

# Overview & Scrutiny

## Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

**Date of meeting:** Tuesday 29th October 2019

**Title of report:** Update on Foster Carer Recruitment and Retention

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### **Brief:**

In October 2017, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission undertook a review into the recruitment and retention of foster carers in Hackney. The Commission made a total of ten recommendations and this paper outlines Hackney's current position against each of these, building on previous update reports.

### Foster carer annual recruitment figures

Year	Number of in-house mainstream foster carers recruited
2016-17	18
2017-18	17
2018-19	12

The most recent published statistical neighbour average was 9.5 in 2017/18.

### Foster carer resignation figures

In 2018-19, there were no foster carer resignations or terminations received. In 2017/18 - 16 mainstream foster carers resigned and 1 foster carer's approval was terminated.

### Total number of foster carers and percentage vacancy rate

Most recent data shows that at 31st July 2019, there were 105 approved mainstream fostering households (with a maximum capacity for 164 placements) with 107 children in placements. Additionally 23 children and young people were placed with family and friends carers at 31st July 2019. This compares well to 31 March 2015, when there were 84 approved mainstream fostering households in Hackney (with a maximum capacity for approximately 138 placements) with 80 children in placement.

At 31st July 2019, 34 placements were unavailable for use (most commonly due to the personal circumstances of the carer or because they were providing a staying put placement for a young person they had previously fostered), meaning that the vacancy rate for the service was 13%, compared to 22% a year previously.

Number and proportion of children being cared for by in-house carers vs independent agency carers

At 31st March 2019, 139 children were placed with in-house carers including connected persons carers and 144 children were placed with Independent Fostering Agency carers.

Current estimated costs of in-house care vs independent agency care per child

**Average weekly cost of placement types at 31 March**

Placement type	Average weekly cost 2017/18	Average weekly cost 2018/19	% increase
In-house Fostering	£415	£430	3.6%
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)	£910	£924	1.5%
Semi-Independent	£913	£964	5.3%
Residential	£3,640	£4,073	11.9%