

<b>Report Title:</b>	Children and Families Service Annual Report 2022-23
<b>Meeting for:</b>	Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
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### **Report Summary**

The Children and Families Service (CFS) Annual Report is shared to update elected councillors on developments and key performance trends within the Children and Families Service in Hackney during 2022-23. The report has been tabled for discussion at the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission.

### **Overview of developments and areas of note:**

- In October 2023, the Children and Families Service took part in the month-long, council-wide Anti-Racist Summit on the theme of 'Building Better Together'. This included an array of workshops, lectures and events; the first day of the conference was sold out, with an additional 2,700 individual viewers joining online..
- It has been over a year since the Child Safeguarding Practice Review for Child Q was published, and the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership have published a subsequent update report in June 2023. The importance of this Review cannot be overstated and the repercussions of this work are playing out at a national level. In September 2023, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) released the findings from their investigation into the treatment of Child Q calling for a 'substantial review of policing powers relating to strip searches of children' and confirming that four Metropolitan Police Service officers should face gross misconduct hearings. More than ever, the continued focus on Anti-Racist Practice for Hackney children and families is critical.
- Inspectors were impressed with our strong direct work and impactful practice when they came to jointly inspect Youth Justice Services in Hackney at the beginning of this year, and rightly saw how advanced Hackney Anti-Racist Practice is, and how deeply practitioners care about the children they support.
- The last twelve months have also seen progress in the work to improve the systems and tools available for our workforce. Mosaic has been re-embedded as the primary case recording system, and work continues to mature the Children and Families data reporting capability to support leaders to oversee and understand practice.

### **Key performance information:**

- 4,148 referrals were received in 2022/23, a 16% increase from 3,559 received in the previous year.
- 3,998 social work assessments were completed in 2022/23, a 23% increase from the 3,244 completed in the previous year.
- 181 children were supported on Child Protection Plans as at 31st March 2023, a 14% decrease from 211 children at the same time in 2022.
- An estimated total of 16,811 young people accessed universal services offered through Young Hackney during 2022/23, based on 154,030 named and anonymous attendances. This is in line with 16,676 accessing Young Hackney universal services

during 2021/22. Young Hackney delivered targeted support to 1,410 in 2022/23, which is in line with the previous year with 1,471 young people in 2021/22.

- 392 children were looked after as at 31st March 2023, a 3% decrease from 405 children at the same time the previous year.
- 185 children entered care during 2022/23, a 13% increase from 163 children in 2021/22.
- 50 children aged 16 and 17 entered care in 2022/23, a 24% decrease from the 66 young people from this cohort entering care in 2021/22. This represented 27% of the total number of children who entered care in 2022/23, compared to 40% in 2021/22.
- 14% of children in care had three or more care arrangements within the last 12 months as at 31st March 2023, equal to 14% at the same time in 2022.
- 65% of children, under the age of 16, who had been in care for more than 2.5 years were in stable care arrangements of more than 2 years in 2022/23, a decrease from 71% in 2021/22.
- 409 care leavers aged between 17 and 21 were being supported by the Leaving Care service at 31 March 2023, a 5% increase from 391 at the same point in 2022.

### **The Children and Families Service priorities for 2022-23:**

- **Proud to be Systemic, Trauma Informed and Anti-Racist so that our practitioners can flourish to achieve the best outcomes for children and families:** We will reset the Practice Model for Hackney Children's Services, so it describes a whole system approach to supporting children and families. The refreshed vision of practice will describe our values and principles. It will outline how children and families can expect to be supported from education, early help right through to leaving care or transition to adult services. Every practitioner will employ a systemic approach as a way of understanding the lived experience of our children and families. We will focus on relationships and work collaboratively. We will always recognise that individuals are embedded in their social context and remain curious about this. This practice model will enable us all to understand our roles and responsibilities as part of a wider system supporting Hackney children. It will focus on making a difference for every child.
- **Proud to listen to children and families in the shaping of our services:** We will ensure that the voices of children and their loved ones shape both the support plans offered to individual children and families, as well as the strategic development of our services.
- **Proud to work with partner agencies to keep children safe and to help children and families get the right support at the right time:** We will ensure there is a culture of collaborative work with partners in Hackney to keep children safe and improve their outcomes. We will listen to and be appreciative of multiple perspectives to consider how children's needs can best be met and ensure as a partnership that we are clear on our roles, responsibilities and associated powers.
- **Proud to work with partners to improve safety for children during adolescence in all contexts:** As they journey towards adulthood, young people in Hackney will experience safety in the context of their families, peer groups, schools and neighbourhoods, as well as online. We will foster person centred support and engagement, through trusted and empowering relationships that are informed by knowledge of adolescent development and contextual safeguarding. Young people will be encouraged to challenge their ideas and test their capabilities; finding out about themselves and others, whilst gaining information and skills to develop their own agency, independence and to support wellbeing.

- **Proud to support our workforce to do their very best for children in Hackney:**  
We recognise that having a skilled, resilient, stable and engaged workforce, equipped with the tools they need to do their jobs well, is crucial to achieving the best possible outcomes for children. We acknowledge that this requires a relentless focus on the recruitment, development and retention of staff. We want to demonstrate that we are proud of our staff and want them to be proud of working for Hackney's children. We hope to promote Hackney as a great place to build a career working with children and families.