

ALDCS

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELF-ASSESSMENT

2017/18

Local Authority:	City of London
Sub-Region:	

Self-Assessment Contact name:	Chris Pelham
Telephone:	020 7332 1636
Email:	Chris.pelham@cityoflondon.gov.uk

INTRODUCTION

This self-assessment provides an up to date evaluation of the needs of children and families within our area, effectiveness of current service provision and, performance in improving outcomes for children and young people. As part of the ALDCS annual programme of sector-led improvement, it also provides an opportunity to receive peer challenge within the region; share good practice; and identify regional priorities and programme of support for the coming year.

The self-assessment has been completed by senior officers from within the department, with wide collaboration and sign off from the Director of Children's Services on 30 April 2018.

We have welcomed the self-assessment as a timely opportunity to reflect on what we do well and how we can improve. It sits well with our commitment to be a developmental organisation, which is demonstrated through recent transformation of our business planning process to become more outcomes and impact focused. Increasingly, we are using assessment, evaluation, performance management and evidence to ensure that high quality outcomes are achieved and that the impact of these outcomes is experienced by all.

The self-assessment also aligns with our commitment to be a learning organisation, exemplified by a recently recruited Workforce and Learning team, in place to set out a cohesive approach to training and development in line with clear business outcomes.

The Department of Community and Children's Service (DCCS) is responsible for housing, education, social care and community services. It also delivers public health, leisure, community libraries and adult education services for both residents and people who work in the City of London (CoL). This broad scope of departmental service provision has engendered

close inter-team working that enables informed, integrated, outcomes based strategic development across all functions, including services for children. Notably, this strategic outlook is exercised through implementing the Think Family Approach, which enables wider family needs, for example around homelessness or adult skills learning, to be identified through social work assessment and referred to relevant teams within the department.

While we are unique in that we have relatively small cohorts of children and young people who require statutory support services compared to our peers, we also invest in universal and targeted youth services, sports and leisure, young people's health provision, family support services and education services.

Due to our size, our staffing model means several staff lead on more than one area. For example, the Child Protection Chair is also the Independent Reviewing Officer and the Designated Officer is also the Principal Social Worker, Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking Lead and leads the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Service.

Our size also means there is more necessity for our work programme to be delivered through a combination of in-house, spot purchased and commissioned services. We work very closely with our partners and integral to our operating model is the development of productive and agile partnerships with, for example, LB Islington, LB Hackney, LB Tower Hamlets amongst others, to jointly commission services. More than ever, we work collaboratively across agencies to learn from each other, maximise our resources and create a joined-up system that can be easily navigated.

Our learning and development approach, feedback from service users and partners, recommendations from inspections and leadership from the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board and Safeguarding Sub-Committee, has helped shape the vision for our 2018-21 Children and Young People's Plan:

We want the City of London to be the best place possible for children and young people to grow up. We will work in partnership to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all our children and young people feel they belong. We will provide high quality services, world-class education and excellent opportunities that enable them to live healthily, develop resilience, achieve their potential and thrive.

We want to fulfil our vision and are eager to learn best practice, seek guidance from our peers and share our successes. The small size of the CoL's resident population and the challenges and opportunities related to this has given the CoL a relatively unique status compared to our peers. While we embrace this status, we also aspire to be unique at *what we do* as well as who we are, providing excellent services that are tailored to the needs of our communities. We are keen for the peer challenge to help us do this.

PART A: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

1. Key Personnel

Job Title	Name	Start date in current role
Director of Children's Services	Andrew Carter	May 2017
Assistant Director – People	Chris Pelham	June 2012
Lead Member	Dhruv Patel	Elected 8/05/2015
LSCB Chair	Jim Gamble	April 2013
Chief Executive	John Barradell	2012

2. Key Documents

Key documents should be publicly available, and links to these or to other documents relating to specific services are provided below or within the body of the self-assessment. The self-assessment is intended to be a stand-alone document and therefore other embedded documents will not be scrutinised as part of regional peer challenge.

Publication of key over-arching documents		
Document	Date	Link to website or document where appropriate
Corporate Plan	2018	[to attach]
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Ongoing updates	See Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
Health and Well-being strategy	2018-21	See Joint Health and Well-being Strategy
LSCB Annual Report and Priority Plan	2016-17	See LSCB Annual Report
Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan	2017-22	[to attach]
Children and Young People's Plan	2018-21	[to attach]

3. About The Local Area and Services for Children

The Square Mile is the historic centre of London and is home to the 'City' – the financial and commercial heart of the UK. The residential base in the CoL is small compared to most other local authorities but has grown in the last 20 years. The latest population estimate for the CoL is 9,401¹. Children and young people make up a relatively small proportion (13%) of the population, with an estimated 1,215 people under the age of 19 and 1,981 people aged 0-25.

Our children mainly live in dense pockets of housing. Although the CoL is one of the least deprived local authorities in the country, significant disparities of wealth exist. While Barbican West, East and Golden Lane and the rest of the CoL residential areas are among the 20% and 40% least deprived lower super output areas in England, the Portsoken Ward is amongst the 40% most deprived areas in England.

The CoL resident population is estimated to be 78% White British; however, our children and young people are more ethnically diverse and approximately 40% are from black or ethnic minority groups compared to 21% nationally. The community of Bangladeshi origin forms the second largest ethnic group in the CoL.

The 2015 indices of deprivations published by DCLG shows that 10.2% of dependent children live in poverty. 72 children in the CoL live in income deprived households. There were 40 households with children in the CoL claiming out-of-work Benefit Claimant in May 2016.

The CoL's only maintained school is Sir John Cass Foundation primary school which is also home to the CoL's sole Children's Centre. There are five independent schools and several higher educational institutions within its boundaries. Out of the five schools, two are secondary, one is a specialist music and drama school catering for children aged 8 to 18 years and two are preparatory schools. The majority of children attending these schools come from other boroughs and most of the CoL's secondary school age children go to school outside of the CoL.

There is a cohort of students who board and travel into the CoL to study and the Corporation has safeguarding responsibilities for these children.

The CoL has excellent transport links and cultural services. There are a number of open and green spaces in the CoL, but they are generally small in size. As it is a densely populated, urban area it suffers from poor air quality. Levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter are both very high.

PART B: SUMMARY

1.1 Top Three Outcomes We Are Proud Of Achieving This Year

Please include ways that you think your success can benefit others in the region and learning shared, including innovation.

Strength or Outcome	Reference to further information
The Early Help offers continues to impact on the low numbers of cases escalating through to Child Protection status. Very few children from the CoL need to go on a CP Plan or come into the care of the Local Authority due to the quality of the universal and Early Help offer.	8. Early Help
UASC benefit from a high level of consistency, support, advocacy and intervention to help them achieve their potential and aspirations.	11. Children Looked After 13. Care Leavers
A comprehensive Service Improvement Plan captures the learning from QA and independent audits of our entire case load demonstrating rigour and openness to challenge and sets in place a dynamic, ongoing approach to continuous improvement.	1. Leadership and Governance 8. Early Help 10. Children's Social Care: Referral, Assessment, Children in Need and Child Protection 13. Care Leavers
We are delivering good outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The March 2018 Inspection of SEND services identified good self-awareness and knowing our services well; strong and clear leadership; a clear commitment to support families; and an excellent quality of reviews.	19. SEND

1.2 Summary of Reviews, Evaluations and Inspections

a) Ofsted Social Care, School Improvement Inspections, CQC inspections of health services, peer reviews, etc.

Title	Date	Outcome Reference to further information
OFSTED Inspection of SEND	March 2018	Awaiting outcome – see section 19 on SEND
Early Years – Hatching Dragons Inspection	May 2017	Good
Ofsted SIF	June 2016	Good

b) School Inspections

Source: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/latest-monthly-management-information-outcomes-of-school-inspections>

	Total number inspected	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate	% Good or Better
Nursery, Secondary, PRU and Special Schools	n/a					
Primary	1	1	-	-	-	-

2. Looking Forward To 2018/19

2.1 Top Three Outcomes We Need To Improve

Please provide reference to the chapter/page in the self-assessment which provides further information about current performance, reasons and what you will do to improve.

Area for Improvement	Reference to further information
Co-production Co-production needs to become integral to service design and policy development. There are some good examples of co-production – such as the work carried out by the SEND team – but we want to do more to improve the collaboration between staff, service users and partners and make best use of one another’s knowledge and resources to achieve better outcomes.	1. Leadership and Governance 3. National and Local Priorities and Partnerships 19. SEND
Measuring performance Our small cohorts of service users mean it is difficult to establish accurate benchmarking against, for example, national performance data. We need to consider bespoke, practical means of measuring performance that ensure we are able to use data to reliably inform service performance and provide insight to identify emerging issues and risks.	3. National and Local Priorities and Partnerships 5. Performance, Culture and Challenge 6. Education – Strategy and Support to Schools 7. Education – Outcomes for Children and Young People 19. SEND
Systemic Practice Strengthen a systemic approach to practice.	1. Leadership and Governance 4. Resource and Workforce Management
Measuring impact Given our size and that there is one maintained school in the CoL, our residents are likely to use children’s services at our neighbouring authorities. Our challenge is monitoring the services CoL children are receiving from other local authorities and the impact this has on the CoL.	6. Education – Strategy and Support to Schools 9. Thresholds and Decision Making 16. Child Sexual Exploitation

2.2 Top Three Risks For The Future

Risk	Reference to further information
Capacity Given our size, our capacity to deliver our statutory duties for all children has been challenged as a result of delays with the national transfer of unaccompanied asylum seekers (UASC). The risk is that further arrivals of UASC will could compromise our ability to meet statutory duties.	11. Children Looked After 13. Care Leavers
SEND services provision There are fewer places for specialist SEND services in London and an increasing risk that we will not be able to commission SEND services.	19. SEND
Support for social workers The CoL needs to provide commissioned resources for accreditation of social workers. There is a risk we could lose social workers if we don't have the right support in place.	4. Resource and Workforce Management

3. INNOVATION, PILOTS AND GOOD PRACTICE

This is optional additional information to capture what is being done well, involvement in regional pilots, good and innovative practice.

Title and Description	Start and completion date
Innovation We have commissioned research by Goldsmiths University into the links between affluence and neglect. The findings were shared at a launch event attended by over 200 social workers from across the country and are shaping a current programme to identify training and development required to respond to and manage issues arising from the research.	4. Resource and Workforce Management 9. Thresholds and Decision Making
Good practice Developed and implemented a campaign to raise awareness of and respond to the issue of a lack of regulation where nannies, au pairs, are working with children and might pose risk.	[attach pdf]
Good practice We have designed in robust and independent scrutiny of services and cases by establishing an independently chaired Service Improvement Board and external audit of all casework. This provides challenge and supports a learning and continuous improvement culture.	2. Leadership and Governance 8. Early Help 10. Children's Social Care: Referral, Assessment, Children in Need and Child Protection 13. Care Leavers

PART C: CURRENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Description of service provision, evidence of current performance and actions to improve are provided under a set of headings and statements to support self-analysis. This includes 'softer intelligence' and assessment of risk factors as well as covering elements required in Ofsted SIF Annex M and other criteria. There should be sufficient evidence for the reader to be able to draw conclusions without reading any other document, although links are provided where appropriate.

1. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

[Hover here for guidance](#)

Summary

The CoL Committee system provides an effective structure for the lead Member to scrutinise the work of the local authority. The lead Member Chairs the Children and Community Services Committee, which is empowered to take decisions and allocate resources. This oversees the work of the Safeguarding Sub-Committee, which in turn oversees the work undertaken by Children's Services. The Members have received training in their corporate parenting responsibilities and they have each met the Children in Care Council.

The quality of leadership and decision making was recently evidenced when Members acknowledged departmental pressures created by a rise in Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and provided additional resources. It is also evidenced by the role the Chairman of the Committee played in championing the CoL to lead regional development of the Pan London Children in Care Council.

The Director of Children's Services has a systematic line of sight over frontline practice through undertaking case audits, attending staff meetings, staff surgery, meetings with the Children in Care Council, and observation of practice and engagement at the Early Help Multi Agency Forum. The Assistant Director (AD) also manages the Education, Homelessness Services and Adult Services. This provides opportunities to the service around cohesion, improved transition planning and joint work. The AD however also exercises a line of sight over frontline practice through a range of systems, which include Chairing the Operational Performance meeting, the Permanency Panel, the Top 3 case forum, attendance at the Child in Care Council, Care Leavers Forum, the Early Help Forum, the Safeguarding in Education Forum, managing the Service Manager, attending frontline staff meetings and visits to all children looked after in placement every two/three years.

The Children and Young People's Plan sets out a set of priorities for the CoL and is aligned with the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the LSCB. This has led to the development of a well-embedded early help offer in the CoL, which is owned by the partnership. The 2018 – 21 CYPP has just been developed.

The CYPP provides a summary of intentions and the strategic framework to guide thinking and decision-making for all services affecting children and young people from 2018-21. Delivery is led through a departmental Business Plan, which includes an outcomes framework that sets out

priority themes, key activities and means to measure delivery. The staff appraisal process supports implementation of the business plan.

There is a clear line of sight between frontline staff and senior leadership via scrutiny / oversight of performance information. There is a quality assurance framework, with regular audits of cases, which are then distilled into learning and discussed at quarterly service meetings with the Service Manager and Team Manager to build learning into practice. Quality Assurance learning is also reported to the Safeguarding Sub-committee and Departmental Leadership Team. Staff have been further supported to make informed decisions by recent transition to MOSAIC, a new case management and performance reporting system.

Staff, and children and families' surveys provide an opportunity to understand user needs and frontline staff observations. Links between Early Help and SEND provision are strong and enable direct feedback from families about, for example, the short breaks offer, through annual consultation. Children and young people across the service are consulted annually about their experiences within Children's Social Care, by a commissioned, independent agency. Their views are then incorporated into the Service Improvement Plan. The 2018 survey was completed in March and will be presented to Members in May 2018.

We have a low staff and management turnover and no recruitment and retention issues. Case loads are manageable at 16 children per Social Worker across CiN, CP, CiC, and Care Leavers. Transition of staff is carefully planned to mitigate loss of skills and experience. Flexible working arrangements are in place across most teams, ensuring work takes place at the most effective locations and times.

Senior management understand the strengths and weaknesses of its service and is responsive to driving measurable improvement. There has been a rolling programme of improvement over the last 12 months, including:

- Quarterly service improvement boards that track the Ofsted Improvement Plan and the Service Improvement Plan
- Completion of the q3 Case Audit reviewing all the cases open to CSC and Early Help (quote the findings from the Aidhour report), including engagement of children and families in this process.
- Transitioning from Frameworki to the Mosaic case management system during Q1/2 2017/18
- Establishing the SEND Programme Board which is co – chaired with a parent and the AD People
- Establishing the Parent and Carer Forum
- Undertaking annual consultation with children and families, extending this exercise to children from Early Help and Children in Need, as well as Child Protection, Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Strengths

1. The Committee system does not include party political representation, so Members are freer to take the decisions that they believe need to be made without the need for political horse trading.

2. The Safeguarding Sub Committee is also the Corporate Parenting Board. It exercises oversight of corporate parenting through the Corporate Parenting Annual Report, the Virtual School Head Annual Report, the IRO Annual Report, Quality Assurance Reports, reports on key areas such as CSE and Missing children, Radicalisation, and Performance Reports. As a result of the monitoring, scrutiny and tracking that is carried out, performance in these areas is strong.
3. We are a learning organisation – a Multi-Agency Practitioners’ Forum exemplifies the whole-system approach to service development, providing a learning community for all front-line Early Help professionals. We learn from reviews and commission research, for example a commissioned project from Goldsmiths University around Affluence and Neglect and, an evaluation of the system wide Solihull Approach used by universal service providers in education, health and early help.
4. The CoL has a rigorous QA framework with annual audits on open cases. The independent status of QA adds further objectivity to scrutiny. Thematic audits and reports are produced based on intelligence. An annual audit is also undertaken based on a feedback survey from parents, carers and children (where age appropriate), the feedback is used to evidence performance of the service and make recommendations.
5. The Children in Care Council provides challenge, feedback and recommendations that lead to improved service delivery and policy development.
6. We lead through championing success and celebrating positive outcomes, for example we hold a party for young people in care who have secured a permanency decision.

Areas for development

1. A review of the children’s social work model is required to embed a theory of practice into the function on a more sustained and permanent basis and to adopt a systemic practice working methodology across children and adults social care. This will result in a common understanding and application of social work theory across our workforce, providing greater engagement with and understanding of children and families and greater empowerment to social care clients. This work is a priority for the new People Workforce Development Team.
2. Further enhance understanding and implementation of coproduction with all client groups and build further on success of our Children in Care Council coproduction activity with children in our communities, in particular those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

2. COMMISSIONING AND QUALITY

[Hover here for guidance](#)

Summary

The portfolio of the Commissioning team incorporates Housing, Homelessness, Adults Social Care, Children’s Social Care, Education, Early Years, Adult Learning and Public Health. All teams have received training on the commissioning process.

Commissioners work closely with the CoL Youth Forum, Children in Care Council, SEND parent’s forum and SEND and youth programme Boards to better inform required commissioned services.

Effective consultation enables us to identify gaps in service delivery, for example the tendering of the youth services highlighted a gap in service delivery for vulnerable groups such as Children in Care and those with SEND.

A core specification for services delivered for children and young people ensures commissioned services have a minimum standard of delivery and focus on safeguarding arrangements and partnership working. Emphasis is placed on robust contract monitoring and evidencing outcomes. A commissioning prospectus to inform potential and existing providers of our commissioning approach and expectations is also in place.

Our evaluation questions are designed to ensure that bidders are able to demonstrate that they can deliver high quality provision and best value. 10% of our evaluation criteria is assigned for social value and a minimum of 70% is on quality.

To address the challenges of a limited market available to the CoL, the Commissioning team have been exploring various commissioning options such as joining consortiums, joint commissioning and developing the third sector. To support this, the Corporation also use grant funding to support small community organisations and for piloting new provision.

The team have developed a tool to assist Commissioners and Service Managers to identify and address poor performance and complaints.

The team are supported by the corporate procurement team on managing high value contracts. We co-ordinate evaluation panels that consist of stakeholders, such as key service managers and users. For example, the Chair of the City Youth Forum participated in the evaluation of youth services bids. A parent of an SEND child was part of the evaluation panel for Healthwatch.

Our close working relationship with our service areas enables contract monitoring officers to be made aware of issues at the earliest stages. Monitoring information is triangulated with the data and performance team, service area and provider.

Areas for development

1. A key area for development is the commissioning of fostering and supported living placements to secure improvements in placement stability, quality and value. To achieve this, a placements function will be resourced in 2018/19.

3. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

[Hover here for guidance](#)

Summary

Strategic priorities are aligned between the CYPP, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the LSCB, and this has led to the development of a well-embedded early help offer in the CoL.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy targets the improved mental and physical health of children in care, child protection or in need, at risk of CSE or missing. The development of integrated care between health and social care is a priority of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Director of

Children's Services attends the Safer City Partnership and the Lead Member is sighted on minutes. This ensures help to safeguarding is prioritised in the work of this Board.

Across the City, LB Hackney and City and Hackney CCG, there are developing integrated commissioning arrangements which include a workstream focussing on Children, Young People and Maternity Services. The workstream has a Board that consists of representatives from the local authorities, CCG and service users. A workplan is being developed with a range of actions to meet three overarching priorities:

- Improving children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing
- Strengthening the offer of support for vulnerable groups
- Improving the offer of care in maternity and early years.

The Joint Hackney and CoL JSNA has a City specific supplement and a section on children and families. Health service needs have been reviewed through the JSNA. It covers obesity, early years, child poverty, educational attainment and EET rates. The data picture informs and underpins the priorities in the CYPP and for our commissioning. The Strategy and Action Plan set out a range of health and social care services that meet the identified needs of the local child and adult populations.

Strengths

1. We are able to capitalise on the advantages offered through the IC approach while retaining sufficient local flexibility to ensure our local needs and service design are met.
2. Our partnerships with neighbouring boroughs is a key strength and fundamental to our operating model. For example, working arrangements with LB Hackney include integrated commissioning, safeguarding and EDT arrangements, while we work with LB Tower Hamlets to deliver youth services.
3. Early Help is delivered via the full network of partner agencies within the CoL. Support ranges from preventative universal services such as a drop-in Tier 2 CAMHS service, through to targeted family support following referral to the Children and Families hub.

Areas for development

1. Improve co-production with children and young people, in particular SEND and vulnerable groups, to better improve our strategic outlook and service provision and provide better outcomes.
2. Ensure data for the CoL is robust, fit for purpose and influences our service development and planning, particularly in relation to those residents who are registered with GPs in Tower Hamlets.

4. RESOURCE AND WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

[Hover here for guidance](#)

Summary

Growth pressures and savings opportunities are part of the budget setting process. Budget activity is checked monthly with service managers and reported to senior leadership teams, relevant spending Committee and Finance Committee with any emerging pressures / risks

identified. Frequent reviews of the fee charging policy for the children's centre take place along with corporate reviews of income generation as a whole.

The current headcount is 39, at 35.5 FTE. The turnover rate at 17.91%, and staff sickness stands at 1.81 Annual sick days per FTE. Recruitment is informed by service need.

All 8 social workers hold appropriate social work degrees with several staff holding further professional qualifications. Several staff lead on more than one area, for example the Child Protection Chair is also the Independent Reviewing Officer.

The workforce is stable, allowing longer term staff development and opportunity for advanced diplomas and masters degrees after working for the CoL for a period of time.

Staff can access a range of learning opportunities through:

- CoL Learning and Development Service –training related to the Core Behaviours of posts.
- Safeguarding Children's and Safeguarding Adults Boards – e.g. Impact of neglect and emotional abuse on the development of children and engaging with families.
- Commissioned services such as Making Research Count (Kings University) and the London Asylum Seekers Consortium. The Department of Work and Pensions deliver substance and alcohol misuse services across the CoL.
- Membership with the South-East London Teaching Partnership.
- Through partnership arrangements with LB Tower Hamlets and LB Hackney, for example Working with Clients with Autism.

The caseload of the Child Protection Chair and Reviewing Officer is appropriate to the role. All reviews are undertaken in a timely manner.

The CoL supports staff to access learning opportunities to build the departmental skills base, for example offering Makaton classes to all staff. Staff are also supported to apply for secondment positions either within the CoL or with our partner organisations.

Strengths

1. A new Workforce and learning team provides a cohesive approach to training and development across Children, Adults, Education and Homelessness services.
2. Our resources enable the department to bring in expertise and provide learning opportunities as needed, for example the Affluent Neglect research delivered in partnership with Goldsmiths University.
3. Our social work team is uniquely skilled in that they deliver a wide range of children's services. This means our relationships with children and young people are often longer term and care leavers are routinely supported to the age of 25 and sometimes further, with better long-term outcomes.

Areas for Development

1. Completion of the directorate wide learning and skills matrix to give a clearer picture of the skills set within the directorate.
2. While the extensive knowledge and experience of our team members is a strength, the small size of our workforce means that one staff member can undertake a number of different roles within any given service. On their departure there is potential that their

skill set is lost to the organisation and hard to replace due to the organic nature of role development within the CoL. We are reviewing our sustainable workforce development policies and procedures to mitigate this risk.

3. Introduction of Systemic Practice Working methodology across the directorate which will strengthen learning and practice, including on the Think Family model, ensuring all staff are working within this approach.

5. PERFORMANCE, CULTURE AND CHALLENGE

[Hover here for guidance](#)

Summary

Data informs demand and outcomes and is used to profile clients. We benchmark against national, Inner London and where appropriate statistical neighbours although remain very aware that our small cohort can create some, at times alarming, percentage variances and this fact is considered in all data reported.

In July 2016 an Ofsted inspection identified Children's Services performance management and culture as a significant strength, highlighting in particular:

- Comprehensive performance information that is shared with the right people and forums
- Rigorous analysis of performance information that has led to targeted work and practice improvements, such as raising overall referral rates to children's services and increasing referrals to the designated officer
- Detailed performance reports where commentary is helpful where numbers are low
- Proactive measures for continuous improvement, for example through collaboration with another London borough to improve the CoL's child sexual exploitation dataset
- That senior leaders have a clear line of sight on frontline practice, a very detailed and analytical approach to performance and a personal interest in children's experiences
- Clear and comprehensive data set out in the CoL and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) Annual Report, representing agencies' contributions to safeguarding and fully supporting an understanding of effective practice across the whole partnership.

Since the 2016 OFSTED inspection, our approach, level of detail, challenge, and LSCB scrutiny, and of inter-team and multi-agency working has not changed. We continue to develop since the inspection, for example new workflows and reports for e.g. SEND/ EHC Plans and (LA)DO.

In-depth challenge and QA of a comprehensive range of performance data takes place via the CoL CHSCB dataset, which is challenged by a multi-agency panel. Exceptions are then presented to the City and Executive Boards. The Safeguarding Sub-Committee scrutinise the full CHSCB dataset. Challenge by multi-agency groups continues for the Early Help dataset and report and the MASE and Vulnerable Adolescents Group. Business performance indicators are challenged by the Departmental Leadership team.

The CoL has a rigorous QA framework with annual audits on open cases. Thematic audits and reports are produced based on intelligence. An annual audit is also undertaken based on a

feedback survey from parents, carers and children (where age appropriate), the feedback is used to evidence performance of the service and make recommendations. Moreover, an annual consultation is completed by an independent agency (Action for Children) to ascertain the views of child in need, children in care, care leavers and those using the Early Help offer.

Audit reports are also presented to and challenged by CHSCB (QA, CoL and Executive), the Members Safeguarding Sub- Committee, and the Service Improvement Board. The impact has direct correlation to service improvements.

Areas for development

1. There is some conflict in the level of information requested by different report readers arising from varying levels of data interpretation skills. We need to reach a compromise in how reports are presented to a range of readers and bodies that require different levels of detail and context.
2. We need to develop our reporting arrangements to build on the opportunities afforded by transitioning to Mosaic.
3. Ensure that frontline teams involve performance when redesigning any forms or workflows in Mosaic to maintain full coverage of performance reporting.
4. Our small cohorts of data mean it is difficult to establish detailed benchmarking data against, for example national or regional performance data. We need to consider bespoke, practical means of measuring performance that ensures we are able to use data to reliably inform service performance.

6. EDUCATION – STRATEGY AND SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS

[Hover here for guidance](#)

Summary

In 2017, there were an estimated 520 pupils of primary age (4 - 10) and 275 pupils of secondary age (11 - 16) children living in the CoL. The CoL has one maintained school, which has been judged outstanding for overall effectiveness in its last two Ofsted inspections (2013 and 2008). There are no maintained secondary schools in the CoL. All applications are made outside the CoL. CoL residents have priority places available at The CoL Academy schools. Islington Council processes school admission applications on behalf of the CoL.

Safeguarding Education Forum is made up of designated safeguarding leads from academies, independents and the CoL maintained school to share learning around safeguarding, for example learning from serious case reviews.

Pupils that attend Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School are predominantly resident in London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the CoL. Key performance metrics for John Cass are:

- Early Years Foundation Stage are above the national average in 2016/17 at 77% compared to 71% nationally.

- Phonics screening check outcomes for Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School Year 1 in 2016-17 fell from 90.0% to 86.7% but is still almost 6 percentage points above the national average.
- Key Stage 1 results for the expected standard for 2016-17 rose for CoL pupils with performance in writing lower than for reading or maths
- Key Stage 2. 88% of Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School pupils met the expected standard, compared to 62% of pupils nationally. Mathematics, at 92%, was substantially above the rate for inner London and England, reading was stable, and writing dipped only slightly.
- Absence rates for the CoL are below both the rate for England and inner London.

The School provides an inclusive and aspirational environment for SEND children. The number of children with EHC plans has almost doubled in the last three years. There is a good ethnic mix amongst pupils.

The Dedicated schools Grant (DSG) allocation to the CoL is not published in the national allocation tables as there is only one primary school in the area. The Schools Delegated budget for 2018/19 for Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School is £1,904,510. We fund the Early years settings at £6.50 per hour and the high needs block is supplemented from CoL Funds.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for FSM has remained around 33 children for recent years. The number of pupil premium children is 55.

As a sponsor of Academies within the CoL 'Family of Schools', we take up opportunities and benefit from drawing on the expertise of Academies, for example governor training and intelligence and data analysis. We have also invited the CoL Family of Schools into our safeguarding forum to share information and best practice, albeit that those schools outside of the square mile are accountable to their own local arrangements. While this isn't a statutory obligation, it provides further opportunity to collectively improve outcomes for children.

One Islington primary school, Prior Weston, has 82 CoL resident children on the roll. The relationship with the school is positive, particular in relation to supporting CoL children on Education Health care plans and SEN support. The SENCo from Prior Weston school is part of the CoL SENCo network and the CoL SEND team work with the school to ensure CoL children are making good progress with their education. The Golden Lane Children's Centre is no longer part of the school, although it is based on the school site. LB Islington have recently introduced the 'Bright start' Programme that is a targeted service for Islington residents. The school however, do include CoL children in the Early years Foundation stage and have a good working relationship with the early years lead from the CoL.

Key performance metrics for CoL resident children at Prior Weston are:

- Phonics screening check outcomes Year 1 improved from 81% in 2015-16 to 88% in 2016-17.
- Key Stage 1 results for the expected standard for 2016-17 rose with improved annual performance in writing and reading.
- Key Stage 2. 80% of pupils met the expected standard, compared to 62% of pupils nationally. Absence rates for the CoL are below both the rate for England and inner London.

Strengths

1. The small numbers of pupils and schools in the CoL means that the school community work well together. For example, the SENCO network spans across the maintained, independent and CoL academy schools, resulting in shared opportunities for professional development and training to keep up with best practise. We have also included briefings on CAMHS support in response to current needs of children and young people and the wider focus of wellbeing in schools.

Areas for development

1. The Education & Early Years' Service needs to further develop a School Improvement (SI) framework to enable challenge and improvement for our schools and early years providers.
2. Benchmarking outcomes and performance data can be challenging given the CoL's low children/pupil numbers. We want to ensure that the educational attainment gaps for children with additional needs and from less affluent backgrounds are addressed. Benchmarking performance will enable a continual cycle of development to improve outcomes for children and young people.
3. We need to improve the way we monitor the challenges of the majority of CoL children attending schools in neighbouring authorities and potential impact this has on us. This will build on development of a school tracker and network to enable us to keep a track of the quality of education for children on SEN support.

7. EDUCATION AND TRAINING – OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

The CoL has one maintained school, The Autumn 2017 Census record indicate that 29% of children attending Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School are CoL residents.

Breakdown of Children at Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School

Local Authority of residence:	Number of children:
Tower Hamlets	156
City of London	69
Other Local Authority Areas (Essex, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark and Waltham Forest)	15
Total	240

Source: Spring 2018 School Census

The CoL has 14 children and young people on Education, Health, Care plans. The proportion of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) at Sir John Cass primary school has almost doubled from 8% to 15% from January 2013 to January 2017. Absence rates are below both the rate for England and inner London. Section 6 sets out a summary of school performance.

Primary Pupil Attendance Data: Sir John Cass's School and comparisons**2015/16 - 3 term data (whole year)**

	% Overall Absence	% Auth Absence	% Unauth Absence	% pupils PA	Numbers PA	Notes
England	4.0	3.1	0.9	8.2		
Inner London	4.1	3.0	1.1	8.9		
CoL/ SJC	3.3	3.0	0.3	3.9	7	181 pupils
Islington	4.2	3.1	1.1	8.9		
Prior Weston	4.5	3.6	0.9	8.6	31	359 pupils

2016/17 – 3 term data (whole year)

	% Overall Absence	% Auth Absence	% Unauth Absence	% pupils PA	Numbers PA	Notes
England	4.0	3.0	1.1	8.3		
Inner London	4.0	2.9	1.1	8.6		
CoL/ SJC	2.5	2.4	0.1	2.8	5	179 pupils
Islington	4.2	3.0	1.2	9.4	1143	
Prior Weston	4.9	3.3	1.7	13.1	48	355 pupils

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-pupil-absence>

Since 2013 we commission Prospects to deliver information and advice to all CoL young people. Tracking of young people's educational achievements is done via IYSS. The number of young people who are NEET is consistently below 5. The average NEET between December 2017 and February 2018 is 1.5% of all 16 and 17-year olds, which is effectively 1 young person recorded as NEET from a total cohort of 45.

Strengths

1. Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School is well funded and performs highly, see section 6, Education – Strategy and Support.
2. The Governance and leadership at Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School is good. The school networks well with neighbouring schools and the London Diocesan School Board.
3. The CoL has an excellent working relationship with our independent and Academy schools, enabling provision of opportunities for our school to access professional development and keep up to date with best practise.
4. Performance is consistently strong with SJC well above national averages across EYFS , KS1 and KS2.

Areas for development

1. As we have no alternative provision based within the CoL, we must negotiate access to alternative provision with other Local Authorities. We tend to spot purchase these places on a needs basis. We want to move to a more commissioned approach to improve quality and value for money. We are currently developing joint commissioning with the City & London CCG, health services and Hackney Learning Trust. This should mean that we are able to find good quality alternative provision to meet the needs of CoL children efficiently.
2. Because of the small data sets and numbers of children in the CoL we have challenges in benchmarking performance and outcomes. We need better performance monitoring capacity and dashboards to maximise accountability.

3. There are plans to improve the current data collections and analysis. Our plans are to align services and budgets within the Children's joint commissioning for services that support children and families. These services are critical to ensuring that children with additional needs, on SEN support and with mental health issues are able to access their education and achieve good educational outcomes.
4. Building profile of SEN Support needs for all CoL children is a significant challenge given we have no secondary schools in CoL. Work is ongoing to build this profile.

8. EARLY HELP

[Hover over this guidance](#)

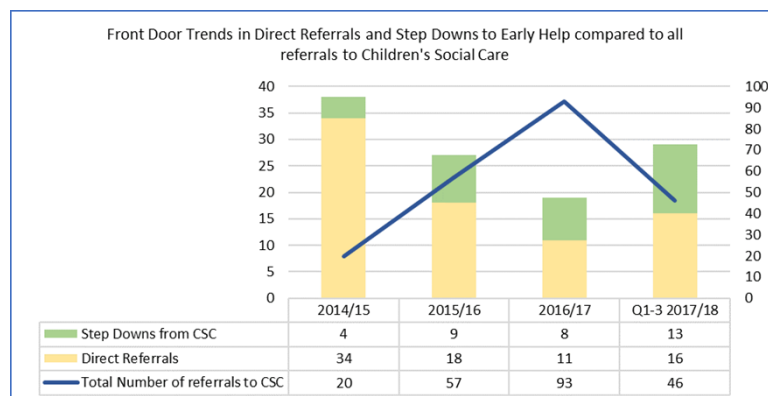
Summary

Early Help is delivered via the full network of partner agencies within the CoL. Support ranges from preventative universal services such as a drop-in Tier 2 CAMHS service, through to targeted family support following referral to the Children and Families hub.

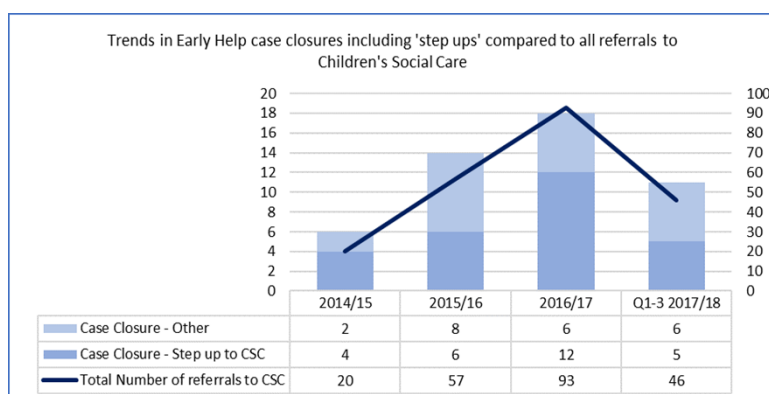
As of 31 March 2018, there were 13 children and young people open cases to Early Help.

There is good understanding of thresholds of need by partners and pathways to support are clear, with virtual MASH arrangements and a single point of entry to both Early Help and Children's Social Care via the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF). The Early Help sub-group and the Children's Executive Board provide Early Help oversight.

We have though seen a significant increase in 'step downs' during Q1 to 3 of 2017/18 however the impact of larger family groups on a small cohort must be considered.



The number of 'step ups' from Early help to Children's Social care has followed the general trend in all referrals to Children's Social Care over the past four years, as below:



The annual Early Help report demonstrates that services are being accessed by all communities within the CoL. Improving awareness of services within the community remains a focus. Data is beginning to emerge from more consistent use of a distance travelled tool and this will be key to identifying emerging needs and informing service planning and development in the future.

Service development and delivery is captured and monitored through the Service Improvement Plan and the Early Help Action Plan. The Early Help Strategy was last updated in 2015 and will be reviewed this year following publication of the new Children and Young People's Plan.

Barbican and Community Libraries and Early Years and Education services offer a range of daily Children's Centre activities for parents and carers of under 5s, including: Rhyming and story sessions, sensory and messy play sessions and baby massage.

Strengths

1. A Multi-Agency Practitioners' Forum exemplifies the whole-system approach to service development, providing a learning community for all front-line Early Help professionals. This forum actively contributes their knowledge and experience to key strategic priorities such as engaging vulnerable/target communities (for example the Bangladeshi Community), evidencing the impact of services and encouraging participation from and co-production with service users. In addition, the forum is used to support multi-agency working through case discussions, often resulting in onward referral of children and families to targeted or specialist services. It was recognised as a strength in the June 2016 Ofsted Inspection and continues to operate with strong multi agency engagement.
2. The targeted Early Help caseload is increasing via a combination of new referrals and step-downs from social care. Partner agencies contribute to all CAF assessments and engagement is good at Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings which are regular and outcomes-focussed. As a result, plans progress at a good pace, securing change and improvement for children, young people and their families which is evidenced through distance travelled data as well as case closures. Feedback from EH service users is positive about the service.
3. The Early Help offer pilots new services, for example, a webinar is being developed to support young people with academic pressure and exam stress. This will raise awareness

of mental health and emotional wellbeing issues as well as providing young people with self-care strategies and pathways to support.

4. The EH offers continues to impact on the low numbers of cases escalating through to Child Protection status. Very few children from the CoL need to go on a CP Plan or come into the care of the Local Authority due to the quality of the universal and EH offer.

Areas for development

1. The existing CAF needs review and a multi-agency task and finish group will explore options for a simpler, shorter shared assessment and outcomes framework. This will support increased leadership from partner agencies as well as improving consistency of approach across targeted Early Help work.
2. Short Breaks is an area of focus for improvement and provision for children with SEND and their families as well as young carers is being re-developed in partnership with the parents' forum. This co-produced outlook mean families become directly involved in the planning and commissioning of the services they access.

9. THRESHOLDS AND DECISION MAKING

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

Social Workers and internal and external partners have a good knowledge of local thresholds of need and support and therefore children consistently receive help at the right level for them.

Thematic audits confirm that trends and changes in Early Help assessments, referrals and Child Protection plans including step-ups/downs are understood. Internal and external audits are undertaken, including front door practice, and outcomes are fed into the learning review programme. Qualitative data informs thematic audits and service improvement.

The CoL refreshed its Thresholds of Need protocol document in 2015 and continues to deliver awareness raising sessions to staff and stakeholders including through the workforce development process; a range of multi-agency meetings and forums; through a thematic range of training providing by CHSCB; through Things U Should Know briefings; and by members of the Children & Families team going out and working alongside partners in their own settings.

Strengths

1. Contacts and referrals are subject to management scrutiny, including a triple lock system, and through monthly and quarterly analysis of the number, types and agency sources; and through comparative analysis with the latest available relevant national, inner London and statistical neighbour data. As a result, rates of referral per 10k CYP have risen for the first time since the launch of the new thresholds protocol to above the national, SN and inner London rates in 2016/17 but as at 31 December 2017, the City's projected rate of referrals per 10,000 CYP for 2017/18, the rate by which local authorities can compare their activity, is now at a level comparable to the 2016/17 national, inner London and statistical neighbour rates of 548, 556 and 526. This is a positive as these three bench mark rates tend to be consistent from year-to-year.

2. Close partnership work helps to improve early identification of any neglect. In addition, CoL has commissioned research into Neglect and Affluence. This has now been published and will shortly be shared at an international conference by Goldsmiths University. Here in the CoL we are using this research as a base to develop targeted training to enable Social Workers to recognise and respond to need in affluent families in a more informed and confident manner.

Areas for development

1. The majority of CoL resident young people attend schools out-of-borough and there have been some delays in schools contacting the CoL. The Education Service has a tracking and mapping project in place.

10. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE: REFERRAL, ASSESSMENT, CIN CHILD PROTECTION

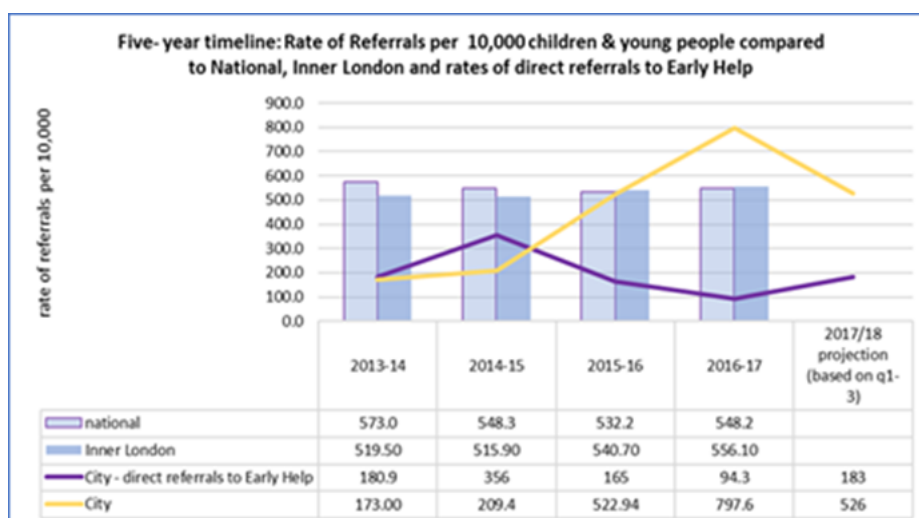
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Summary

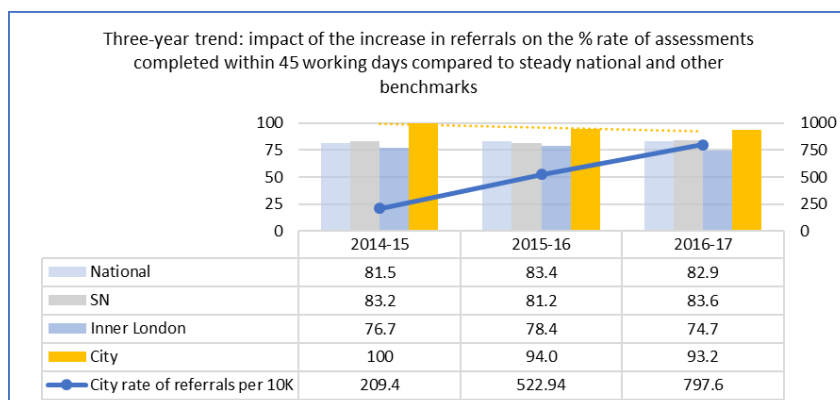
In 2016/17, 93% of assessments were completed within timescales – those that were not involved just 2 families and the delay was explained by a clear rationale, evidenced with management oversight.

In 2015/16 the thresholds guidance was refreshed, and new front door protocols put in place. This impacted on the number of contacts to Duty and on the number of referrals to Children's Social Care: in 2015/16 the rate of referrals per 10,000 resident under-18's for the first time rose to a level comparable to National and Inner London rates.

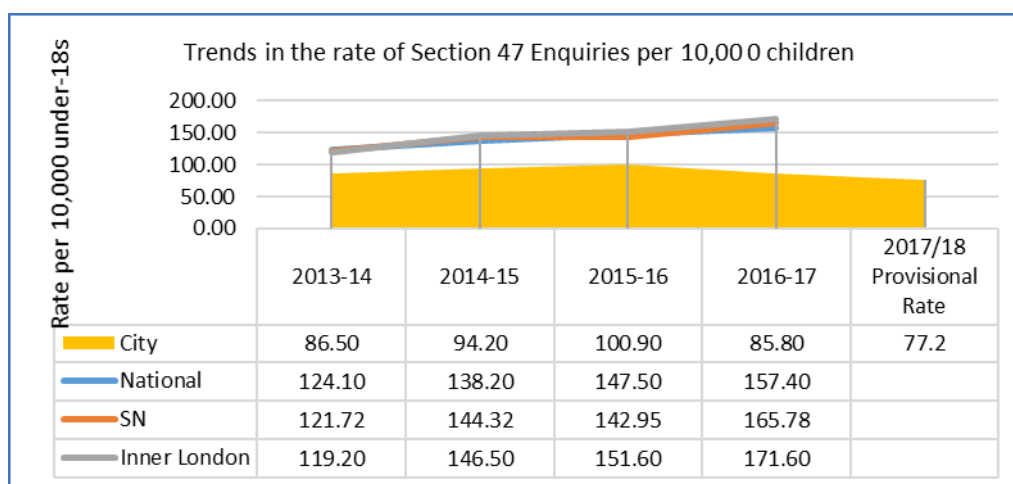
As at 31 December 2017, the City's projected rate of referrals per 10,000 CYP for 2017/18, the rate by which local authorities can compare their activity, is now at a level comparable to the 2016/17 national, inner London and statistical neighbour rates of 548, 556 and 526. This is a positive as these three bench mark rates tend to be consistent from year-to-year.



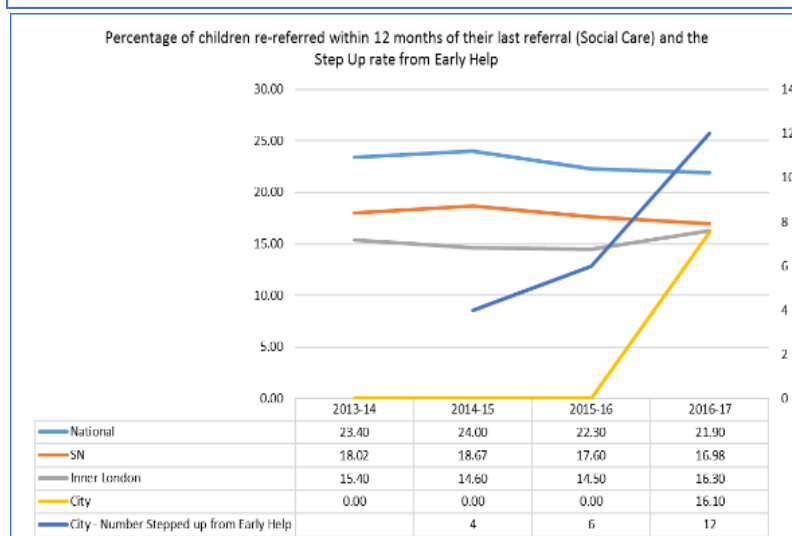
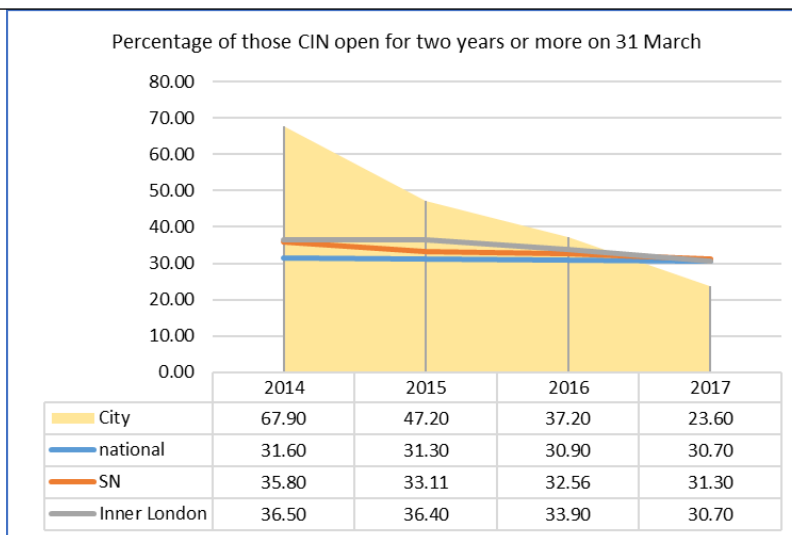
The increase in the number of referrals to Children's Social care since early 2015/16 appears to have impacted the previously consistently high rate of Child & Family Assessments completed within 45 working days, but performance is still above National, Statistical Neighbour and Inner London rates, as below:



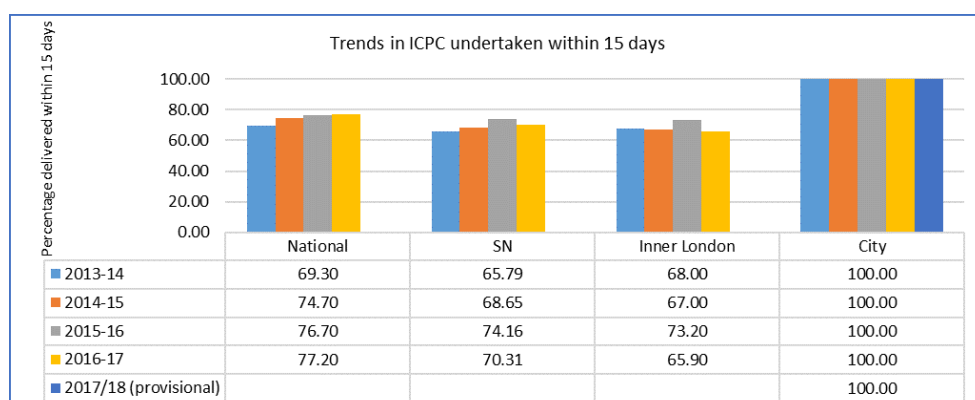
Over the past five years, City has seen a general trend in an increase in the rate of Section 47 enquiries per 10,000 children, mirroring but below national and other comparator rates, but the impact of our small cohort was seen in 2016/17:



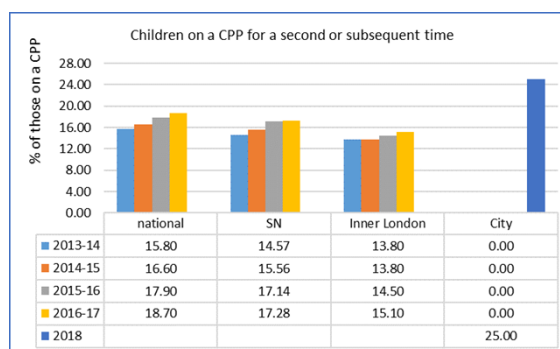
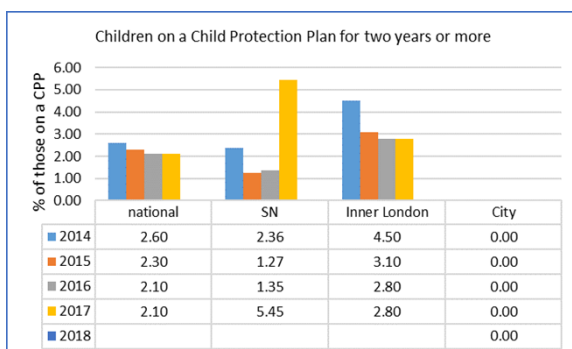
The City has improved in reducing the number of children open to CSC (CIN) for two years or more, but in 2016/17 we saw a significant rise in the percentage of children re-referred to Children's Social Care within 12 months of their previous referral. The increase in re-referrals was mirrored by an increase in 'step ups' from Early Help, including some that had previously 'stepped down', demonstrating mobility between the services. This is illustrated in the tables below:



In comparison City has performed consistently well in delivering Initial Child Protection Conferences within timeframe, as expected given our very low numbers of children escalated to ICPC this would be expected of the team:



City also continues to perform well in having no child subject to a Child Protection Plan for two years or more. The percentage of those on a CPP for a second or subsequent time is above national, SN and Inner London averages however only four children started CPP during the year and the one repeat in this very small cohort has had a significant impact on the percentage.



From 2015/16 the IRO service was bought in-house and City returned to consistently delivering all review Child Protection Conferences within timeframe. Again, due to our very low numbers on CP Plans this should be expected but performance had fallen to 0% in 2014/15 as the RCPCs for three siblings was delivered a few days late.

Whilst the Inner London rate of Children in Need at 31 March 2018 has seen a year-on- year decline since 2014, the CoL rate has seen a year-on- rise. It also of note that the national and statistical neighbour rates, usually consistent, saw a decline in 2017. But this may be due to the high ratio of UASCs/ former UASC in the CoL care comparative to its population.²

Strengths

1. A thematic audit on thresholds evidenced that in the majority of cases thresholds are being appropriately and consistently applied between Child Protection, CIN, Early Help the step up and step-down process. This ensures that the right level of support is offered to children and families at the optimum time to effect change.
2. All CIN and Child Protection Reviews are completed within timescales and all CIN cases have a CIN plan. Work is therefore focused on individual need and managed in a timely way to ensure there is no drift.
3. Social Workers know their children and families well and engage with young people in a variety of ways to ensure that their voices are heard. This is confirmed by the children and families themselves as evidenced by the Annual Action 4 Children survey. Children and families are encouraged to contribute to strengths-based planning approach, designed to encourage involvement and ownership.
4. Children and young people across the service are consulted annually about their experiences within Children's Social Care by a commissioned, independent agency (Action for Children). Their views are then incorporated into the Service Improvement Plan. This ensures that our service focuses on areas for development that are important and make a difference to the children and young people with whom we work.

² The CIN census data includes all those open including LAC and Care Leavers

Areas for development

Audits undertaken by an independent provider identified recommendations for improvement, which are progressed through the 'good to outstanding' meeting, chaired by the Assistant Director for people's services.

1. Although we have a good understanding of thresholds within the tiers of statutory services and Early Help, the same rigour needs to be consistently applied at the front door. This will ensure that we offer a consistent and proportionate response to all children and families referred to the City. A review of the Virtual MASH arrangement will be taking place to ensure consistent understanding of thresholds is in place across the partnership.
2. Plans need to be more outcome focused and timely. This will be addressed through targeted training. This will ensure that children and families are clear about why social care are involved, what they are working towards and what difference this will make to them. Training is also being planned around the Think Family approach. We will work to ensure this training informs and enables practitioners to work with families in a holistic, multi-agency way that is strengths based and offers opportunity for realistic and sustainable change.
3. The City has commissioned research from Goldsmith's University around Affluence and Neglect. Recommendations from this research will be incorporated into the Service Improvement Plan. This will maintain focus and our commitment to developing practice in a consistent way, with all families, where children's needs are not being met to a good enough standard. This will ensure that regardless of background and parental response, children and young people's needs remain paramount.

11. CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (Children in Care)

[Hover over this guidance](#)

[Hover over this guidance – Part B](#)

Summary

The CoL has almost exclusively Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in its Children in Care (CiC) cohort. As of year-end 2017/18, the City has the highest number of CiC in London, with 85.8 per 10,000.

Understanding of associated processes is robust - the Virtual School Head (VSH) provides a special tool-kit, all CiC have a direct voice to leaders through the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and all CiC have consistent access with Independent Review Officer, VSH/IAG and legal support. All CiC are aware of their rights and entitlements, and all UASC have access to appropriate legal support.

All CiC are met and consulted with on a regular basis by social workers, IRO, VSH, IAG worker and external agencies (including independent advocates and visitors) and through consultations undertaken by an external partner.

All CiC are referred for an initial health assessment within 3 days of coming into our care. In addition, they are all offered an initial CAMHS baseline assessment and are referred to University College London for a transmutable disease blood test as standard. All are registered with a GP,

dentist and optician by their foster carer as soon as is possible. Health passports are issued which provide them with a transferable record of health issues and care since coming in the care of the City.

The CoL does not have an internal fostering team, and City CiC are placed out of the borough as there is no local provision. The IRO, senior officers and lead members monitor the quality and impact of care and support. A permanent placement officer post has recently been agreed which will be recruited to shortly, ensuring that we are focused on sourcing best quality placement's, ensuring that all appropriate checks and balances are in place.

Multi-agency support is in place to help each CiC achieve their potential through access to education and training, including the UASCs who arrive with little or no English or formal education. The VSH, SWs and IAG worker ensure that some structured provision is put in place whenever there is a delay providing an appropriate school or college place and to ensure that PEP meetings go-ahead. The most recent KS4 results were good; and we are currently supporting a UASC into university.

Robust scrutiny is achieved through internal and external quality assurance processes and detailed performance information that together inform leaders and managers and help them to identify where services need to be improved in order to be consistently good or better than good.

Strengths

1. Due to the relative stability of the SW team, children and young people and Care Leavers are often supported by the same allocated social worker through transition and beyond. The quality of meaningful enduring relationships developed between SWs and CiC was highlighted by Ofsted in 2016. Young people tell us that it makes all the difference to them, knowing that their social worker knows them, listens to and understands them, and advocates on their behalf to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met.
2. All CiC are able to co-produce their plans at each review stage. They are consulted prior to review and set the meeting's agenda. This works towards ensuring the process is meaningful and of value to the young person, ensuring that they feel listened to and able to affect change in respect of their own lives while also meeting statutory requirements.
3. The Annual Survey of CiC and Care Leavers consistently highlights a high satisfaction rates from our young people in respect of their views about the quality of social work and carer support.

Areas for development

1. The quality of some recording is an area for further development. We are confident that quality work takes place and that our young people are consulted with, have their voices heard and make good progress. Ensuring that this is consistently recorded in a timely way will ensure that we are able to evidence the difference we make. Our IRO is working on making the review document much more accessible to children and young people so the new format will really tell the individuals story using their own words and reflecting in a very real way their hopes and feelings.

2. Pathway plans need to be completed jointly with young people reflecting their views, wishes and feelings. This needs to be a dynamic and evolving process that young people value and take pride in.

12. FOSTERING AND ADOPTION

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

The City currently commissions Coram to recruit, train and support adopters for the City, and provides the City with family finder advice and contributes to permanency planning. The City manages the care proceedings, undertakes the assessment of the child (CPR), takes the ADM decisions and manages the placement of the child once the Placement Order is granted.

There have been no adoption referrals made in the City in the last 5 years, however, annual monitoring is maintained of the service and activity reports are submitted by the provider to ensure we meet our statutory responsibilities. While we outsource functions, we are able to scale up our response to need by using the Permanency Panel and CiC Review to ensure that all children are considered for adoption.

The CoL has access to Coram's Concurrent Planning Project in order to facilitate the early placement of babies and very young children up to the age of two, if required- to date this has not been necessary.

If required, Coram provides appropriate support to adopters and their children (birth children as well as adopted children) at different stages of development throughout childhood and into adulthood, including:

- Social events
- Study day
- A newsletter
- Stay and play groups for pre-school children, supported by a child psychotherapist
- Parenting skills groups for adopters of children aged 3-8 and for those whose children are approaching adolescence.

The CoL is a member of the Ambitious for Adoption Regional Adoption Agency alongside several other LA areas with Coram acting as the hub. This arrangement was recently approved by the DfE and plans are now in place to develop this partnership into a full RAA by 2019.

The local authority does not have its own fostering service due to the size of the LAC population, but spot purchases from the Pan London consortium. Ofsted rates all independent fostering agencies used by the City either Good or Outstanding. There are sufficient suitable placements available to meet the needs of the CoL CiC population.

All placements are outside of the local authority. These placements are kept under close review to ensure that it continues to meet the young person's needs and is appropriate.

There is a diverse range of foster carers available which can be sourced through the Pan London arrangement with the IFA's. Allegations against foster carers are passed to the appropriate LADO

and the City checks the number of referral that have been made by IFA's as part of the monitoring process.

The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance service carry out annual monitoring visits to the IFAs to confirm that they are meeting their safeguarding duties and supporting the carers and young people in placements in areas such as radicalisation.

Strengths

1. The voice and views of the young person are fed back through the IRO and CiCC which informs the development of the service.
2. Audits carried out on the Independent Fostering Agencies show that the agencies are either judged as being good or outstanding.
3. The Action 4 Children survey of all CiC identified the very high rate of satisfaction amongst the CiC for their carers.

Areas for Development

1. The need to scope possible provision of semi-independent provision in the City itself to support transition arrangements.

13. CARE LEAVERS

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

There were 18 care leavers in the City on 31/03/18 and 15 of them were unaccompanied asylum seekers (UASC). UASC who come into the City and who are placed on the National Transfer Scheme receive a high level of support. Where transfer is not timely, the Independent Reviewing Officer and allocated Social Worker advocate on their behalf to enable them to remain in the care of the CoL.

A multi-agency cross referencing process is in place in regards housing requirements for care leavers. Many younger care leavers are supported in semi-independent placements, whilst older ones move into independent living, often in CoL social housing units in London. The latter are able to access the tenancy support offer beyond care leaver status.

At 31 March 2018 100% of our care leavers (aged 18 – 24) were in suitable accommodation at this time and social workers kept in touch with them all. This is above the national and statistical neighbour averages at for 19 – 21 year-olds during 2016/17 of 84% and 81% respectively. At year end, 2 care leavers were in “staying put” arrangements with their previous foster carers. 10 were placed in sole occupancy units and two were in shared accommodation sourced and supported by semi-independent living projects. and 4 were in social housing studio flats (3 being CoL units of which 2 are in borough).

At 31 March 2018, 71% of Care Leavers aged 19-21 (7) were in education, employment or training, and of those NEET one was NEET for maternity reasons. This is still above national and Inner London comparisons for this age group in 2016/17, which were 50% and 51% respectively. Young people who are NEET are followed up promptly by the Virtual School Head (VSH) and their social

workers. Care Leavers are supported by the VSH to access appropriate College courses to ensure progression. The VSH also supports young people onto apprenticeships and higher education.

The Apprenticeship Service is part of the Department of Community and Children's Services and delivers an expanded corporate apprenticeship programme that to provide employability, training and skills opportunities. Close working relationships have enabled apprenticeship as a potential pathway for care leavers and UASC.

Strengths

1. Care Leavers have highlighted that the consistency of support - Social Worker, VSH, IAG, Children in Care Council access, semi-independent project key workers - improves the quality of the transition to care leaver services – they feel cared for. This support better enables care leavers to find appropriate provision to remain EET, thus more likely to complete education. The City also offers work-experience to its care leavers and one has become an employee as a result.
2. Most of our Care leavers are former UASC and the City has established some ways, and are exploring more, to develop their life skills and qualifications not just to live independently in this country but in case they have to return to their original home country. As a result, our young people have ambition and the tools to be able to access educational and vocational opportunities, including: one who is currently studying at degree level; another who will be going in September; another who has secured a role as an apprentice within the CoL Corporation; and the rest engaged in ESOL or college.
3. Care Leavers are encouraged to join the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and the CoL has recently led on the development of a London wide CiCC. This enables the voices of children and young people in the CoL who are in care or care leavers to be heard; it increases opportunities for young people to meet together and share their understanding of their care experience and independent living within the City.
4. Care leavers and children in care are actively and effectively encouraged to share their views in pathway and PEP planning and are included in the consultation undertaken by the external agency. They are offered direct access to senior leaders through the CiCC and are invited to feedback directly to members at the Safeguarding Sub Committee. They benefit because they have an opportunity to engage directly with the people who are ultimately responsible to ensure the CoL fulfils its 'corporate parent' role.
5. Care leavers are given the opportunity to attend outward bound courses and activities that are supported and attended by their Social Workers. This gives young people the opportunity to try new things, with their peers, that will hopefully increase their confidence and self-esteem. It also encourages development of social skills and builds relationships.

Areas for development

1. We have identified that Pathway Planning is an area for development in relation to timeliness in some cases. This is being supported through the QA process and compliance processes and will inform the Service Improvement Plan. Young people will benefit from plans that reflect their journey and contain their voice, that are regularly reviewed and kept up to date. The aim is that they will see these documents as useful and dynamic tools, that actually mean something to them as opposed to just more paperwork.

2. The IRO is currently scoping more innovative ways to engage with care leavers so that their views inform practice. Again, we want young people to feel a sense of control and that their views are sought, reflected and acted upon and used to shape the service they receive.
3. Social worker support is bolstered by key worker support for those in semi-independent placements and the VSH supports and monitors access to ESOL and functional skills courses. Challenges can arise in gaining placements on vocational skills courses that would produce practical qualifications, due to levels of English language.

14. YOUTH OFFENDING

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

There are 0 CoL children and young people currently known to the YOS. There was 1 SEND young person known to the YOS service last year.

To meet our statutory duties, we commission our Youth Offending Service from London Borough of Tower Hamlets. These arrangements are subject to performance monitoring and contract reviews. Commissioners meet with YOS on an annual basis. Monitoring data is received from the YOS every quarter where it is cross referenced with CoL Police, Children Social Care and the Appropriate Adult Service to confirm the data is accurately reflected across these key referral sources.

The YOS will liaise with the young person's education, training, employer to ensure that their interventions complement their delivery. The Appropriate Adults Service is commissioned to provide independent advocacy service for any young person who is held in custody.

Strengths

1. The Children's Social Care team have a strong working relationship with the CoL Police who ensure the service is informed of any child/young person coming to notice or who are at risk of offending. We are therefore confident that we will be notified as early as possible of any child/young person at risk of offending to then ensure we can prepare a comprehensive prevention plan.

Areas for development

1. Monitoring information provided by the provider needs to be improved by making explicit the SEN Support Needs of the young person, if applicable.

15. MISSING CHILDREN (HOME, CARE, EDUCATION)

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

Missing from Home, Care and Education procedures are in place, which have been localised from the Pan London procedures. Return Home Interviews are commissioned to be carried out by Action for Children within 72 hours of the child's return and an annual report on children missing is made to the LSCB and the Safeguarding Committee, which analyses the Return Home Interviews

for themes and patterns. The numbers of children missing is low in the City compared with other LAs. From October- December 2017, the front door received 52 contacts relating to missing children and/or maternity alerts. None were City residents.

The majority of missing children coming to notice to the police are non-City residents. These are referred to their home local authorities, but the patterns and trends arising from this are reported to the MASE to build an intelligence picture.

Due to the small size and geography of the CoL, links with the British Transport Police and the LSCB have been developed. Systems are in place to monitor the non-attendance of children in education in the City, who are tracked and followed up.

Electively Home Educated children are visited twice a year, as a minimum, by Education Officers to ensure that the curriculum is suitable and to screen for any safeguarding concerns.

In light of concerns over young people at risk of sexual exploitation, radicalisation and the often-invisible practice of private fostering arrangements, the City has procedures for tracking its resident primary and secondary age pupils who fall within the statutory school age. The Children Missing Education (CME) Database is established, maintained by the Admissions and Attendance Manager and includes all known children at risk of missing education. Additionally, the School Tracker provides comprehensive identification of City children of statutory school age in mainstream education. This enables us to maintain an overview of children educated outside of the City area and increases assurances that they are in education. This information is monitored by Heads of Service on a monthly basis and subject to review by the DCS on a termly basis.

Strengths

1. Our CME database captures all the children we have concerns about but who may not reach the thresholds for children's social care and therefore are not on MOSAIC. This is monitored on a weekly basis and is reported on every month. This enables us to regularly monitor progress for these children and ensure that any changes in circumstance are picked up and responded to quickly.
2. The Education and Early Years' Service and the Children and Families team work well together to enable the identification of children not in school, those at risk of missing school and Looked After Children that need a school place or tuition until a school place is found. This means that we can work collaboratively between departments and with City schools to share information and raise educational safeguarding standards.
3. The relationship with Independent Schools in the City is strong and this work increases the quality of the partnerships. The schools are starting to contact us earlier and more often for advice on matters of attendance which enables us to provide advice, information and make referrals earlier.

16. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Summary

The CoL has low numbers of crimes recorded and young girls at risk usually coming to notice before abuse or exploitation occurs. Between April 2015 and March 2017, 12 crimes which relate to CSE were recorded. The victim in two of the reported crimes is a City resident. All of the victims in the recorded crimes were female.

Reporting of actual sexual assault remains in single figures in the city of London, but the reporting around predominantly young girls who may be at risk of CSE has increased, which is looked at as a positive sign of more potential issues being picked up earlier before abuse can occur.

The majority of children coming to notice in the City (for any reason) are not resident in the City, although reports are disseminated to their home police force as appropriate and social services within their home boroughs are notified.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) housed and cared for by CoL are a group that is a high risk of CSE.

There is a local Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy and work plan in place, led by the LSCB.

The MASE has now become the Vulnerable Adolescents Group (VAG) which is focussed not just on CSE but considering all aspects of vulnerability against children – mainly because those at risk of CSE are likely to be vulnerable to other things (mental health, suicide, FGM, gangs, radicalisation etc).

The VAG meets monthly and reviews cases of children who are considered to be vulnerable to CSE up to children believed to be victims of CSE. MAP meetings are required in procedures for all cases of known CSE. A deep dive into all open City Children's cases took place to screen for CSE or risk factors. Currently there are no children in the City known to have been a victim of CSE, but the deep dive identified 2 young people known to children's social care who are vulnerable to CSE because they go missing from care. They have been considered by the Panel and vulnerability factors addressed in planning.

The City launched Operation Makesafe in March 2015, with the aim of raising awareness of CSE within the business community - including hotels, taxi companies and licensed premises. We also had a peer review with LB Camden in 2016.

Clear procedures are in place for children missing from care, or education or at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. The local authority commissions Action for Children to undertake return home interviews within 72 hours and follow up of any risky behaviour is undertaken by City Gateway or CAMHS where appropriate.

CSE is a standing item on the Safeguarding Committee, forms part of the Town Clerk's supervision of the LSCB Chair and is a key part of the LSCB Business Plan.

Return home interviews are monitored by the Service Manager and action taken where appropriate to mitigate future risks.

Strengths

1. The introduction of a School Tracker in 2015 enables identification of all children of statutory school age, including children attending independent schools. We are now in a position where we can locate all CoL resident children of statutory school age in mainstream education.
2. Our CME database captures all the children we have concerns about but who may not reach the thresholds for children's social care and therefore are not on MOSAIC. The Education and Early Years' Service and the Children and Families teams work together to enable the identification of children not in school, those at risk of missing school and Looked After Children that need tuition until a school place is found. Our collaborative work between departments and with City schools enables us to share information, raise educational safeguarding standards and build better working relationships.

Areas for Development

1. Due to the resources needed to maintain the accuracy of the school tracker, a decision has been made to focus on children in the maintained sector only and to update the tracker aligned to the school headcount. We will mitigate this by:
 - Securing more robust data sharing agreements with the CoL independent schools to allow a more rigorous process around information sharing.
 - Implementing an annual census to support the accuracy of the information recorded in the school tracker on an on-going basis.
 - Ensure that all schools our children attend are aware of our policy to monitor children who have persistent absence of less than 90%. Where there is a concern about low attendance these children will be added to the CME Database.
2. The CoL has a number of major transport hubs. The British Transport Police (BTP) have shared their data of CYP's coming to notice at City locations, some of whom may be vulnerable to CSE. A review of the interface with the BTP should be considered to further improve intelligence and information sharing.
3. The City has a large number of hotels, and serviced apartments which could provide locations for offences to take place. Consideration needs to be given to an ongoing programme of awareness delivery needs to staff at these premises, particularly due to the high turnover rate of staff.

17. DOMESTIC ABUSE, PARENTAL SUBSTANCE MISUSE, AND MENTAL ILL HEALTH

[Hover over this guidance](#)

Domestic Abuse

The Home Office Ready Reckoner estimate that there are 221 female victims of domestic abuse in the City between the ages of 16 – 59. The actual level of instances of domestic abuse as a concern in child protection investigations reaching a Section 47 investigation remained low at a total of 10 in 2016/17.

We are partners in the MARAC process sharing information, in relation to children and family services, on high risk cases of domestic violence and abuse. MARACs are held as required, given the small number of cases that meet the MARAC Threshold.

The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Forum reports on its strategic plan to the Community Safety Partnership. The work of the Forum is supported by the Safer City Partnership team and is Chaired by the Assistant Director People.

Recognising the need to have full integrated cooperation across the Police and Local Authority, arrangements are in place to recruit to a joint funded Domestic Coordinator Post accountable to the Forum and funded by Community Safety, CoL Police and Department of Community and Children Services.

Strengths

1. Training events have been delivered to children's services and partner agencies around domestic abuse, including impact on children and working with perpetrators of domestic abuse. This has increased awareness and enabled early intervention across agencies.
2. The MARAC process enables local frontline services to share information and work out how best to help safeguard victims and children at high risk of serious harm.

Areas for development

1. Recruit to the new joint funded DA Coordinator post.
2. Review and update the Children's Domestic Abuse Strategy in line with the new Children and Young Peoples Plan priorities.
3. To further embed our 'Think Family' approach in order to secure better outcomes for children, young people and families by coordinating the support they receive from multi-agency services.
4. Better insight and service design for those families from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Mental Ill Health

Based on MINI2K-adjusted estimates in 2014, there were 52 children (age from 5-15) in the CoL with a mental health disorder.

We commission CAMHS to support children and young people who may benefit from support around their mental health. The City will commission additional services to meet need at different levels across the threshold of need continuum to support the emotional wellbeing of families. For example, we commission First Steps to provide targeted Early Help Support for children and families of children under 5. The recent SEND Inspection and the 2016 Ofsted Inspection noted the impact and user satisfaction levels were positive and helped reduce increase levels of concerns for children's and parents/ carers wellbeing. The service provides one to one support around parenting, as well as parenting groups as required. It links with our Children Centre provision as well being part of multi-disciplinary discussions through the Multi Agency Practitioners Forum. This provision is supported using the Solihull Approach which provides a multi-agency framework/ language for supporting families, used by professionals in health, education and early help. The model was subject to an evaluation by Goldsmiths which recognised the positive impact it was having on families.

The CoL also has a bespoke service for UASC who receive an initial emotional wellbeing assessment from CAMHS when they first arrive in the City. This service was commissioned to address the concerns of our UASC Population having a potential vulnerability to PTSD due to their experiences in their home countries prior to coming to CoL. Reported Mental health concerns for our Care Leavers has reduced in number, albeit the figures are very low, in the last 3 years since the service was first commissioned.

Children Social Care and Adult Social Care both sit within the People Directorate and are co-located on the same floor in the Guildhall, with the Heads of Service sharing the same office. This significantly increases opportunities for joint working, as evidenced by a number of cases. This was recognised in the recent SEND Inspection via the submission of case examples to support our evidence of impact of joined up working.

At a strategic level there is an Adults With Additional Needs policy and a Mental Health Strategy in place.

Strengths

1. Strong links between services around Mental Health enable access via ASC to the RIO database for Mental Health records of parents, family members. This enables relevant information to be shared between agencies working with children and families in a timely way to ensure a more 'joined-up approach' which will assist in achieving better outcomes.
2. Strong links across services particularly in relation to Safeguarding. A recent example of which was the multi-agency response to a rough sleeping, pregnant women with substance abuse problems. Health, social care, substance abuse and homelessness outreach workers worked together to attempt to engage the mother and protect the unborn child. There are a number of case examples to support our evidence base regarding impact.
3. 'Think Family' approach is evidenced by our 'Top 3' meetings where service leads from ASC, Children and Families, SEND and Homeless services meet to discuss cross cutting cases. This has offered a higher level of multi-agency scrutiny and encourages a greater sense of shared ownership and responsibility in working towards achieving good outcomes.

Areas for Development

1. We are reviewing our Approved Mental Health Practitioner function. This will consider how we can further enhance MH support adopting a Think Family approach across the whole of the People Directorate.
2. Updated 2018 data on children with mental health issues will enable a review of service provision.

Parental Substance Misuse

In 2014, it was estimated that there were 90 CoL adults who were alcohol dependant¹ and in 2014-15 an estimated total number of 28 residents aged 15-64 year old using opiates and crack cocaine². There are currently two cases open to Children's Social Care involving adult substance misuse.

Westminster Drug Project are commissioned to provide drug and alcohol prevention and treatment services for adults living in the CoL. They also provide information and prevention services to families in the City. Between April and December 2017, the total number of CoL service users engaged in structured treatment with the service is 32. Of these, 6 are parents. Young Hackney are currently commissioned to provide drug and alcohol treatment to young people living in the CoL and two CoL residents were referred in 2017-18 (contract finishes 31st March 2018).

Strengths and outcomes

1. Administration and management of the service is co-located at the Guildhall. This results in excellent communication with frontline services and therefore more support to services and more referrals.
2. Training and prevention services in place, with outreach to young people and adults. Events run within this to target families, in conjunction with other commissioned services.

Areas for development – how we will improve

1. The young people's service is based in Hackney. There is a risk that without outreach or proactive engagement with services, young people will not present to treatment. There is also a risk of a lack of link between parental and child substance misuse. This will be improved as from April 2018 WDP will also be commissioned to provide the young people's substance misuse services, currently provided by Young Hackney, which will bring services for young people in to the City.

1. Estimates of alcohol dependent adults and alcohol dependent adults living with children, Public Health England
2. The 'Estimates of the prevalence of opiate use and/or crack cocaine use, 2014 to 2015' published by the Liverpool John Moores University, Public Health England

18. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

Summary

We have achieved a good coverage of training for staff and key external groups such as foster carers. Training will be rolled out to all Corporation staff, with bespoke face to face support available for key staff such as Children's Social Care. We will look further at responses to high risk cases to ensure clear understanding between partners.

An audit has been completed on children's cases to identify how we are meeting the potential risks around radicalisation, which enable gaps in practice to be addressed.

Strengths

1. Commissioned IFA's are audited annually on how they ensure their foster carers can recognise when a young person is at risk and/or showing signs of radicalisation. Training that is being offered around radicalisation is checked at monitoring visits.
2. Children and young people who are potentially at risk of radicalisation have a risk assessment completed, which is updated 3 monthly. This puts the City in a better position to constantly evaluate the potential risk of radicalisation, which then enables earlier implementation of intervention strategies.

3. Social workers have manageable caseloads and know their care leaver and looked after children and young people. This means they can provide earlier intervention by quickly picking up any changes in behaviour either through their direct contact or through the young person's key worker.
4. Children's Social Care Staff have received training around radicalisation. The team have a close and effective working relationship with the CoL Police Prevent Team. This gives us early sight of potential risks and more time for appropriate intervention.

Areas for Development

1. We need to review the individual risk assessments every 4/6 months on children's case files to ensure that they are comprehensive in regard to covering the current risks. The outcome of this will be to identify those young people at potential risk of radicalisation, or identify those young people who may be radicalised, ensuring early referral to Channel.
2. Our CiC are all unaccompanied minors, who have a markedly different journey into care and experience of life. We are continually driven to better understand the marginalisation and radicalisation of this group. This will include a rolling training and development programme for staff on radicalisation, to ensure that new staff coming into Children's Social Care will have the requisite skills to know what the potential vulnerabilities are to radicalisation and how young people may present if they are being radicalised.

19. SEND

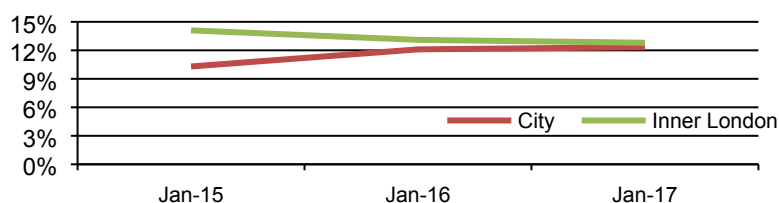
Summary

Around 300 children and young people who live or go to school in the City receive some SEND support. As of September 2017, the City has 14 children with an Education, Health, Care (EHC) plans or Statements of Educational Needs.

Because of our small SEND cohort, our families have enjoyed well-resourced, tailored services and a stable team of professionals, some of whom have worked with the children and young people for many years.

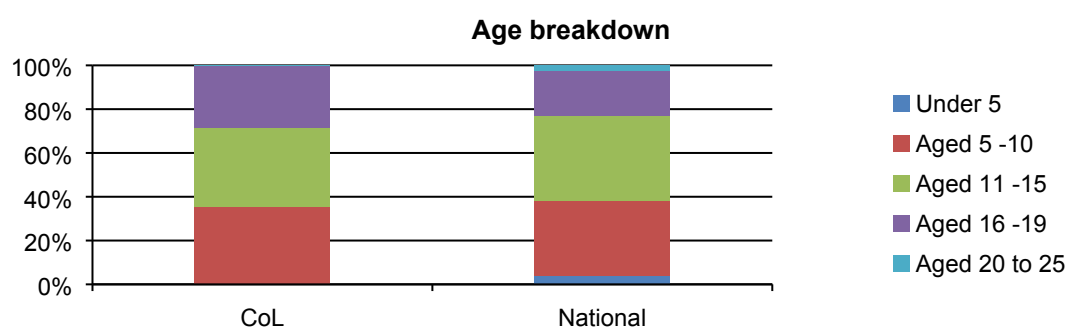
100% of statutory assessments are completed within 20 weeks of commencement compared with 59% nationally and 70% in London as a whole. The City has completed the transfer of all Statements (of Special Educational Needs) to Education Health and Care Plans, well in advance of the national deadline of 1 April 2018. An Education Health and Care Plan has also been issued for a young person who previously had a Learning Difficulty Assessment. This was well in advance of the legal deadline.

The number of children receiving SEN Support has risen from 9.2% in 2014 to 12.3% in 2017. This is slightly lower than the Inner London average (12.8) but is higher than the national average of 11.6%.



Percentage of SEN Support varies between schools in the City from 16% St Pauls Cathedral School to 8% in Charterhouse Square School. The Education team will be looking to enhance its relationships with the independent schools in the City over the next academic year to help identify children with SEND and improve the quality of SEN support in COL.

The majority of children with EHC plans are boys (92%). This is higher than the national average (73%). Six out of 14 (43%) children with EHC plans are of White ethnicity. Twelve out of the 14 children with EHC plans are of statutory school age, with 36% aged between 11 and 15, which is below the national average of 39%. The City does not have any children under statutory school age with EHC plans (see graph below for breakdown). All CoL children with an EHC plan attend schools that are judged “Good” or “Outstanding” by Ofsted. Three children with EHC plans attend Sir John Cass’s Foundation Primary School, the only local authority maintained school in the City.



Strengths

1. In March 2018 an OFSTED Inspection of SEND services noted a number of strengths, including:
 - Leaders have a strong and purposeful commitment and a detailed understanding of service strengths and weaknesses.
 - Leadership roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and governance is effective
 - Leaders and professionals are ambitious and have a detailed understanding of children and young people and their families.
 - The overall number of children and young people are small but mobilising staff and using joint commissioning is effective.
 - There are clear assessment procedures, particularly in early years.
2. We know what we do well and have development plans to further improve, as set out in our self-evaluation. We are making progress on key areas, including:
 - Improved communication and engagement with staff, partners and health professionals to identify emerging needs and provide early intervention.
 - Developing a Children’s Centre offer based on local needs of City based families.
3. Co-production is a principle we are working to embed in our activities, for example through co-production of the Local offer to champion our ‘one front door’ approach to

increase access to good quality advice and information for children, young people, parents and carers of children with SEND.

4. Excellent partnerships with Hackney CCG to underpin joint working and commissioning:
 - Commissioned/re-commissioned services demonstrate inclusive practice and a focus on outcomes for children, young people, parents and carers of children with SEND.
 - There are well developed plans for achieving integrated commissioning and aligned budgets in the Integrated Commissioning Children's workstream.

Areas for development

1. The parents' forum is too small and should include parent carers of children on SEND Support in CoL schools. We also need to develop effective systems to improve engagement and participation of young people with SEND. The outcome is a lack of user insight, which compromises the range and depth of services available. To improve this, we have enabled CoL parents to develop a local network, so they have more involvement and influence on the strategy, design and delivery of local services.
2. Need better performance analysis and reporting and a quality assurance framework that better enables our strategic planning, oversight and scrutiny. Small cohorts mean we haven't got robust data with which to confidently inform joint commissioning which reduces the scope of our search to identify services that we need. We will develop a performance analysis and a quality assurance framework that better enables our strategic planning, oversight and scrutiny. We are linking up with Tower Hamlets to be able to share their data sources to further develop the support to our one maintained primary school.
3. Need to improve post 16 education progression and pathways so that when children and young people are transitioning into adulthood their access to training and employment good quality provision and services are available to support them. It's currently difficult to identify the right pathways for our post 16 children and young people and our services to post 16 children are compromised. We will transform EHC plans to focus on the aspirations and outcomes for the child and young person. We will also work closely with commissioning to research post 16 pathways that include apprenticeships, employment or further education, independent living, life skills.
4. Because of the size of the CoL resident population, joint commissioning activity needs to be reframed to specifically meet the needs of the CoL children, particularly where there is a joint commission of services targeting large numbers of children across two boroughs. New governance arrangements and multi-agency participation at SEND Implementation Boards will create a new paradigm in which the voice of the CoL child is the first voice in all that we do.

FINAL WORDS

We have set out a clear and frank evaluation of the effectiveness of current service provision and performance in improving outcomes for children and young people services. The self-assessment has demonstrated that we understand the needs of children and families and that we work with intelligence to translate this understanding into excellent service provision.

External inspection of safeguarding in 2016 and SEND in 2018 recognised that quality of services is good and that leadership is strong. We are determined to build on this, so our good leadership fosters an organisational culture that is committed to being developmental, using self-improvement tools like the Service Improvement Plan and a rigorous Quality Assurance framework to exercise continuous improvement.

We recognise our future challenges and that service improvement will be achieved through effective co-production arrangements that are integral to policy development and service delivery and result in sustained and meaningful impact on lives of our children and families. Our recently reviewed and revised CYPP 2018-2021 has been driven by the views of our children and families and we need to ensure that we build on this partnership with our communities.