

Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: Tuesday 29th October 2019
Title of report: Children and Families Service 2018-19 Full Year Report to Members
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<p>Brief:</p> <p>The Children and Families Service Full Year Report is produced to update elected councillors on developments and key performance trends within the Children and Families Service in Hackney during 2018-19. The report has been tabled for discussion at the Corporate Parenting Board, Cabinet, Full Council, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission, and City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.</p> <p>Below is an overview of developments and areas of note in the period April 2018 to March 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following the Ofsted focused visit in February 2019, the Children and Families Service has worked hard to make changes quickly and is now embedding these.• The Children and Families Service has worked to review and align the Children and Families Service values with the relaunched Council values. These core values for the Children and Families Service form ethical standards that inform everything that we do. Our aim at all times is to be:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Collaborative and respectful○ Innovative and creative○ Child and family focused and responsive to wider context○ Strength-based and reflective○ High aspirations for children○ Purposeful, timely and solution focused• The Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework has been further developed and re-launched - the wellbeing framework is the Hackney partnership's equivalent of a thresholds document and now includes additional information related to extra-familial risk, as well as a Context Wellbeing Framework to support the local partnership to assess risk in extra-familial contexts such as peer groups, schools and neighbourhoods.• The Fostering Network's Mockingbird programme is an innovative research-based method of delivering foster care using an extended family model which provides respite care, peer support, regular joint planning, training, and social activities to other foster placements. 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 Hackney's first hub home in August 2019.• Hackney continues to develop its Contextual Safeguarding approach to address risks faced by children from outside of their family and have shared their learning with local authorities across the country.

- Young Hackney's Trusted Relationships project, funded through a successful bid to the Home Office, is providing detached outreach interventions with some of the most vulnerable young people in the borough. The detached outreach team became operational in January 2019 and includes youth workers and a clinical psychologist. The team also aims to generate further insight into young people's lived experiences, through the removal of perceived barriers to access services.

Key performance information:

- Demand for services continues to increase.
- There were more children attending Young Hackney provision than ever before - 177,299 attendances at Young Hackney provision, including commissioned services, by children and young people during 2018/19 – a 7% increase compared to 165,283 in 2017/18.
- Although at the end of March 2019, there were fewer children on Child Protection Plans (194 children), this has since increased to 291 children on Child Protection Plans at the end of September 2019
- A greater number of children were looked after - 405 children were looked after as at 31st March 2019 – a 6% increase compared to 381 children in care as at 31st March 2018. This since increased to 416 looked after children at the end of September 2019.
- 308 care leavers aged 17-21 were being supported at the end of March 2019 – an increase compared to the end of March 2018, when 301 care leavers were being supported.
- The number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system decreased from 111 in 2017/18 to 81 in 2018/19. The rate per 100,000 in Hackney is significantly lower the statistical neighbour average

The Children and Families Service priorities for 2019-20:

- Review and reiterate the centrality of the child's lived experience to how we work in Hackney and ensure that the child's lived experience is embedded in all of our processes.
- 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.
- Carry out an extensive review of Early Help services to ensure that a comprehensive, consistent and responsive early help offer, based on current best evidence, is in place for all children and young people in Hackney.
- Continue to invest in the workforce across the Children and Families Service, with a particular focus on improving the diversity of our workforce, especially at a management level.
- Move to a 'business as usual' model for delivering Contextual Safeguarding and continue to develop our response to adolescent vulnerability and extra-familial risk, including in the context of their peer group relationships, school environments and the community, linking this work with our Trusted Relationships project.
- Continue our drive to recruit and retain more in-house foster carers, including through the introduction of the Mockingbird model and the launch of our first hub homes in 2019.
- Ensure that we have the right placements to provide stability for our more complex adolescents who are looked after, including through our involvement in the East London residential project and exploring joint commissioning opportunities with other local authorities.
- Work more closely with schools regarding support for children in need and young people at risk of school exclusion.
- Refresh our Corporate Parenting Strategy to reflect greater corporate responsibility for looked after children and care leavers, and reflect the current views of a wider group of

children and young people through the broadened membership of our Children in Care Council.

- Further develop our communications to ensure care leavers can access dynamic and interactive information about our Care Leaver Offer.
- Introduce the internationally recognised Safe and Together model to strengthen our response to domestic abuse across the partnership.
- Respond to the findings of the Hackney Young Futures Commission.
- Ensure that issues relating to identity, diversity, inequality and discrimination are considered and addressed in all aspects of our work, and that we progress improvements identified through the corporate Young Black Men programme.
- Strengthen our safeguarding reach into out of school settings and hard to reach communities.