

**Joint Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission and the Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission:
Update on Children in Temporary Accommodation - 25th March 2019**

Context

In December 2016 the CYP Scrutiny Commission and the Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission held a joint session discussing temporary accommodation. The two Commissions heard information from officers and from local residents who shared their personal experiences of living in temporary accommodation. The joint session provided members with a better understanding about the Council's role, work and impact on children and families in TA. This was discussed again on 5th April 2017.

The Chair of Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission sent a letter to Cllr Bramble and Cllr Rennison dated 8th December 2017, requesting information on three additional areas in relation to children in temporary accommodation, including *how we are tracking the social and emotional development of children in temporary accommodation and how this compares to other children.*

In order to track social and emotional development outcomes for children over time, it was initially agreed that the Benefits and Housing Needs Service would provide a list of all families in temporary accommodation living in Hackney and outside the borough. The Troubled Families database would be used to identify a cohort of children in temporary accommodation, and matched with children not in temporary accommodation to create a control group. After 6 months, educational outcomes for the two groups would be compared as there is no other recorded data source that is routinely collected for children who are not open to statutory services.

It was further agreed that Benefits and Housing Needs would extract the details of children living in temporary accommodation and share with Hackney Learning Trust, who would then cross-reference the data with school registers.

Summary of work undertaken to establish the cohort

Following the meeting of the Commission in December 2016, officers from Benefits and Housing Needs, the Learning Trust and Children and Families Service met to consider how best to go about sharing information between the respective services in order to consider the impact of living in temporary accommodation on children's developments, achievements and outcomes. Three significant challenges were discussed in respect of sharing information within the council to achieve this objective, including:

- Approximately half of the 2,100 children living in temporary accommodation were placed outside Hackney, or did not attend a Hackney school
- It would be difficult to develop a picture over time as data on children attending Hackney schools only provides a snapshot of children in temporary accommodation and their current attendance/attainment levels. Initial analysis did not suggest that the profile of these children was significantly different from their peers.
- Consideration needed to be given to data sharing protocols which had not been developed for the purpose of monitoring education performance of children in temporary accommodation.

It is very difficult to produce a coherent dataset to show an improvement, or decline, in attainment over time for children in temporary accommodation due to the inconsistent and incomplete data available. Attainment results for this cohort are reported under various assessment frameworks, and as these have changed over time, direct comparisons between pupils and cohorts is not always possible.

We have continued to consider the impact of living in temporary accommodation through the Troubled Families programme. An updated report on families in temporary accommodation was provided to the Troubled Families Team in December 2018. This list provided details of 738 children aged 5-17 residing in Hackney in temporary accommodation. From this list, we were able to identify:

- 510 children aged 5-17 residing in Hackney in temporary accommodation did not meet any Troubled Families identifying factors (there are 6 identifying factors, of which families must meet 2 before being captured under the Troubled Families programme - details of the criteria are in the appendix).
- 228 children aged 5-17 residing in Hackney in temporary accommodation met at least one of the Troubled Families identifying criteria.
- 50 children aged 5-17 residing in Hackney in temporary accommodation met the Troubled Families education criteria¹.
- 15 children aged 5-17 residing in Hackney in temporary accommodation met the Troubled Families education criteria with at least one other Troubled Families factor and were identified as known to the Troubled Families programme. Of these 15 children, 12 (80%) had achieved a successful outcome and Hackney was able to make Payments by Results (PbR) claims for them, which means that they met a positive outcome for significant and sustained progress, with all outcomes being monitored over three consecutive school terms.

31% of school-age children who are living in temporary accommodation have needs that meet at least one of the Troubled Families identifying criteria, with 7% of school-age children living in temporary accommodation meeting the Troubled Families criteria for education.

We can infer that living in temporary accommodation has a significant impact on families, but we know that this is also not the only factor that may cause stress for a family. For those children captured by the Troubled Families programme that met the Troubled Families education criteria with at least one other Troubled Families factor identified, we can see that a successful outcome can be achieved through the Troubled Families programme in 80% of cases.

Further information about the Troubled Families programme can be found in the appendix.

Families in temporary accommodation are supported in a number of ways by Hackney Council as detailed below:

¹ A child who is persistently absent from school or; has received at least 3 fixed term exclusions or; is primary school aged and has had at least 5 school days of fixed term exclusions or; has had at least 10 days of fixed term exclusions or; has been permanently excluded from school within the last 3 school terms or; is in alternative educational provision for children with behavioural problems or; is neither registered with a school, nor being educated in an alternative setting or; is nominated by education professionals as having school attendance or attainment problems of equivalent concern to the indicators above because he/she is not receiving a suitable full time education.

Support for families in temporary accommodation in Hackney

Family Information Service

Hackney's Family Information Service (FIS) provides information to support families to access services that will improve the quality of their lives. The Family Information Service has a helpline and a website providing information:

- to professionals, agencies and members of the public on a range of services that are available locally for children aged 0 – 19 years old
- on registered childcare such as nurseries, playgroups, child minders, Children's Centres and out of school provision, and information on paying for childcare
- things to do with children and on parenting programme
- leaflets and attending outreach events
- about services on the Local Offer for families with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Hackney Local Offer

The Hackney Local Offer provides information on services, activities and organisations for families with children and young people aged 0 -25 years with Special Educational Needs, disabilities or additional needs. The services are categorised by (but not limited to):

- Adventure playgrounds
- Art and hobbies
- Clubs and groups
- Libraries and museum
- Music, dance and drama
- Parks
- Sport and exercise

Children's Centre Services

Children's Centre Services provide a range of universal and targeted/multi-agency interventions to families living in hotels and temporary accommodation in Hackney.

Benefits and Housing Needs

The Benefits and Housing Needs Service use the placement procedure for the placement of households in temporary accommodation and private rented accommodation both inside and outside Hackney. The list below identifies a number of key principles from the procedure that applies to families;

- Do applicants or household have a severe and enduring mental health problem who are receiving psychiatric treatment and aftercare provided by community mental health services and have an established support network where a transfer of care would severely impact on their well-being?
- Do applicants or household have child/children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan in Hackney; or families who are linked into local health services or have high social needs, for example are working with Social Services, and where it is confirmed that a transfer to another area would impact on their welfare?
- Do applicants or household have a child/children with special educational needs, receiving education or educational support in Hackney, where change would be detrimental to their well-being?
- Are applicants or household women who are on maternity leave from employment and meet the above criteria would also be prioritised for placements in Greater London?

- Do applicants or household have as part of their household, a child or children who are enrolled in public examination courses in Hackney, with exams to be taken within the next six months?
- Attendance at schools will be considered before an offer of accommodation is made. The Council understands that disruption to education and established support networks can be detrimental to a child's development and therefore an assessment of their need will be carried out. This assessment will look at the requirement to both promote and safeguard their welfare. However, it must be noted that although it would naturally be desirable to keep children in their current schools this may not be possible due to the availability of local accommodation.
- The Council will consider the proximity to schools, public transport, primary care services, GP's and local services in the area in which the accommodation is located.
- So far as is practicable if placing vulnerable families outside of London we will ensure that such families will continue to receive appropriate support. In all cases we will notify the host borough of the household details. All households will also be given details of their local GP surgeries, schools and community centres as applicable.

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 prosocial 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.

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.

Young Hackney works with temporary accommodation providers across Hackney to ensure that local Young Hackney resources available to families are well advertised and they are encouraged to make use of these facilities.

Summary

From the work that has been completed over the past two years it can be inferred that:

- There are over 2,100 children of school age living in temporary accommodation provided by Hackney and, of these, 738 are resident in the borough, but not necessarily attending a local school. This makes it difficult to find a reasonable control group to test the hypothesis of whether their attainment is better or worse than their peers as it needs to be measured against education data.
- Education data only provides a snapshot at a point in time, so is not the most reliable method for measuring attainment of a control group over time.
- People in temporary accommodation, by virtue of their situation, may not remain in one place for a prolonged period of time, making it difficult to follow the path of an individual child.
- A family's situation at home prior to going into temporary accommodation might have already been challenging, but there is no starting measure of their attainment at this point to assess whether any decline or improvement is attributable to their housing situation making any data comparison inherently difficult to draw conclusions from.
- Matching children in Temporary Accommodation against children known to the Troubled Families Team provides some indication of challenging factors faced by children in temporary accommodation and it was possible to measure outcomes for children by matching with the agreed criteria for measuring success for the PbR in terms of education and attainment.

APPENDIX
Summary of the work of the Troubled Families team

Hackney has an overall programme target to work with 3510 families to be worked with by March 2020, and has successfully identified over 3510 families who meet the programme criteria of 2 or more of the 6 presenting needs in the Troubled Families Plan as outlined below. To date Hackney has made 1255 Payments by Results Progress (PbR) claims and is set to have made 1800 claims by the end of this financial year.

The six key themes:

1. Crime and Anti-social behaviour
2. Education and attainment
3. Children who need help
4. Work and finances
5. Staying safe
6. Physical and mental health

Each theme is broken down into two areas:

- Identifying Factors - These describe the criteria that they will use to identify children and parents, on a household level, that might need some support.
- Positive Outcomes - These describe what they think a positive outcome or good result looks like.

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 we were the last of those to go live with phase 2 of the programme. Feedback following a spot check by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) 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.*'

Hackney agreed to work with 2,716 families in the first three years of the programme until March 2018. We have met this target. The number of families worked with until March 2018 is representative of 77% of the revised 5 year total. We are on track to reach our target by 2020.

Troubled Families have submitted 1,015 PbR claims since the initiation of phase two in September 2015 (350 this financial year). The significant increase in the last two quarters can be attributed to the recent investment of resources in the form of additional Data Analysts.

The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (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.

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.

In January 2018 MHCLG conducted a Spot Check of Troubled Families cases about whom Hackney had submitted claims. This Spot Check examined a sample of 36 cases chosen randomly by MHCLG with a 'deep dive' into 15 of these. The Ministry found that Hackney's Troubled Families Programme is working well. Ministry representatives - in addition to auditing a random sample of 'Payment by Results' cases - met with practitioners to explore how the systems in Hackney work in practice to help families meeting the Troubled Families criteria. They were impressed with the commitment and enthusiasm of practitioners in achieving good outcomes for families. All of the PbR claims were found to be valid and the Ministry gave Hackney a very favourable overall evaluation.

On 21st June DCLG conducted another site visit to Hackney to evaluate progress on the Service Transformation Maturity Model. MHCLG representatives met with the Troubled Families leadership team, the Director of Children's Services and a large sample of practitioners from different agencies. They again found that Hackney's innovative, flexible, non-bureaucratic culture and systems enable complex families to receive helpful services that achieve good outcomes.

Detail of the Troubled Families identifying criteria

1. Parents and children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour

A child who has committed a proven offence or who has received an anti-social behaviour intervention (or equivalent local measure) in the last 12 months or; An adult prisoner who is less than 12 months from release and will have parenting responsibilities on release or; An adult who is currently subject to licence or supervision in the community following release from prison, and has parenting responsibilities or; An adult currently serving a community order or suspended sentence who has parenting responsibilities or; Adults or children nominated by professionals because their potential crime problem or offending behaviour is of equivalent concern to the indicators above

2. Children who have not been attending school regularly

A child who is persistently absent from school or; Has received at least 3 fixed term exclusions or; Is primary school aged and has had at least 5 school days of fixed term exclusions or; Has had at least 10 days of fixed term exclusions or; Has been permanently excluded from school within the last 3 school terms or; Is in alternative educational provision for children with behavioural problems or; Is neither registered with a school, nor being educated in an alternative setting or; Is nominated by education professionals as having school attendance or attainment problems of equivalent concern to the indicators above because he/she is not receiving a suitable full time education.

3. Children who need help: children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan

A child who has been identified as needing early help, i.e, no take-up of the Early Years Entitlement or; Has social, emotional and mental health problems or; Has been reported missing from home & identified as of concern or; Are repeatedly assessed under Section 17 or 47, of the Children Act 1989, but not deemed a 'child in need' or; Are subject to Early Help Assessments or; A child 'in need' under Section 17, of the Children Act 1989 or; Has been subject to an enquiry under Section 47, Children Act 1989 A child subject to a Child Protection Plan or; Has been identified as at risk of exploitation or; Nominated by

professionals as having problems of equivalent concern to the indicators above (e.g. a referral that leads to a statutory Child and Family Assessment)

4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness

An adult in receipt of out of work benefits or; An adult who is claiming Universal Credit and subject to work related conditions or; A child who is about to leave school, has no/few qualifications and no planned education, training or employment or; A young person who is not in education, training or employment (NEET) or; Parents and families nominated by professionals as being at significant risk of financial exclusion or; This may include those with problematic/unmanageable levels and forms of debt and those with significant rent arrears

5. Families affected domestic violence and abuse

A young person or adult known to local services has experienced, is currently experiencing or is at risk of experiencing domestic violence and abuse or; A young person or adult who is known to local services as having perpetrated an incident of domestic violence or abuse in the last 12 months or; The household or a family member has been subject to a police call out for at least one domestic incident in the last 12 months

6. Parents and children with a range of health problems

An adult, child or young person with mental ill health, substance misuse, smoking, sexual health or physical health problems A new mother who has a mental health or substance misuse problem and other health factors associated with poor parenting, (Inc. mothers who are receiving Universal Partnership Plus service or participating in a Family Nurse Partnership) or; Adults with parenting responsibilities or children who are nominated by health professionals as having any mental and physical health problems of equivalent concern to the indicators above, (Inc. unhealthy behaviours, resulting in problems like obesity, malnutrition or diabetes)