at 30th September 2018, an increase compared to 12% at the same point last year.

The number of children leaving care between April – September 2018 was 105. Of these, 43 (41%) returned home to live with parents, relatives or another person with parental responsibility. A further 6 (6%) left care due to Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangements Orders (previously known as Residence Orders) being granted, and 4 (4%) were adopted.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

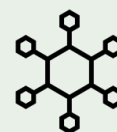
45 UASC were open to Hackney CFS as at 30th September 2018, compared to 27 as at 31st March 2018. This represents a 67% increase in UASC numbers since March 2018.

Fostering Service

Recruitment of Foster Carers



The Fostering Service has approved 6 mainstream foster carer households during April-September 2018 and the service is on track to recruit 14 carers by the end of March 2019. 7 mainstream foster carer households were approved between April-September 2017 and 17 for the whole of 2017-18. No foster carers have resigned or had their approval terminated in this period.



Mockingbird Project

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



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

The project launched in Hackney in spring 2018 with the establishment of a project working group. Two hub home carers have been identified and the project team are now in the process of identifying satellite home foster carers to join the hub. We are will be launching the first hub home in June 2019 and the second in October 2019.

Looked After Children

Placement Activity

Placement Stability

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

	Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
Hackney	18%	14%	11%	13%
Statistical neighbour average	11%	n/a	12%	n/a
England	10%	n/a	10%	n/a



The number of looked after children with three or more placements in the last 12 months, as at 30th September 2018 was 13% compared to 11% at the end of March 2018. There is an increase and is above the statistical neighbour average and national performance data for this indicator.

Hackney's multi-strand placement stability strategy has led to improved performance since March 2017. It has promoted the importance of placement stability with staff, encouraging them to build a 'team around the placement' which aims to identify placement fragility early on in order to devise a response to make placements more resilient and prevent break down.

Adoption and Post Permanency

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

	2016/17	2017/18	Sep 2018
Hackney	19	12	4
	9%	6%	4%
Statistical neighbour average	15	12	n/a
	7%	6%	n/a

Between April - September 2018, 4 Hackney children were adopted; this is in line with the same period last year when 4 children had been adopted.

Recruiting adopters

3 adoptive families were approved in Hackney between April - September 2018. This is in line with 2017/18 when 6 adoptive families were approved during the year.

For the children adopted during April to September 2018:

The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted in days was **221 days** compared to a national average of 406 days.

The average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family in days was **101 days** compared to a national average of 173 days.

Percentage of looked after children aged under 16 looked after continuously for at least 2½ years who have been living in the same placement for at least 2 years¹ as at 30th September 2018

	Mar 2017	Sep 2017	Mar 2018	Sep 2018
Hackney	69%	67%	62%	66%
Statistical neighbour average	73%	n/a	69%	n/a
England	70%	n/a	70%	n/a

Long-term placement stability for children in care has increased in the first two quarters of 2018/19 from 62% to 66%. Long term placements are reviewed at the Care Planning Panel to ensure required support is provided as early as possible.

Leaving Care



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

260 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported by the Leaving Care Service, as at 30th September 2018, a 3% increase compared to the 252 being supported at the same point in Sept 2017, and a decrease compared to the 301 young people being supported at 31st March 2018.

The Service was providing support to 23 care leavers aged over 21 who were in higher education, as at September 2018. This is a decrease compared to 30 care leavers at March 2018.

As at 30th September 2018, 24 young people were living in Staying Put arrangements (continuing to live with their previous foster carer after they have turned 18), this is an increase from March 2018 when 20 young people were living in Staying Put arrangements.

Safeguarding and Learning



Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO investigates allegations of harm or concerns around the conduct or suitability of adults working with or volunteering with children.

There were 135 referrals to the LADO between April – September 2018, a significant increase in referrals when compared to 2017/18 which saw a total of 165 referrals over the whole year.

The increase in LADO referrals is largely due to work done to strengthen the relationship between Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) and the LADO service. The LADO has worked extensively with the Head of Wellbeing and Education Safeguarding, including to address the ongoing difficulties posed by unregistered educational settings and the challenges they present in relation to safeguarding.

This working partnership is now in full effect with increased awareness resulting in schools proactively seeking advice from the LADO during disciplinary processes and when determining if an incident constitutes an allegation.



Children's Rights Service

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

Between April – September 2018 there have been no formal complaints made by children and young people or advocates on their behalf. This due to the Children's Rights Officers continuing to seek early and informal resolution for the children and young people with whom they work; there are numerous examples of mediation activity over April-September 2018. During this period, the Children's Rights Service worked with 49 children and young people. Young people are also accessing external advocacy – in instances where this happens, young people are supported by the Service to ensure the advocacy process remains helpful for them even if Hackney Children's Rights Officers are not the young person's preferred advocate.

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

Independent Chairs

Hackney's Independent Chairs provide independent oversight of work with looked after children as well as chairing Child Protection Conferences. They hold regular consultations on determining whether cases meet thresholds for Child Protection Conferences and have also taken on the new role of Independent Chairs of Contextual Safeguarding Conferences.

Safeguarding and Learning



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

Between April – September 2018, 52 young people went missing from care on 188 occasions and 33 young people went missing from home on 45 occasions. 57% children/young people who went missing from home accepted a Return Home Interview. 62% of children/young people who went missing from care accepted a Return Home Interview between April-September 2018 compared to 51 (82%) children/young people who went missing from care accepting a Return Home Interview for the whole of 2017-18.

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

Quality Assurance



The Children and Families Service is a complex system and many tools are used to understand performance and identify learning opportunities, themes and trends to enable the service to continue to adapt and respond to new demands. This includes management and audit oversight, with 144 audits taking place between April – September 2018. Multi-agency audits are also coordinated through City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

The focused visit from Ofsted in February 2019 found that:

'The local authority has a strong focus on auditing and self-evaluation to improve practice. A particular strength is the inclusion of service-user feedback....audits are detailed and comprehensive and identify relevant themes for special review.'

Ofsted also identified areas for improvement including observing that they felt some audits were too optimistic and the quality assurance framework for the Children and Families Service will be reviewed to ensure that priorities identified are incorporated into quality assurance processes.

The audit programme is also being reviewed following the focused visit. Immediate developments that are currently (at March 2019) underway include: refresher training for Service Managers on the audit approach; review of audit templates to ensure they are outcome-focused and evidence based, with a clear focus on the child's experience; peer reviewing of audits by Service Managers; Service Manager oversight of completed audit actions and the impact of audit actions.