



Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2015

Time: 1.45 pm

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Randall Anderson
Marianne Fredericks
Professor John Lumley
Gareth Moore
Deputy Joyce Nash
Dhruv Patel
Elizabeth Rogula

Enquiries: Philippa Sewell
tel. no.: 020 7332 1426
philippa.sewell@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1pm
NB: Part of this meeting could be the subject of audio or video recording

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**
To elect a Chairman pursuant to Standing Order 29.
For Decision
4. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**
To elect a Chairman pursuant to Standing Order 30.
For Decision
5. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**
To receive the Terms of Reference, as agreed at the 8 May 2015 meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee.
For Information
(Pages 1 - 2)
6. **MINUTES**
To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 February 2015.
For Decision
(Pages 3 - 6)
7. **CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING REVIEW**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 7 - 14)
8. **CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 15 - 26)
9. **CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 27 - 30)
10. **LOCAL AUTHORITIES DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) ANNUAL REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 31 - 48)

11. **PRIVATE FOSTERING REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 49 - 58)
12. **QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
14. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
MOTION - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 February 2015.
For Decision
(Pages 59 - 60)
16. **COMPLAINTS REPORT APRIL 2012-DECEMBER 2015**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 61 - 72)
17. **ANNUAL REPORT VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-15**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 73 - 82)
18. **MISSING CHILDREN REPORT 2014/15**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 83 - 96)
19. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
20. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

This page is intentionally left blank

SAFEGUARDING SUB-COMMITTEE

Constitution

- 6 Members appointed by the Community & Children's Services Committee.
- It is convention for the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Grand Committee to be appointed to this subcommittee.

Terms of Reference

To be responsible for:-

1. ensuring, in respect of children entering public care, that the duty of the local authority as a corporate parent to safeguard and promote a child's welfare is fulfilled;
2. overseeing the discharge of the City of London's responsibilities to safeguard children and adults who have been identified as requiring support and protection;
3. monitoring the Community & Children's Services Department's performance in respect of its work to safeguard children and adults and make recommendations to the Grand Committee to bring about improvements as appropriate; and
4. exercising its functions with regard to the views of relevant service users, as appropriate.

Suggested frequency of meetings

A minimum of 2 a year

2014/15 Membership:

Deputy Billy Dove

Dhruv Patel

Dr Martin Dudley

Professor John Lumley

Elizabeth Rogula

Deputy Joyce Nash

TO APPOINT 6 MEMBERS.

This page is intentionally left blank

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19 February 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 3.15 pm

Present

Members:

Dhruv Patel (Chairman)

Deputy Joyce Nash

Deputy Billy Dove (Deputy Chairman)

Elizabeth Rogula

Officers:

Philippa Sewell

Town Clerk's Department

Chris Pelham

Community and Children's Services

Marion Willicome-Lang

Community and Children's Services

Simon Cribbens

Community and Children's Services

Jim Gamble

City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

Rory McCallum

City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

Fran Pearson

City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Revd Dr Martin Dudley and Professor John Lumley.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 27 November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Visits

Members noted that a visit to elderly tenant in Tower Hamlets could be arranged for the following week but, as this was such late notice, officers undertook to arrange another visit at a later time. Members were also reminded of the Children in Care Council event on 30th March.

Corporate Parenting Strategy

The Town Clerk undertook to follow-up the presentation of the Strategy to the Court of Common Council, and Members noted a training session had been scheduled for 15th April at 1pm.

4. **THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14 CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

The Chairman welcomed Jim Gamble, Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB), who introduced the CHSCB Annual report for 2013/14. This detailed the work undertaken by partners and the Board to ensure robust safeguarding arrangements were in place.

Members discussed the report in detail, noting the NHS representation on the various Boards, and the need for strong scrutiny and comprehensive Member training. Mr Gamble advised that joint training with Hackney could be facilitated and officers undertook to look into the options available. Mr Gamble praised the work of the Director of Community & Children's Services and the Assistant Director of People, highlighting their commitment and care with regards to safeguarding.

RESOLVED – That officers liaise with the London Borough of Hackney to facilitate joint training, and the report be noted.

5. **THE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013/2014 CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD**

The Chairman welcomed Fran Pearson, Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB), who introduced the CHSAB Annual report for 2013/14. This detailed the priorities for 2013/14 and 14/15, key developments and activity data, as well as the governance and membership of the Adult Safeguarding Board.

Members discussed the report, noting that Safeguarding Adult Boards would be placed on the same statutory footing as Children Safeguarding Boards from April as a result of the Care Act 2014, and that a dedicated budget for the Board had been agreed by all partners. In response to Members' questions, officers advised that other Local Authorities had specialist teams but the City's social workers undertook both statutory and non-statutory work.

Ms Pearson echoed Mr Gamble's praise for the Director of Community & Children's Services and the Assistant Director of People, as well as Professor Lumley (lead Member on the Adults Safeguarding Board) and other key members of staff in the Community & Children's Services Department.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. **UPDATE ON CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services which provided an update on the work undertaken to address issues in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in the City of London. Officers advised Members of the development of a City of London CSE Action Plan and establishment of the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) group, and it was noted that a peer review had been completed with the London Borough of Camden.

Officers confirmed that there had been no reported cases of CSE to date in the City of London or involving any of the City's children, and that just under half of the actions in the City of London CSE Action Plan had been fully completed with the remaining actions were underway. In response to Members' questions, officers advised that although they were confident there were robust reporting processes in place, it was never assumed there were no cases or vulnerable children. Regarding National Agencies such as Childline, officers confirmed these organisations existed to increase the channels through which alerts could be raised and that the relevant Local Authority and Police were contacted immediately.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services detailing the progress made in setting up the Children in Care Council (CiCC) with Looked After Children and Care Leavers supported by the City of London. The first CiCC took place on the 4th November 2015 where the children and young people confirmed the City of London's Pledge, which had now been included into the Corporate Parenting Strategy. A work plan had also been agreed, which had been included in the Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROGRAMME (KTP) ANNUAL REPORT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services providing an update on the first year of the three year Knowledge Transfer Programme established between the Department of Community and Children's Services – People Directorate and Goldsmiths, University of London Department of Social, Therapeutic and Community Studies.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item	Paragraph(s)
12	1 & 2

13
14-15

2
-

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

13. **UPDATE REPORT OF VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

14. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 4.24 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Philippa Sewell
tel. no.: 020 7332 1426
philippa.sewell@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Committee	Date:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	25 September 2015
Subject: Children's Safeguarding Review	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This review presents to Members the progress made by the City of London's Community and Children's Services to improve the quality of the City of London's safeguarding services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

Since May 2015, a Service Improvement Board chaired by Ade Adetosoye, Director of Community and Children's Services, has overseen a number of recommendations and agreed priority actions against each of these areas, which are incorporated into the Service Improvement Plan.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. In May 2015, the City of London Corporation's Community and Children's Services produced a Service Improvement Plan to set out the recommendations and agreed priority actions to improve the quality of the City of London's safeguarding services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. The Improvement Plan incorporates a range of single-agency and multi-agency recommendations, including those for the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB), as well as CHSCB police and health partners.
2. This review is being presented to Members of the Safeguarding Sub-Committee to enable the scrutiny of the improvements made to the City's safeguarding service and oversee any future improvement priorities.

Current Position

3. This report provides an overview of the key recommendations and agreed actions to ensure the effective safeguarding of vulnerable children in the City at all stages from the early help point through to care leavers.
4. The report also reflects a number of key service improvements that relate to new statutory requirements for safeguarding children, including:
 - children and young people at risk or who are known to have suffered FGM;
 - the effectiveness of the local authority in meeting the 'Prevent Duty' in relation to safeguarding children.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

5. Once the Service Improvement Board completes its safeguarding review, any on-going improvement priorities will be embedded within wider service improvement planning.
6. A Communications Plan incorporating the main service improvements, as well as standalone communications plan for CSE, Private Fostering and the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), will raise awareness among partner agencies as these improvements are embedded into the service.

Conclusion

7. In completing this Safeguarding Review, the City of London continues its improvement journey as a learning organisation, ensuring that it provides effective safeguarding services for children and young people from the early help point through to care leavers, and that it complies with statutory requirements in this area.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Children's Safeguarding Review: May 2015 – September 2015

Moushumi Bhadra

Improvement Planning Programme Coordinator

T: 020 7332 1324

E: Moushumi.bhadra@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Children's Safeguarding Review: May 2015 – September 2015

In May 2015, the City of London Corporation's Community and Children's Services produced a Service Improvement Plan to set out the recommendations and agreed priority actions to improve the quality of the City of London's safeguarding services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

The Improvement Plan incorporates a range of single-agency and multi-agency recommendations, including those for the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB), as well as CHSCB police and health partners. It also includes new improvement priorities to ensure compliance with statutory requirements for safeguarding children, including the experience and progress of children and young people at risk of or who are known to have suffered female genital mutilation (FGM) and the effectiveness of the local authority in meeting the 'Prevent duty'.

Governance of the Service Improvement Plan is conducted through the Service Improvement Board on a fortnightly basis, chaired by Ade Adetosoye, Director of Community and Children's Services. The Service Improvement Board members are:

- Chris Pelham, Assistant Director for People
- Pat Dixon, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager,
- Shaista Afzal, Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager
- Ivy Alexander, Children and Families Team Manager
- Sham Kidane, Independent Reviewing Officer and Principal Social Worker
- Jim Gamble, Independent Chair, CHSCB
- Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, CHSCB
- Moushumi Bhadra, Improvement Planning Programme Coordinator
- Gemma De La Rue, Inspection and Improvement Project Manager

The recommendations and agreed priority actions were organised into the following categories:

1. The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

The following actions have been taken to improve the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection in the City of London:

Knowledge and application of thresholds

- Following concerns about the low referral rate to children's social care services, the City of London produced a new Thresholds of Needs document to provide guidance to partner agencies on the process for identifying children who need to access early help and children's social care services using the Thresholds of Needs matrix, with particular guidance relating to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and the Prevent duty.
- The significant rise in referrals and contacts reflects the work undertaken to address the low referral rate, demonstrating that thresholds for referral for children's services are now known and appropriately applied across the City.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- LADO referrals are dealt with in accordance with statutory requirements.

- Although the numbers of LADO referrals are low, training and briefing sessions have increased awareness of the role of the LADO, meaning that staff and partner agencies know to refer to the local authority if they come across concerns about the suitability of staff working with children.

Private Fostering

- Although we have not identified any Private Fostering arrangements in the City for the last three years, City staff and partner agencies have received training on Private Fostering, meaning that they know how to refer appropriately.
- A 12 month communications plan is in place to promote Private Fostering in the community and with key agencies to increase awareness.

Engagement with Children and Young People

- Our annual consultation for 2014/15 with all children and young people accessing our services shows that they felt their views were listened to and they were treated with respect. Most children felt safe or safer after social workers had become involved.
- A framework has been developed to enable the meaningful engagement and participation of children and young people in children's social care services.

Advocacy Services

- The City has commissioned Action for Children to provide a specialist advocacy service for children from the early help point through to care leavers, as well as for children with disabilities. This will serve to raise awareness among our children on their entitlements to provide feedback on our services and to access an advocate.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- A joint FGM strategy with Hackney is being developed under the City of London Executive Group to ensure that the City is identifying children and young people who are at risk of and who are known to have suffered female genital mutilation (FGM).

Prevent duty

- The Assistant Director for People will act as the departmental lead to ensure that the local authority is compliant with the Prevent duty in relation to safeguarding children and will be the main point of contact for any referrals to the Channel panel.
- The Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager will act as the operational lead for the Prevent duty and will regularly attend the Corporation-wide Prevent Delivery Plan Meetings.

Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- The City has a local CSE strategy in place, which is led by the CHSCB.
- Any children who are considered to be vulnerable or at risk of CSE are discussed at the monthly Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings.
- A CSE Communications and Engagement Strategy is in place to raise awareness among partner agencies and for early identification of young people at risk of CSE.

2. The experiences and progress of looked after children and achieving permanence

The following actions have been taken to improve the experiences of children looked after in the City of London, as well as ensuring that they achieve permanence in their placements:

Missing from Home, Care and Education

- The City has an effective and well co-ordinated multi-agency approach to protect children who go missing from home, care and education, which are localised from the Pan London procedures. This is underpinned by the CHSCB Missing Strategy and Action Plan.
- We have updated our Missing from Care Protocol and ensured that it is fully implemented.
- Although the majority of the City's secondary school age population are educated outside the local authority and in independent schools, the City has sought to improve its monitoring and tracking of City children in order to identify children missing from education. Electively home educated children are visited twice a year by education officers to ensure the curriculum is suitable and to screen for safeguarding concerns.

Achieving permanence for children looked after

- Our Children and Families Team are committed to achieving permanence for the children in our care. We have a new Permanency Policy and Procedure in place to ensure close tracking of permanency as part of the way the child's care plan is reviewed.
- Our Permanency Panel reviews all children looked after.

Children Looked After and Care Leavers Service Improvement Group

- A Children Looked After and Care Leavers Sub-Group, led by the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager, acts as a strategic multi-agency group and is attended by all key lead partner agencies.
- The City of London's Pledge has been disseminated to all children looked after, ensuring that they are aware of the promises that the City has made to help and support them.

Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)

- The City closely monitors the performance of the Independent Fostering Agencies where our children looked after are placed.
- The performance team records Ofsted inspection ratings for all IFAs and feeds back to the Children and Families Team when an agency's rating is changed.
- The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager holds an annual monitoring meeting with all Independent Fostering Agencies, assessing the agency against national minimum standards, using evidence provided by the IFA and taking into account relevant feedback from social workers.

3. Adoption performance

The following actions have been taken to improve adoption performance in the City of London:

Commissioned services for adoption

- Although the City has not had any adoptions for a number of years, it has commissioned Coram for its adoption services, a provider rated as Outstanding by Ofsted that brings specific expertise to the recruitment of adopters and family finding.
- The City has nominated a designated social worker to attend the City and Hackney Adoption Panel.

4. The experience and progress of care leavers

The following actions have been taken to improve the experience and progress of care leavers in the City of London:

City of London Pledge

- The Children in Care Council supported the development of the City of London Pledge to Children Looked After and Care Leavers, enabling them to have oversight and awareness of the promises that the City has made to help and support them.

Education, Employment and Training Strategy

- A City of London Care Leavers Education, Employment and Training Strategy is in place to provide greater job opportunities and work experience placements for care leavers within the local authority.

5. Leadership, management and governance

The following actions have been taken to support continuous improvement of leadership, management and governance in the City of London:

Knowledge of frontline practice

- The Lead Member for Children's Services has shadowed social workers, attended the children's centre, linked up with a lead member from another borough and attended the Lead Member's development programme.
- Senior leaders in the local authority, including the Lead Member for Children's Services, the Director for Children's Services and the Assistant Director for People, have met the Children in Care Council (CiCC).
- Corporate Parent training has been rolled out for Chief Officers to ensure that they are adequately engaged.

Quality assurance

- Our Independent Reviewing Officer is now in-house, which has ensured that an effective quality assurance framework is in place.
- The Early Help Sub-Group is chaired by the Assistant Director for People, operating as a sub-group of the Children's Executive Board, seeking to align the work of the multi-agency partnership with the Early Help Strategy and

address the strategic objectives set out in the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

6. City and Hackney Safeguarding Board

The following actions have been taken by City staff to improve services provided by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board:

Missing and CSE

- The CHSCB Missing Children and CSE Strategies have been completed and City-specific action plans have been developed and monitored.

Safeguarding training

- The CHSCB provides high quality multi-agency training and awareness-raising, which ensures it embeds learning from reviews and audits

Think Family protocol

- The CHSCB have developed a 'Think Family' protocol to encompass adult substance misuse, mental health, neglect and domestic abuse, setting out the arrangements for the City and our partners.

Conclusion

Once the Children's Safeguarding Review is completed in September 2015, any on-going improvement priorities will be embedded into wider service improvement planning.

A Communications Plan incorporating the main service improvements, as well as standalone communications plan for CSE, Private Fostering and the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), will raise awareness among partner agencies as these improvements are embedded into the service.

This page is intentionally left blank

Committee	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	25 September 2015
Subject: Corporate Parenting Annual Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report presents to Members the document Corporate Parenting in the City of London - Annual Report 2014/15. The annual report provides an overview of the City Corporation's role as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care.

The Annual Report illustrates that the City provides good care to looked after children, supports their achievements and safeguards them from harm. It also sets out a number of priorities and actions for the coming year.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2014/15 provides Members with an overview of the City Corporation's role as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care. As a corporate parent the City has a moral and legal duty to provide support, care and encouragement to the children and young people we look after to help them reach their full potential.
2. The annual report is being presenting to Members of the Safeguarding Sub Committee, in its role as the Corporate Parenting Board, to enable scrutiny of the performance of the City Corporation in this role.

Current Position

3. The annual report provides an overview of the profile of the children in our care, and reports on the City's performance in meeting key measures of health and wellbeing, and providing stable, quality foster homes for our children to be cared in. It sets out the actions taken to safeguard children from harm, and the work undertaken to support children to maximise their educational attainment or their engagement with training and employment.
4. The report also reflects the strong oversight of the corporate parenting role through the Safeguarding Sub Committee, which acts as the City's Corporate Parenting Board. This role has been supported by development sessions for Members, to highlight their roles and responsibilities, and the development and approval of a new Corporate Parenting Strategy.
5. The City's support for the children in our care is strong. Statistical measures of performance are better than those reported nationally, or by local authorities considered to be our statistical neighbours. However, the City continues to strive to improve, and the report sets out a number of areas for development and priorities to be delivered in 2015/16.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

6. The City's role in supporting children in our care to achieve their full potential contributes to the fulfilment of the priorities of the Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan and the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Conclusion

7. The City of London continues to deliver a strong corporate parenting role that is helping the children and young in our care to thrive.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting in the City of London – Annual Report 2014/15

Simon Cribbens

Policy Development Manager

T: 020 7332 1210

E: simon.cribbens@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Corporate Parenting in the City of London

Annual Report – 2014/15

1 Introduction and context

- 1.1 This annual report provides an update on the City Corporation's role as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care.
- 1.2 The City of London Corporation is a Corporate Parent to the children who are in its care. These looked after children are those children and young people aged 0 - 18 years who cannot safely remain with their family, or those for whom the City Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. Looked after children can include unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC), children with multiple disabilities and those who have suffered abuse and/or neglect. As such, looked after children and young people are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.
- 1.3 The City Corporation's legal and financial responsibility to the children and young people for whom it is a corporate parent extends into their lives as care leavers and as they transition to independence.

2 The children in our care

- 2.1 During 2014/15 the City looked after 11 children. Seven children were in care at the start of the year and a further four came into care during the year. One of those who came into care was looked after temporarily and subsequently returned to their home. Two others reached the age of 18 and continued to receive the support of the City Corporation as care leavers (both living in semi-independent accommodation).
- 2.2 The City's looked after children are predominantly older, with only one under the age of ten years at the beginning of the year. Four looked after children were aged 17 or 18 years, three were aged 14 or 15 years, and three were aged 12 or 13 years.
- 2.3 Ten of the 11 children looked after during 2014/15 were male.
- 2.4 The age and gender profile of the City's looked after children reflects the dominance of children who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) among this group. Seven of the 11 children looked after in 2014/15 were UASC, as were three of the four children who came into care during the year. Nationally, 89 per cent of UASC children are male and 76 per cent are aged over 16 years.
- 2.5 The number of UASC in our looked after population is also reflected in the diversity of ethnicities and countries of origin. Children of Asian origin represent the largest cohort (four of 11 children), three are of mixed origin and four identified as either white British or white other (Albanian). Although households of Asian origin are significant proportion of the City's population, such households are south Asian (Bangladeshi) in origin and diverse from the children of Asian origin in our care who are Afghani or Iranian.

- 2.6 During 2014/15 the City supported 13 young people who had left care – including the two young people mentioned above who at the age of 18 years became care leavers.
- 2.7 Five care leavers are aged between 21 and 25 years, and are being supported in full time education. The remaining eight are aged 18 to 21 years.
- 2.8 Twelve of the 13 care leavers supported by the City were male.
- 2.9 Our care leaver population is very ethnically diverse, and as with our looked after children, is markedly different from that of the City's resident population. This reflects their route into care, which for 12 out of 13 care leavers was as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child.

3 Corporate Parenting Board (Safeguarding Sub Committee)

- 3.1 Within the City Corporation the function of Corporate Parenting Board is undertaken by the Safeguarding Sub Committee which reports to the Community and Children's Services Grand Committee.
- 3.2 The Safeguarding Sub Committee meets four times each year, and in its capacity as the Corporate Parenting Board it is responsible for:
- achieving improved outcomes for children in care and care leavers;
 - developing and overseeing implementation of the City Corporation's Corporate Parenting Strategy to drive improved outcomes;
 - providing challenge to ensure that the Council's duties as Corporate Parent are carried out effectively and consistently.
- 3.3 Membership includes the lead member for children, and the Chairman of Community and Children's Services Grand Committee. Over the past year the Sub Committee has considered reports on topics including:
- safeguarding
 - child sexual exploitation
 - participation of children
 - educational progress of looked after children
 - health of looked after children
 - participation and engagement of looked after children
- 3.4 The Sub Committee formally received the Annual Report of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and the City Corporation's renewed escalation policy for safeguarding concerns.
- 3.5 A development session for members was also held during the year to highlight the City's role and responsibilities as a corporate parent. This took place alongside Member engagement sessions focussed on safeguarding as part of the City's "Notice the Signs" campaign.

4 Corporate Parenting Strategy

- 4.1 During the year the City Corporation developed a new Corporate Parenting Strategy which was approved by the Safeguarding Sub Committee. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out how the City will fulfil its commitment and ensure that children and young people have the support, care and encouragement to reach their full potential.
- 4.2 To achieve this, and deliver the City's role and responsibilities as a corporate parent the strategy sets out a number of actions and commitments grouped under the following headings:
- healthy and safe
 - learning, achieving and enjoying
 - listening and contributing
 - independence and working
 - individual and community.
- 4.3 Within the Strategy the City has developed a "Pledge" for its looked after children, young people and care leavers. The Pledge is the City's promise to provide the care and help that children and young people in its care have told the City they want. It also includes the commitments the City has already made in signing up to the Government's "charter for care leavers".
- 4.4 The Pledge to looked after children and care leavers was developed through consultation with children and young people and agreed at the first meeting of the City's Children in Care Council (see Engagement below). It sets out a number of promises that children and young people have identified which, if delivered, would make the City a good parent and carer.
- 4.5 Our Children in Care Council also developed a young person friendly version of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, which together with the Pledge, will help the children and young people in our care hold the City to account for the commitments it has made to them.
- 4.6 Once approved, the Corporate Parenting Strategy was presented to the Community and Children's Services Grand Committee. It has subsequently been presented to the full Court of Common Council in order to highlight both the responsibility of Members as corporate parents and the importance of this role. The strategy was also presented by the Director of Community and Children's Services to the City Corporation's Chief Officer Group, which identified two Chief Officers to act as champions for our looked after children.

5 Health and wellbeing

- 5.1 As corporate parents the City takes responsibility for assessing and promoting good physical and mental health among the children and young people in our care. This is achieved through annual assessments of health and dental health, and by ensuring children and young people are fully immunised. We have also changed the delivery of mental health services for this group, to better meet their needs, and we support

children to be happy and thrive. The City's performance in achieving health and dental assessments and immunisations exceeds national performance. Our children's emotional wellbeing is better than that measured nationally among other looked after children.

- 5.2 During 2014/15 all looked after children had a health assessment performed by a paediatrician. The latest reported national figures show that only 88 per cent of children were looked after for at least 12 months had had an annual health assessment.
- 5.3 Health reviews were also undertaken by the designated nurse for looked after children, who visits children and young people in their placements. All children looked after by the City for at least twelve months had been fully immunised, compared to 87 per cent of looked after children nationally. Of those who came into, and have remained in care during the year, one has received an immunisation booster package for UASC, and two remained outstanding at the year end.
- 5.4 Annual dental checks were conducted during the year for all those who were in care at the start of the year, compared to nationally reported performance of 84 per cent. Of those entering care, one was temporary and did not have a dental check-up during the period in care, two have had a dental check, and one remained outstanding at the year end.
- 5.5 The City's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) supports children and young people in our care. Our looked after children were all placed out of borough in 2014/15, but the CAMHS service specification was amended during the year so that it is now commissioned to provide support to our looked after children in their placement (wherever they are placed). Under this service all looked after children and care leavers receive a CAMHS assessment. These are undertaken in their placement and include the mental state of the child or young person. All relationships are also assessed. Assessments include diagnosis of common conditions such as ADHD, and Autistic Spectrum Conditions can be screened for and diagnosed if appropriate. Support is also given to foster parents and carers for crisis management on a case by case basis, as is teaching and training to foster parents and carers.
- 5.6 Seven of our looked after children were referred for CAMHS assessments during the year. Following assessment, two cases required no further intervention or support for mental health issues, one child was referred for support from local CAMHS services in their home area, and the remaining four received on-going therapeutic and medical support.
- 5.7 No looked after child, young person or care leaver was identified as having a substance misuse issue, and there were no conceptions.
- 5.8 Five of our children aged 4–16, who had been in care continuously for a year or more, completed "strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) during 2014/15 to assess their emotional wellbeing. A higher SDQ score indicates more emotional difficulties with a score of 0-13 range considered normal. The average SDQ score for City looked after children was 4.8 and all children fell into the normal range. This compares to a national picture where the average score is 13.9 and only just over half of looked after children fall into the normal range.

6 Safeguarding our children

- 6.1 The City Corporation is committed to keeping children and young people safe. During 2014/15 the City rolled out its “Notice the Signs” safeguarding campaign. This thought provoking and conversation-led approach sought to raise awareness of the signs of abuse and neglect of children and adults. The campaign, sponsored by the Town Clerk, engaged staff, Members and residents to make them aware of what we mean by abuse, who can be an abuser, where abuse can take place, and what anyone in the organisation can do in response to their concerns.
- 6.2 All our looked after children are allocated a fully qualified social worker.
- 6.3 During the year no allegations were made by children in our care of neglect or abuse by their carers or others, and consequently no referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer from or in relation to this group. The City has received no complaints from the children or young people in its care or its care leavers. None of the children we look after have had engagement with the police or criminal justice system during 2014/15
- 6.4 Over the period two looked after children went missing from their foster placements. One of these young people has frequent missing episodes. The Children and Families team has worked with the police, carers and the independent reviewing service to provide support and take actions to prevent or minimise further missing episodes.
- 6.5 Children who go missing can be at risk of serious harm. There are particular concerns about the vulnerability of missing or runaway children to sexual exploitation or other exploitative harm such as violence crime, gang exploitation or drug and alcohol misuse. Looked after children who go missing from placements are at particular risk and vulnerable to sexual and other exploitation. Therefore the children in the City’s care who went missing were considered vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and were reviewed by the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation group. This resulted in vulnerability factors being addressed in case planning and multi agency meetings.
- 6.6 CSE has been introduced as an important issue within the strategies that support the operation of Children’s and Families as they have been revised. Each renewed strategy is presented and approved by the Safeguarding Sub Committee to ensure Member awareness and support. This focus is evident in the renewed Thresholds document, and the renewed Corporate Parenting Strategy which commits to:
- provide specific training for staff to identify the risk and/or experience of child sexual exploitation that may be experienced by unaccompanied asylum seeking minors
 - ensure our foster carers are able to identify the risks of child sexual exploitation and can support online safety that includes the risks specific to children looked after
 - establish a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on child sexual exploitation for looked after children.

- 6.7 The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board published the *City and Hackney CSE Strategy* in February 2015, and subsequently a specific *City of London CSE Operating Protocol* was developed and is being implemented.

7 Education and employment

- 7.1 The City is committed to, and ambitious for, the educational progress and attainment of children in its care. This ambition is driven by our Virtual School Head who during the years has reviewed the Personal Education Plans (PEP) of all our looked after children and attended the majority of PEP meetings. These meetings set PEP targets that are clearly focused on improving academic outcomes and measure progress. Sharp focus is given to the expected end of Key Stage outcomes. PEPs are now subject to close scrutiny by the Targeted Educational Resource Panel (TERP) to quality assure and drive up standards around the PEPs for our looked after children and care leavers. Social workers have received training during the year to support the completion and effectiveness of PEPs.
- 7.2 Six of our looked after children are school based, of whom half are pupils of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Two pupils are exceeding the national curriculum levels of attainment in end of Key Stage tests, and expected to exceed these levels in the next assessments. One ESOL pupil, is working to improve the current assessed levels and grades and is already expected to attain at least the nationally expected number of GCSE grades A*-C including English and mathematics. One other pupil who was subject to Key Stage tests did not achieve the expected national curriculum levels in literacy and numeracy, but is making significant improvements.
- 7.3 Attendance for all of the school based pupils was well above 90 per cent. One pupil was internally excluded for one day within school and one pupil was externally excluded from school for one day. School mentoring support has been provided in both instances and both pupils are keen that such incidents do not recur.
- 7.4 Pupil premium expenditure in the schools is being monitored by the virtual school head to ensure that the funding is specifically spent to improve academic outcomes and targets identified by PEPs. Specific areas that are supported by the grant in the schools include additional one to one support in literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching, additional science and mathematics tuition on a one to one basis or in small groups, learning support assistance across the curriculum, and mentoring is provided to support specific behavioural needs that arise.
- 7.5 Four looked after young people attend college based provision. Two young people are currently without college places having been permanently excluded from their placements. Both students were making good educational progress and social workers are working closely with the careers service to secure new college places.
- 7.6 The City also has high aspirations for the achievement of its care leavers. There is comprehensive support to minimise the risk of care leavers being not in employment, education or training (NEET). Educational participation among care leavers is excellent. The Virtual School Head co-ordinates a multi-agency meeting to review the progress of Care Leavers up to the age of 25 and supports social workers to review the educational/training part of the Pathway Plan. Support is also given to plan work

experience placements to develop skills for the work place. The multi-agency group agrees bespoke work packages for, and with, each young person, particularly those at risk of being NEET.

- 7.7 Eleven of 13 care leavers are attending college or university. Three care leavers are following career based courses in cookery, vehicle repair and maintenance and accountancy. One care leaver is in full time employment, and one was NEET at the end of the year.
- 7.8 Those at university (two) benefit from higher education bursaries and the City fund their accommodation and in one case have kept open their fostering placements for holiday periods. Our university students attend Portsmouth and Hertfordshire universities.
- 7.9 The planned establishment (both in 215/16) of a Virtual School Attainment Group, and the Care Leavers Education, Employment and Training Strategy, will further enhance our support to children and young people to ensure they achieve the best educational outcomes they can.

8 Assessments, case planning and permanency planning

- 8.1 The implementation of a Quality Assurance Framework in August 2014 has ensured the review and scrutiny of assessments, care planning and permanency planning for the children in our care.
- 8.2 Scrutiny of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service during the year has prompted a change in the delivery of this role, which will be brought in house in 2015/16.
- 8.3 A permanency policy and Panel has been developed to strengthen process, practice and oversight of permanency planning. This ensures that our children in care continue to be subject of Permanency Panel review on a quarterly basis until they are in a permanent placement, and six monthly once they are in placement to ensure that the permanency plan is working.

9 Accommodation

- 9.1 Stable and caring home environments help children in care. All the children the City Corporation looks after benefit from living with foster carers rather than residential children's homes. Foster placements are carefully commissioned on an individual basis in order to meet the needs of children and young people and we systematically monitor these arrangements to ensure they provide stable placements that meet the physical, emotional and social needs of children. Where it is appropriate to do so, siblings that are looked after (as was the case in 2014/15) are placed together.
- 9.2 Children are only placed with independent fostering agencies that are judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. Placement stability is excellent – with four out of five children whose care has been long-term, having been in their current placement for more than two years, which is a better performance than our statistical neighbours. There were no placement moves during 2014/15.

- 9.3 Care leavers are supported in a range of accommodation suitable to their needs. One hundred per cent of City of London care leavers are in suitable accommodation – a performance which is above the national and statistical neighbour averages of 88 per cent and 77 per cent respectively.
- 9.4 The City already supports young people to remain in foster care arrangements post 18 years - prior to new Government's guidelines. This reflects our commitment as a corporate parent to deliver for the young people that we look after the security and outcomes we would want for our own children. The "staying put" arrangements were formalised into a policy during the year. Three of our care leavers were staying at the outset of the year, one of which moved on into their own independent accommodation during 2014/15. Six other care leavers were living in independent homes of their own with the rest sustaining either semi-independent or university accommodation.
- 9.5 Young people are supported in independent accommodation through a joint protocol between housing and the Children and Families team which ensures clarity about roles and responsibilities. Young people have also benefited from increased tenancy sustainment provision during the year.

10 Engagement and participation

- 10.1 During 2014/15 the City developed a Children in Care Council (CiCC), which met for the first time in November 2014. The role and focus of the CiCC was decided by young people through a residential trip in the summer of 2014 for the City's children in care and care leavers. Three further meetings of the CiCC occurred in 2014/15 during which young people discussed, agreed and signed off their terms of reference, as well as writing the Pledge, agreeing the City's Corporate parenting strategy and a producing a young people's version of that strategy.
- 10.2 Participation has meant more than meetings. CiCC members have joined in a number of activities to get to know each other, form as a group and have fun together. These have included a pizza making session and bowling. Young people also attended a celebration lunch at the end of March 2015 with elected members of the safeguarding sub-committee, during which a speed 'get to know you' session ensures that every member of the CiCC got to meet and engage with the elected members present.
- 10.3 Our social workers have formed trusting relationships with the children we look after through regular contact. This has helped ensure children and young people have the confidence to share their views, and that these views can inform the planning of their care.
- 10.4 Through the year, social workers have supported our children and young people to meet their social and recreational needs. We encourage and support sporting, musical and other recreational pursuits. The City has used personal education awards to fund school skiing holidays and music lessons. Two children in care have been supported to pursue their interest in cricket by joining local teams, with the City funding their equipment. Young people have also been supported to attend cultural and religious groups to help build their sense of community and relationships with others.

11 Areas of development and priorities for the year ahead

11.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out the City Corporation's commitment to ensuring the children in and leaving its care meet their full potential and have lives in which they thrive. We will continue to drive the achievement of this in 2015/16 through continuing and enhanced services, and the delivery of targeted actions. These included:

- delivering a Care Leaver Education, Employment and Training Strategy to achieve 100 per cent participation in EET
- maximising participation of young people in service planning and delivery through individual review meetings, the CiCC and other initiatives
- delivering a new in-house IRO service to support and ensure the representation of the views of looked after children
- implementing the new Missing from Care, Home and Education procedures and practice guidance to minimise the risk and incidence of missing episodes
- work with the CiCC to develop a "coming into care" pack
- develop a "health passport" for our care leavers as a record of their health care
- ensure that our staff and partners remain trained to meet the health needs of children looked after, including sexual health, mental and emotional health, child sexual exploitation and substance misuse issues
- provide specific training for staff to identify the risk and/or experience of child sexual exploitation that may be experienced by unaccompanied asylum seeking minors
- establish a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on child sexual exploitation for looked after children
- develop a Looked After Children and Care Leavers Service Improvement Group to provide co-ordinate and seamless services that deliver clear and measurable outcomes for children
- safeguard our children and young people from radicalisation and ensure staff and partners can identify and respond to such risks through the implementation of the Prevent Strategy
- completing "life story" work for all out looked after children.

This page is intentionally left blank

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	25 September 2015
Subject: Children in Care Council	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report will outline the activity and progress of the Children in Care Council (CiCC), since it was set up in November 2014. There will be a summary on the event in March 2015, when the young people met with Members for lunch. There will also be information on a sailing activity that was arranged through the CiCC and took place in August 2015.

Members will be informed of the future development of the CiCC in reviewing the pledge, and how the promises that were made are being met. There will be information on the training and support being offered to the young people and their carers.

Recommendation

Members are asked to: Note the report

Main Report

Background

Children in Care Council

1. The CiCC has been in place for nearly a year, the first CiCC meeting was held in November 2014 and there will be six meetings a year that will correlate with the school holidays, to date there have been five meetings. Since it has started the CiCC has agreed on the pledge and the terms of reference for the group and earlier this year a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson were elected by the group. Attendance at the meetings has at times been variable, with a minimum of two attending and a maximum of nine. However this is to be expected given this is a new initiative, meetings taking place in the Guildhall and also due to their school and college commitments.
2. It was agreed that when the group is established an event would be arranged for the young people to meet with Members, and this took place in March 2015. The young people were consulted about what they wanted to do on the day and they suggested that they would like to ask Members questions about themselves. The event initially involved lunch with Members and then after lunch the young people

asked Members various questions, with the Members moving from table to table within a set time period. Overall the day went very well and the young people reported to have enjoyed the day.

Key Priorities Achieved for 2015/2016

3. The CiCC has set out its key priorities and below are some of the achievements for 2015/2016;
 - Develop a welcome pack and contact card for children and young people who are looked after or care leavers in the City of London – This has been now been completed.
 - Develop a young person friendly version of the corporate parenting strategy – This has now been completed.
 - Develop and provide training, volunteering opportunities for looked after children and care leavers – Young people will be having training on interview skills and mentoring and volunteering opportunities, this was presented to the CiCC by Fusion in February 2015.
 - Workshops for CiCC on the prevent agenda, radicalization, substance misuse and child sexual exploitation. This took place in July 2015.

Summer Events

4. In July and August 2015 a number of workshops were held for the young people, the topics covered were;
 - Radicalisation – raising awareness, keeping safe and reporting any concerns.
 - Child Sexual Exploitation – this focused on young people keeping themselves safe.
 - Workshop on drugs and alcohol – raising awareness of the affects.
5. These workshops took place after a CiCC meeting, the first two workshops were attended by two young people and the second two workshops were attended by nine. Those young people who attended gave positive feedback on the events and professionals providing the workshop found the young people to be interested and engaged in the topics.
6. In August 2015, eight young people who were looked after and care leavers aged between 13 and 24 were sponsored to go on a sailing adventure through the Tall Ships Youth Trust based in Portsmouth. They were accompanied by two members of staff from the Children and Families team. The Tall Ships Youth Trust runs these adventures for young people from varying backgrounds. Young people spend a week on board a sailing ship, with experienced crew members, learning basic sailing skills, cooking, team building and confidence building.
7. During the week the young people were separated into two groups and were involved in sailing the vessel, with support from experienced crew members, part

of their duties involved cooking for everyone on board, this for some of the young people had been the first time they had cooked.

8. A video diary was recorded by the young people during the week, as well as blog of their experience. They were also taught basic sailing skills and some of the young people went fishing and engaged in various other activities throughout the week. This created a healthy competition between the two groups with a noticeable change towards the end of the week in young people's confidence levels.
9. At the end of the week the young people were given a certificate, and two young people were commended for their leadership skills by the crew. The feedback from the staff who attended was very positive, they had seen many of the young people develop during the week, as they learned new skills and gained confidence. For most of the young people this had been the first time they had been on a sailing boat and travelled outside of London since they arrived in the country.
10. Staff encouraged young people, not currently engaged with CiCC, to participate, highlighting the benefits, which include them contributing the service changes/improvements. The feedback from the young people has also been positive, many enjoyed the experience of working as a group and it also gave them the opportunity to develop their relationships with frontline staff of the Children and Families team.

Future Development

11. As stated above, there are plans in September 2015 to have a training event for the foster carers who care for City of London children and young people. This training will be a one day event and will focus on Prevent, Radicalisation and Child Sexual Exploitation. The purpose of providing this training is to ensure that carers know and understand the potential risks that the children/young people could be exposed to or indeed vulnerable to due to their backgrounds. Overall, there appears to have been a good take up of this training, there is also going to be training for young people around interviewing skills, to enable young people to have the skills and confidence to attend job/college/university interviews.
12. There are plans to have young people involved in the procurement and monitoring of services for children and young people. This will be explored further as to what the level of interest is in taking this opportunity, and whether this would be feasible given the young person's commitments to school/college/university. At the CiCC on the 18th August the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson put forward the idea of setting up a Facebook group for the CiCC, this idea is now being progressed.

Conclusion

13. The CiCC is now becoming an established group and it is hoped that those individuals who attended the Tall Ships event, who are not already involved in the CiCC may now attend meetings and events organised. The eight young people

who attended have now had an opportunity to bond as a group and the forum of the CiCC would afford them the opportunity to meet as a group in the future and remain in contact. It is hoped that the sailing activity will have encouraged the young people to participate in the work of the CiCC and contribute to on-going service development. The development of a Facebook group will also facilitate communication and enable those young people who find it difficult to attend the meetings an opportunity to express their views. Members have also been made aware of the progress of the CiCC through the briefing sessions that have been taking place.

Appendices

None

Pat Dixon
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager

T: 020 7332 1215

E: pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Committee:	Date:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	25 September 2015
Subject:	Public
Local Authorities Designated Officer Annual Report	
Report of:	For Information
Director of Community and Children's Services	

Summary

This report will give Members information about the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) activity for the period of April 2014 to March 2015, which is contained in the annual report for the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board. During this period there have been a total of five LADO referrals from various sources, which is lower than the City of London's statistical neighbours.

Members will be advised of the activity that has taken place to raise the profile of this role and the recommendations for 2015/2016 in relation to multi agency training. Outlining the progress that has already been made with these recommendations and how this has increased the number of referrals for this period from five the previous year to six, within a five month timeframe.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to: Note the Report

Main Report

Background

1. Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Role

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and the London Child Protection Procedures (5th edn. 2015, Chapter 17). All allegations made against staff, including volunteers, that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children, whether made about events in their private or professional life, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

In the City of London the LADO work is carried out by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager who reports directly into the Assistant Director People. Guidance and training on professional allegations is available through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board website and agencies have access to consult with the LADO in the City of London.

The LADO would become involved when a professional or volunteer;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Current Position

2. LADO Activity for April 2014 to March 2015

There have been concerns raised by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board about the low number of referrals to the LADO, which has been scrutinised within the quality assurance sub group of the board. In total there have been five referrals during the period of 2014 to 2015. Two were historical allegations, with one relating to a historical allegation against a teacher currently working in the City, which was unsubstantiated. The other relating to an incident that occurred in the late 50's and early 60's, which was investigated by the City of London Police.

Due to the number of referrals it is difficult to discern any particular themes, but there has been an increase in the number of historical allegations, which reflects a wider national picture. Despite efforts to raise awareness around the LADO role there continues to be a low referral rate of professional allegations from school's nurseries, voluntary agencies and commissioned services in the City of London.

For 2014 to 2015 the key priorities have been to raise the profile of the LADO role with staff across the City of London Corporation and with external partners. This has been achieved by;

- working closely with agencies around their safeguarding responsibilities.
- offering advice and support around individual case concerns.
- assisting agencies with the referral process to the LADO.
- providing support and guidance to maintained and independent schools in the City through the Education Forum in regard to the referral process and criteria re professional allegations.
- raising awareness with partner agencies who attend the Children's Executive Board.

- introducing a Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults in January 2014 which clearly sets out the guidance for professionals allegations.
- working with safeguarding champions across the City of London Corporation as to the role of the LADO.
- explaining the role of the LADO in briefing within the wider safeguarding campaign, “Notice the Signs”.

The priorities for 2015 to 2016 will be to continue raising awareness; this will be achieved by;

- Ensuring that all professionals who work with children, from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors, are engaged and understand the LADO process. Training events will also be held.
- A Safeguarding Conference was to be arranged in the City; this has now taken place and has been well attended by partner agencies.
- Quality assurance of in-house and independent safeguarding training will be taken to ensure that it is to an appropriate standard.
- There will be a review of how agencies ensure that parents feel confident and able to raise safeguarding concerns about professionals.
- A peer review of City of London LADO cases will be completed by another local authority.

Conclusion

3. It has been concerning that there have been a low number of LADO referrals in the City of London, despite efforts to increase awareness. One of the recommendations from the annual LADO report was to increase awareness around professional allegations by delivering multi-agency training. Training sessions were commenced in August 2015 and further training is planned for October 2015 and February 2016.

Since April 2015 there has been a significant increase in the number of LADO referrals. For 2014 to 2015 there were a total of five referrals for the whole year and since April of this year there have been six. It is not clear at this stage whether the increase in the number of referrals is due to professionals having increased awareness, however this will be reviewed and the findings will be incorporated in the annual report for 2015 to 2016. Guidance on Local Authorities Designated Officer role is now on the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children’s Board web site.

Appendices

Local Authorities Designated Officers Annual Report for 2014 /2015

Background Papers

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/.../Working Together to Safeguard Children.](https://www.gov.uk/.../Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children)

London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition, 2015, Chapter 17

www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/

City of London Local Authorities Designated Officer Guidance

www.chscb.org.uk

Pat Dixon

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, DCCS

T: 020 7332 1215

E: pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk



City of London Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2014 - 15

1. Introduction

This report to City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board provides an overview of the work of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the City of London between April 2014 and March 2015. The report will review the progress that has been made to raise awareness around the safeguarding role during the year, as part of a wider safeguarding campaign. Identifying what action has been taken and the referral figures and outcomes.

2. LADO role

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in "Working Together" to safeguard children, March 2015 and the London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition, 2015, Chapter 17. All allegations made against staff (including volunteers) that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children, whether made about events in their private or professional life, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

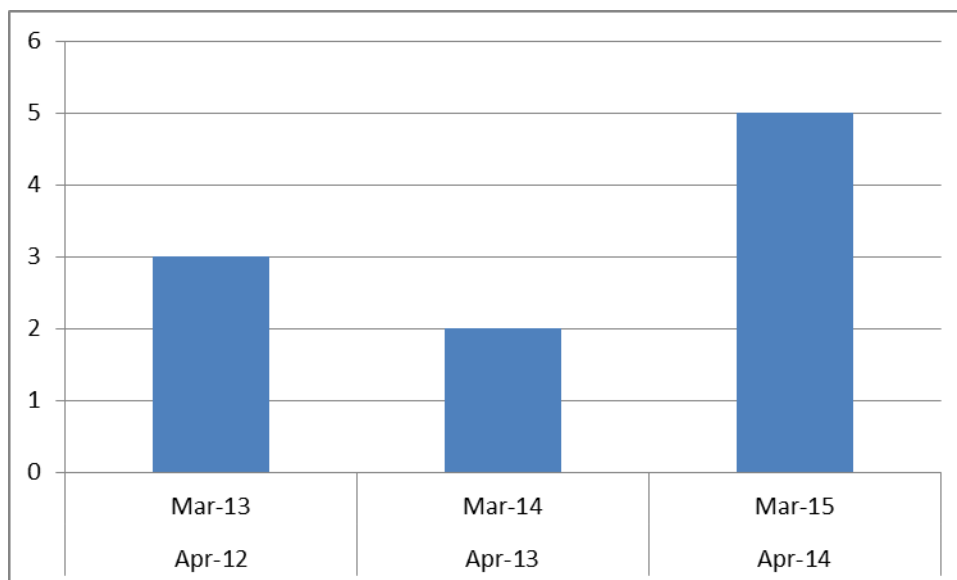
In the City of London the LADO work is carried out by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager who reports directly into the Assistant Director People. Guidance and training on professional allegations is available through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board website and agencies have accesses to consult with the LADO in the City of London.

3. Referrals

Since the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Ofsted Inspection in March 2012 there have been concerns raised around the low level of referrals to the LADO. Fig 1 shows the number of referrals received for each year since 2012. In Fig 2 there appears to be an increase in referrals for 2014 to 2015, two were historical allegations, with one of the historical allegations referring to a teacher at the school. One was a LADO referral

from the Substance Misuse Partnership and two were contacts from other Local Authorities.

Fig 1 Referrals from 2012 to 2015



Significant efforts have been made to raise awareness of the LADO role since March 2012. Following the Ofsted inspection the LADO has visited nurseries, schools and youth service providers, speaking with agencies about the role of the LADO and the pathways for making referrals. There is still further work required in working with voluntary agencies, police and probation to ensure that all we engage with all agencies in the City.

City of London has one maintained primary school and five Independent Schools. Out of the five schools, two are secondary, one is a specialist music and drama school, catering for children from 8 to 18 years and two are preparatory schools, the majority of children attending these schools come from other borough's. There has also been an independent review of safeguarding in the schools that come under the governance of the City of London, which consists of four in the City and one based in Surrey. This was completed in 2013 and recommendations around safeguarding training were acted on by the school, which was evidenced by a follow up review in 2014.

There are also six private nurseries and one children's centre, which is attached to the maintained primary school. These settings have also been visited as part of the raising awareness of the LADO role. Safeguarding training has also been offered to these settings and has taken place at the weekend to maximise attendance, this training was well attended across the nursery settings. Recently there has been a safeguarding awareness campaign called "Notice the Signs", 477 City of London employees and external agency staff were spoken to during this campaign about the role of the LADO. A key message of these briefing's taking place was to raise

awareness around the corporate safeguarding policy, which outlined professionals responsibilities in regard to professional allegations.

Fig 2 Referral Sources for LADO referrals 2014 to 2015

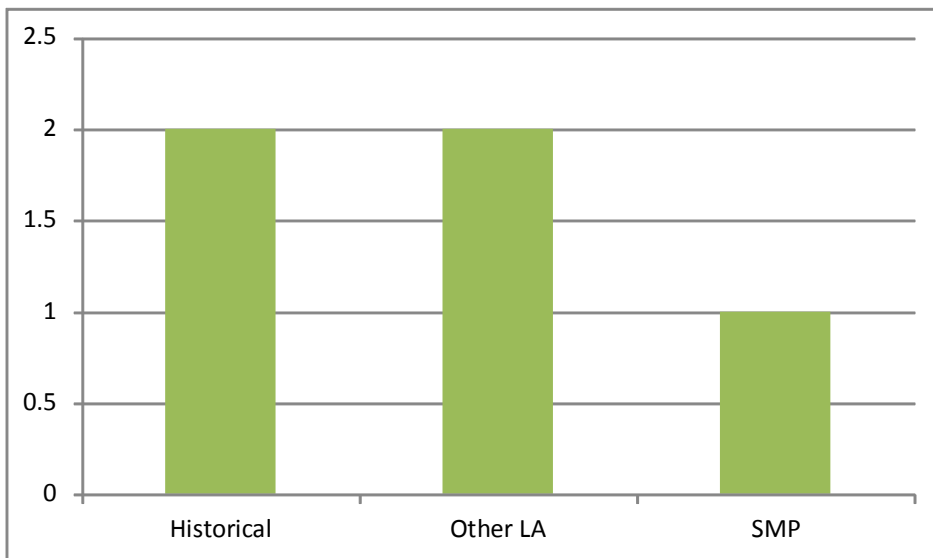
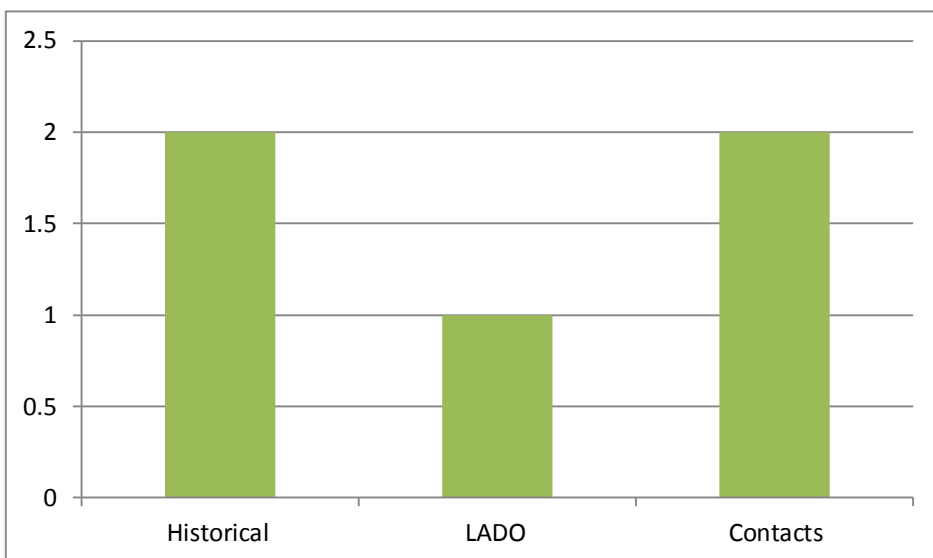


Fig 3 Referral type



This report identifies that there has been, and continues to be a sustained effort to raise awareness around the LADO role and professional allegations. When looking at the low referral rate from the Police and

Probation Service it is comparable with other local authorities for the year 2013 to 2014.

Hackney	- 0 from Probation Services	- 1 from the Police
Camden	- 0 from the Probation Services	- 4 from the Police
Enfield	- 0 from the Probation Services	- 0 from the Police
Haringey	- 0 from the Probation Services	- 0 from Police

As for health, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board is requesting information from health providers as to the low referrals rate from health visitors and this is currently being progressed.

4. Emerging themes

Due to the number of referrals it is difficult to discern any particular themes, but there has been an increase in the number of historical allegation, which reflects a wider national picture. As previously identified despite efforts to raise awareness around the LADO role there continues to be a low referral rate of professional allegations from school's nurseries, voluntary agencies and commissioned services in the City of London.

When analysing our data in comparison to other Local Authorities the City does have a low referral rate in relation to the numbers of referrals per percentage of educational establishments. When compared to other Local Authorities the City has two referrals less than the lowest cohort and approximately six referrals less than the highest.

A thematic review of the LADO referrals received has shown that parents have sometimes been reluctant to raise concerns around problems with staff. This has been due to their concerns that it may have implications on their child's place at the establishment. This is especially prevalent at the more prestigious independent establishments, when this has been raised as a factor, assurances have been given to parents.

Further scrutiny of the low referral rate has been undertaken through the s11 auditing process. This audit identified that there was full compliance around the handling of professional allegations by those agencies who completed the audit. However this does not prevent the need for continued scrutiny and training around professional allegations, which will be progressed during 2015/2016.

5. Multi-agency working

The City of London works closely with partners, schools and nurseries, who are represented on the City of London Executive Safeguarding Children's Board and the Education Forum, where safeguarding issues are

discussed. As part of the LADO role support and advice is offered to partners around their safeguarding duties, policies and procedures and individual case advice on potential referrals to social care. Training provided by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board has been taken up by agencies in the City as can be seen by the information below. The schools have also commissioned in their own safeguarding training. A key area for development for 2015 to 2016 will be to scope and quality assure the training that is taking place within the schools and nurseries.

Data collated from CHSCB on the 26th February 2015 has identified that;

Six attended from the City:

Two members of staff- Guildhall School of Music and Drama
One member of staff – Charterhouse Square School
One Member of staff – St Pauls Cathedral School
Two members of staff- The Prince's Drawing School

10 October 2014 – five attended

One member of staff – London Islamic School
One member of staff– Outward Housing
One member of staff – Respect
One member of staff – St Pauls Cathedral School
One member of staff – Windsor Fellowship

6 May 2014 - seven attended

Four members of staff – Cass Child & Family Centre
One member of staff – Guildhall School of Music & Drama
Two members of staff – London Islamic School

In January 2014, the Department of Community and Children's Services developed a corporate-wide safeguarding policy, which aimed to ensure that all areas of the organisation had a clear understanding of the shared legal duties around safeguarding for children at risk of harm. A key area for development for 2015 to 2016 will be to evaluate whether this has had an impact on increasing awareness across the corporation. This will be achieved by ascertaining whether there has been an increase in the number of contacts with the safeguarding champions across the City of London Corporation.

The LADO continues to develop positive working relationships with partner agencies, from the City of London Police, Community Paediatricians, Adult Safeguarding, HR, and Commissioning. The LADO also represents the City on City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Boards, Training and Development Sub Group and Quality Assurance Sub Group.

6. Increasing awareness of the Managing Allegations process

As can be seen by this report there have been initiatives to raise awareness around the role of agencies in managing professional allegations. This has been achieved through face to face meetings with the LADO and through safeguarding briefings, with City of London staff, schools and nurseries. In February/March 2013 the City of London's Town Clerk commissioned an independent review of safeguarding arrangements which was undertaken by an independent consultant. This review involved four of the independent schools who came under the governance of the City of London.

Recommendations from this report identified that one of the School's needed to have a designated Child Protection lead who had received safeguarding training commensurate with the role. Further safeguarding training was also identified for teaching staff and Governors within the organisation. The City of London supported the commissioning of safeguarding training and eLearning modules for staff, which when reviewed in 2014 had been completed. There is also a safeguarding lead who has received training on professional allegations by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board by employees.

7. Links in London and nationally

The City of London LADO is a member of the pan-London LADO group which meets on a quarterly basis. This is a sub-group of the London Safeguarding Children Board.

8. Police Notifications – Notifiable Occupational Scheme (NOS)

Between April 2014 and March 2015 there was one referral to the LADO, which came through the MARAC forum, relating to a young male who came to police attention for a matter related to an allegation of harm to a child, and his occupation met the criteria under this scheme.

Where the employer can be identified, the information received in the notifications is passed to the employing organisation to address, but the employing organisation is not always clear from the referral, and in these cases no further action can be taken.

It would add to the effectiveness of the Scheme if at the point when the police officer asks for the nature of the employment in order to assess whether to refer in relation to NOS, the officer also asks the name of the employer.

9. Update on 2014- 15 Development priorities

Worked closely with agencies around safeguarding responsibilities

- By offering advice and support around individual case concerns;
- Assisting agencies with the referral process;
- Support and guidance provided to maintained and independent schools in the City through the Education Forum;
- Partner agencies attend the Children's Executive Board where safeguarding priorities and initiatives within the Department Business Plan are reviewed;
- The City of London introduced a Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults in January 2014;
- Safeguarding Champions were identified across the City of London Corporations to support employees;
- A safeguarding awareness campaign called "Notice the Signs" was launched to raise awareness about safeguarding, including the LADO role. This campaign targeted all City of London employees and residents.

10. Service Development Priorities 2015/16

- Ensure that all professionals who work with children, from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors, are engaged and understand the LADO process.
- Review independent safeguarding training, in relation to quality and frequency.
- Safeguarding Conference to be arranged in the City.
- Training events for City of London employees and partner agencies around safeguarding and professional roles and responsibilities.
- Meet with Safeguarding Champions on a quarterly basis to review referrals.
- Review of how agencies will ensure that parents feel confident and able to raise safeguarding concerns about professionals.

- Peer review to be undertaken on LADO cases.

Pat Dixon, LADO
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN
Date: April 2013-March 2014

1. Total number of Referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer			
Local Authority	City of London	Number of referrals regarding allegations and matters of concern	5
2. Number of Referrals about each or organisation			
Agency	Number		
1.Social Care	2 Two contacts made from other LA		
2.Health-hospital staff	0		
3.Health-community	0		
4.Education	1 Historical Allegation relating to a current employee.		
5.Early Years-Child-minder	0		
6.Early Years-Nursery Staff			
7. Foster Carer-IFA with other LA children or other LA in house carers living in City.	0		
8.Police	0		
9.Probation	0		
10.CAFCASS			
11.Voluntary Organisations Include sports clubs, scouts, brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	0		
12.Faith Groups	0		
13.Immigration/Asylum Support services	0		
14.Transport Transport provided to services through a contract	0		
15.Care Agency	0		
16.Other Dept. in City of London	1 LADO referral from substance misuse partnership		
17 Other	1 Historical allegation from alleged victim.		
18. Leisure Services	0		
19.Adult Services	0		
20.Housing Associations/ Providers	0		

3. Who made the Referral	
	Number
1.Social Care	2 Islington and Luton LADO's contact
2.Health-hospital staff	0
3.Health-community	0
4.Education	1 Historical allegation which came through School via an email in relation to current member of staff.
5.Early Years-Child-minder	0
6.Early Years-Nursery Staff	0
7.Foster Carer-IFA with City of London children	0
8.Police	0
9.Probation	0
10.CAFCASS	0
11.Voluntary Organisations Include sports clubs, scouts, brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	0
12.Immigration/Asylum Support services	0
13.Transport Transport provided to services through a contract	0
14.Care Agency	0
15.Other Dept's City of London	1 Referral from Substance Misuse Partnership.
16. Other	1 self-referral from alleged victim of historical abuse.
17.Leisure Services	0
18.Adult Services	0
19.Housing Associations/Housing Providers.	0

Number of referrals about an adult within specific employment/volunteer sector which reached a multi-agency strategy discussion and/or meeting and primary reason(s) for referral.						
Employer	Physical <i>state whether concern arose from authorised physical intervention restraint or arrest</i>		Emotional	Sexual	Neglect	Behaviour which called into question person's suitability
	Yes	No				
Social Care						1 LADO referral SMP
Health-hospital staff						
Health-community						
Education-teaching staff				1 LADO referral from school, historical allegation-not proven		
Education-non teaching staff						
Early Years-child-minders						
Early Years-nursery staff						
Foster Carers-IFA with City children						
Police						
Probation						
CAFCASS						
Voluntary Organisations						
Faith Groups						
Armed Forces						
Immigration/Asylum Support Services						
Care Agencies						
Transport				1 Historical allegation, self-referral to		

				LADO, forwarded to Police for investigation		
Other						
Leisure Services						
Adult Services						
Housing Associations/Provider						
4. Number of referred cases that resulted in: <i>please note there could be more than one outcome</i>						
Being Substantiated	2					
Being Unsubstantiated	3					
Being Unfounded	0					
CSM held	2					
Met the threshold for LADO input but not for a Complex strategy meeting	Of the five referral received by the LADO, two were historical allegations, one of which was relating to a current member of staff at the school. Two were contacts where the City was not the primary LADO involved, and one was a LADO referral from the substance misuse partnership.					
Criminal investigation/joint work with CAIT	0					
Criminal prosecution	0					
Caution	0					
Conviction	0					
Acquittal	0					
Initial inquires by employers						
Disciplinary investigation	0					
Disciplinary meeting/hearing	0					
Suspension	0					
Dismissal	0					
Cessation of use	0					
Deregistration	0					
Training needs identified for member of staff or the agency.	1 - Concerns around the delay in referring to LADO, employee who reported incident appeared unclear as to his role.					
Risk Assessment completed by Employer	1					
Referral to DBS	1 referral made to DBS by LADO of lead LA, as he had misled employers' in regard to have a previous conviction. Agency in City seen by City LADO re there role					

	responsibility in checking DBS.
Referral to regulatory body e.g. GMC /Ofsted etc...	
5. At the point of conclusion, the number of cases that were resolved within the following timeframes	
1 month	4
3 months	1
6 months	

This page is intentionally left blank

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	25 September 2015
Subject: Private Fostering Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report will inform Members about Private Fostering arrangement and the duties that are placed on partner agencies and parents and carers in notifying the local authority of any such arrangement or proposed arrangements. This report will explain the Local Authorities function in safeguarding children and young people when they have been Privately Fostered, by assessing the arrangements that have been put in place.

Member will be informed of how the City of London is meeting National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering by raising awareness around this agenda with professionals and City of London residents. This is being achieved through briefing sessions at multi-agency events, specific training and through established events for residents and City of London staff.

Recommendation

Members are asked to: Note the report

Main Report

Background

Definition of Private Fostering Arrangements

1. A Private Fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of the local authority), for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt, or they may be a friend of the family or other non-relative, such as the parents of the child's friend. A person who is a close relative of the child, as defined by the Children Act 1989 (a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether by full or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent) will not be a private foster carer.
2. Examples of private fostering arrangements are:

- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their English or for educational opportunities;
 - Asylum seeking and refugee children;
 - Teenagers who, having broken ties with their parents, are staying in short term arrangements with friends or other non-relatives;
 - Children living with host families, arranged by language schools or other organisations;
 - Children living with members of the extended family, e.g. great aunt.
3. The primary responsibility of the local authority is to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children and young people by:
- Meeting the duty to promote public awareness of the requirement to notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements and, therefore, to reduce the number of 'unknown' private fostering arrangements;
 - Responding to notifications and assessing the private fostering arrangements; and meeting the duty to support private fostering arrangements.
4. This responsibility is underpinned by the Replacement Children Act 1989 Guidance Private Fostering; Children Act 2004 (Section 44 amends Section 67 in the 1989 Act); the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 and the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering 2005.

Current Position

5. Over the last 12 months there have not been any private fostering arrangements identified in the City; it is highly unlikely given the demographics of the City that this is a true reflection of the situation. The City of London is ensuring that it is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering, and this is an area that has been identified by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board (CHSCB) as being a priority for 2015/2016.
6. In May 2015 the CHSCB sent out a letter on behalf of Jim Gamble, the Independent Chair of the CHSCB, explaining to all partners the expectation placed on them to raise awareness and identify any private fostering arrangements in the City of London. This letter was accompanied by leaflets for professionals, parents/ carers and young people explaining what constitutes a private fostering arrangement and what was required should a private fostering situation be in place. The City of London has also instituted a rolling programme of awareness raising events for 2015/2016 to raise the profile of private fostering, which consists of;
- Partnership events, where briefings are being given to partner agencies as part of a wider conference event.

- Articles about private fostering in publications of magazines which will be going out to residents across the City of London.
 - Raising awareness with the police, schools, early years settings and general practitioners in the City through the distribution of posters and leaflets.
 - Training events for City of London Corporation staff and partner agencies which specifically focuses on private fostering. Two such events have already occurred and further events are planned for the City for 2015/2016.
 - Utilising partnership events to distribute leaflets to professionals and residents in the City.
7. Any contacts or referrals about private fostering would be directed to the Children and Families team and information on private fostering is captured as part of the performance data set.

Conclusion

8. As this report has identified there have not been any private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for the period of April 2014/March 2015. There have been continued efforts to raise awareness around private fostering in the City of London, with professionals and residents throughout this time period. This has been achieved through established events such as Health Watch information sessions and the “Notice the Signs” campaign.
9. The focus for 2015/2016 is to create a sustainable programme of events that will keep private fostering on professionals and resident’s agenda and support the City of London in ensuring it is meeting its responsibility in raising awareness about private fostering arrangements. In achieving this it is envisaged that any private fostering arrangement that is in place in the City will come to the attention of the Children and Families team.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Private Fostering Report

Background Papers

Private Fostering leaflet for Professionals, Parents and Carers and Children and Young People. www.chscb.org.uk

Pat Dixon

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager

T: 020 7332 1215

E: pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



Annual Report Private Fostering Arrangements 2014 to 2015

Context of City of London

The City has a relatively small resident population of approximately 7,600 (including 1,370 people who occupy a second home outside the City of London). There are approximately 4,400 households and large numbers of people of working age. The average household size is small and many people (56%) live alone.

The City has proportionately more people aged between 25 and 69 living in the square mile than Greater London. Conversely there are fewer young people. Approximately 800 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in the City. This is 10.84% of the total population in the area.

The resident population is predominantly white. The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian/Bangladeshi and Mixed - Asian and White. The City has a relatively small black population, less than London and England and Wales. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 43.63% of all children living in the area, compared with 21.47% in the country as a whole.

DEFINITION OF PRIVATE FOSTERING

A Private Fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of the local authority), for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private Foster Carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt, or they may be a friend of the family or other non-relative, such as the parents of the child's friend. A person who is a close relative of the child, as defined by the Children Act 1989 (a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether by full or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent) will not be a Private Foster Carer.

Examples of private fostering arrangements are:

- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their English or for educational opportunities;
- Asylum seeking and refugee children;

- Teenagers who, having broken ties with their parents, are staying in short term arrangements with friends or other non-relatives;
- Children living with host families, arranged by language schools or other organisations;
- Children living with members of the extended family, e.g. great aunt.

The primary responsibility of the local authority is to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children and young people by:

- Meeting the duty to promote public awareness of the requirement to notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements and, therefore, to reduce the number of 'unknown' private fostering arrangements;
- Responding to notifications and assessing the private fostering
- Arrangements; and meeting the duty to support private fostering arrangements.

This responsibility is underpinned by the Replacement Children Act 1989 Guidance Private Fostering; Children Act 2004 (Section 44 amends Section 67 in the 1989 Act); the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 and the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering 2005.

Meeting National Minimum Standards on Private Fostering,

Standard 1: The local authority has a written statement or plan, which sets out its duties and functions in relation to private fostering and the way in which they will be carried out.

The City of London's 'statement' on private fostering was reviewed and updated in 2014. A communications plan has been developed for 2015 to 2016 to ensure there is a sustained campaign to raise awareness about private fostering with professionals and potential carers.

Standard 2: The local authority: promotes awareness of the notification requirements and ensures that those professionals who may come into contact with privately fostered children understand their role in notification; Responds effectively to notifications; and deals with situations where an arrangement comes to their attention, which has not been notified.

The City has promoted private fostering with professionals through the distribution of leaflets and posters. Fig 1 shows the activity that has taken place in raising awareness about private fostering with City of London staff and residents and how this has been linked into established activities.

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board Independent Chair, Jim Gamble has also sent out an annual survey to all the Independent Schools to establish whether any of the pupils at the School are being privately fostered.

Fig 1

Event	Date	Resident or Professionals
City Library	18.08.14	Staff
Barbican Library	18.08.14	Staff
EIP Partnership Day	25.09.14	Staff
Health Watch, Artizan Library	15.10.14	Residents
Resident Celebration Day	18.10.14	Residents
Health Watch, Green Box	25.10.14	Residents
L&D Week Barbican	28.10.14	Staff
Health Watch, Dutch Church	29.10.14	Residents

Private fostering data is reviewed through the Quality Assurance Sub Group. To date there have been no notifications of any private fostering arrangements in the City of London as from April 2014 to March 2015. However, there are procedures in place to take referrals and staff in the Contact Centre have received training on private fostering. The CHSCB has identified that private fostering is a key priority for 2015 to 2016.

Standard 3: The local authority determines effectively the suitability of all aspects of the private fostering arrangement in accordance with the regulations.

The City has not received a referral for 2014 to 2015; however there are procedures in place for staff in regard to assessing the placement and ascertaining the young person's views. All assessments would include and cover the expectations within the National Minimum Standards:

- The ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child about the proposed/actual private fostering arrangement.
- That the child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development is appropriate and satisfactory.
- The child's needs arising from his religious persuasion; racial origin and cultural and linguistic background are being met.
- That consideration has been given and necessary steps taken to make arrangements for the child's education.
- The standard of care provided for each privately fostered child.

- The project ensures that all children and young people who are registered with the GP and all children and young people are registered with a dentist.

Where age appropriate the children would be seen alone by their Social Worker and their views obtained. Where children are considered to be at risk or in need of intervention those cases are considered in line with S17 and S47 Children Act 1989.

DBS checks would be completed on all carers.

As part of our assessment process and on-going case work the Children and Families Team will ensure that children are actively encouraged and involved in leisure activities, and that they receive appropriate stimulation in the Private Fostering arrangement. The allocated social worker will research age appropriate activities and inform the carers.

Standard 4: The local authority provides such advice and support to private foster carers and prospective private foster carers as appears to the authority to be needed:

The Children and Families Team social worker would assist and advise all private foster carers with general parenting skills, and provide advice on an on-going basis in regard to local resources and activities. There would also be assistance with practical issues for carers around benefits, housing and immigration status if required. The City would ensure that all carers had support in accessing education and health provision for the child or young person.

Standard 5: The local authority provides advice and support to the parents of children who are privately fostered within their area as appears to the authority to be needed:

Where possible all parents would be seen and spoken to during the course of establishing the arrangements (if living abroad contact would be made by telephone, if domiciled in the UK then the expectation is that a visit would take place).

A leaflet designed for parents and carers of children who are privately fostering would be provided and where possible this would be given to all parents.

Contact details of the allocated social worker would also be provided to all parents where possible.

Standard 6 Children who are privately fostered are able to access information and support when required so that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Privately fostered children are enabled to participate in decisions about their lives:

The allocated social worker would consult with all children and young people individually about their views and ensure that their private foster carers understood their needs and wishes. Children and young people's views and wishes would be incorporated into the assessment report.

As part of the on-going involvement the social worker would be expected to make termly contact with the education provision to discuss the child/ young person's progress.

If required the social worker would undertake direct work with the child or young person in the community.

Children who are subject to private fostering arrangements would be given information about what they should expect if they are being privately fostered, where age appropriate. Children and young people who are privately fostered in City of London will also have access to the advocacy service.

Contact details for the social worker will be provided to all children where appropriate and to all parents (who are in contact with the service).

Standard 7 The local authority has in place and implements effectively a system for monitoring the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering. It improves practice where this is indicated as necessary by the monitoring system:

All information pertaining to children and young people is placed onto Frameworki, the integrated children's system used by the Children and Families Team. There are no paper files and the information stored on this system can be utilised for performance reports and National Indicator returns for the Department of Education, PF1. This includes age of the child, place of birth, ethnicity, first language and any disability.

As part of the Quality Assurance Framework any private fostering arrangements would be subject to an auditing process and the qualitative and quantitative information obtained would be reported into the CHSCB quality assurance sub group. It is through this group that concerns have been raised around about the lack of referrals in the City and the low number of referrals in Hackney. A priority for the CHSCB for 2015 to 2016 will be to promote awareness around notification of Private Fostering for professionals, carers and young people.

Summary

Over the last 12 months there have not been any private fostering arrangements identified in the City; it is highly unlikely given the demographics of the City that this is a true reflection of the situation. This has been identified by the CHSCB as being a priority for 2015 to 2016 and there will be concerted effort to raise awareness with professionals and residents in the City around their responsibility in notifying the local authority of private fostering arrangements.

Future plans

1. A key priority for 2015 to 2016 will be to strength links with Community Health, Hospital's, Independent Schools and Secondary Schools where City young people go or are placed when they leave Primary School. This will be achieved through establishing links close links with these agencies, to ensure that young people are tracked through schools and health establishments.
2. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board will be sending out leaflets and posters to all professionals outlining their expectation around professionals knowing their responsibility around notification. This is due to take place in City and Hackney in April 2015.
3. The City of London will develop the communication plan for Private Fostering for 2015 to 2016, establishing a rolling plan for notifying professionals and City of London residents about their responsibility in notifying the local authority about private fostering arrangements. This will be done by May 2015.
4. The City of London provides training for staff on Private Fostering, additional to the training provided by the CHSCB.
5. Provide an annual private fostering report to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Director of Children's Services.

Pat Dixon
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager
City of London

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank