



## **Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee**

**Date:** FRIDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2019  
**Time:** 1.45 pm  
**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

**Members:** Randall Anderson (Chairman)  
Ruby Sayed (Deputy Chairman)  
Mary Durcan  
Marianne Fredericks  
Dhruv Patel  
Susan Pearson

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**N.B. Part of this meeting may be subject to audio-visual recording.**

**Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1.00pm.**

**John Barradell  
Town Clerk**

# **AGENDA**

## **Part 1 - Public Agenda**

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **MINUTES**  
To agree the public minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2018.  
**For Decision**  
(Pages 1 - 6)
4. **CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN REPORT (CHSCB) ANNUAL REPORT**  
Report of the Independent Chair of The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.  
**For Information**  
(Pages 7 - 8)
5. **LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) ANNUAL REPORT 2017 TO 2018**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.  
**For Information**  
(Pages 9 - 20)
6. **PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2017 TO 2018**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.  
**For Information**  
(Pages 21 - 30)
7. **INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) ANNUAL REPORT**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.  
**For Information**  
(Pages 31 - 70)
8. **ANNUAL REPORT VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/18**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.  
**For Information**  
(Pages 71 - 76)

9. **CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 77 - 90)
10. **LEAVING CARE GUIDANCE FOR PRACTITIONERS**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 91 - 132)
11. **OFSTED FOCUSED VISIT ON CARE LEAVERS**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 133 - 142)
12. **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2019**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 143 - 156)
13. **SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) UPDATE**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 157 - 162)
14. **EDUCATION AND EARLY YEARS SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 163 - 180)
15. **AIDHOUR AUDITS NOVEMBER 2018**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
- For Information**  
(Pages 181 - 184)
16. **QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

18. **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.

**For Decision**

**Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda**

19. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**  
To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2018.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 185 - 188)

20. **HEALTH OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) AND CARE LEAVERS ASSESSMENT AND NURSING REDESIGN AND PROCUREMENT**  
Report of the Integrated Commissioning Workstream Director, Children, Young People and Maternity.

**For Information**  
(Pages 189 - 194)

21. **LOOKED AFTER CHILD (LAC) HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT**  
Report of the Looked After Children's Health Team City & Hackney.

**For Information**  
(Pages 195 - 220)

22. **CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR QUARTER TWO (Q2)**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 221 - 240)

23. **ADULT SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT**  
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 241 - 248)

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

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

## **SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 19 September 2018**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 2.15 pm**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Randall Anderson  
Mary Durcan  
Marianne Fredericks  
Dhruv Patel OBE  
Susan Pearson

#### **Officers:**

Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Pat Dixon	- Community and Children's Services Department
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Jackson	- Community and Children's Services Department
Jacquie Campbell	- Community and Children's Services Department
Elizabeth Malton	- Department of Community and Children's Services

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ruby Sayed (Deputy Chairman) and Deputy Joyce Nash.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. MINUTES**

Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

#### **4. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) - UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which provided Members with an update on Special Educational Needs and Disability. As Ofsted had visited during the planning stage, the timescales would also be visible in the outcome report. In order to implement learning from the Inspection; parents of SEND children and young people are in the early stages of implementing a carers' forum. Giving a voice to parents and young people, and the co-production of services, is very much at the forefront of Year-2 priorities. Parents are very keen to promote weekend activities.

However, this can be challenging given the low numbers and age range of the young people concerned. Priorities for this year include short breaks, commissioned from Hackney; including siblings with disability as well as SENs. Parents feel that the current offer is limited, mainly due to the restraints within the City, but options were being explored; i.e. swimming at Golden Lane Leisure Centre.

Members suggested that officers engage with the Departments of Planning and Transportation and Open Spaces and the Barbican Arts Centre. Officers advised that the development of the local leisure offer is a high priority and, whilst this is a work in progress, parents and partners are encouraged to share their experience with web searches. A recent session at a City Library had been very successful and resulted in the children's work being displayed at a City Museum. Another parent is working with Friends of City Gardens on a proposal for a sensory garden for autistic visitors.

The Chairman of the Community and Children's Services Committee has attended the Ofsted meeting, which he had found very positive and commended the team for their hard work.

## **5. MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update. The City Corporation's current Mental Health strategy 2015–2018 was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2015. The CoLC and City and Hackney CCG share ownership of the document. It aims to improve the mental health of people in the City, keep people well and then ensure that we provide effective support when mental health problems do arise. An action plan was developed to monitor the progress against four priorities to deliver better outcomes for residents, workers and rough sleepers. This strategy is due to be refreshed.

A joint Mental Health Strategy will enable a collaborative approach to provide more effective mental health and wellbeing services and improved health outcomes for the workers and residents of the City of London. A draft strategy will be brought to Members in April 2019.

## **6. EARLY HELP ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

The vision and aim of Early Help, articulated in the Early Help strategy, is that we reach the right families with the right help, in the right place at the right time. This includes responding to current needs and putting support in place so that escalation to statutory services is prevented wherever possible. The goal is that children and families would be able to manage well without targeted support and that early help would prevent dependency on, or referral to, statutory services in the future. Direct work with children and young people at Tier 2 is coordinated through the CAF and TAC mechanisms. While partner agencies

have been encouraged to complete CAFs and to lead TAC meetings, there were no external CAFs completed in 2017/18. Therefore, data in this report refers only to cases held within the Children and Families Team. It was noted that whilst there were fewer partner CAFs, there was increased activity in respect of allocated Early Help cases in the Children and Families Service. With a permanent Early Help specialist worker in post, the momentum to maintain strong focus on Early Help was continuing with positive feedback provided on the direct support provided by the Early Help service.

## **7. CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

The City of London Corporation is a Corporate Parent to the children who are in its care. These looked-after children are children and young people aged from 0 to the eve of their 18th birthday who cannot safely remain with their family, or those for whom the City Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. children in care (CIC) 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. The report noted to the continuing good work that the CoL does as a Corporate Parent to its children in care population and Care Leaver Population. It was noted that the Chairman will be meeting with the Children in Care Council in October. Members were pleased that there were positive reports in respect of the Children in Care Council going on its annual summer trip- this time sailing in the English Channel.

## **8. ACTION FOR CHILDREN ANNUAL SURVEY 2018**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

Between February and March 2018, Action for Children carried out the annual service user survey with children and families supported by the City of London's Children and Families Team. This survey included families open to early help, children assessed as being in need, children subject to a child protection plan, children looked after by the City of London, and care leavers. The survey sought to establish the views from children of varying age ranges, so questionnaires and methodologies were adapted to suit the needs of the children.

Overall the feedback from the survey was very positive, especially about the relationships between young people and their social workers. This was particularly evident in looked-after children and care leavers. Children and young people felt safe and there was positive feedback about the Children in Care Council (CiCC). Three young people who were looked after by the City raised concerns that there were not enough laptops for educational use. This issue has been resolved and young people who need one have been allocated

a laptop. Members acknowledged that the report complimented the presentation at the previous Sub Committee that had been given by Action For Children on the initial findings of the survey , which at the time had just been completed.

**9. SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2017-2018**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update. 20 tasks are marked as 'amber'. Work in the next quarter is to turn these to green, including the areas highlighted above. Key actions include:

- Work with the new Virtual School Head to drive forward and extend employment and educational opportunities for our children looked after and care leavers.
- Amending and relaunching the MASH to improve information sharing at the beginning of family involvement (September) (SIP 1.5)
- Writing guidance for staff on specific risk assessment tools (SIP 1.6a/1.6b)

Members were pleased with the progress being made in respect of the priorities set out in the Service Improvement Plan(SIP). The SIP will remain as a standing item on the agenda.

**10. PROGRESSION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

Throughout 2018, the Workforce Learning and Development for the People's Directorate within the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) will be tendering to appoint a service provider to deliver a wider range of learning opportunities for staff across the Directorate. A range of options have been explored for the delivery of learning and development to specifically meet the needs of social care staff across the service areas within the People's Directorate. The Workforce Development Group, consisting of Senior Managers and Human Resources personnel, agree a tendered service would best meet the identified need. Funding for this new service has been sourced from the Departmental Local Risk budget. This will fund the development and deployment of a two-year tendered contract to deliver learning and development activity within the Directorate. The new service support the service to meet the future demands in respect of Social Work accreditation. It is anticipated that this will be in place by end of the calendar year.

**11. THE CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (CHSAB) ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB) is a statutory Board and it is a statutory requirement to produce an annual.

In summary during 2017/18:



- City of London partnership concluded its financial abuse awareness event. The CHSAB has taken up the mantle and is planning a follow-up campaign in 2018/19 to raise awareness among residents about how to keep safe and avoid financial abuse.

- City of London continues to build on its work with people who are socially isolated. We are involved in an initiative to address social isolation and loneliness for residents, which has the potential to reduce the likelihood of people becoming the subject of an adult safeguarding concern.

- City of London ran successful 'Rough Sleeping' event, signposting rough sleepers to appropriate services.

- City of London staff from all partner agencies attended the 'Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)' workshops and have taken the learning back into their organisations.

- The Assistant Director for People and Community Services is the chair of the SARs sub-group and has led the group towards an evaluation of learning that identifies key themes to address in the strategic plan.

**12. QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

**14. 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.

**15. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

**16. ADULT SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

**17. CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR QUARTER FOUR AND YEAR-END 2017/18 AND QUARTER ONE 2018/19**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

**18. CITY OF LONDON CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC) - UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the update.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

**The meeting closed at 4pm.**

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Chairman

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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee Community and Children Services	08/02/2019 08/03/2019
<b>Subject:</b> CHSCB Annual Report	Public
<b>Report of:</b> Jim Gamble, Independent Chair of The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board	For Information
<b>Report author:</b> Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor	

## Summary

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Board (CHSCB) annual report for 2017/18 is a transparent assessment on the effectiveness of safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare across the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney.

- The report describes the **governance and accountability** arrangements for the CHSCB, outlining the structures in place that support the CHSCB to do its work effectively.
- It sets the **context for safeguarding children and young people** in the City of London, highlighting the **progress made by the City partnership** and the challenges going forward.
- It sets out the lessons that the CHSCB has identified through its **Learning & Improvement Framework** and the actions taken to improve child safeguarding.
- The report also describes the range and impact of the **multi-agency safeguarding training** delivered by the CHSCB and a brief account of the single agency training delivered by partners.
- It sets out the **priorities going forward** and the **key messages** from the Independent Chair of the CHSCB to key people involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the draft report which remains embargoed until the final version is formatted and published on the CHSCB website.

## Background

The publication of an annual report by the CHSCB is a requirement set out in the statutory guidance Working Together 2015.

Its purpose is to provide a transparent account of the strength and weaknesses of local child safeguarding practice – as determined by the Independent Chair and the Board itself.

The report sets the context for child safeguarding activity over 2017/18. It builds on the positive findings set out by Ofsted through its inspection of the City of London Corporation and the CHSCB in the preceeding year.

The final report is being formatted, with copies likley to be available prior to the Safeguarding Sub Committee meeting scheduled for 5 February 2018. Previous versions are available:

[2016/17](#)

[2015/16](#)

[2014/15](#)

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2017 to 2018	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, Department of Community and Children's Services	

## Summary

The Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) activity between April 2017 to end March 2018 remains low: in total there were four referrals, with three out of the four meeting the threshold for the LADO. While some agencies engaged and understood the process, there were others who had minimal contact with the LADO. Although there was a higher number of referrals in 2016/2017, only one of the seven referrals received met the threshold for the LADO.

In 2016/2017 a training resource was developed with the support of the Metropolitan Police, City of London Police and the Hackney and City of London LADOs. This has been offered to professionals throughout the year and was taken up by Early Years settings through their providers forum. Training on the role of the LADO is also provided through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

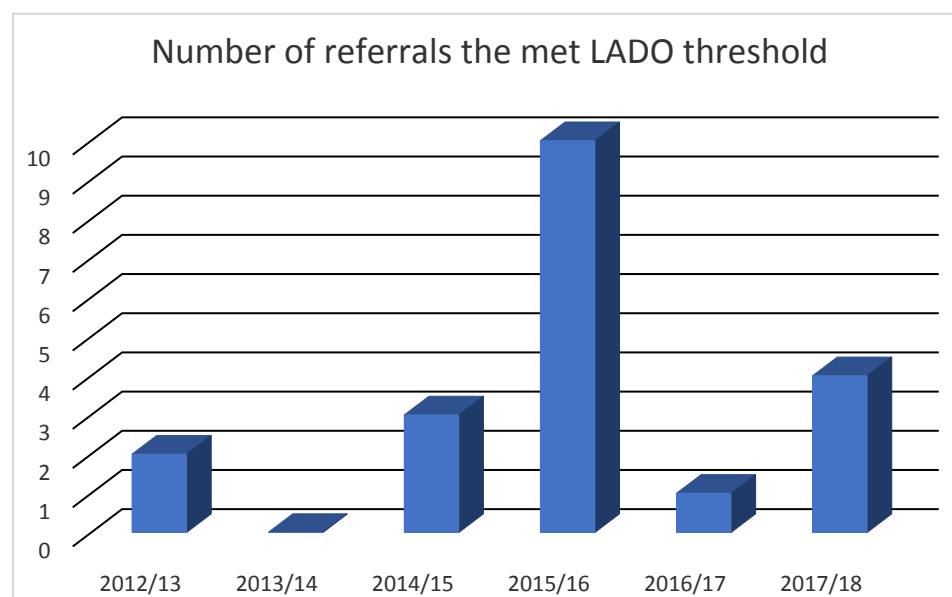
1. The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (July 2018), and the *London Child Protection Procedures: 5th edition* (updated 2017), Chapter 7. All allegations made against 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.

2. The role of the LADO is carried out by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager who is a member of the pan-London LADO network. This group meets on a quarterly basis, and is a sub-group of the London Safeguarding Children Board. The LADO also reports to the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and is a member of the Quality Assurance Sub Group, Training and Development Sub Group and City of London's Executive Safeguarding Children Board.

### Current Position

3. There have been only four referrals made to the LADO for 2017/2018. Although this is lower than previous years, three out of those four referrals met the threshold for the LADO, whereas only one referral out of seven in 2016/2017 met the threshold. The diagram below shows the number of cases that have met the threshold for the LADO in the past six years. As shown, this averages out at approximately three referrals a year over the past six years. Therefore, taking this average into account, there appears to be no discernible reduction in the number of appropriate referrals.



4. Some agencies engage and understand the process around professional allegations, welcoming the support offered by the LADO. However, there are some agencies that have minimal contact with the LADO, if any. This may be due to the absence of any concerns, but further scrutiny would be needed to discern the underlying reasons. There has been a concerted effort during 2017/2018 to raise the profile of the LADO role through the offer of training. However, there has been minimal interest in this training, with only the Early Years providers taking up this offer.

5. In 2016/2017 it was identified that there could be potential risks around nannys and au pairs: there was limited regulation in this area, and many parents would have limited knowledge about safe recruitment practice when employing someone to care for their child. A priority identified for 2017/2018 was to provide information on a postcard for parents and carers on how to safely recruit nannys and au pairs. Information on the postcard highlighted key areas around safer recruitment and how to register nannys and au pairs on Ofsted's voluntary register. Details were also provided on who to contact should parents have any concerns about someone caring for their child, including details of the LADO in the City of London.

## **Conclusion**

6. There have been continued efforts to raise awareness around the role of the LADO. Where training has been given, there is evidence of impact in relation to increased referrals. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board provide information on the LADO role as part of their training for Designated Safeguarding Leads, however, this just gives an overview of the role. The training produced by the Metropolitan Police, City of London Police and the LADOs from Hackney and City is more detailed. It uses actual case scenarios that have been provided by other LADOs across London. A priority for 2018/2019 will be to improve the take-up of training on professional allegations.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Annual LADO Report 2017/2018

### **Pat Dixon**

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## **City of London Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2017- 18**

### **1. Introduction**

This report to City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board provides an overview of the work undertaken by the City of London's Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) between April 2017 and March 2018. The report will review and analyse the referrals received throughout the year and the training and development opportunities that have been available for agencies in the City of London. The report will also evidence an initiative that has taken place to raise awareness around safer recruitment for parents and carers employing nanny's and au pairs.

### **2. Designated Officer role**

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in Working together to safeguard children (July 2018), and the London Child Protection Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> edition (updated 2017), Chapter 7. 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 to 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.

### **3. Referrals**

There have been four referrals made to the LADO for 2017/2018, as can be seen in Fig 1. Although this is lower than previous years, three out of the four referrals met the threshold for the LADO. In 2016/2017 there were seven referrals, but only one met the threshold for the LADO. Fig 2 shows the numbers of cases that have met the threshold in the past six years, as can be seen this averages out at approximately three referrals a year, over the past 6 years. Therefore, when looking at the data within this context

there does not appear to be a discernible reduction in the number of appropriate referrals.

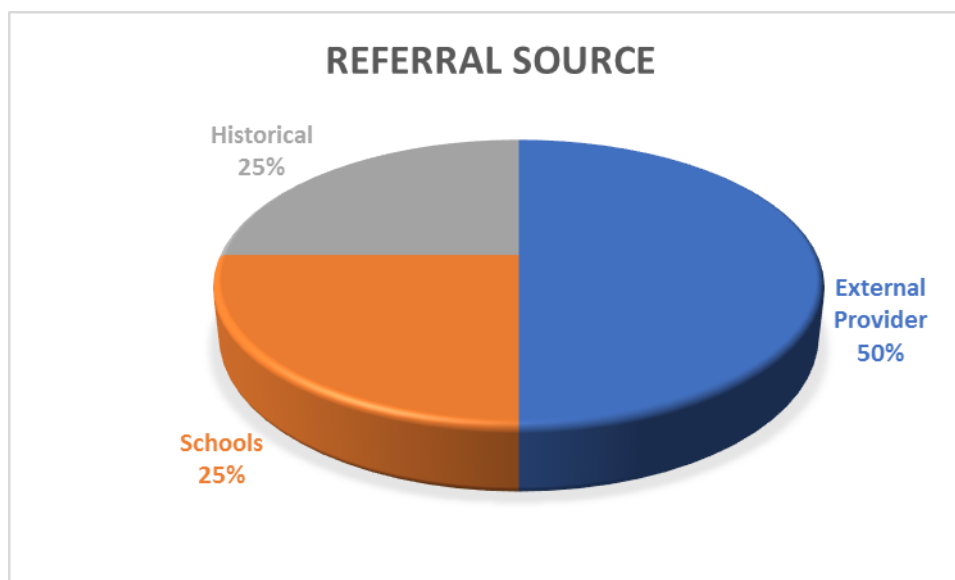
Whilst some agencies engage and understand the process around professional allegations, welcoming the support offered by the LADO. There are some agencies who have minimal contact, if any, this may be due to there not being any concerns, however without further scrutiny it would be difficult to discern the underlying reasons.

The low number of referrals may be due to the perception that to have a referral would reflect on the reputation of the provision, rather than demonstrating vigilance. Utting (1997) identified this attitude as obstructive as it created a culture where failures and weaknesses were hidden, and harmful behaviours were left unacknowledged. This clearly has been a feature in historical allegations, whereby victims speak about staff being aware of concerns but not acting on their suspicions.

In the 2016/2017 annual report it was identified there needed to be a concerted effort to raise awareness around the role and function of the LADO. Training developed by the City of London LADO, Hackney LADO, City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police, with scenarios collated from LADO's across London has been offered, however in 2017/2018 there was minimal take up.

Fig 1 below identifies the source of the referrals

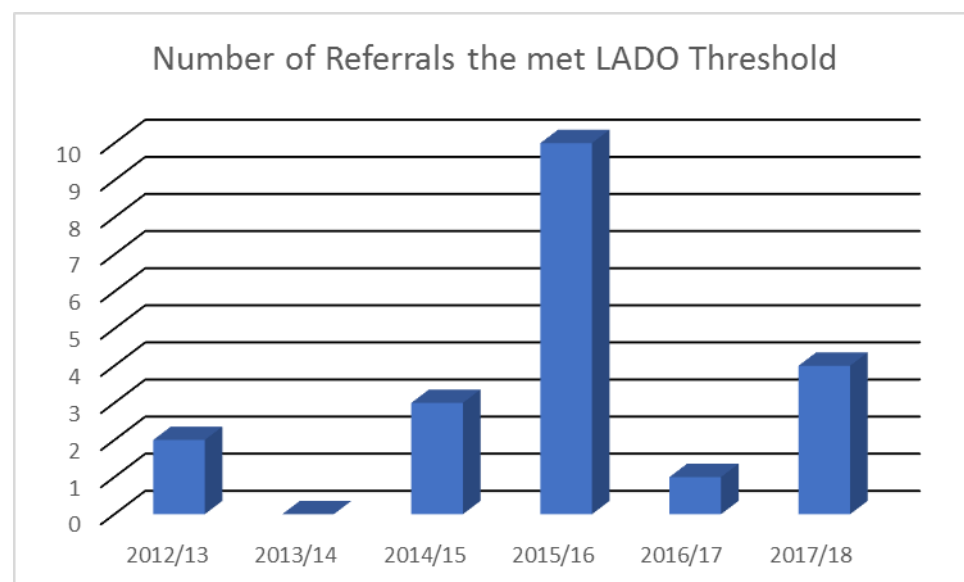
**Fig 1**



There have been two referrals from one external provider and this was in relation to a short breaks provision, the first referral did not meet the threshold for the LADO. There was one historical allegation and one allegation in relation to a school. All referrals are now being recorded on a secure electronic database, called Mosaic, which was the mechanism to securely record LADO information since October 2017. Consultations have taken place

with agencies on cases that have not met the criteria for the LADO. Consultation's in 2018/ 2019 will be recorded on Mosaic and reviewed in relation to the number of consultations taking place, and whether there are any underlying theme's emerging.

**Fig 2**



#### **4. Raising Awareness**

In 2016/2017 it was identified that there was limited regulation around nannies and au pairs. Parents and carers were often employing nannies and au pairs with limited knowledge on the safer recruitment process. Often individuals in these roles will be working and living in the family's home, having unsupervised access to young children. Therefore, this became a priority for 2017/2018 and guidance, in the form of a postcard, was developed and distributed to families through various networks.

Information on the postcard highlighted key areas around safer recruitment and how to register nanny's and au pairs on Ofsted's voluntary register. Details were also provided on who to contact should they have any concerns about someone caring for their child, with details on how to contact the LADO within the City of London. The card was co-produced with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and has been distributed to schools through the Safeguarding Education Forum and Early Years Settings in March 2018. The impact of this initiative will be reviewed in the LADO report for 2018/2019.

#### **5. Emerging themes**

There appears to be a direct correlation between high-profile cases of abuse being in the press and an increase in historical allegations. Erooga (2018) identified that victims of abuse often find it difficult to disclose due

to their fear of not being believed, this is often exacerbated if they are the only victim to come forward. The historical allegation in 2017/2018 was precipitated by the disclosures against Harvey Weinstein, and the second victim only came forward once they knew they were not the only person.

A further theme is the impact on survivors of abuse, and their fear of not being believed. Therefore, the first step is always to give assurance and support that they will be listened to and believed. This is a small part of wider research in this field, which highlights the importance of such allegations being treated seriously and that agencies have the mechanisms in place to support individuals.

## **6. Multi-agency working**

During 2017/2018 there were raising awareness sessions with partners through the Staff Induction programme and multi-agency forums, such as the City of London's Executive Safeguarding Children Board and the Education Forum. As previously identified within this report there has been limited take up of the new training developed on the role and function of the LADO. The Safeguarding Lead in the Education and Early Years' Service has been supporting the role of the LADO by briefing early years settings on the procedures in reporting professional allegations. In March 2018 five managers from the early years settings attended a provider's forum where they had training in this area. This was well received and generated discussion. Multi-agency safeguarding training is also available for partner agencies through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

## **7. Links in London and nationally**

The City of London LADO is a member of the pan-London LADO network, which meets on a quarterly basis. This is a sub-group of the London Safeguarding Children Board. They are also a member of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board and a member of the Quality Assurance Sub Group, Training and Development Sub group and City of London's Executive Safeguarding Children Board.

## **8. Police Notifications – Notifiable Occupational Scheme (NOS)**

Between April 2017 and March 2018 there have been no direct notifications from the Police. The City of London, Public Protection Unit (PPU) has identified that there have been no professional allegations for the City of London in 2016 to 2017 that would have met the threshold for a professional allegation.

Pat Dixon  
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)  
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager

**ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN****Date: April 2017 -March 2018**

<b>1. Total number of referrals to the Designated Officer</b>			
<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>City of London</b>	<b>Number of referrals regarding allegations and matters of concern</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Number of referrals from each or organisation</b>			
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Number</b>		
<b>1.Social Care</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>2.Health-hospital staff</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>3.Health-community</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>4.Education</b>	<b>2 School, 1 historical</b>		
<b>5.Early Years-Child-minder</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>6.Early Years-Nursery Staff</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>7. Foster Carer-IFA with other LA children or other LA in house carers living in City.</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>8.Police</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>9.Probation</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>10.CAFCASS</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>11.Voluntary Organisations</b> Include sports clubs, scouts, brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	<b>2 Short Breaks Provision</b>		
<b>12.Faith Groups</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>13.Immigration/Asylum Support services</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>14.Transport</b> Transport provided to services through a contract	<b>0</b>		
<b>15.Care Agency – Education Employment agency</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>16.Other Dept. in City of London</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>17 Other – Anon Youth Services</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>18. Leisure Services</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>19.Adult Services</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>20.Housing Associations/ Providers</b>	<b>0</b>		

<b>3. Who made the Referral</b>	
	<b>Number</b>
<b>1.Social Care</b>	<b>2 in total, one C&amp;F Team COL and one from LADO in another LA</b>
<b>2.Health-hospital staff</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>3.Health-community</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>4.Education</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>5.Early Years-Child-minder</b>	
<b>6.Early Years-Nursery Staff</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>7.Foster Carer-IFA with City of London children</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>8.Police</b>	<b>1 Historical</b>
<b>9.Probation</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>10.CAFCASS</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>11.Voluntary Organisations</b> Include sports clubs, scouts, brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	<b>0</b>
<b>12.Immigration/Asylum Support services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>13.Transport</b> Transport provided to services through a contract	<b>0</b>
<b>14.Care Agency- Education Employment Agency</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>15.Other Dept's City of London</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>16. Other</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>17.Leisure Services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>18.Adult Services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>19.Housing Associations/Housing Providers.</b>	<b>0</b>

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						
Health-hospital staff						
Health-community						
Education-teaching staff	1			1		
Education-non teaching staff						
Early Years-child-minders						
Early Years-nursery staff						
Foster Carers-IFA with City children						
Police				1		
Probation						
CAFCASS						
Voluntary Organisations						
Faith Groups						
Armed Forces						
Immigration/Asylum Support Services						
Care Agencies	1					
Transport						
Other						
Leisure Services						
Adult Services						
Housing Associations/Provider						

<b>4. Number of referred cases that resulted in: <i>please note there could be more than one outcome</i></b>	
<b>Being Substantiated</b>	<b>1 Physical</b>
<b>Being Unsubstantiated</b>	<b>2 Physical</b>
<b>Being Unfounded</b>	
<b>CSM held</b>	
<b>Met the threshold for LADO input but not for a Complex strategy meeting</b>	
<b>Criminal investigation/joint work with CAIT</b>	<b>1 Sexual – Historical Allegation</b>
<b>Criminal prosecution</b>	
<b>Caution</b>	
<b>Conviction</b>	
<b>Acquittal</b>	
<b>Initial inquires by employers</b>	
<b>Disciplinary investigation</b>	
<b>Disciplinary meeting/hearing</b>	
<b>Suspension</b>	
<b>Dismissal</b>	
<b>Cessation of use</b>	
<b>Deregistration</b>	
<b>Training needs identified for member of staff or the agency.</b>	
<b>Risk Assessment completed by Employer</b>	
<b>Referral to DBS</b>	
<b>Referral to regulatory body e.g. GMC /Ofsted etc...</b>	
<b>5. At the point of conclusion, the number of cases that were resolved within the following timeframes</b>	
<b>1 month</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 months</b>	<b>1- Delay due to Police investigation – Historical Allegation.</b>
<b>6 months</b>	



<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Private Fostering Annual Report 2017 to 2018	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, Department of Community and Children's Services	

## Summary

There have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for 2017 to 2018. Therefore, this report will inform Members about how the City of London has met the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering by raising awareness of private fostering arrangements with professionals and residents in the City of London. In 2016/2017 the annual report identified the potential barriers to raising awareness within the community, whereby residents associated 'private fostering' arrangements as being akin to being a local authority foster carer. In 2017/2018 the City produced publications and banners featuring 'Somebody Else's Child'. to support the engagement of residents.

## 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 the child is 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), is not 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, have short-term arrangements to stay 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. a 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
  - meeting the duty to support private fostering arrangements.
4. This responsibility is underpinned by: the Replacement Children Act 1989 Guidance on 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 past 12 months, there have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City. Given the City's demographics, it is highly unlikely 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 Board (CHSCB) as a priority. The attached annual Private Fostering Report goes to the City Executive Board of the CHSCB.
6. In 2016 to 2017 it was identified that parents' and carers' initial response when being informed about private fostering arrangements would be to align it to becoming a foster carer for the local authority. This perception often prevented potential private foster carers from reading any further than the headlines, as they considered it would not apply to them. In 2017 to 2018 a review of the

leaflets for parents, carers and young people was completed. Rather than the headlines coming under the banner of Private Fostering, the leaflets asked whether they were looking after 'Somebody Else's Child'. or if their child was being cared for by somebody other than a parent or close relative. The information inside the leaflets has remained the same, as it was considered that the terminology would be suitable for use with the family should they be involved in a private fostering arrangement.

## **Conclusion**

7. During Private Fostering Week, stalls were set up in libraries across the City and at Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School. Many library visitors were not City residents, but City workers; however, the libraries did prominently display information on private fostering, with information about what to do if someone was caring for a child. Information on private fostering arrangements were sent out on a regular basis through resident publications. When there were events involving residents, leaflets and banners were displayed prominently. In 2018/2019 there will be continued effort made to engage residents through established networks.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Private Fostering Report 2017/2018

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## **Annual Report Private Fostering Arrangements April 2017 to March 2018**

### **Context of City of London**

The City has a relatively small resident population of approximately 9,400 (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 1,200 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in the City. This is 12.4% 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 42.6% of all children living in the area, compared with 21.5% 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) would not be considered a Private Foster Carer.

Examples of private fostering arrangements include:

- 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 of Purpose' on private fostering was reviewed and updated in August 2017. A communications plan was developed for 2017 to 2018 to ensure that there was a sustained campaign to raise awareness about private fostering with professionals and potential carers. The objectives identified in this plan were for;

- young people know what to expect if they go through private fostering and how they should be treated
- professionals understand their responsibilities in relation to private fostering
- parents understand what private fostering is and whether it is a suitable option for them and their family.

**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.**

There has been considerable activity in raising awareness around Private Fostering over the past year;

Fig 1 below shows some of the activity that took place over the past year to raise awareness:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Resident or Professionals</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Digital Briefing	June 2017	Members	A digital briefing was sent to Members at the end of June.
Digital Briefing	21 <sup>st</sup> June 2017	Partnership for Young London	This digital briefing was forwarded to the voluntary sector.
Safeguarding Education Forum	June 2017	Professionals, Designated Safeguarding Lead's in Schools.	Verbal briefing on Private Fostering to the forum from Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager
Peoples Directorate	June 2017	DCCS	Peoples Services were spoken to regarding professional roles and responsibilities around Private Fostering by Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager.
Private Fostering Week - Event	3 <sup>rd</sup> July to 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Resident's	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager set up a stall at lunch time in all the Library's in the City throughout private fostering week. Leaflets and bookmarks containing information about Private Fostering were distributed at these events.
Private Fostering Week – Event	3 <sup>rd</sup> July to 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Residents	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager had a stall at Sir John Cass Primary, in the morning and afternoon when children were being dropped off and picked up. Leaflets and bookmarks containing information about Private Fostering were distributed.
Distribution of Posters For Estates – for Private Fostering week	3 <sup>rd</sup> July to 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Residents	Posters on Private Fostering were put up on notice boards across the various estates in the City of London to coincide with Private Fostering week.
Estate Resident Meetings	Various dates	Residents	Leaflets and bookmarks containing information about

	throughout 2017 & 2018		Private Fostering were distributed.
Staff Induction Event	Various dates throughout 2017 & 2018	Professionals	Presentation on Private Fostering and responsibility on professionals to notify the Local Authority.

Private fostering data is reviewed through the Quality Assurance Sub Group of the CHSCB; there have been no private fostering referrals this year.

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

There have been no referrals received by the City for 2017 to 2018; however, there are procedures in place to assess the placement and ascertain the views of the young person. Assessments completed would include and cover the expectations within the National Minimum Standards by:

- Ascertaining the wishes and feelings of the child about the proposed/actual private fostering arrangement. The young person being privately fostered would be spoken to alone as part of the assessment process, this would occur when they are visited by the social worker.
- Establishing the child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development is essential and this would be addressed as part of the assessment process.
- The child's needs arising from their religious persuasion; racial origin and cultural and linguistic background are being met by the placement.
- That consideration has been given and where necessary steps have been taken to make arrangements for the child's education.
- A risk assessment has been carried out on the home conditions and the standard of care offered within the arrangement.
- The young person is registered with a G.P and Dentist.
- That DBS checks are completed in respect of all the adults within the household.
- The social worker supports the young person in accessing leisure activities in their locality.

**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 workers are aware that it is within their role to assist and advise all private foster carers with general parenting skills and provide advice on an on-going basis. 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, carers and young people about private fostering arrangements is available and would be given to anyone entering into such an arrangement. There is also information available about services and activities in the City of London which would be provided for parents, carers and young people from the Family and Young Peoples Information Service.

Contact details of the allocated social worker would 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 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 would also have access to the advocacy and independent visitor 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 Mosaic, 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 City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board via the quality assurance sub group.

## **Summary**

As evidenced within this report there have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City over the last 12 months, given the demographics of the City of London it is likely that there are private fostering arrangements taking place, but these arrangements haven't been reported. For this reason, there has been a concerted effort to engage with residents, especially during Private Fostering week, to raise awareness around what constitutes as a private fostering arrangement. Even with this increased activity there has not been an increase in the number of private fostering referrals or enquiries.

In 2016 to 2017 it was identified that parents and carers response when being informed about private fostering arrangements initially would be to align it to becoming a foster carer for the Local Authority. This perception often prevented potential private foster carers from reading any further than the headlines, as they considered it would not apply to them. In 2017 to 2018 a review of the leaflets for parents, carers and young people was completed, rather than the headlines coming under the banner of Private Fostering, the leaflets asked whether they were looking after "Somebody Else's Child". or was their child being cared for by somebody other than a parent or close relative. The information inside the leaflets has remained the same, as it was considered that this was terminology that would be used with the family should they be involved in a private fostering arrangement.

Consideration does need to be given as to whether the message around private fostering is getting to those communities which are harder to reach. Therefore, going forward for 2018 to 2019 there will be a concerted effort to look at a more targeted approach to raising awareness around private fostering, by targeting communities across the City of London.

Pat Dixon  
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager  
City of London

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), Annual Report 2017/18	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Ria Lane, Independent Reviewing Officer and Child Protection Chair	

## Summary

This report gives Members an overview of the independent reviewing service in the City of London covered in the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report 2017/18.

The report summaries the statutory requirements of the IRO service and how the City of London has performed in this regard. There is an overview of the IRO role and their performance in ensuring that children's key needs are met. Strengths of last year's practice and areas of development for 2018/19 are identified.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The IRO service is set within the framework of the updated *IRO Handbook*, linked to the revised Care Planning regulations and guidance that were introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO has changed from managing the review process to taking a wider overview of the case, including regular monitoring and follow-up between reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for children in care and for challenging drift and delay.

Specifically, the statutory duties of the IRO are to:

- monitor the local authority's performance and their functions in relation to the child's case

- participate in any review of the child's case
  - ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child concerning the case are given due consideration by the local authority.
2. The IRO's primary task is to ensure that the child's care plan fully reflects the child's current needs and that the actions set out in the plan are consistent with the local authority's legal responsibilities towards the child. As corporate parents, each local authority should act for the children they look after in the same way that a responsible and conscientious parent would act.

## **Current Position**

3. A permanent IRO has been in post since September 2017.
4. The achievements identified within the annual report for 2017/18 are:
- Increased participation of children in their review meetings
  - All children seen alone by the IRO outside of review meetings
  - Active monitoring of children's care plans and needs between review periods
  - Review minutes, contacts and alerts recorded on children's files within the Integrated Children's System (ICS) workflow
  - Commissioning a service to improve consultation of children and young people in care
  - Improved timely distribution of looked-after children (LAC) review minutes
  - The development of a local dispute resolution process which has been actively used since implementation.
5. In addition to direct work with children and the local authority, the IRO takes part in the London IRO Practitioner Network and serves as a practitioner representative to the London IRO Managers' Group. Engagement in these pan-London groups facilitates the IRO's access to information and the experience of colleagues from larger authorities. It also ensures that the experience and needs of the City's children in care are represented in forums that have the potential to influence the direction of practice and statutory guidance about the services and support they receive.
6. The IRO service has been alert to safeguarding issues for children in care. The service will continue to monitor care plans closely to include actions that address the known risks of all forms of exploitation and aims to build safety and stability according to the needs of each child.
7. The IRO has an action plan to improve the following areas:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust challenge of timescales not being met.</li> </ul>	IRO to hold quarterly meetings with social work team managers and LAC
--	---

	providers to share data and areas for improvement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all children and young people know how to contact the IRO.</li> </ul>	Contact details of IRO given to all children at first LAC review. IRO business cards to be ordered in the key languages of the LAC cohort.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve how the life story work is recorded and compiled on each child's record.</li> </ul>	IRO to undertake an overview of the current system in January 2019, with recommendations to be implemented by March 2019.

## Conclusion

8. The IRO service has made significant contributions to quality assuring and improving services for children in care throughout 2017/18. The monitoring and challenge functions of the role have been strengthened and the IRO's knowledge of, and relationship with, the children in care is a positive feature of the service.
9. The planned focus for 2017/18 was looking at more innovative ways of engaging young people in the consultation so that their views could have a direct impact on influencing change within children's services. This has been achieved with the commissioning of a new service.
10. A key priority for 2018/19 is to embed the change in the service, including results from the overview of current life story work to improve how this is recorded and given to young people.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City of London Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2017–18

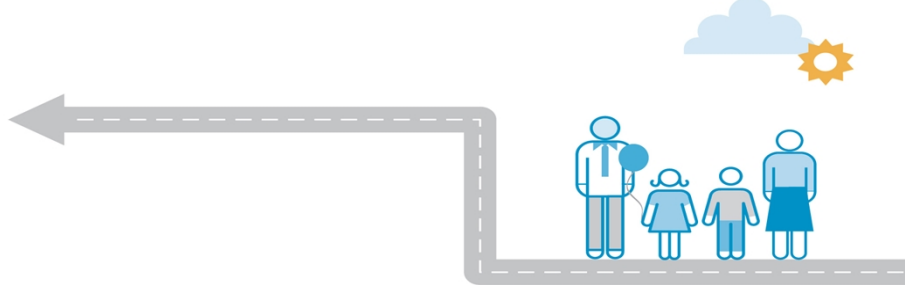
### Ria Lane

Independent Reviewing Officer and Child Protection Chair

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**City of London Corporation  
Department of Community and Children's Services**

**Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)  
Annual Report 2017/2018**

***The Contribution of the Independent Reviewing Officer to Quality  
Assuring and Improving Services for Children in Care***

**July 2018**

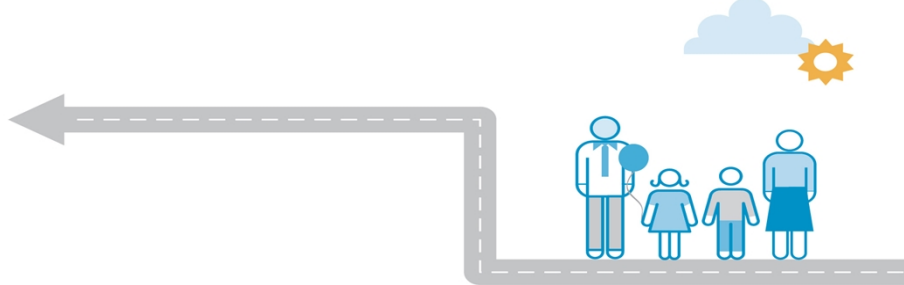




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#### 6.4. Conclusion

### 7 Planned & Recommended Improvements for 2018/2019

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## Appendix 1 New template for LAC review minutes

### 1. PURPOSE OF SERVICE & LEGAL CONTEXT

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The Independent Reviewing Officers' (IRO) service is set within the framework of the updated IRO Handbook, linked to the revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance that were introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO has changed from the management of the review process to a wider overview of the case including regular monitoring and follow-up between reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for children in care and for challenging drift and delay.

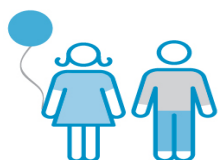
Specifically, the statutory duties of the IRO are to:

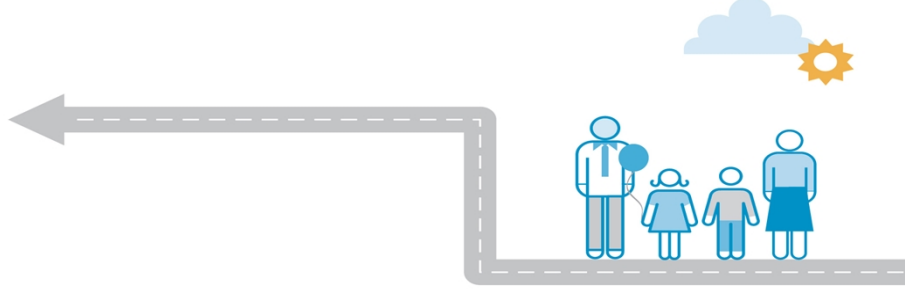
- ❖ Monitor the performance by the local authority of their functions in relation to the child's case;
- ❖ Participate in any review of the child's case; and
- ❖ Ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child concerning the case are given due consideration by the authority.

The IRO's primary task is to ensure that the care plan for the child fully reflects the child's current needs and that the actions set out in the plan are consistent with the local authority's legal responsibilities towards the child. As corporate parents each local authority should act for the children they look after as a responsible and conscientious parent would act.

In carrying out the monitoring function, the IRO's duty extends beyond the focus on individual cases to include the collective experience of and services to looked after children. Where concerns about the local authority's services to its children in care are identified, the IRO is obligated to immediately alert senior managers.

The National Children's Bureau research 'The Role of the Independent Reviewing Officers in England' (March 2014) provides a wealth of information and findings regarding the efficacy of IRO services. Mr Justice Peter Jackson, the author of the foreword in the research report, makes the following comment about the significance of the IRO function:





The Independent Reviewing Officer must be the visible embodiment of our commitment to meet our legal obligations to this special group of children. The health and effectiveness of the IRO service is a direct reflection of whether we are meeting that commitment, or whether we are failing.

This annual report provides evidence of the effectiveness of IRO services provided to and on behalf of the City of London's children in care between April 2017 and March 2018

## 2. THE IRO SERVICE

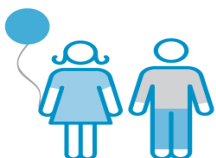
### 2.1. Local Arrangements

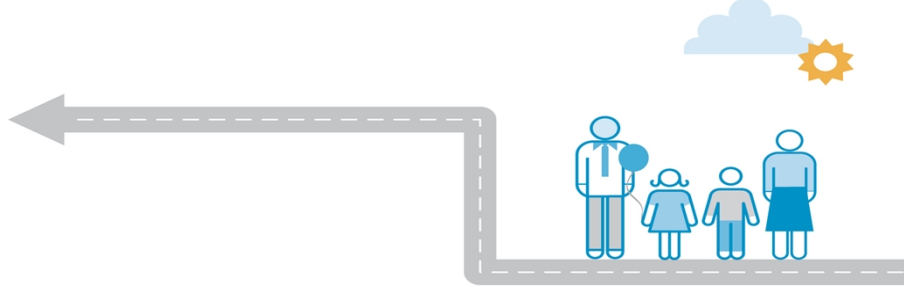
The City of London has provided an in-house Independent reviewing service since April 2015 and there is one full time IRO who is responsible for carrying out the functions of the role to all children in the care of the City. The IRO service sits within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (S&QA) Service and is managed by the S&QA Service Manager who reports directly to the Assistant Director of the People's Division.

The IRO's independence is assured by the fact that the position is held by someone who is not involved in the preparation of the child's care plan, management of the child's case, or the control over resources allocated to or required by the child. The IRO sits away from the Children's Social Care Team, which serves to reinforce the independence of the role.

This has enabled consistency for children and young people in the City of London, whereby they have had the same IRO from April 2015 to February 2017, when a new IRO was appointed to take over. Every effort was made during this period of transition to ensure that children and young people had the opportunity to say their goodbyes to their IRO and be introduced to the new IRO.

The Children and Families Team ensure that the IRO is notified of all children received into care within 72hrs and the IRO assumes immediate responsibility for monitoring the child's care planning and ensuring the statutory reviews takes place within timescales from the point of allocation onwards.





Where relevant, the IRO service would be guided by the CAFCASS and Independent Reviewing Officer Good Practice for Public Law Work protocol to ensure cases in proceedings are subject to robust analysis and challenge about the matters of critical importance to children's safety, wellbeing and permanency needs. This is further monitored within the permanency panel meetings chaired by the Assistant Director of People.

The IRO's independence is assured by the fact that the position is held by someone who is not involved in the preparation of the child's care plan, management of the child's case, or the control over resources allocated to or required by the child. The IRO sits away from the Children's Social Care Team, which serves to reinforce the independence of the role.

In order to ensure that the needs of children in care are met at all times, the City have engaged Aidhour, an external provider, in an agreement for their IRO associates to be spot-purchased in the unforeseen and unlikely event that the in-house IRO becomes unavailable.

There was consideration given to entering into reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring local authorities but due to significant resource limitations, this was not found to be a feasible option. Aidhour was selected as the most reliable and appropriate contingency plan because of their access to experienced and reputable IRO associates that can be called upon at short notice and because the company directors are already familiar with the local children in care population through the independent auditing work they do for the City.

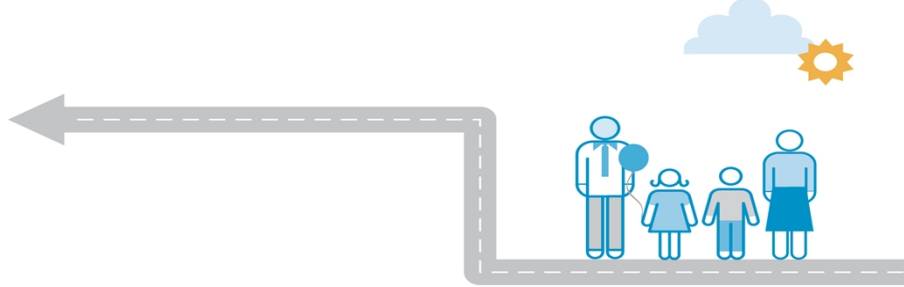
The IRO has not had any periods of unplanned absence and therefore has not had to call upon the back up support of Aidhour. The service provided has been stable and reliable for each child that has been in care at any point throughout this reporting year and this consistency has supported the development of positive relationships between the children and IRO.

While there has been minimum need throughout this period, where relevant, the IRO service has been guided by the CAFCASS and Independent Reviewing Officer Good Practice for Public Law Work protocol to ensure cases in proceedings are subject to robust analysis and challenge about the matters of critical importance to children's safety, wellbeing and permanency needs.

## 2.2. Professional Profile

There has been a change in the IRO and operational service for this reporting year. The previous full time IRO left in February 2017. There was a part time IRO in position from this point, until September 2017 when the IRO became a permanent full-time member of staff at City. It has meant that for half of this reporting year, the IRO service was being managed part time until the permanent full-time position commenced. The IRO who is currently in place has a background in child protection, with previous managerial and IRO experience. The IRO is registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as well as being DBS checked on an annual basis.





The current IRO is white British and female. The vast majority of the children in the City of London's care population are male Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), whose nationality, language, ethnic, religious and cultural identities within the population are diverse. It would be difficult to reflect this diversity across the workforce; however, every effort is made to ensure that their needs are represented in where they are placed and how they are supported.

The IRO is committed to understanding the identity needs of individual children through her direct contact with them, independent study, and care reviews with their allocated social workers and foster carers.

The IRO adopts and advocates Anti Oppressive Practice as part of all aspects of service delivery including direct contact with children, foster carers, and the Children's Social Care Team.

### 2.3. Scope of the Service

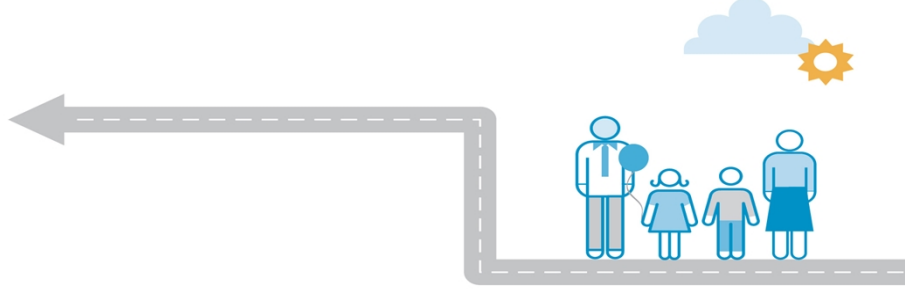
The IRO service fulfils its statutory duties by:

- ❖ Charing and co-chairing statutory Reviews
- ❖ Visiting children in care
- ❖ Case discussions with allocated social workers and the management team
- ❖ Consulting with foster carers and parents
- ❖ Reviewing case file records
- ❖ Participating in any additional meeting required by the needs of the child
- ❖ Maintaining up to date knowledge of relevant legislation and practice developments

Additionally, the scope of the IRO service includes:

- ❖ Chairing Child Protection Case Conferences
- ❖ Core Membership in Permanency Tracking Meetings
- ❖ Core Membership in Permanency Panels
- ❖ Core Membership in the Children Looked After & Care Leavers Service Improvement Group
- ❖ Core Membership in the early years and social care Service Improvement Board
- ❖ Core Membership in Quality Assurance Review Meetings
- ❖ Core Membership in the commissioning and review of all Children's Rights Services
- ❖ Management of the Annual Consultation of Children and Young People
- ❖ Participant in the quality assurance process of Independent Fostering Agencies
- ❖ Core Membership in ICS – Framework I – Sub Group
- ❖ Training delivery





### 3. SERVICE ACTIVITY

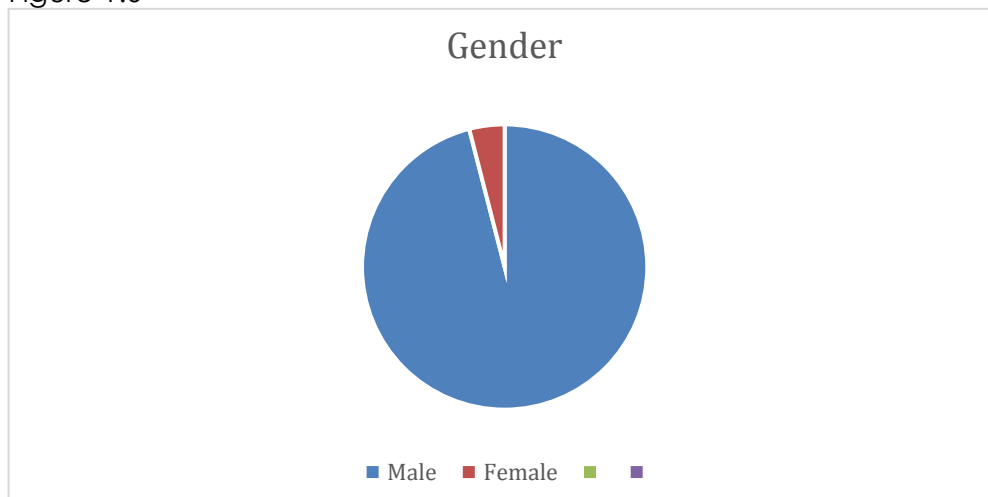
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#### 3.1. Children in Care

There were 12 children looked after on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, 10 as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, and 26 in total throughout the year.

The following illustrates the profile of the individual children, reason for accommodation, legal status, and placement arrangements.

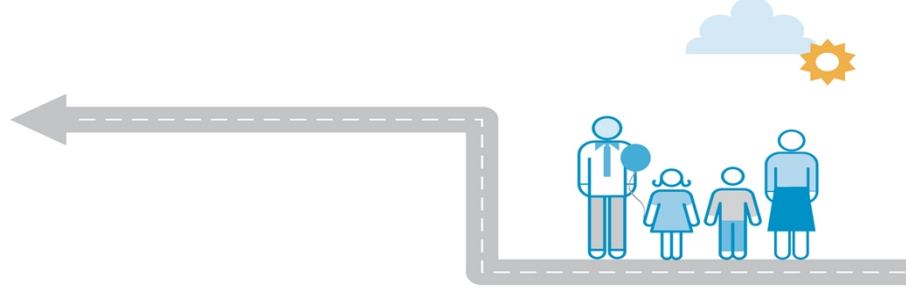
Figure 1.0



Of the 26 children looked after during this period, only 1 was female.

Figure 1.1

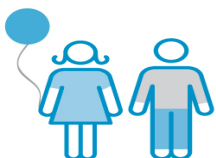
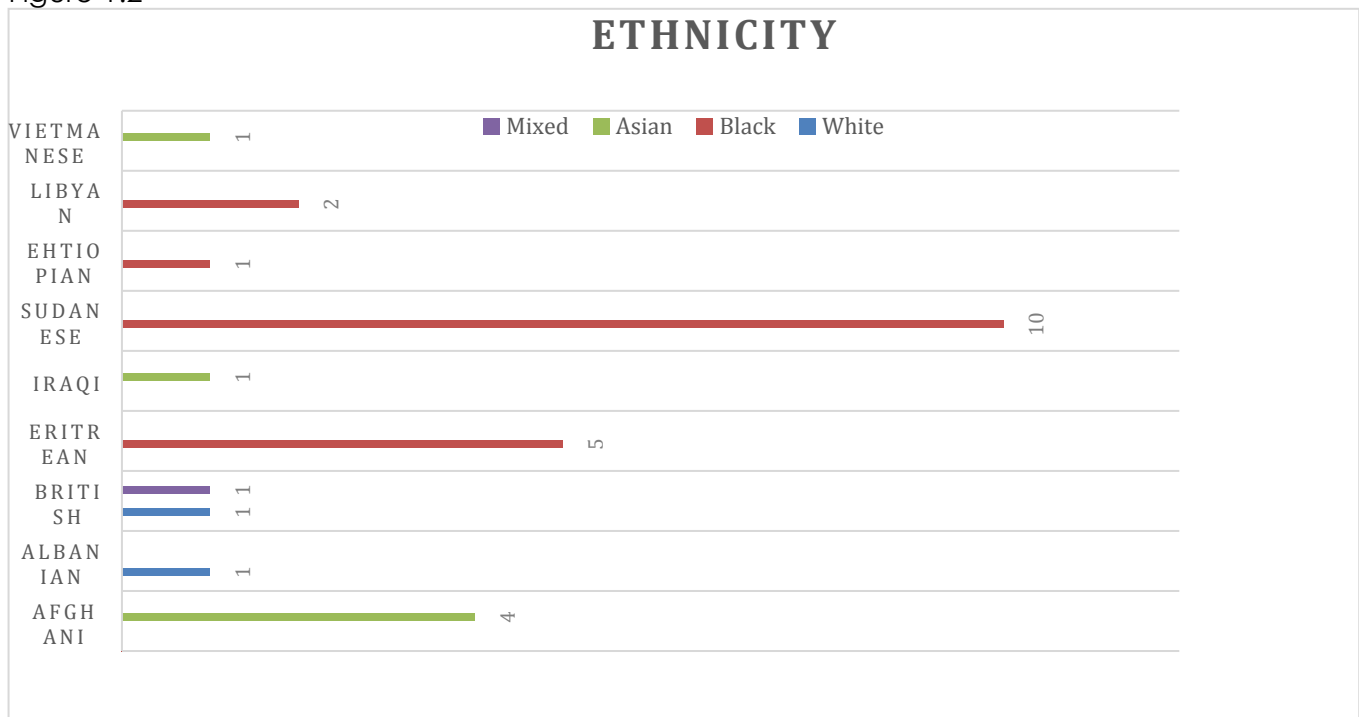


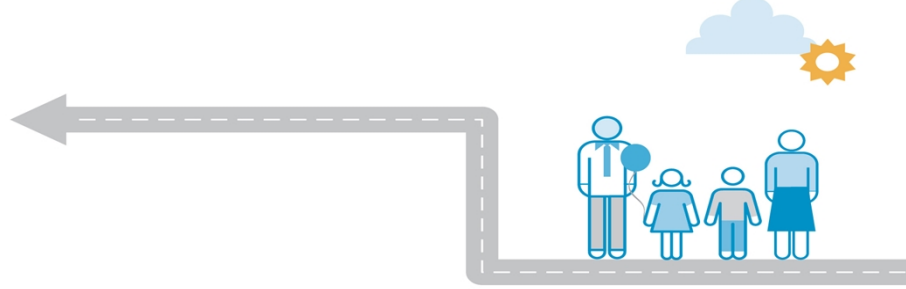


The ages reflected in Figure 1.1 refer to the age of each of the 26 children as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 or the date when they ceased to be looked after.

Of significance, 65% of the children cared for during this period were 15years or older and the child who was 5 years old had not remained in care by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, which means that 100% of children in care at the end of this reporting period were 15years old or older.

Figure 1.2





The countries of origin illustrated in the above also account for the nationality of each child. Of note, the 1 British child that was in care throughout the year, did not remain looked after as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 thereby increasing the percentage of non-British children from 96% to 100% at year end.

The only communication need identified throughout this year was interpretation and translation services given that English was an additional language for the 96% of children who were not born or raised in Britain.

Figure 1.3a

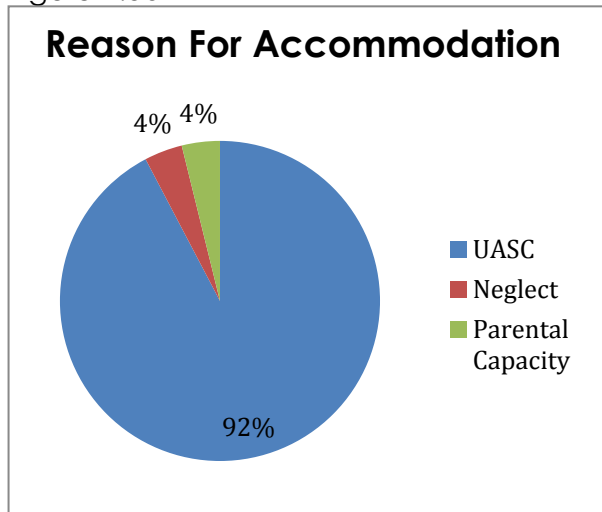
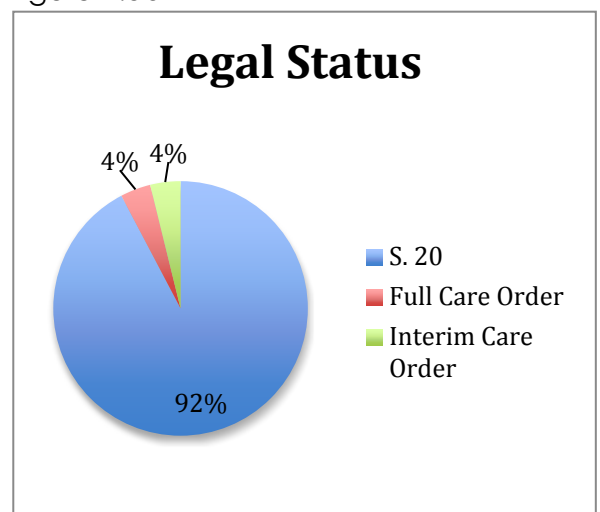
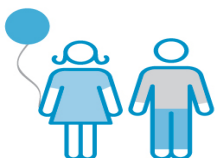
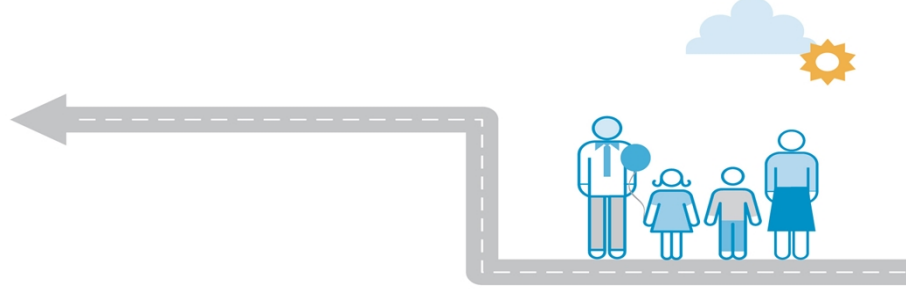


Figure 1.3b



24 of the 26 children looked after during this period required accommodation due to being unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) and in each of these cases, they were received into care under S.20 and appropriately remained looked after under this legal status throughout the year. Six of the 24 UASC became care leavers upon reaching the age of 18 during this reporting year and are being supported by the local authority accordingly. One further UASC





became a care leaver after a judicial review, due to them contesting a previous age assessment. This makes 7 UASC care leavers in total.

Six UASC were transferred to a different Local Authority, as they were on the national transfer scheme.

One UASC went missing from care after 6 days in their placement after stating they did not want to be in looked after accommodation, instead preferring independent accommodation. The missing protocol was instigated but the police were unable to locate the young person. The young person had all relevant details for professionals and his foster placement but after a significant duration, did not return. The case was subsequently closed to City of London.

The child who was subject to an interim care order ceased to be looked after when they were returned to their parent's care under a supervision order.

A child subject to a Full Care Order became a care leaver on their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday, leaving no children in care under S.31 as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

The profile of children in the care of the City at year end is unique for the following reasons:

- ❖ 100% are UASC; and
- ❖ 100% are male

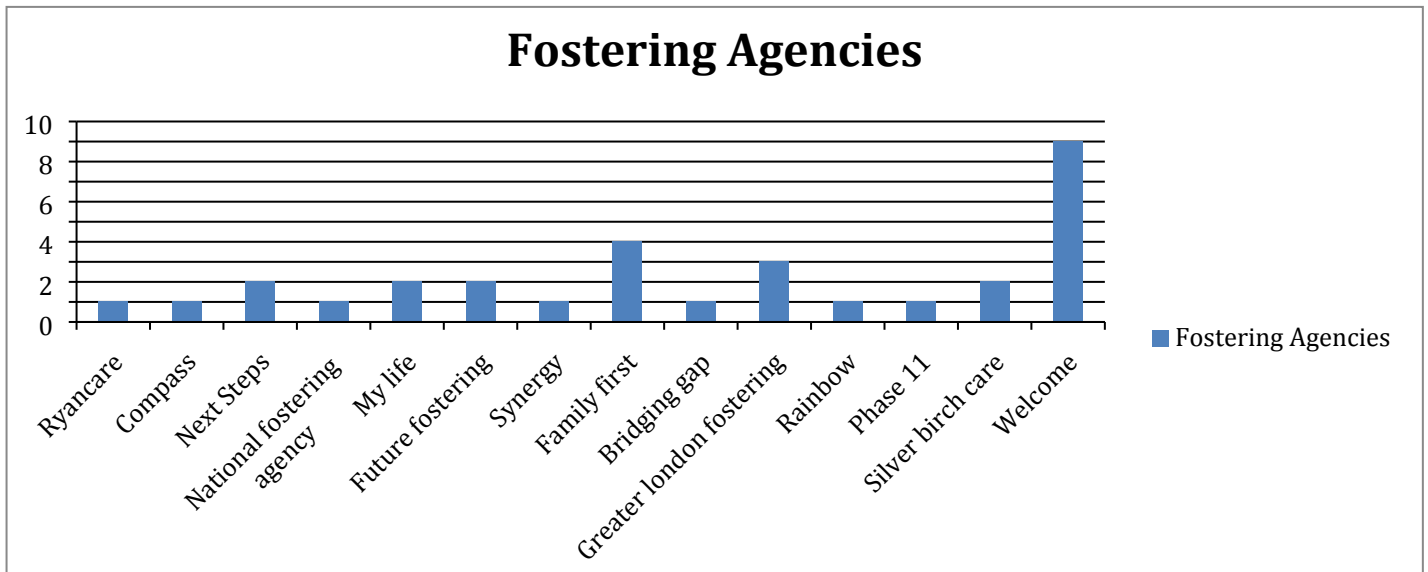
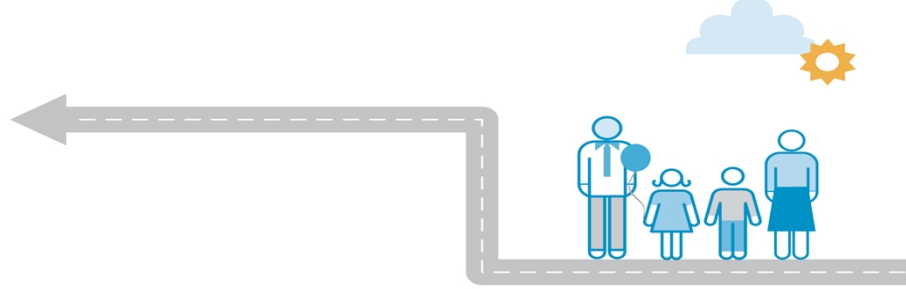
It is also worth highlighting that:

- ❖ The total number of children in care during this reporting period is 53% higher than the last two years and in all but two cases, this increase is accounted for by the rise in UASC;
- ❖ There has not been any City of London resident child accommodated throughout 2017/2018; and
- ❖ None of the children in care during this period have presented with or been assessed as having a disability.

Figure 1.4



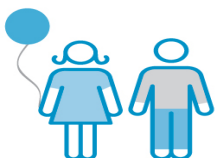


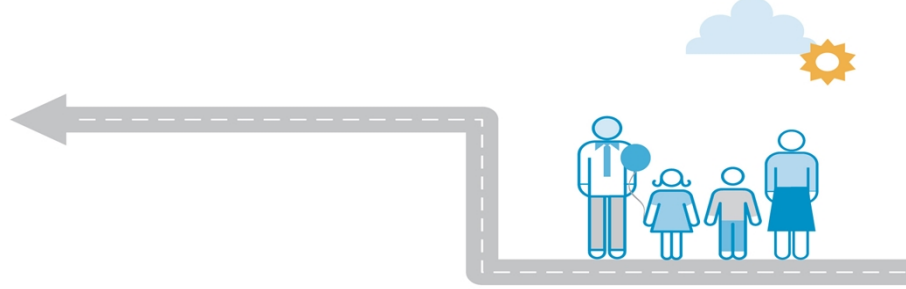


The City of London does not have an in-house fostering service and therefore commissions placements from external agencies for each child according to their individual needs. Throughout this year, the City's children in care were placed with 14 different independent fostering agencies (IFAs). The 10 children in care as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 were placed across six different IFAs. Each agency used was rated Good in their most recent Ofsted inspection.

There was an issue in December 2017 when an independent fostering agency we were using for two placements-future fostering, had an Ofsted monitoring visit where significant concerns were raised about the agency. It was found that inexperienced and unqualified staff were carrying out social work roles, resulting in the insufficient assessment of potential foster carers. Upon being notified of this inspection outcome, the two children in care in separate placements, were moved to a new foster carer with a different agency and a semi-independent provision within 1 week of the concerns being raised. Future fostering is no longer in operation and City of London continue to check Ofsted ratings before placements are agreed.

Figure 1.5





## Placement Distance



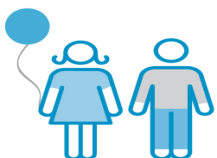
As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, 92% of placements were within 15 miles of the City with 15 of the 26 children living within the 0-10-mile range. Of the 8% that have been placed further away, one has been in placement long term with a celebration event to commemorate the permanency of the placement. The other was a planned move in line with the young person's wishes. They have since become a care leaver and have chosen to stay in the area.

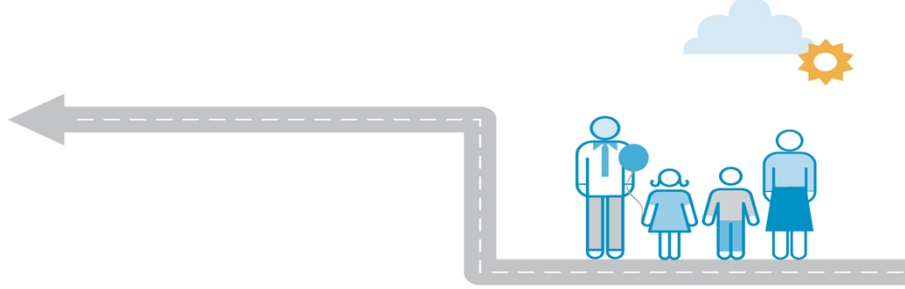
### 3.2. Statutory Reviews

42 statutory reviews were held in 2017/2018. 15 were initial reviews, 9 were second reviews, and 18 were subsequent reviews as illustrated below.

Figure 2.0

## Statutory Review Type





39 reviews occurred as single meetings this year. The three reviews that took place over a series of meetings were arranged to facilitate children's participation and to support the completion of pathway planning activity.

5 Statutory review meetings did not take place within timescales. The reasons for each meeting are outlined below:

1. Child missing from care
2. Unplanned appointment from CAMHS offered to child
3. Transfer of dates between old and new IRO
4. Foster carer and young person away for holiday
5. Foster carer and young person away for holiday

There have been no LAC reviews out of timescales since October 2017. All LAC reviews are now booked 1 month before their due date.

### 3.3. Focus of LAC reviews

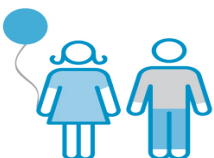
There has been a change in the focus of LAC review meetings. Previously, it had been expressed by social workers and children that LAC reviews were at times too long. It is important that children and young people feel their review is purposeful and engaging. Therefore, the reviews now focus primarily on the agenda of the child/young person with any other important issues of note covered if needed. Information such as PEP meetings and dates of health assessments can be gathered from the social worker LAC review report and included in the new template of minutes pre-review. This process of 'front loading' the review with relevant information, means the LAC review meeting is shorter and more focused on what is important to the child/young person. This then contributes to them feeling more involved in their care plan.

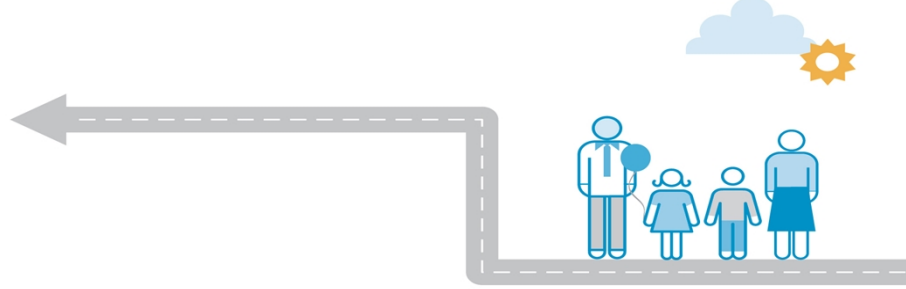
### 3.4. LAC review minutes

There has been a change to the format of minutes that are sent out to children and young people. Previously, the completed form on the child's electronic file (using computer system mosaic) would be sent out to all attendees and children. This form is heavily data based and refers to the child/young person in the third person.

There is now a new word document template that addresses the child/young person directly. It also includes, if appropriate, photos of key events and achievements of the child/young person.

The aim of this new form was to increase the involvement of children/young people in the review process, their care plan and to celebrate their achievements. Please see appendix 1 for an example of the new format.

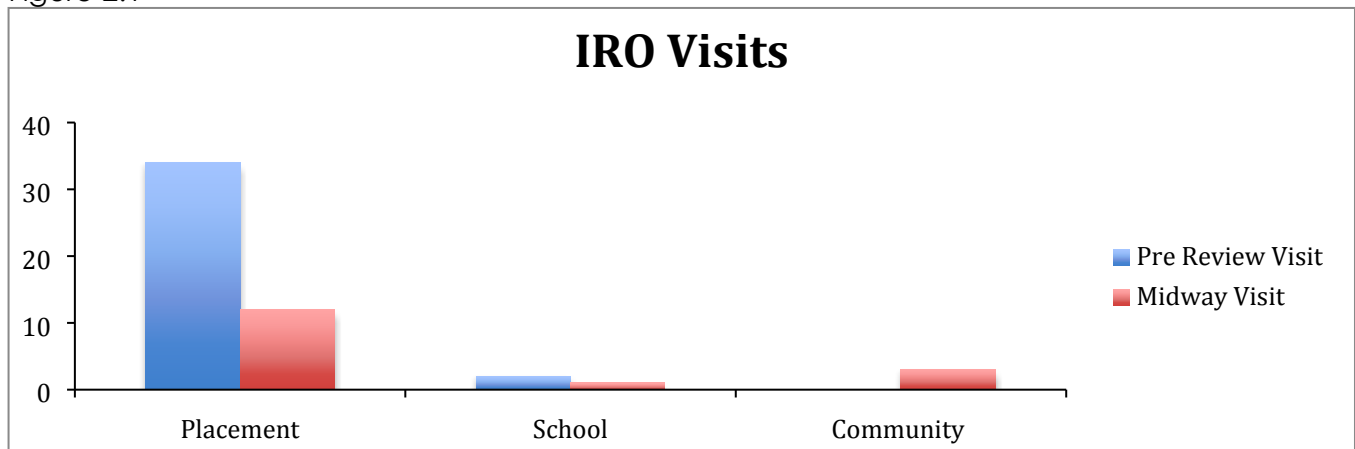




The electronic record form is also still being sent out as this must be completed for recording statutory data on the electronic system.

### 3.5. IRO visits

Figure 2.1



The IRO conducted 16 standalone visits to meet with children during this reporting period. The purpose of these visits was to introduce the role of the IRO to newly accommodated children and in all cases, to consult children and monitor the quality and progress of their care plans.

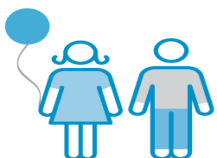
There were also 36 pre-review visits, whereby the IRO met with the child/young person on the same day as their meeting but in a separate visit, prior to the meeting starting. The purpose of these visits was to confirm the agenda of the meeting with the young person and ensure they understood the review process.

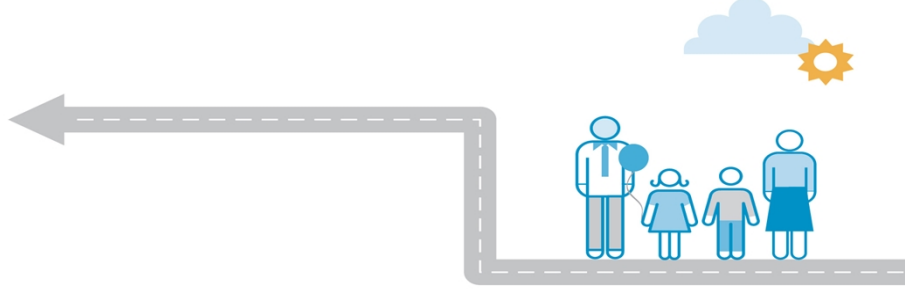
A midway visit is recorded as a separate document on the system and is a stand-alone piece of work. A pre-review visit is noted in the LAC review documents

Of the 16 midway visits, 12 took place at the child's placement, 3 in the community and 1 in the child's school.

Of the 36 pre-review visits, 34 took place at the placement and 2 took place at the child's school.

The majority of midway visits took place in the children's placements at 75%, with the remaining 25% occurring at the children's schools and cafés local to their placement. Even in the cases where visits took place in various community settings, the IRO has met with the foster carers and children in each case in their placements on at least one occasion.





In 100% of the visits conducted, the IRO met with children on their own.

### 3.6. Consultation and Participation in Reviews

The IRO service is committed to and guided by the duty to ascertain the wishes and feelings of children in care and to ensure that these are given due consideration by the local authority.

Children's views about all aspects of their care planning and review processes are sought after by the IRO during Pre Review and Midway Visits, by reviewing completed Have Your Say consultation booklets, and during review meetings where children are given the space to express their wishes and feelings, encouraged to ask questions, and supported to raise issues when needed.

The IRO also ensures that the views of the children's foster carers are established during placement visits, through consultation forms and during review meetings.

The IRO contacted and consulted directly with the parents for both of the 2 children whose parents' whereabouts the local authority knew.

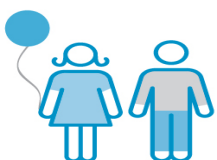
Consultation with any of the parents or family members of the 24 UASC in care has not been achieved due to either the children indicating that this is not possible or social workers' reporting that they have not been able to reach the parents for whom they had been given contact details. The IRO service acknowledges the complicated nature of family relationships for UASC and is sensitive to the safety considerations required as a result.

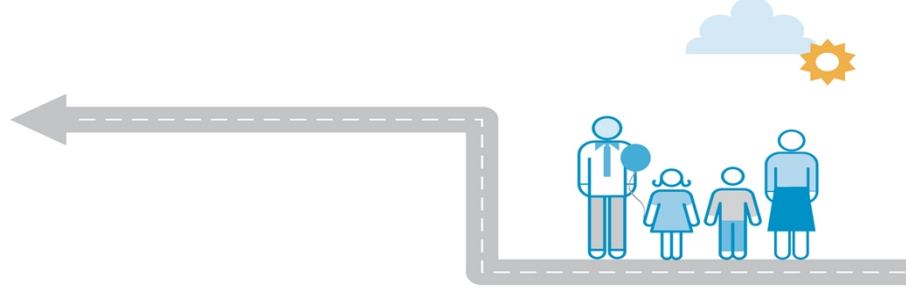
### Consultation documents

Use of the consultation documents has been an area requiring improvement for at least the last 2 reporting years. In 2015/16 38% of children were completing the consultation documents and 40% of carers. In 2016/17 this number had reduced and for this reporting year, of the 42 reviews that took place 11% of children completed consultation documents.

A factor influencing these figures could be due to the change in IRO service as for the first 6 months of this reporting year, there was not a full time IRO in position. This meant there was less emphasis on reminding social workers to send out the forms. Furthermore, there has been a continuing theme of children and foster carers expressing their views that the consultation booklets were not of high quality and were laborious to use. The ethnicity of young people is also likely a factor. The consultation form is in English with no graphics to aid communication.

Since September 2017 when the IRO has been in full time post, the issue of consultation methods has been a significant focus of work. A business case was compiled and presented to senior management which reviewed the current situation and options that could be used. The outcome was a recommendation for the City of London to purchase a contract with a service called



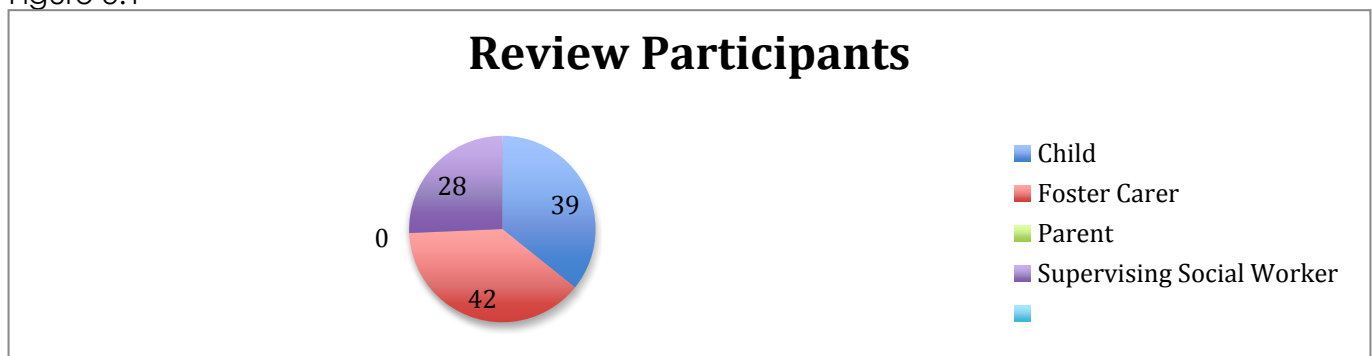


MOMO (Mind of my own). This is an app that helps young people express their views and workers evidence them. It can be used on smart phones, tablets, laptops and computers. Every child will have their own account and can express their views via the app at any time. These views will then be sent electronically to the City of London where they can be uploaded on to the child's file. There are sections for the children to communicate directly with specific workers such as their social worker, IRO and virtual school head. For children where English is not their first language (which is 100% of the end of year cohort of Looked after children), they can use visual aids on the app to support them to communicate and/or use the app with their social worker, IRO or other professionals.

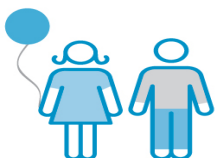
The app is solely for children meaning that carers will continue to receive consultation forms. However, the format of this will be amended to make it clearer and more accessible for them to use.

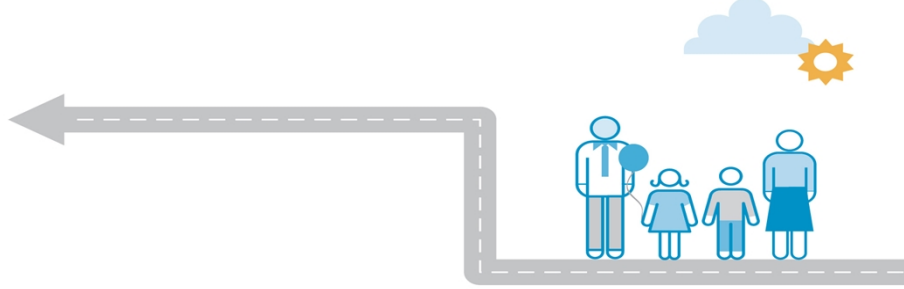
It has been agreed by the senior management team to progress with purchasing MOMO. The implementation period will be a key time to train social workers and foster carers as they will be the key line of support for children in using the app. The plan is for MOMO to be active in the City of London by the end of 2018.

Figure 3.1



As illustrated in Figure 3.1, foster carers attended 100% of the 42 reviews that took place during this reporting period; children were present in 92% of the reviews; a parent or significant family





member was present in none of the review meetings; supervising social workers attended 88% of the meetings.

In one of the reviews where the child did not attend, the IRO is satisfied based on her own contact with him that due to his young age it was not appropriate for him to be present in the main part of the LAC review. However, the IRO conducted a separate visit to the child and liaised with the CAFCASS guardian and social worker to ensure the child's views were represented throughout.

One further child did not attend their review as they were given a last-minute appointment with the Home Office. The child was happy to convey their views through their social worker and the IRO spoke to the child pre and post review to ensure their views were represented.

The IRO works with social workers to promote children's participation by ensuring that review meetings are arranged at a time and place that best suits the child and that they are consulted about who should be invited.

In keeping with children's expressed wishes, review meetings have taken place in placements, at schools and once, in the local authority's office; meetings have excluded a parent in one case at the child's request.

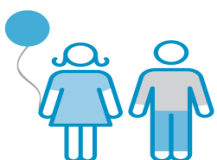
All children are offered the opportunity to chair their own reviews and are provided with support from the IRO to prepare them if they choose to chair their meeting. This helps to promote their active participation in the decision-making processes of their lives and to empower them through increased self-esteem. One child successfully chaired their meeting this year and one other child has expressed an interest in chairing their next review.

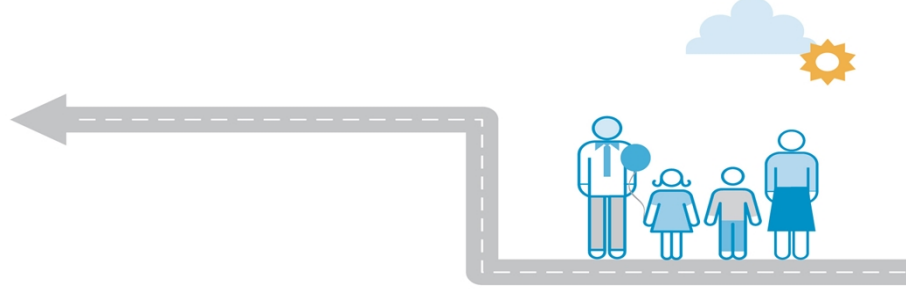
### 3.7. Children's Rights

Action For Children provide the full range of children's rights services for the City's children in care.

The IRO works hard to ensure that children in care understand, have access to, and make use of their right to independent advocacy, independent visiting services (IV), and the complaints process by maintaining this topic as a standing agenda item for each review meeting and contact the IRO has with children.

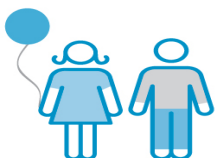
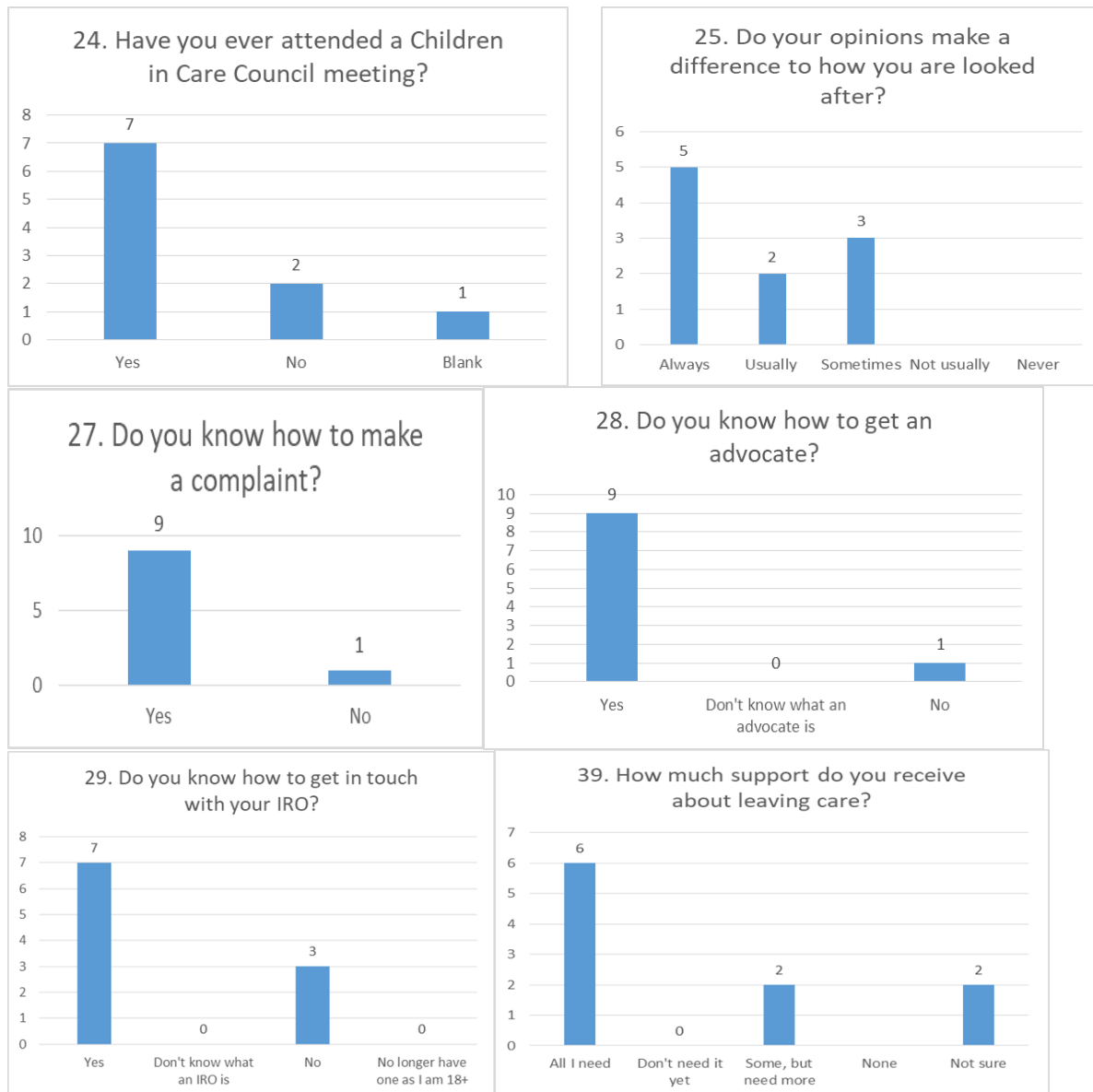
There has been good use of the independent advocacy service this year with five of the 26 children accessing the support of an advocate. The advocates have been key in supporting the children with the issue of the national transfer scheme. The 5 children who used advocates had been placed on the national transfer scheme due to the quota of children in care in the City of London being significantly over the threshold. All five children with an advocate contested this move as the length of time to move them had gone past the recommended 4 weeks. One of the children used their advocate to make a stage 1 complaint. The four other children used their advocate to express their dissatisfaction with the plans for moving them out of London. All five children remained in the care of the City of London after the complaints and disputes were raised.



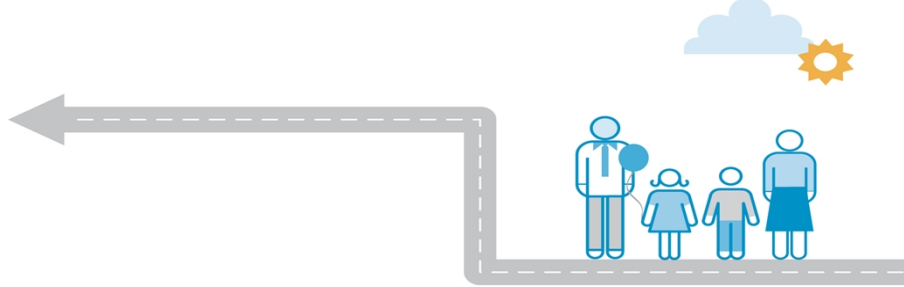


During February and March 2018, Action for Children carried out the Annual Service User Survey among children and young people supported by the City of London Children's Services Teams.

Below are some examples of their findings:







Compared to the advocacy services, there has been a slower response to allocating children with an independent visitor if they request one. There have been two instances where a child had turned 18 or was about to turn 18 before they were able to be matched. Three children have long term visitors and they have stated they enjoy their company and the support they provide.

Every child in care has a copy of the City's Pledge in English and in their native language. The IRO ensures that all children's rights information is routinely shared with foster carers specifically so that they are equipped to support the children in their care to exercise their rights.

## 4. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN CARE

### 4.1. Care Planning

Services and support provided to looked after children in the City are of a high quality. The size of the looked after population is such that each child in care is known to all members of the team and senior management group and there is clear time and resource commitments made to ensuring their needs are met. The survey completed by Action for Children shows the high level of support children feel from their social worker. Of the 10 children interviewed by Action for Children in their annual survey, 80% said they knew what their care plan was and understood it.

However, this evidence is not always being recorded on children's files. Of the 14 children who came into care during this reporting period, only 21% had a care plan recorded on their file within the statutory 10 working days of them coming into care. Of the remaining 79%, 54% left City of London care under the national transfer scheme with no care plan on file. 36 % had a subsequent pathway plan and one care plan recorded on their case file.

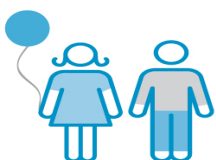
#### Pathway plans

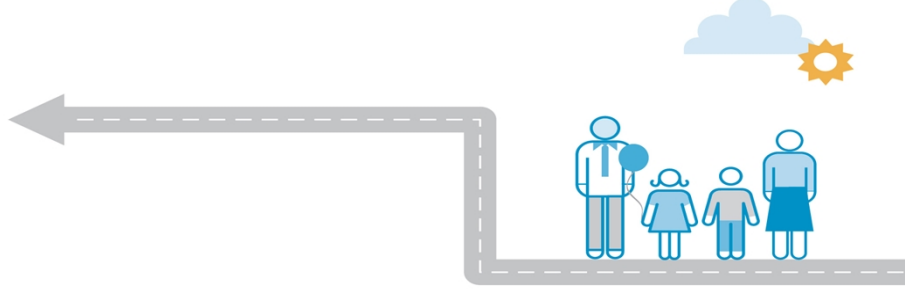
There is a similar trend regarding the completion and/or recording of pathway plans. Of the 26 children accommodated during this year, 20 reviews or first pathway plans were due for 13 of the looked after children. Of these 20 pathway plans 10 were completed on time, equalling a 50% adherence to timescales.

#### Post 18 reviews

The Post 18 independent review protocol, an enhanced service which sets out the circumstances when an independent oversight of pathway plans for care leavers can be offered, remains in place. All young people are informed/reminded of this service at their last LAC review before turning 18 and how to request this. To date, no care leaver has requested this service. Going forward, the plan is for letters to be sent to care leavers, 6 months before they turn 19 to remind them of this service.

### 4.2. Placement Stability





Of the 26 children looked after during this reporting period, 13 were newly accommodated UASC and 6 of them have experienced placement breakdown within the first 6 months. 2 further children who were in long term placements experienced a placement breakdown, one of whom has had 3 placement breakdowns over the course of 1 year (which is explored further below).

Given the City's care population of predominately UASC and there being no planned accommodations throughout this year, the initial placement of children is either an emergency arrangement or through London Asylum Seekers Consortium duty rota system. This means that all placement searching activity is done with little information about the child, is always time pressured, and significantly limited by the shortage of foster carers experienced in looking after the needs of UASC in this current climate of increased migration.

Where the social work team have had the opportunity to plan placement moves, the quality of the search and matching process is good. Children are involved in the process, the application of learning from the breakdown is evident, and the search is informed by the child's short and long-term care needs.

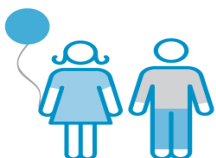
As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, 3 of the 10 children in care are living in placements that are not a match across any aspects of their identity. In each of those cases, the children declined the opportunity to search for placements more reflective of their ethnic, religious and/or cultural identities. In the remaining 7 cases, the children and the foster families share similar identities in at least one respect and there is a commitment to understanding and supporting the children to practice and develop their individual identities in line with their backgrounds and expressed wishes.

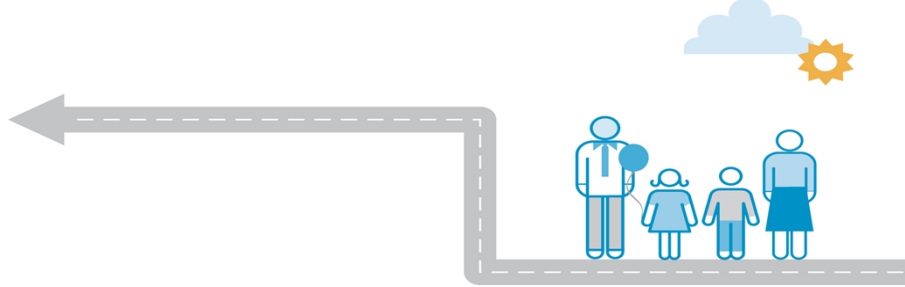
### 4.3. Achieving Permanency

Of the 26 children looked after during this reporting period:

- ❖ 7 transitioned into adulthood and continue to receive support from the City as care leavers
- ❖ 6 were transferred to Local Authorities outside of London under the National Transfer scheme
- ❖ 1 was returned to the care of their mother under a Supervision Order
- ❖ 3 are in established long term fostering arrangements under S.20
- ❖ 4 are 16 years or older and in the foster families they intend to remain with until they reach 18
- ❖ 1 child went missing and has not returned
- ❖ 1 child turned 18 shortly after coming into care and subsequently transferred to support of NASS.
- ❖ 3 children are 16 and are in placements that require further assessment of their suitability for long term care.

Of the children remaining in care as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, 70% are in placements that are either long term or established placements until they reach 18. Therefore, the above range of permanency outcomes for the children in care this year is good.





#### 4.4. Health

The timescales for initial health assessment is within 20 working days of coming into care. Initial health assessments were completed within timescales for 10 out of the 14 newly accommodated children this year. 2 children were moved to new carers with a new local authority before their initial health assessment had taken place. One child missed their first initial health assessment as their foster carer forgot the appointment and one initial health assessment was out of timescales due to a late referral from the social worker.

All 26 children in care throughout this year received their statutory health assessments and of the 8 review health assessments due during this period, 7 were completed within the 12month timescale.

The IRO service has continued the quarterly review meeting process with the designated Children Looked After Nurse to improve the independent monitoring of the care and health services needed by and provided to children in care. Findings from these meetings are fed back to the local authority in the form of recommendations or notifications of agreements reached. The social work team manager has responsibility for implementing these recommendations. An example of the effectiveness of this arrangement is a recent issue regarding leaving care health assessments were not occurring in timescales. A system has now been put in place for the social work team to alert the health team when a child is due to be turning 18 and leaving care.

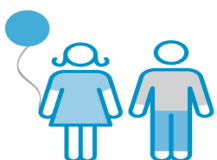
All children who were accommodated and remained in care during this reporting year were offered baseline CAMHS assessments. As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, none of the children remaining in care continue to access therapy services at CAMHS.

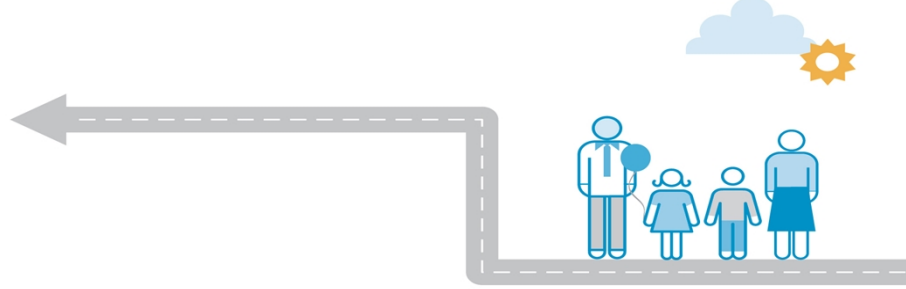
#### 4.5. Education

All children in care as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 were in education with one in a school placement and 8 in colleges. One child was in a provision that was an alternative to mainstream college. This was due to a number of unplanned placement moves and lack of space in local colleges at short notice. The virtual school head is responsible for overseeing the educational placements of Looked After Children.

Throughout the reporting year, the majority of cases had PEPs completed within timescales and ahead of statutory review meetings. Since being highlighted as an issue in previous annual reports, there is now a system in place for the social work team to ensure PEP reports are shared with children, education establishments and carers.

Extracurricular tuition was offered to all children throughout this period with specific additional support made available to the 3 children who were in their GCSC year and UASC who were not able to secure education placements in a timely manner due to their in-year arrival or disputed age.





A common theme in LAC reviews is for children to request a laptop to support their studies. The Action for Children survey also identified this as an issue that children spoke about. A new protocol regarding laptops has now been agreed and implemented. Lap tops will be routinely provided to children if agreed at their PEP meeting, up to sum of £200.

While there has been some progress made with respect to supporting children in care to access work experience placements through the City, this is an area in need of further development.

#### **4.6. Life story work**

A review of the children's files shows evidence of innovative and positive life story work being completed with children and young people. However, at present, there is no specific place for this work to be located and each piece of life story work is saved as a single document alongside other pieces of work such as assessments, care plans etc. The current system means that if a young person were to be presented with a life story book, it would entail searching through a child's file to locate each piece of work that has been saved. There is also no current process of gathering pieces of life story work and presenting them to children and young people in the form of a book.

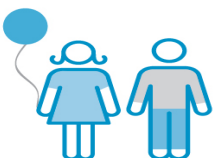
#### **4.7. Midway monitoring**

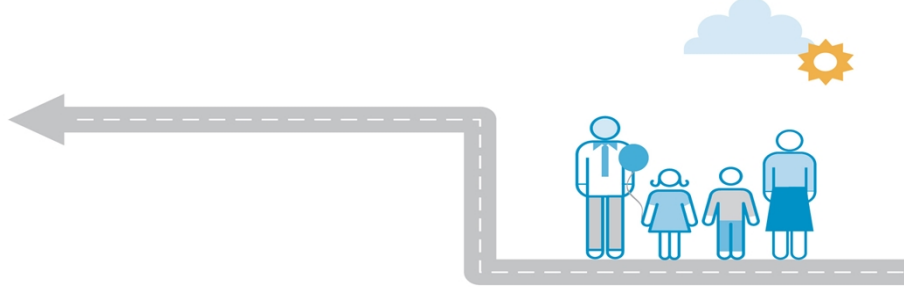
There has been an increased emphasis on midway monitoring this year with a new template now in action. The list of actions from each LAC review are checked against information from the child's record with information on outstanding or unrecorded actions requested from the social worker.

#### **4.8. Practice Recognition and Dispute Resolution**

One of the key functions of the IRO is to identify and resolve issues arising from the care planning process. In the City this is called the Dispute Resolution Process for Independent Reviewing Officers (DRP). The DRP is a 6-stage process that begins with the team manager and ends with a referral to Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) but it encourages resolution at the lowest appropriate level and anticipates that in the vast majority of cases, issues can be resolved through discussion between professionals.

The IRO escalated concerns to stage 2 of the DRP in three cases and stage 3 in 2 cases. All disputes were regarding the national transfer scheme and the length of time it was taking to transfer the children. All five children were waiting in excess of 10 weeks, during which time they had made attachments to their foster carers, started attending college and made links in the community. The City of London social work team were proactive throughout in requesting updates on the transfers from the Home Office and senior management agreed that the transfer times had become too long. However, the quota of children in care had gone significantly over threshold and there was an impact on the resources available.





All five children utilised the support of an advocate regarding the transfer issue. One child made a stage 1 formal complaint.

All five formal disputes raised by the IRO were resolved, with the children remaining in the care of the City of London.

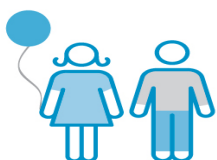
The IRO Dispute Form was used to record the management of this dispute for two out of the five cases, but documented in the children's case file for all disputes.

Whilst the National transfer scheme remains in place, the IRO recognises that formal disputes will likely be raised again in the future. It has been nationally recognised that the National transfer scheme has not fulfilled its purpose and has resulted in significant delays for children, causing them emotional distress. Therefore, it is the role of the IRO to continue to raise this as an issue. It is important to note however, that senior management have consistently agreed with the concerns raised by the IRO but are in a difficult position of having to manage staff resources and budgets.

All other concerns have been resolved through informal challenge within the service and during quality assurance monitoring meetings. In no particular order, the tables below provide samples of the good practice recognised and the issues of concern identified throughout 2017/2018.

Table1.0

<b>Good practice identified</b>
All children placed in foster families to 18
Voice of the child is listened to
SW Support to UASC with immigration process
SW and Virtual school head support with education
Quality and timeliness of statutory visits
Transfer of learning between reviews leading to improved practice
Involvement of children in placement changes
Quality of SW/CLA relationships
Support for children to engage in CiCC
No unnecessary Age Assessments initiated
Children supported to develop talents/interests
SW efforts to consult and engage parents and significant family members



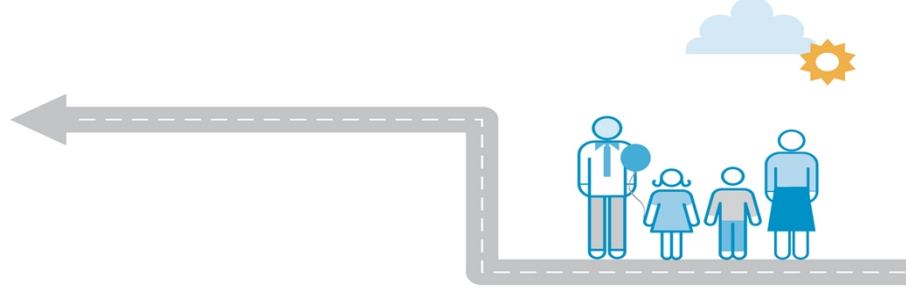


Table 1.1

Issues of Concerns Identified	Current Status
Children's preparation for review meetings	There need to improvements in children's involvement in planning their review and the support offered to them in completing consultation documents. A new method of consultation will be going live by the end of 2018.
Delay in children being moved to new placement under National transfer scheme	The National transfer scheme remains in place with delays on-going. IRO's and senior management teams across London are voicing their concerns to the Home Office,
Care and pathway Plans recorded in statutory timescales	2 monthly meetings with team manager have been initiated to keep track of timescales across the LAC service and increase early identification of issues.
Life story work	Current system remains in place. Plans are being made for this to be reviewed in 2018/19 reporting period.

## 5. Quality Assurance of the IRO Service

### 5.1. Supervision and Management Oversight

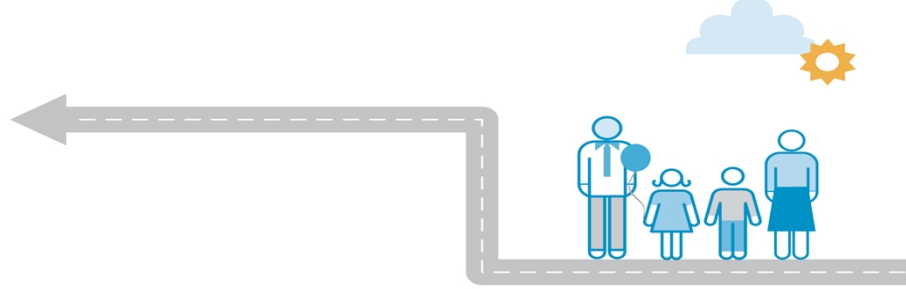
The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager supervises the IRO once every 4weeks. These sessions focus on practice issues as well as service development needs.

The revised statutory guidance states that designated senior managers must consider the decisions from reviews. This is in part due to the need to monitor and account for any decisions with resource implications. Any disagreements with the decisions made are required to be sent to the IRO in writing within 5 days for resolution and where this is not possible through informal means, the DRP will need to be used. In the City the social work team and service managers are the designated seniors responsible for considering review decisions. The fact that there haven't been any disagreements raised indicates that managers are overall satisfied with the recommendations and decisions made by the IRO.

### 5.2. Performance Monitoring







The IRO meets with the Performance Analyst regularly to monitor compliance with statutory review timescales and the degree to which the IRO is 'keeping in touch' with children in care. The one issue raised has been regarding the LAC reviews out of timescales, for which the mitigating reasons have been recorded and the issue resolved. There have been no other issues of non-compliance identified as part of this process. The IRO's performance is reported into the People's Directorate Senior Management Team, the Safeguarding Sub Committee, and the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board's Quality Assurance Sub Committee. There are also quarterly Quality Assurance meetings held at the City of London where the relevant LAC figures are communicated.

### 5.3. Case File Auditing

The IRO's footprint and the quality of the service provided are considered as part of all formal case file audits. There has been an independent full-scale audit completed by external agency, Aidhour, in 2017. The audit identified that:

*"There is evidence of good quality LAC reviews. The IRO 'footprint' is clearly evident on the case file through mid-point reviews and ongoing scrutiny and oversight in case notes".*

*"Social workers, IRO, first line and senior managers are to be commended on their breadth of knowledge and expertise in supporting asylum seeking young people. There is outstanding evidence of IRO challenge around delays in the National Dispersal Scheme with equally outstanding and timely responses from management at all levels".*

The 4 cases recorded with overdue LAC reviews were also noted in this audit and as stated in this report, the issue has been resolved with no further reviews out of timescale.

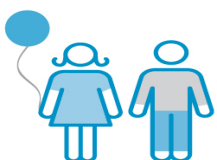
### 5.4. Children's Views

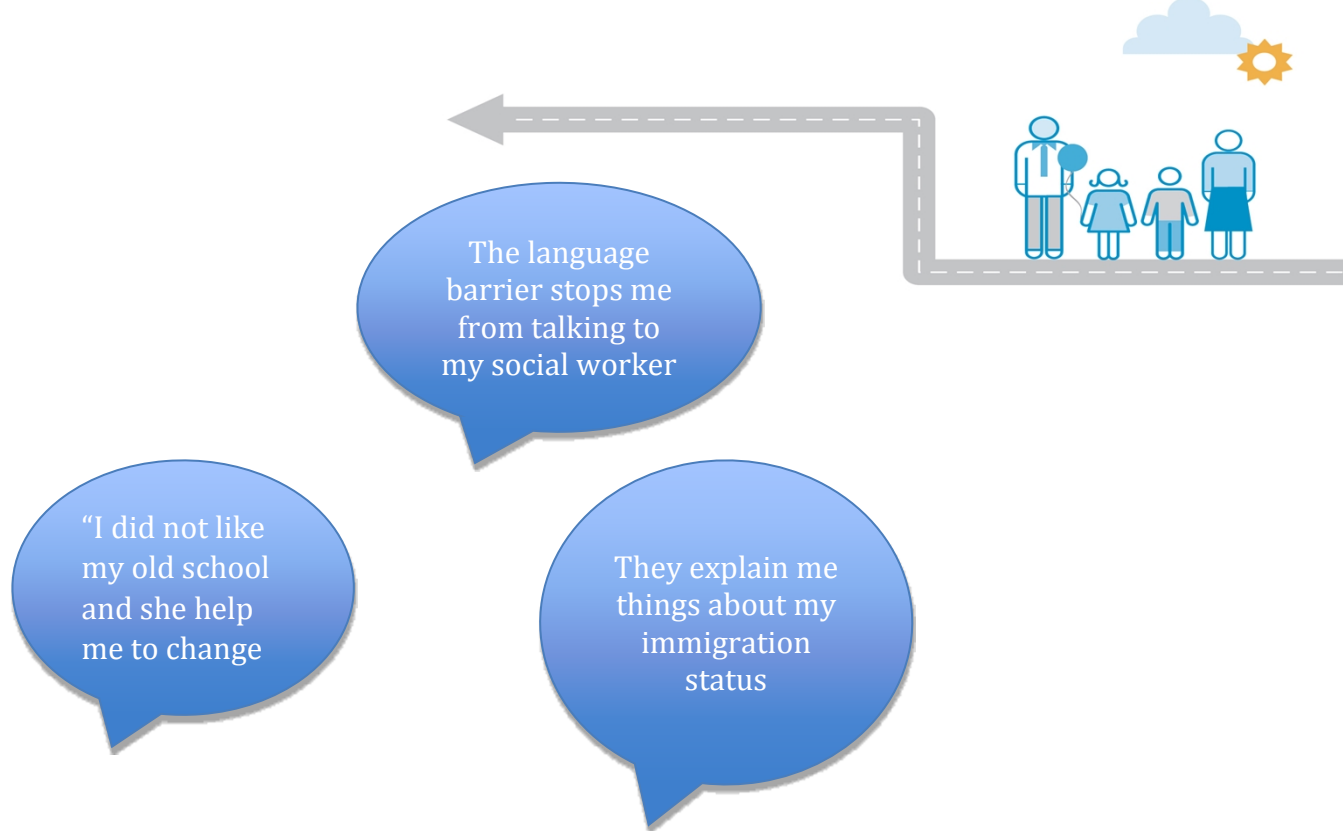
Children's views about the IRO and their review meetings are an important aspect of the quality assurance process of the IRO service. Here are some examples of what children in care had to say:

They are great. They are doing their job.

I asked for a winter coat and they got me one. "

I'm happy always where I live because my foster family is very nice



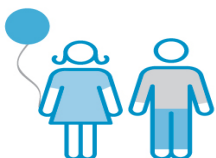


### 5.5. Social Works' Views

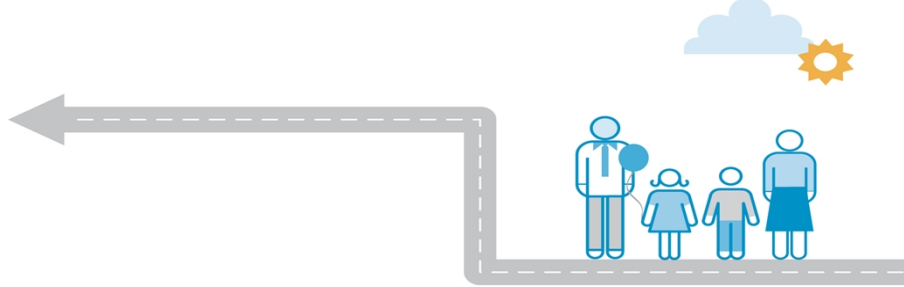
The social work team was invited to provide feedback about the IRO service over the course of this year and responses were received from

Table 2.0

What does the IRO service do well?	What could the IRO service do better?	Any other comments
She is child focussed but has a good	Perhaps there could be more of a challenge	She is an approachable and understanding colleague. She clearly







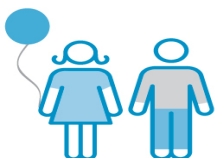
understanding of pressures on frontline SWs.  It is evident during meetings that she has a detailed understanding of the child/young persons needs.	around timescales when they are not met.	cares about children and young people and this is particularly evident in the time she takes to understand their care plans.
Relationship building with young people.	Communication around upcoming review dates.	Incorporate the social workers views when decision-making is made at senior management level.
Relationship building with social workers and other professionals.	Social work visit frequency to be reviewed at each review.	
Innovation.	Make more use of social work reports for CLA reviews. Sometimes it feels as though this is a simply form filling exercise for the social worker.	
Mid way monitoring is thorough and useful.		
Flexible, supportive approach to social workers whilst maintaining professional boundaries and challenging when needed.		
Being approachable, friendly and helpful.		

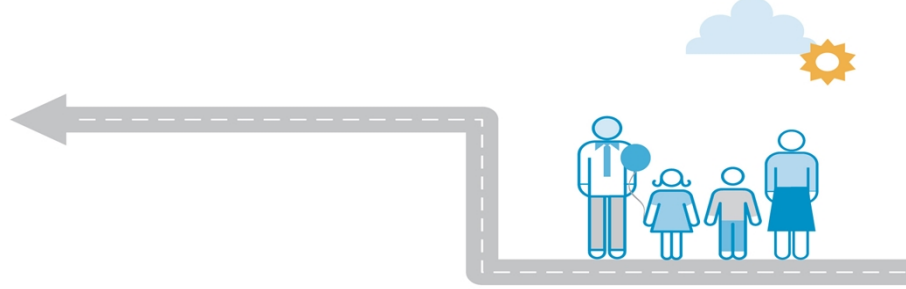
## 6. Overview

### 6.1 Achievements

The positive impact of the IRO service in 2017/2018 is evident in the following list of achievements:

- ❖ Consistent participation of children in their review meetings
- ❖ Development of new LAC review minutes template





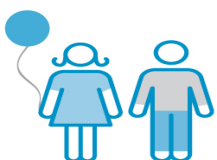
- ❖ Development of new consultation tool
- ❖ Reduction in LAC review meeting length to ensure meetings are purposeful and engaging
- ❖ All children seen alone by the IRO outside of review meetings
- ❖ Active monitoring of children's care plans and needs between review periods
- ❖ Review minutes, contacts and alerts recorded on children's files within the ICS workflow
- ❖ The promotion of the Children's Right services
- ❖ The continuation of review meetings between the IRO, VSH and CLA Designated Nurse

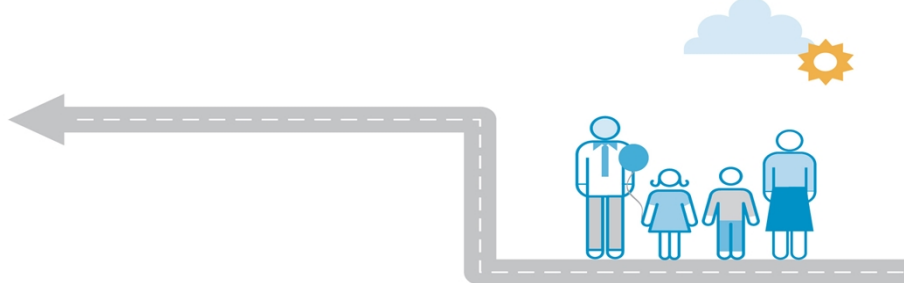
In addition to direct work with children and the local authority, the IRO takes part in the London IRO Practitioner Network and serves as a practitioner representative to the London IRO Managers' Group. Engagement in these pan-London groups facilitates the IRO's access to information and the experience of colleagues from larger authorities. It also ensures that the experience and needs of the City's children in care are represented in forums that have the potential to influence the direction of practice and statutory guidance about the services and supports they receive.

The IRO service has been alert to safeguarding issues for children in care and will continue to monitor care plans closely to include actions that address the known risks of all forms of exploitation and aims to build safety and stability according to the needs of each child. The IRO continues to access learning and training to aid their development and understanding of the needs of Looked After Children.

## 6.2 Update on planned objective for 2016/2017

Objective	Actions	Update
To look at more innovative ways of engaging with young people in the engagement of their reviews and hearing their voice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at different mediums to use to consult with young people.</li> <li>2. Look at the different models currently being used in other LA's.</li> <li>3. Consult with the CiCC to ascertain their views about the models reviewed.</li> <li>4. Consult with the Children and Families and SMT.</li> <li>5. Trail new model and evaluate impact.</li> </ol>	<p>Actions 1-4 have been successfully completed. Review of consultation methods was presented in a business case along with feedback from young people in care. Agreement has been confirmed for new application to be implemented across children's service to improve consultation methods.</p> <p>Action 5: New application will be implemented by December 2019.</p>





		Evaluation of impact will be monitored throughout.
Improve the quality of reviews and child protection conferences.	<p>1. By setting clear expectation that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports are shared with young people, parents/ carers in adequate time before reviews and conferences.</li> <li>• That all professionals who attend the children's looked after review and child protection conferences provide a written report.</li> <li>• If reports are not provided contact will be made with the professionals line manager to ascertain why.</li> <li>• That any meeting involving children and families involves their views in the first person.</li> <li>• That monitoring forms are completed at each review/ conference and this performance data is reviewed within SMT and QA Meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Child protection conferences have proceeded with reports being completed and shared with families before the day of conference.</li> <li>• First person recording of views remains an area of improvement. It is hoped the new application Mind of Mo Own (MOMO) will support the improvement of first person recording.</li> <li>• Monitoring forms remain an area for improvement. This action will be moved on to objectives for 2018/2019 work.</li> </ul>

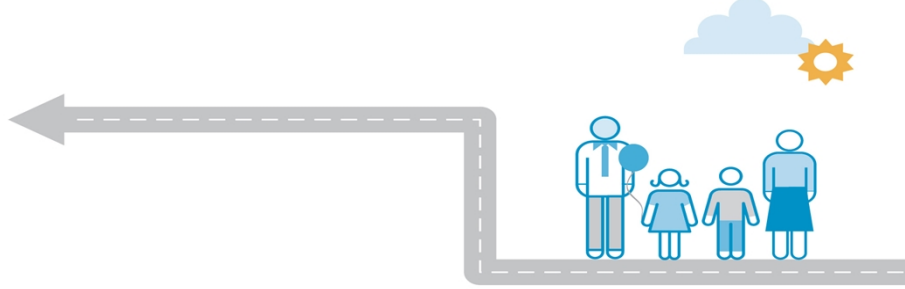
### 6.3 Areas for Improvement

The IRO service acknowledges the need for improvement in the following areas:

- ❖ Include social work visit frequency in LAC review actions
- ❖ Schedule allotted time with social workers to discuss and confirm plans for upcoming LAC reviews
- ❖ More robust challenge of timescales not being met
- ❖ Ensure all children and young people know how to contact the IRO

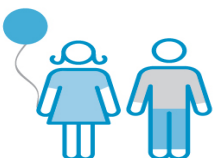
### 6.4 Conclusion

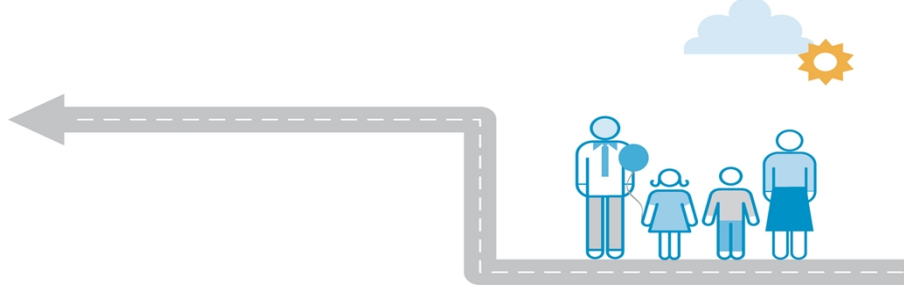




The IRO service has made significant contributions to quality assuring and improving services for children in care throughout 2017/2018. The monitoring functions of the role have been strengthened and the IRO's knowledge of and relationship with the children in care is a positive feature of the service. The LAC review process has been changed to ensure the meetings and records are more accessible for children and young people.

The IRO service notes that the presiding theme throughout this year has been the consistent and positive relationships that social workers build and maintain with the children and young people in care. The enthusiasm and commitment they show for the service is appreciated, along with the positive communication they have with the IRO. The presiding area of improvement is to ensure that these positive relationships and sound work is being recorded appropriately on the children's' files.





## 7. Planned & Recommended Improvements For 2018/2019

The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service will continue to develop the IRO service across the full range of its roles and functions.

The following outlines the key practice priorities planned for the IRO service in the coming year.

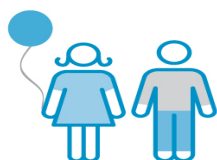
Table 3.0

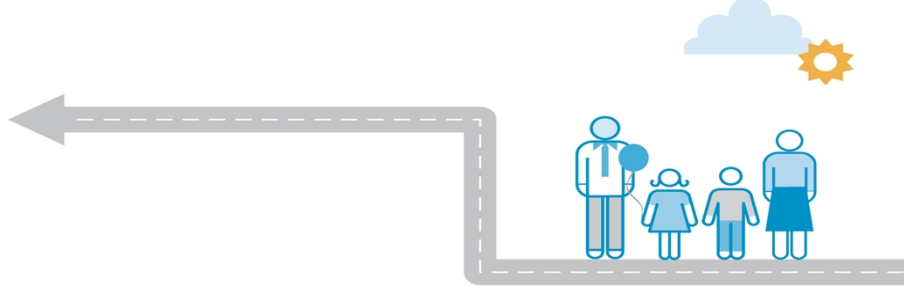
Objective	Actions
Consultation methods to be updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Implementation of new app-Mind of My own</li> <li>7. Improved consultation form for foster carers</li> </ul>
Care plans to be completed within statutory timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. 2 monthly meetings with team managers to review service data and identify trends</li> <li>3. Mosaic system to be checked to ensure care plan document is being generated</li> </ul>
Improve children and young people's understanding of IRO role and ways to contact the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome pack for children coming into care to be reviewed and updated</li> <li>2. Welcome pack forms to be translated into 10 most common languages of LAC cohort to increase understanding</li> <li>3. Increase IRO visits before the first LAC review</li> </ul>

The list below is the IRO service's recommendations for development to the local authority.

Table 3.1

Improve financial arrangements and planning for children	Ensure children have a say in the planning of their review meetings
Update radicalisation risk assessment	Continue to develop understanding and analysis of the equality and diversity needs of UASC in all aspects of care planning
Life story work-improve how this is recorded and compiled on child's record.	Develop knowledge and practice of contingency planning in relation to UASC's immigration outcomes.





## Appendix 1 New template for LAC reviews

Hi M , this is a record of your Looked After Child (LAC) review that happened on 3rd April 2018.

Before the meeting you told me that the issues you wanted to talk about in your meeting were the following:

### **Your agenda:**

Football-you would like to join a club.

Bike-Siobhan needs to apply for one on a bike scheme

Friend visiting

Laptop

### **Attendance**

#### **Attending your meeting was:**

I chaired the meeting (Ria Lane, Independent Reviewing Officer).

M M-interpreter

H W-supervising social worker

N U-your foster carer

S M-your social worker.

I have done a summary of our meeting and the reports below. We agreed some actions that needed to be completed after your meeting and I have listed these at the end.

### **Previous actions**

These are the actions we agreed at your last meeting and an update on them:

M to have secure plans for future-Completed/On-going

M to have developed independent living skills-Completed

M to have access to education and supported throughout to achieve best outcomes-completed

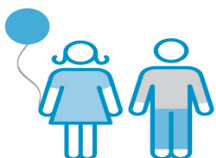
M to have emotional support to process his life experiences-On-going

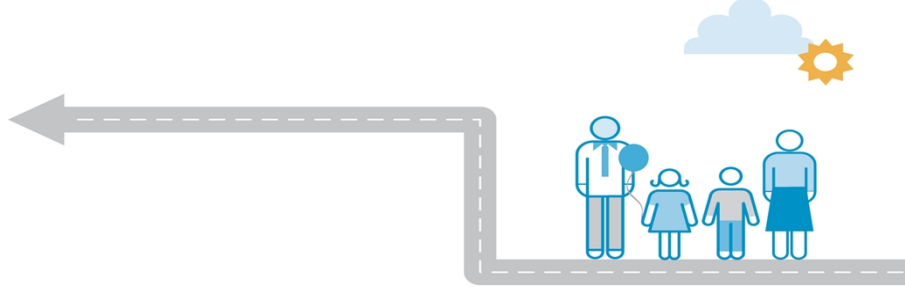
ran

M to have access to social and leisure opportunities (football team)-Not completed

### **Future plans (Pathway plan)**

You have talked this over with Siobhan and you have decided you want to stay with your foster carers until you are 18. This will be discussed at the next Permanency panel in June 2018 where a decision can be made if your arrangement can be made permanent. The panel will need to discuss your foster carer's level of English.





### **Independence skills**

You told the meeting you have learnt a lot of skills whilst living with your foster carers-you are learning cooking from Nighat, and you are always cleaning your room and the house. You said you are always happy to learn new skills.

You told us you are responsible for your own clothing budget now.

You need to get a bank card for online shopping.

You will do some Independent skills work with the supervising social worker.

### **Immigration status**

You told us you had some good news-You have been granted 5 years leave to remain by the Home Office. You now have a National Insurance number on the back of your biometric card.

### **Education**

I have read the report from your last education meeting (PEP) which took place on 12/01/2018  
The actions from your PEP were:

Diane, ICT teacher to assist M to log onto Headway so he is able to practice grammar exercises.  
Completed

Lucy to find out how M enrolls onto entry level 2 ESOL

Julia to send M some past exam papers and M to practice the papers at home. M to try writing small sentences in English via email

Your next education meeting is due to take place by June 2018.

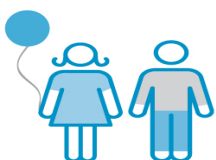
You have recently passed your ESOL level one course and received a certificate-well done M!

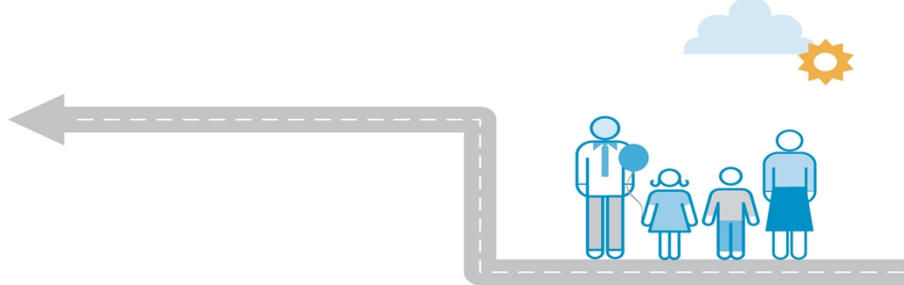


(Photograph cropped for this appendix for data protection)

You still have not received your laptop and this needs to be looked into.

### **Health**





Your most recent health assessment was last year on 17/08/2017. The list below were the actions that needed to happen about your health:

Issues	Action required	By when	Update
GP registration	To register once photographic ID obtained	1 month	Completed
Knee pain	For GP to please review and consider imaging (XR/MRI) and possible referral to orthopaedics if required	1 month	Better now
Rash on chest	For GP to please prescribe anti-fungal treatment	1 month	Completed
Immunisations	For GP to please given catch up immunisation as per letter	1 month	Completed
Infectious disease screen	Referral to UCLH	1 week	Completed
Dental registration	To register once photographic ID obtained	1 month	Completed 17 <sup>th</sup> April next appointment
Opticians			Completed
Emotional wellbeing	Counselling	1 month	Not completed

In your meeting I also checked if the following things had been done:

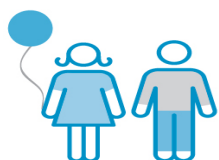
Referral to infectious diseases  
SDQ-completed  
Blue book-not given

### **Social and leisure**

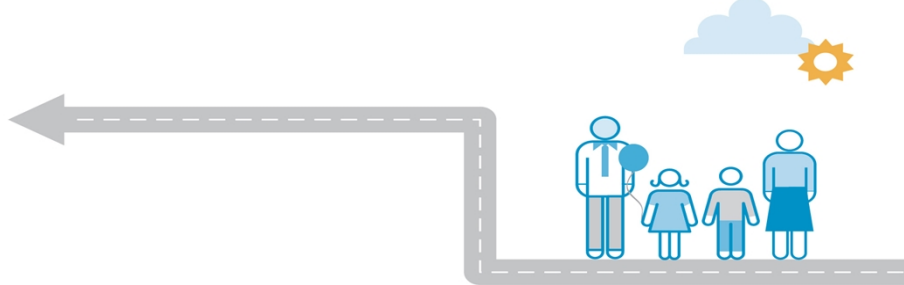
You enjoy meeting your friends and travel independently around London. You play football often with your friends and you said you are the best player! You would like to join a proper football team though.

You have been invited to a Pizza making session at welcome foster care tomorrow

You are planning to attend the next Children In Care Council on 5<sup>th</sup> April-where you will be doing some rock climbing







Your friend Mohammed who was transferred to live in Leeds is coming to visit you-hopefully over the Easter holidays. Holly has spoken to the manager in Leeds and needs your social worker to sign a form and plans can be made. You said you are happy for Mohammed to share a bed with you for one night.

### Money

You are managing your allowances well and are now in charge of your own clothing budget.

### Safeguarding

No safeguarding concerns at present

### Actions

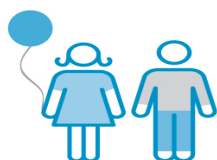
What is important	Action	Who will do this	When will they do it by
You are healthy	Blue book	S and H	30/04/18
You are independent	Independent skills checker SSW	H and S	30/06/18
You have positive social and leisure opportunities	To join a football team	N and H	10/04/18
	Bike referral scheme	S	10/04/18
	H to confirm arrangements with both social workers about your friend Mohammed visiting	H	10/04/18
You are supported with your education	Laptop	R and S	11/04/18
You have goals for your future	Pathway plan	S, SW	18/07/2018
	Permanency panel -confirm date (Ria)	R and S	10/04/18
	Travel document	S	30/04/18
Social worker visits every 4-6 weeks			





**Your next LAC review meeting:** Thursday August 16<sup>th</sup> 2018 at 11am

**Next Children in Care Council:** Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 10:30am



<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Annual Report Virtual School Headteacher Academic Year 2017/18	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Andrew Russell, Virtual School Headteacher Department of Community and Children's Services	

## Summary

This report, which is for information, provides a summary of the achievement of the Virtual School for the academic year 2017/18.

The majority of our looked-after children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). They are making good progress and benefit from the additional support provided by the City of London (CoL). Our care leavers are mainly at college studying English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses, and a few are in employment.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

#### Purpose of the Annual Report

1. This report summarises the education outcomes of looked-after children and care leavers for the 2017/18 academic year. The report outlines the ways that the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) and the Children and Families Team have worked to raise the achievements of the young people. It also identifies the priorities for 2018/19.

#### Role of the Virtual School

2. The Virtual School has the overall responsibility for monitoring, supporting and providing interventions to ensure that looked-after children and care leavers achieve the best possible educational outcomes. The Virtual School strives to achieve this by:
  - co-ordinating and quality assuring all Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
  - monitoring and challenging schools to make effective use of pupil premium in line

- with Department for Education guidance
  - tracking the academic progress, attendance and exclusions of looked-after children
  - ensuring that special educational needs and disability (SEND) requirements are identified and supported appropriately, including applications for statutory assessment
  - ensuring effective transition between schools, colleges, higher education or specialist providers
  - leading training for foster carers, social workers and other professionals
  - encouraging looked-after children and care leavers to have high aspirations about their futures
  - helping to remove barriers to further education.
3. The VSH is 0.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) in term time only. Julia Hodson retired at the end of August 2018 and was replaced by the author of this report (Andrew Russell). I have worked in Virtual Schools in different authorities for several years and was also a former secondary school headteacher.
  4. The Virtual School team comprises the VSH, four social workers and the team manager. Several other colleagues contribute as required:
    - Child psychotherapist, City and Hackney Children's Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
    - Information, Advice and Guidance Advisor, Prospects
    - Children in Care Council (CICC) Co-ordinator
    - Head of Adult Learning, City of London Corporation
  5. The attainment in the Virtual School meeting now forms a part of the Children and Social Care team meeting. The meeting occurs each half term to provide training for the social workers, to review processes, develop policies and discuss cases.

## Cohort

6. There were eight looked-after children educated in either schools or colleges, depending on their age or course studied.
7. The following table indicates the number of looked-after children in schools (up to age 16 years)

Phase	Total in Virtual School	Number of schools	UASC
Nursery	1	1	0
KS1			
KS2			
KS3			
KS4	6	4	6
KS5			
Total	7		

There have been four new UASC this year – all in Year 11. They attended schools/colleges where they have studied mainly English and Maths, with limited access to the National Curriculum. This has allowed them to develop their language skills.

8. Two of the secondary schools have been judged as good; one requires improvement; and the other institute was an alternative provision which does not have an Ofsted judgement. Alternative provision was necessary as the young person had moved foster carers, so a place in mainstream school would not have been suitable so close to the end of the

academic year.

9. The following table indicates the number of looked-after children in college.

Year	Number	UASC
12	3	3
13	6	6
Total	9	

10. All but one of the colleges has been judged as good. However, the colleges that require improvement have been challenged to ensure that they provide a good education for our young people.

11. The following table indicates the number of care leavers by age.

Age	UASC	Education/Employment or Training			
		Higher education (university)	Further education (college)	Employment	Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
19	2		2		
20	2		1		1
21	2		2		
22	1		1		
24	2			2	
Total	9				

## Attainment

12. The results this summer were pleasing. We had two young people gain entry to university: one to study Accounting at the Southbank University and one to study Mechanical Engineering at the University of East London. Most of our young people took entry level courses in ESOL, although a few also took vocational qualifications. One passed eight GCSEs including two Grade 5s (= a high 'C' Grade – all GCSE grades are now numbers).

13. The following table indicates the progress of looked-after children in schools and colleges.

Progress	Number
Significantly below	0
Below	6
Expected	14
Above	2
Significantly above	0
Total	22

14. The following table indicates the outcomes of the care leavers of 2017/18 in the autumn term of 2018/19.

Type		Number	Qualifications studied
------	--	--------	------------------------

1. Higher education (i.e. studies beyond A level)	Full time <sup>1</sup>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree in accounting</li> <li>Degree in Mechanical Engineering</li> </ul>
2. In education other than higher education	Full time	14	Mainly ESOL courses, plus vocational courses in a variety of skills and trades. One is doing a Level 3 jewellery qualification.
	Part time	2	ESOL courses
3. In training or employment	Full time		
	Part time	1	
4. NEET	Illness/disability	0	
	Other	2	
	Pregnancy or parenting	0	

### Attendance and behaviour

15. The following table indicates the behaviour and attendance of looked-after children.

	City of London %
Attendance of cohort	90.11
Permanently excluded	0
At least one fixed-term exclusion	15.4

16. Attendance is just on 90%. The slightly lower average figure compared to last year is a result of one of our looked-after children who has had an unsettled year after going missing and experiencing placement changes. His attendance was a concern at the start of the year, but improved during the year.

17. Behaviour is generally good. Two of our young people had fixed-term exclusions for fighting. They were not the instigator of the fights but retaliated, which led to the exclusions. In future the social workers will emphasise that anyone involved in a fight will be subject to exclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Full-time education means undergoing more than 16 hours of guided learning per week,

## **Personalised Education Plans (PEPs) and Pathway Plans**

18. PEPs are completed termly for all looked-after children at a meeting attended by the young person, social worker, designated teacher from the school and, in most cases, the VSH. The purpose of the meeting is to review progress, attendance, punctuality and behaviour. All parties attending the meeting are expected to contribute to the discussion. Targets and interventions are agreed for the term, with a focus on English and Maths.
19. The CoL continues to have formal PEPs up until the age of 18 years old. This has helped the Virtual School to continue to support the young people and work more closely with the colleges.
20. Young people do not have PEPs after the age of 18. Their targets and progress are recorded in the Pathway Plan. The VSH reviewed the quality of Pathway Plans. It has now been agreed that the following will appear in the education section of Pathway Plans:
- long-term goals
  - details of courses studied
  - reference to actions from previous Pathway Plan
  - attainment and progress
  - achievements and attributes
  - attendance and punctuality
  - behaviour and attitude to learning.

## **Pupil Premium**

21. A pupil premium grant of £1,900 per looked-after child is allocated to the local authority. The fund aims to “raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to reach their potential”.<sup>2</sup> The grant for the looked-after child is allocated to the local authority based on the March return to the Department for Education for the previous year. Any children who are taken into care after this time will not receive a grant until the following year. The grant from April 2017 to April 2018 was for three young people. However, the grant is only allocated to looked-after children up until Year 11. This means that our young people in Years 12 and 13 receive no additional funding (though see Additional Funding below).
22. The pupil premium grant is generally released to the schools and used to provide additional support for the young people to ensure progress. This could include one-to-one support, small group work, teaching assistance in lessons, tuition or resources. The allocation is not automatic – it depends on the discussion at the PEP meeting.

## **Additional Funding**

23. The Virtual School receives additional funding from CoL. This is used to fund:
- holiday programmes
  - training for the VSH
  - tuition for newly arrived UASC while waiting for a school/college placement
  - tuition for looked-after children who do not receive the pupil premium

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<sup>2</sup> Pupil Premium 2017 to 2018: Conditions of grant

- funding for the UASC Toolkit.

**24.** All UASC and the foster carers are provided with a toolkit to support language development. The toolkit contains:

- a booklet describing strategies to develop language
- picture dictionary
- story boards
- whiteboards and pens
- exemplars of ESOL exam papers
- cards of 100 key words used when speaking English
- list of useful websites.

### **Celebration Event**

**25.** The first celebration event was held at the City Centre for our looked-after children and care leavers. Attendees included 12 young people, one foster carer, the Director and Assistant Director and five members. This was an excellent opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our young people. The members appreciated the opportunity to meet the young people over lunch to discuss their success and challenges.

**26.** The new VSH hopes to build on the success of the event for this year.

### **Virtual School Priorities**

**27.** The priorities for this academic year are to:

- ensure that new arrivals are quickly placed into appropriate, high-quality education
- ensure that all young people in education are making good progress
- have a NEET target of zero
- develop relationships with tuition agencies to ensure that our young people have access to timely, high-quality tuition whenever required
- ensure that our young people are studying the most appropriate courses.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

**28.** The work of the VSH is focused on raising attainment and closing the educational gap of vulnerable CoL looked-after children and care leavers.

### **Conclusion**

**29.** The Virtual School continues to support and challenge the network of professionals around the looked-after children and care leavers to ensure that they make good progress and achieve their goals.

### **Andrew Russell**

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public</b>
Corporate Safeguarding Policy	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	
Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	
<b>Report author:</b>	
Pat Dixon, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, Department of Community and Children's Services	

## Summary

This report updates Members on the background and current position of the Corporate Safeguarding policy, which has recently been updated. There have only been minimal changes made to the policy in relation to the lead for Adult Social Care, guidance update and new initiatives in relation to adult safeguarding. The policy is accessible via the intranet to City of London corporation staff and is also available to commissioned services. The next update in relation to this policy will be in August 2019.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. In January 2014, the Department of Community and Children's Services developed a Corporate Safeguarding policy which aimed to ensure that all areas of the organisation had a clear understanding of the legislative duties around safeguarding for children and adults at risk. Safeguarding was also added to the Corporate Strategic Risk Register. This was followed by a campaign to raise awareness around safeguarding for adults and children, delivered across the City of London Corporation.

### Current Position

2. The Corporate Safeguarding policy was updated in August 2018. The updates to this policy related to guidance on how professionals work together to safeguard children, (which came out in July 2018), the commitment that the City of London has to promoting Making Safeguarding Personal in adult services, and the change in service manager for the Adult Social Care service.

3. As a local authority, the City has an overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in its area. The law requiring this is set out under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts and complemented government guidance included in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, July 2018.
4. For adults at risk, the Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the health and care system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect. It includes a duty for the City Corporation to make enquiries (or request others to make them) when we think an adult with care and support needs may be at risk of abuse or neglect, and find out what action may be needed. The City of London is committed to Making Safeguarding Personal by developing a safeguarding culture that focuses on the personalised outcomes desired by people with care and support needs who may have been abused.

## **Conclusion**

5. The Corporate Safeguarding policy has been reviewed by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, who is leading on corporate safeguarding for the City of London Corporation. Adult safeguarding has been reviewed by the Adult Social Care Service Manager, who leads on safeguarding for adults. The Corporate Safeguarding policy is due to be reviewed and updated in August 2019.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Safeguarding Policy

## **Background Papers**

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, July 2018.
- *Making Safeguarding Personal Outcomes Framework: Final Report*, May 2018

## **Pat Dixon**

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## **City of London Corporation**

### **Safeguarding Policy**

**Reviewed August 2018**

<b>Document status:</b>	final
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Simon Cribbens
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Pat Dixon and Ian Tweedie
<b>Owner:</b>	Chris Pelham
<b>Approved by:</b>	Safeguarding Sub Committee
<b>Implementation date:</b>	17 December 2015
<b>Review date:</b>	Reviewed August 2018
<b>Document end date:</b>	Annual Review and update
<b>Version:</b>	2

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## 1 Overview

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance for all City of London Corporation (City Corporation) staff, Members and individuals, consultants and agencies contracted by the City Corporation who may come across concerns regarding the “safeguarding” and protection of children, young people and adults at risk within the context of their work.
- 1.2 It is a duty of the City Corporation to ensure that children and adults are safeguarded from harm.
- 1.3 Everyone has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, whatever the role of the individual, or the City Corporation service or department they work in.
- 1.4 Any allegations or concerns that children and adults may be suffering significant harm should be raised with the City Corporation’s Children and Families service or Adult Social Care service. There is no such thing as information being given “in confidence” – there is a duty of care and legal responsibility to respond to safeguarding concerns or incidents.
- 1.5 Each department needs to be aware of how their staff interact with children and with adults at risk, providing appropriate training on safe working practices and on creating safe environments. Staff should be alert to any indications that a child or adult at risk may need to be safeguarded from harm and know who to contact if they have concerns.
- 1.6 Organisations the City Corporation contracts with will be required through the terms of their contract to have a similar policy in place for their staff as appropriate.
- 1.7 The significance of safeguarding to the wider organisation is recognised by its inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register and the development and adoption of this policy.
- 1.8 The City of London Corporation will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse or a safeguarding adult’s investigation is necessary.
- 1.9 For this policy to be effective it is essential that each agency and person working in that agency has an applied understanding of what safeguarding means, knows that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, knows the signs and symptoms of potential harm, how to access safeguarding information, advice and guidance, and is committed to making an informed contribution to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk.
- 1.10 This policy is complementary to the **London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures** and to the **City of London Safeguarding Adults Board Policy and Procedure** which can be accessed online.

## **2 What is safeguarding**

2.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined, as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2.2 Adult safeguarding is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. It is an important part of what many public services do, and a key responsibility for the City of London.

2.3 Adult safeguarding is aimed at people with care and support needs who may be in vulnerable circumstances and at risk of abuse or neglect. In these cases, local services must work together to spot those at risk and take steps to protect them.

## **3 Children, young people and adults at risk**

3.1 The definition of a child and/or young person for the purpose of this document is anyone under the age of 18 years.

3.2 It should be noted that the fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

3.3 An adult at risk is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

3.4 An adult at risk may therefore be a person who:

- is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long-term illness/condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is a carer, such as a family member/friend, who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse
- is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

(This list is not exhaustive)

## 4 Signs of abuse

4.1 Staff will be able to recognise abuse. The main forms of abuse are divided into the following categories:

- **physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions
- **sexual abuse** – including rape, sexual assault, sexual acts to which a person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting
- **psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating
- **discriminatory abuse** – including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- **institutional abuse, neglect and poor professional practice** - this may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other.

4.2 Children, young people and adults at risk can be influenced by those who would seek to radicalise them. The City Corporation has a legal duty to work to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This “prevent duty” is led by the Safer City Partnership, but safeguarding children and adults from the risk of radicalisation extends to all staff. As such all staff should recognise the risk of radicalisation as a safeguarding issue, and respond to signs of this as they would to other abuse.

## 5 Legal Framework

5.1 As a local authority the City has an overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in its area. The law requiring this is set out under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts and complemented government guidance included in Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018).

5.2 For adults at risk the Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the health and care system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect. It includes a duty for the City Corporation to make enquiries, or request others to make them, when we think an adult with care and support needs may be at risk of abuse or neglect and they need to find out what action may be needed. The City of London is committed to Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) by



developing a safeguarding culture that focuses on the personalised outcomes desired by people with care and support needs who may have been abused.

## **6 What this means for our work**

6.1 In their day to day work, officers employed by City of London Corporation will endeavour to safeguard children and young people and adults at risk by:

- reporting in a timely way any concerns or suspicions that a child or young person, or an adult at risk is being or is at risk of being abused.
- always giving a high priority to actions to protect a child or an adult from abuse
- reporting without delay concerns or allegations
- ascertaining the wishes and feelings of children and adults at risk, valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, adults at risk, carers, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children or adults at risk and carers appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- providing senior management commitment and accountability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and of adults at risk
- being clear about the authority's responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk
- involving adults at risk, carers, children and young people and families in planning and developing services
- ensuring services for children and adults at risk are safe and accessible
- attending staff training and continuing professional development
- following safe recruitment, vetting procedures and responding to allegations against staff
- providing effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk
- reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

6.2 The City Corporation will support safeguarding work by ensuring all staff, Members and individuals, consultants and agencies contracted by the City Corporation:

- understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm, abuse and exploitation
- who work directly with children and young people or with adults at risk have at least a basic understanding of child protection and adult safeguarding as part of their training and induction
- understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person or adult at risk, or a member of staff's conduct towards a child/young person or adult at risk.

- 6.3 The City Corporation will ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of staff are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- 6.4 Safeguarding is delivered and achieved through good interagency and multi-disciplinary working within the City Corporation and with other organisations. Standards of practice in work with children, young people, adults at risk and their families or carers are regularly reviewed in line with relevant national Guidance.
- 6.5 Working effectively with partners and other agencies means:
- supporting the Safeguarding Children's Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board to carry out their duties in partnership with other local organisations
  - commissioned organisations, including the voluntary sector, providing services to children, young people, vulnerable adults, their families or carers and to schools demonstrating standards of safeguarding compliant with those of the City Corporation, regional and national standards.
  - information is shared efficiently and effectively in respect of issues that may affect the safety and welfare of children, young people or adults at risk.
  - concerns are shared early in order to prevent any problems escalating.
  - ensuring that the City Corporation has a network of departmental safeguarding leads who can act as trained and accessible safeguarding advocates to support staff to make alerts.
- 6.6 Schools located within the City boundaries are invited to participate in regular school liaison meetings with the Assistant Director People regarding safeguarding issues.

## **7 Responsibilities of individuals**

- 7.1 The Director of Community and Children's Services is the designated person with overall responsibility for safeguarding of children, young people and adults.
- 7.2 All employees of City of London Corporation and elected Members are to:
- understand and apply this policy and procedure in their activities
  - identify opportunities and undertake appropriate training to support them in their role
  - act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others
  - be able to recognise harm
  - know how to report any concerns in a timely and appropriate way.
- 7.3 In addition, senior managers and Safeguarding Champions of the organisation are to:
- have a working knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance with respect to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk and how this applies to their department

- be responsible for communicating to all staff of the Authority the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults and that it is everybody's responsibility to do so
- hold managers within their department to account for the contribution of their services to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk;
- ensure staff have effective working relationships with other parts of the authority and with other agencies in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk;
- report identified training needs of staff to managers with responsibility for staff training and offer opportunities to undertake appropriate safeguarding training
- ensure that the policy and procedure is adhered to; and
- ensure that all staff know how to access the whistle blowing procedures.

#### 7.4 The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Champions are:

- to ensure that all staff in their department are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person or adult at risk maybe subject to abuse or neglect
- ensure that any concerns about a child/young person or adult at risk are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed
- to record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or adult at risk or breach of Safeguarding policies and procedures
- ensure staff in their areas know how to access the authority's local Safeguarding Procedures
- ensure relevant staff access appropriate training if required
- ensure appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place within their specific setting that fit with this policy and the wider London Safeguarding Procedures
- act as an escalation point for Safeguarding issues or cases where the appropriate or perceived appropriate steps have not been taken and the risk remains
- ensure that staff have regard to safeguarding issues in their areas of work
- to be familiar with the contact details for safeguarding leads for adults and children in the City of London, or within the borough in which they operate.

## 8 Acting on concerns

### 8.1 If you are worried about:

- a child or young person** who lives in the City of London call:

**020 7332 3621 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm only)**

Email: [children.duty@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:children.duty@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

*Or outside office hours (emergency only) call:*

**020 8356 2710 or 020 8356 2710**

Email: [emergency.duty@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:emergency.duty@hackney.gov.uk)

- ii. **an adult** who lives in the City of London call:

**0207 332 1224 - Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm only**

Email [social.services@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@cityoflondon.gov.uk).

**0208 356 2300** - for all other times, including weekends and Bank Holidays

- 8.2 **If you think a child, young person or adult is at risk of immediate harm call 999.**

## **9 Responding to allegations made against professionals**

- 9.1 Where an allegation is made in relation to a professional working with children or young people you must contact the “Designated Officer” (formally known as the LADO, Local Authorities Designated Officer) Pat Dixon. You can make a referral by emailing [LADO@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@cityoflondon.gov.uk) or phoning 020 7332 1215.
- 9.2 Where an allegation is made in relation to a professional working with adults at risk you must contact the lead professional for safeguarding adults – Ian Tweedie. You can make a referral by emailing [ian.tweedie@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:ian.tweedie@cityoflondon.gov.uk) or phoning 020 7332 3129.
- 9.3 Any suspected immediate risk to any child or children, or adult at risk should be responded to immediately and the case referred to the Children and Families Team or Adult Social Care team using the contact details given below.

## **10 Oversight and challenge**

- 10.1 Support, coordination and challenge of the City Corporation’s actions, services and responsibilities to safeguard are overseen by the independently chaired City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board. Member oversight is provided by the City Corporation’s Safeguarding Sub Committee.

## Appendix 1: Safeguarding leads and key contacts

The Safeguarding Lead within City Corporation is the Assistant Director People.

### Safeguarding Champions

Each department has its own Safeguarding Champion: Currently under review

Position	Department
<b>Chris Pelham</b> - Assistant Director People <b>Pat Dixon</b> – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager <b>Ian Tweedie</b> - Service Manager, Adult Social Care and Safeguarding Lead for Adults	Community and Children's Services
Natasha Dogra	Town Clerk's
Ciaran Rafferty	City Bridge Trust
Amanda Owens	Culture, Heritage and Libraries
Grace Rawnsley	Open Spaces
Tony Macklin	Markets and Consumer Protection
tbc	City Surveyor's
Elisabeth Hannah	Built Environment
Sean Gregory	Barbican Centre
Claire Tao/Katherine Brice	City of London School for Girls
Alison Mears	Guildhall School of Music & Drama
Andrew McBroom/ Coco Stevenson	City of London School
Evelyn Guest	City of London Freeman's School

### Key contact numbers

Children's Services	<b>0207 332 3621</b>
Adult Services	<b>0207 332 1224</b>
Out of hours Children's Social Care	<b>0208 356 2346; or 0208 356 2710</b>
Out of hours Adult Social Care	<b>020 8356 2300</b>
Police Public Protection Unit	<b>0207 601 2941 (or in an emergency 999)</b>
NSPCC	<b>0808 800 5000</b>
Designated Officer (Allegations against a professional or someone working with children)	<b>0208 332 1215</b>

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
<b>Safeguarding Sub Committee</b>	<b>08/02/2019</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Leaving Care Guidance for Practitioners	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Rachel Green, Service Manager, Children's Social Care and Early Help	

## Summary

Section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers.

This Leaving Care Guidance for Practitioners was co-produced with our care leavers and comprises the full local offer.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. Our care leavers started this guidance, sharing their views as to what a good offer would look like. Staff then looked at what we, as a whole department, are able to offer care leavers – for example, adult education, public health, tenancy support, adult social care, and so on. The offer was reviewed in light of support provided by our statistical neighbours. The offer then went back to our care leavers for their review and oversight. Changes were made according to their feedback.
2. The report outlines what care leavers can expect at different stages of their lives, with support available until the age of 25. The report details support for education, health, work, housing, immigration, leisure, and family life. The offer is robust, with discretion on a needs-led basis to allow for responsive tailor-made provision.
3. The guidance will be turned into an 'easy read', accessible and reader-friendly document and will be published on the City of London website.

### **Exceptional in the City**

4. The offer to care leavers in the City of London is above the statutory requirements and offers an exceptional service to young people.

### ***Consistent relational support***

5. Young people benefit from having long-term working relationships with their social workers. The City of London offers care leavers qualified social workers until the age of 25, with regular face-to-face visits, at least once every six to eight weeks, as agreed in the Pledge. This offers young people an excellent, consistent, quality of support.
6. Care leavers are exempt from council tax wherever they live. They are offered support until age 25, regardless of their immigration status. Tenancy support is guaranteed to all care leavers to at least age 21.

### ***Support from Corporate Parents***

7. The City of London is corporate parent to our children in care and care leavers. Care leavers benefit from support across the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS), including from adult education with apprenticeships and additional English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, from the Cultural Mile, including the use of Spice Credits to access activities.

### ***Housing***

8. After the age of 18, young people are encouraged, where needed, to 'stay put' with their foster carer. This means that young people can stay in a family environment for longer, until they are ready to move into their own tenancy. Young people are also supported with a generous starting home grant that can cover all essentials. Budgetary guidance is also given so that recipients can make the most of the funding.
9. Winter heating money is given for the first year in tenancy to ensure that young people do not suffer from the cold when they are learning financial management skills.

### **Implications**

10. At this time the financial implications are being contained in budget.
11. The Home Office does not provide a grant for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Care Leavers aged 18 or over.
12. This will be an area that is closely monitored on an ongoing basis.



## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Local offer
- Appendix 2: Legislation and definitions
- Appendix 3: Universal credit
- Appendix 4: Alternative housing options

### **Rachel Green**

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# **COLC Leaving Care Guidance for Practitioners**

Version 5.0 November 2018

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# 1. Introduction

The City of London Corporation (COLC) acts as a corporate parent to children who are looked after. Being a corporate parent means that we provide support, practical advice and assistance to young people as would be expected of a good parent. Employees and carers are trained, qualified and supported to undertake their roles as corporate parents, including their responsibilities to prepare young people for adult life.

The aim of this guidance is to lay out our policies for care leavers who are 16–25 years old so practitioners who work with them know what they are entitled to and how to access it. This is to ensure the consistency and transparency of our work with care leavers.

Our care experienced young people have full access to activities in the Cultural Mile, including museums and libraries. Care leavers have access to: support within the Department of Community and Children’s Services (DCCS); transition support and special educational needs and disability (SEND) support from the Education and Early Years Service; transition support from adult social care; tenancy support to all care leavers from age 16 and 17; and after-tenancy support to age 25 and beyond (Housing Department). Care leavers can also access work experience, additional English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision and apprenticeships to age 25, regardless of immigration status (Education and Skills Department), and to the Making Every Contact Count approach in the National Health Service.

This guidance is in line with our Children and Young People’s Plan 2018–21 and assists in ensuring that the five priorities – Safe, Potential, Independence, involvement and choice, Health and wellbeing, and Community – and all the objectives that sit within them, are met for the young people leaving care.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 increased the age that local authorities are required to provide social work support for care leavers from 21 to 25, regardless if that young person is in education or not. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 also requires all local authorities to publish their local offer to care leavers. Our local offer is attached as Appendix 1, and this policy supplements the local offer and guides practitioners on how it should be implemented.

Our role is to advise, assist and support young people in their transition to adulthood. City of London’s provision of continuing leaving care support must ensure that each care leaver is provided with leaving care services through frequent contact with their social worker, with their needs being subject to ongoing assessment and review.

All young people aged 16 to 25 who are in and leaving the care of the COLC are supported by a qualified social worker. All young people are offered support regardless of immigration status, including those without recourse to public funds.

Young people are supported throughout their care experience by the same team, and most often by the same worker. Young people tell us that this is very important. The Pledge, which was created by and for our young people, sets out our promises to the young people that we care for.

The young people referred to in this document are those young people who are eligible, relevant (see Appendix 2 for definition), former relevant and qualifying young people under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010. Please see Appendix 2 (Legislation and definitions) for an explanation of these categories of care leavers. Please note that a full looked-after child service is offered to age 18, and as such, there are no young people in the 'relevant' category.

Universal credit has replaced a number of welfare benefits in the City of London. It is being rolled out across London, but some boroughs have not adopted it yet and will still have welfare benefits in place. Where this document identifies a possible benefit entitlement, this is for signposting purposes only. Universal Credit legislation is complex, and no person has an absolute guarantee that they will receive Universal credit, even where they have an underlying entitlement. City Advice (T: 020 7392 2919) and the COLC Benefits Section (T: 020 7332 1622/ E: [benefits@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@cityoflondon.gov.uk)) can provide further advice and information on all benefit-related matters. Please see Appendix 3 for more information.

## **2. Social workers, Pathway Plans and contact with young people**

### **2.1. Social worker support and staying in touch**

- The COLC has a duty to promote contact with all care leavers aged 16–25 years old.
- Local authorities have a proactive duty to keep in touch with care leavers aged 18–20 and to provide social worker (SW) support.
- From the age of 21–25 the proactive contact duty does not apply, but SW support must be provided when requested. The COLC must make care leavers aware that they can continue to request SW support when they turn 21, and at least on an annual basis thereafter until they reach 25. Any care leaver who is not aware that they can receive support until the age of 25 should be contacted and informed of this (social workers are not expected to spend a disproportionate amount of time tracking care leavers down).
- The frequency of social work visits for a looked-after child aged 16–17 is within one week of first moving in, and then every week for the first four weeks, and subsequently every four weeks (six with agreement of team manager). If more frequent visits are required, dependent on need, this

can be requested. After one year, visits can be reduced to no less than one visit every three months if the young person, social worker and team manager are in agreement.

- For care leavers aged 18 and over, the frequency of visits should be determined based on the care leaver's wishes and feelings, alongside their needs. The Pledge offers social visits at least every six to eight weeks until age 25. Methods and frequency of keeping in touch should have some flexibility.
- It is important that contact is at agreed, regular intervals. This allows the social worker and young person the opportunity to establish a close, trusting relationship within which the social worker can provide advice, support and guidance based on the wishes and needs of the young person.

## **2.2. Standards of contact**

- It is important to visit a young person in their home environment to assess their living conditions.
- If attempts to contact a young person prove unsuccessful, the social worker must inform their team manager. The team manager will decide whether the social worker should proceed with an unannounced visit.
- If no contact is made after an unannounced visit, and this is out of character, and if the young person is considered vulnerable or under stress, then consideration must be given to reporting the young person to the police as missing. The social worker should consult with the team manager who will decide whether the police should be contacted.
- All unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) care leavers who go missing must be reported to the Home Office.

## **2.3. Monitoring and recording of contact**

- All contact with young people must be recorded on Mosaic.
- Contact will be monitored via supervision, file audits and at Pathway Plan review meetings.
- If a care leaver has refused the offer of continued support but the social worker is concerned that they are at risk of harm, they should try and continue to monitor the welfare of the care leaver and take appropriate action if necessary.

## **2.4. Pathway Plans**

- Each care leaver will have a Pathway Plan that will be reviewed, at a minimum, on a six-monthly basis. They must also be reviewed whenever the care leaver requests it.
- Care leavers aged 16 to 20 must have a full Pathway Plan. For care leavers aged 21 or over, the duties to assess care leavers' needs, and develop and keep under review a Pathway Plan, apply only where the young person requests support. The Pathway Plan may be partially updated after the age of 21 to reflect only the area in which the young person requires ongoing support, unless the person is experiencing numerous or complex difficulties.

## **3. Young people's health needs**

Every six months as part of young people's Pathway Plan assessments, the COLC Social Care team will assess physical and emotional health needs and how these needs will be met.

The young person's social worker will advise and encourage them to have regular health, dental and optical check-ups, and accompany them to appointments if requested by the young person.

Young people will be advised and signposted to health and support services as needed. They will be assisted to apply for reduced cost or free health care through the NHS. Counselling and therapeutic support will be accessed through mainstream services and, where specialist services are deemed necessary, funding can be considered. They will be supported in their transition from children to adult health services.

If a young person has no leave to remain, the COLC should cover their health costs (prescriptions and essential dentistry).

## **4. Education and training**

The COLC has a comprehensive Adult Education and Skills offer that can benefit care leavers. There are three types of courses offered by the Adult Education and Skills team.

### **1) Adult education offer**

These accredited and non-accredited education courses, including GCSE qualifications and ESOL courses, usually have a cost attached, but there are grants available for care leavers.

## **2) Training**

These accredited industry-specific courses for local residents, such as food hygiene training, introduction to business and teacher training, are particularly useful for people considering starting their own business.

## **3) Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships combine working and practical training in a job with studying to gain skills, knowledge and a recognised qualification. The Corporation offers a wide range of apprenticeships which are available to anyone aged 16 or over.

For more information about these courses and how the Corporation can support care leavers with education and training, please contact the Adult Education and Skills team on 020 7608 2753 or 020 7332 3918 or email [adulthoodeducation@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:adulthoodeducation@cityoflondon.gov.uk).

# **5. Accommodation**

In deciding whether accommodation is suitable to meet a care leaver's needs, the COLC must listen to their views about the accommodation they want.

The Care Leavers Housing Forum is a meeting between the Social Care team and housing managers to discuss and find housing for eligible current care leavers .

The social worker must review a care leaver's accommodation after 28 days – and at least every three months after that. The care leaver's social worker must visit them within the first week in a new accommodation, and at least every two months after that.

## **5.1. Age 16–17**

For young people aged 16–17, the COLC has an absolute duty to accommodate them and ensure that they have a suitable care placement.

The COLC does not encourage anyone under the age of 18 to apply for social housing. The social worker should encourage young people to stay in care up to the age of 18 at least, and then have a period of semi-independent living to develop independence skills before considering a social housing application. However, if they choose to leave care, the social worker will work with the young person to ensure that they have suitable accommodation and support.

## **5.2. Over 18**

As part of their assessment and Pathway Plan, a young person's plans for post-18 accommodation must be considered. Discussions with young people and foster carers should take place to establish their wishes and feelings regarding post-18 accommodation. A record should be produced, setting out all the issues discussed and tracking progress bi-annually. Post-18 placements are not foster



care placements; they are supported lodging placements, or can also be on a room-only basis.

Social workers should help young people find suitable accommodation. There are several suitable accommodation options, including:

- remaining with foster carers (see more information on this below)
- semi-independent accommodation
- COLC housing tenancy.

Private rental is generally not considered for care leavers; they should remain in semi-independent accommodation until a social tenancy becomes available. See section 15 for more information on the housing process for care leavers.

### **5.3. Young people who wish to remain with their foster carer beyond age 18**

If a young person wishes to remain in their foster placement beyond 18 years of age, arrangements can be made as long as this is deemed to be in their best interest, it is specified in their Pathway Plan, and the foster carer is in agreement. This is reflecting the Staying Put Guidance – a framework of best practice to assist all parties involved in an arrangement where a young person stays with their foster family beyond the age of 18.

Staying in foster care will allow stability if the young person is undertaking an educational course. It will also give time to make a transition into independent living. Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) can also remain with their foster carers, provided this is agreed as part of their Pathway Plan.

The rate will be negotiated with the foster carer and their fostering agency as a supported living or tenancy rate. Young people over 18 can claim universal credit to cover housing and subsistence and will be expected to do so. Payment of any universal credit to the young person will affect the rate that will be paid to the foster carer by City of London.

This arrangement will continue for the specified duration in the young person's Pathway Plan, as in their best interests.

For more information on universal credit and how to apply see Appendix 3.

## **6. Young people in education**

A young person can leave school on the last Friday in June if they will be 16 by the end of the summer holidays. They must do one of the following until they are 18:

- stay in full-time education, for example, at a college
- start an apprenticeship ([www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide](http://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide)) or traineeship ([www.gov.uk/find-traineeship](http://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship))

- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training.

## **6.1. Aged 16–17**

### **Personal allowance**

COLC has a duty to provide for the maintenance of young people who are eligible and relevant at the minimum in line with universal credit rates. If they are living independently, the allowance is to cover food, household bills, toiletries and clothes. Other personal expenditure will be considered, for example, travel expenses.

Those in foster care aged 16 and 17 years old receive an allowance through their foster carer, which is paid by COLC to the foster care agency.

### **Rent**

The COLC generally meets accommodation costs associated with provision of foster care placements. Where young people have a liability to pay rent, it is the duty of the COLC to pay this.

### **16–19 Bursary Fund**

The 16–19 bursary fund entitles young people in care and care leavers in further education to receive a bursary of £1,200 per year if they stay in full-time education. The bursary is managed by the education provider (school/college). Larger bursaries can be paid if the provider considers this necessary to enable the young person to continue in education or training.

To be eligible, the young person must be aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study. Where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported until the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of the programme of study, whichever is sooner.

Young people must also satisfy the residency criteria:

- Must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of their programme.
- Any person subject to a Home Office Deportation Order will ordinarily be ineligible for funding until their situation has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Home Office, as funding should only be claimed for learners who can complete their programmes.
- The person must have been ordinarily resident in the UK for the three years preceding the ‘relevant date’ (the first day of the first academic year of the course).

- The person must be ‘settled’ in the UK – this means having either indefinite leave to enter or remain, or having the right of abode in the UK, and aged 18 years and older.

For further information and the most up-to-date information on the 16–19 bursary, please see the Department for Education’s website at [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/studentsupport/funding/a00203061/16-19-bursaries](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/studentsupport/funding/a00203061/16-19-bursaries).

### **Clothing allowance**

Where an eligible or relevant young person is living independently, semi-independent or in supported lodgings and is in education, they will receive a clothing allowance of £150 a year. There will be an additional £50 available once a year to buy clothing for festivals or special occasions at a time the young person chooses.

## **6.2. Aged 18 and over**

### **Course fees**

Where all avenues for the funding of course fees have been explored, but the young person has been unsuccessful, the COLC may provide some discretionary financial support. This will be based on the assessed needs of the young person, including the appropriateness of the course, whether the course that meets the young person’s educational need is the closest to their home, how it will help them to achieve their ambitions, immigration status and what other options are available to that young person to help them attain their long-term goals. These details will be agreed by the team manager and recorded in the young person’s Pathway Plan.

### **Education-related costs – books/materials/laptops**

Once other sources have been exhausted, young people in further education can request discretionary financial assistance to purchase essential reading materials, uniforms and equipment necessary to support the successful completion of the course. These details will be agreed by the team manager and recorded and agreed on in the young person’s Pathway Plan.

### **Travel**

Where a young person remains in further education post 18 and is living independently, the COLC will provide the young person with the cost of a weekly bus pass to support the continuation of their course of study/training. In the event that the young person’s travel costs are more than the weekly bus pass, additional finance will be considered. This will include details of how far they live from the college, current financial circumstances, what other means of transport are available. These details will be agreed by the team manager and recorded in the young person’s Pathway Plan.

## 6.3. Education/university

### Planning

As part of the ongoing support offered to young people by the COLC Social Care team in relation to their education, students completing A levels or equivalent courses should be signposted to information about bursaries and support available. They will also be given details of Buttle UK and Article 26 (Helena Kennedy Foundation) who provide grants and other support and information about continuing education for care leavers.

### Student loans/grants/bursaries

Young people will be entitled to claim a range of student loans, grants and bursaries while they are studying full-time at an advanced level. Students can apply for the following:

	Repayable
• Maintenance grant	No
• Loan for tuition fees	Yes
• Loan for maintenance	Yes
• Local authority higher education bursary	No
• University bursary	No

To qualify for the university bursary, young people must identify themselves as a care leaver to the university to ensure that they access the full range of funds.

The Virtual School Headteacher and the Information, Advice, Guidance and Resilience Practitioner can help care leavers with the process of claiming a bursary.

### The COLC higher education bursary

COLC has a duty to provide a bursary to young people at university, as required within The Children Act 1989 (Higher Education Bursary) (England) Regulations 2009. The bursary offered by COLC is £2,000 per year. This bursary will be paid in weekly or monthly instalments into the young person's bank account.

This bursary is dependent on the young person maintaining satisfactory attendance and having acceptable reports from the university. This will be monitored by the young person's social worker.

A bursary will also be considered for those in further education as part of their Pathway Plan.

### Travel

The COLC will pay for the travel expenses for young people to visit prospective universities. The Social Care team will purchase a travel card to enable cheaper travel. In the event that the young person's travel costs are more than the weekly bus pass, additional finance will be considered.

**Accommodation**

The Social Care team will explore accommodation options with all young people. They will support young people to apply for social housing through the COLC Housing Department. If a young person is not entitled to public funds, the COLC will consider meeting accommodation costs up to the shared local housing allowance but only on a case-by-case basis, dependent on the immigration situation. The Assistant Director's approval will be needed.

**Vacation accommodation**

If a young person is in university accommodation, it is important that they have somewhere that offers the stability of 'home' to which they can return during vacations. Where possible, young people should be aware of their vacation accommodation prior to starting their course and, wherever possible, this should be somewhere they are familiar with.

Financial support will be provided for vacation accommodation for care leavers in higher education. This will be to a maximum of the single person's rent level for the area where the young person wishes to spend their vacation.

**Treatment of earnings**

Young people are encouraged to participate in part-time work while studying at university, as their student loans, grants and bursaries are not affected by any earnings.

**Postgraduate study (e.g. Masters / PhD/ Teaching Qualification)**

For any young person who would like to go on to postgraduate study, their social worker will help them to explore their options. This will be recorded within the young person's Pathway Plan, including details of any discretionary financial support that may be offered to them, based on their individual circumstances.

## **7. Young people not in education**

The following section applies to care leavers who are not in education. This includes care leavers in training, in work and NEET.

### **7.1. Aged 16–17**

**Personal allowance**

The COLC has a duty to provide for the maintenance of young people who are eligible or relevant (see Appendix 2 for definitions). This maintenance will be included in fees paid to the foster carer, or if in independent living, in line with universal credit rates.

If the young person has a sickness or disability and is not entitled to the work capability component of universal credit, the City has a duty to pay them a personal allowance in line with universal credit rates.

### **Travel**

The COLC will support 16- and 17-year-olds in training with travel expenses through the fostering allowance, or for young people living independently, directly in the form of a weekly bus pass. Where a young person is living independently and is NEET, the COLC will provide a weekly bus pass (or equivalent) if they are attending appointments and interviews and for their first month in employment. In the event that the young person's travel costs are more than the weekly bus pass, additional finance will be considered.

### **Rent**

Eligible and relevant 16- and 17-year-olds are unable to claim universal credit until they are 18 years old. Where they have a liability to pay rent, it is the duty of the COLC to pay this. Any earnings will not affect these rental payments.

### **Clothing allowance**

Where an eligible or relevant young person (under 18) is living independently, semi-independent or in supported lodgings and is in training, they will receive a clothing allowance of £150 twice a year. There will be an additional £50 available once a year to buy clothing for festivals or special occasions at a time the young person chooses.

## **7.2. 18 years and over**

### **Rent**

Young people who are over 18 years old and attending training courses, working or unemployed may be able to claim universal credit to help them to pay their rent (see Appendix 3).

### **Treatment of earnings/universal credit entitlement**

A young person who is working for less than 16 hours per week or is NEET could claim universal credit if they are on a low wage (see Appendix 3).

## **7.3. Young people in training (including apprenticeships)**

### **Training-related costs – books/ materials/equipment**

Once other sources have been exhausted, the COLC may provide young people with discretionary finance to purchase essential reading materials, uniforms and equipment necessary to support the successful completion of their training course. This will be based on the assessed needs of the young person, including the appropriateness of the training course, how it will help them to achieve their ambitions, and what other options are available to them. These

details will be agreed by the team manager, recorded and agreed on in the young person's Pathway Plan.

## **7.4. Young people unable to work due to sickness/disability**

### **Universal credit entitlement**

If a young person is deemed as not capable of working due to sickness or disability, they may be eligible to claim the work capability component of universal credit. If they are over 18, they may also be able to claim universal credit to help them pay rent.

Additionally, if a young person has an ongoing disability or a condition that affects their daily life, they should consider making a claim for personal independence payments.

For more information on universal credit/personal independence payments and how to claim them, see Appendix 3.

## **8. Young parents and pregnant women**

### **Healthy Start scheme**

Health experts recommend Healthy Start vitamins for pregnant woman. In the City, Healthy Start vitamins are provided free of charge to all pregnant women, mums who have had a baby in the last year, and babies and children from four weeks until their fourth birthday. For information on how to claim the vitamins, see the Hackney Council website's Healthy Start page: <https://hackney.gov.uk/healthy-start>.

Healthy Start vouchers can be exchanged for milk, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables and infant formula at Healthy Start registered retailers. Pregnant women and mothers qualify for vouchers if they or their partner are on certain benefits, or if they are under 18. For more information about the Healthy Start vouchers, please visit the City of London Corporation website's Healthy Start page: <http://fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk/kb5/cityoflondon/fyi/service.page?id=BnYJe-9t4Rc>

### **Maternity grant**

Young people who are eligible or relevant are able to access the Sure Start Maternity Grant of £500 from 11 weeks before the baby is due until the baby is three months old. Usually to qualify for a Sure Start Maternity Grant there must be no other children in the family and the parent or their partner must receive one of these benefits:

- income support
- income-based jobseeker's allowance
- income-related employment and support allowance
- pension credit
- child tax credit



- working tax credit that includes a disability or severe disability element
- universal credit

The Sure Start Maternity Grant comes from Social Care via Section 17 (child in need) of the Children Act 1989 budget. This is discretionary financial support and will be spent with the young person's social worker on essential items.

For further information visit the Gov.uk website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

### **Baby grant**

The COLC will provide a one-off grant of £200 just prior to or subsequent to the birth of a baby to a care leaver. If a care leaver is not eligible for the maternity grant, the COLC will also match the maternity grant (currently £500) and provide the additional £200.

### **Universal credit**

There are a number of benefits that young parents and pregnant women may be entitled to under universal credit. See Appendix 3 for more information.

### **Care to Learn**

Young parents who are under 20 years old and in education may be able to get help with childcare costs via the Care to Learn scheme. Further information is available from the GOV.uk website: [www.gov.uk/care-to-learn](http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn).

## **9. Young people on remand or imprisoned**

### **9.1. Aged 16–17**

Young people on remand or imprisoned are considered to be looked-after children. They are under the responsibility of the Social Care team and will be given support identified in their Pathway Plan.

### **9.2. 18 years and older**

The universal credit rules connected to young people who are detained in custody awaiting trial or sentence, or who are serving a custodial sentence, are complex. Advice should be sought from City Advice for young people in these circumstances.

## **10. Young people who live at home with parents**

### **10.1. Aged 16–17**

Young people who were previously accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, and have had a successful return home for six months or more, revert to legal status Section 24 of the Children Act 1989 (Qualifying Child). This means that they are then able to access the universal credit system



(or their parents can claim for them). The COLC will not pay a personal allowance or accommodation costs for these young people once they have been at home for six months and have reverted to legal status Section 24.

Young people who are subject to a Care Order under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 are not able to access the universal credit system, nor can their family claim benefits for them, (with the exception of the child benefit that the parent can claim for the young person if they are in education).

Social Care has a duty to pay a personal allowance to those 16- and 17-year-olds living at home who are Section 23a (for the first six months) or Section 31, but not rent. This is in line with the universal credit rate.

## **10.2. 18 years and older**

In most circumstances, young people who are over 18 years old and living with their parents will have full access to universal credit if they are not in employment.

They can claim universal credit if they are unemployed and available for and actively seeking employment.

If the young person is in education, their parents will be eligible to continue to claim child tax credits and child benefit for them until their 21st birthday.

Young people will not be eligible to claim universal credit to help them pay rent where they are living with their parents or another close relative.

## **11. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)**

Asylum-seeking young people within the City of London usually have equal access to financial support from social care as detailed within this document. However, depending on their immigration status, they may have differing entitlements to public funds that could affect their entitlement to claim universal credit and to access education-related funding.

Most asylum-seeking children who arrive in the UK without a parent or guardian make an application to the Home Office, and are granted Discretionary Leave for three years, or until they are 17-and-a-half years old, whichever comes first. They then have the opportunity to make an 'in-time application' for this leave to be extended. As long as they do this before their original leave has expired, they will usually have access to public funds, which includes entitlement to welfare benefits, while they are awaiting a decision from the UK Border Agency.

If the decision on their asylum claim is negative, but they make an 'in-time' appeal, they still have access to public funds until all of their asylum appeal rights have been exhausted.

For those young people who are refused asylum and have exhausted all of their appeal rights, their entitlement to public funds, including welfare benefits, would usually end. At this point, Children's Social Care will liaise with the Home Office to provide financial support to these young people while they are waiting for instructions and assistance in leaving the country, until they reach the age of 21. After the age of 21, the COLC will provide support to the young person until they turn 25, including accommodation and subsistence, on the basis that to remove accommodation/support would be to breach their human rights, given their express wish to claim asylum in the UK. The COLC will support the young person as a care leaver first.

- This is the most common route for UASC entering the UK, but there are other possible outcomes of the asylum claim.
- The young person could be granted refugee status (i.e. granted asylum), they would have leave to remain and access to public funds for five years.
- The young person could be refused asylum but granted Humanitarian Protection (HP) with leave to remain for five years, again usually with access to public funds. HP is most commonly granted when the person is at some risk of 'ill treatment' in the particular country they left but does not meet the criteria of the Refugee Convention. This is a rare category for UASC.
- There is also the possibility that the Home Office could refuse asylum with no grant of leave. In this case the UASC would be returned to his/her country of origin. Social workers will always consider returning home with young people in pathway planning as a parallel plan.

On 9 February 2011 new rules were announced concerning asylum seekers' access to higher education. From this date only those with a settled status and right of permanent residence will be eligible to home fees and student support for a higher education course in England. This does not affect UASC who:

- are studying in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, or apply for student support in one of those countries
- are studying in England and their course began before 1 April 2011
- applied for student support before 9 February 2011
- are taking a further education course in England.

Plans for transition to adulthood must be in place for all looked-after children aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks after they reached the age of 14. The 13 weeks can be continuous or made up of separate episodes of care; they exclude short-term placements made by way of respite care, but must include a period of time (at least 24 hours) after reaching the age of 16.

Young people who were previously eligible and have returned home and become relevant and subsequently qualifying, will revert to being relevant if this arrangement breaks down before their 18th birthday.

### **11.1. Former UASC**

If a former UASC care leaver has not been recognised as a refugee or been granted any other valid form of leave to remain and becomes 'appeal rights exhausted' (ARE), the Home Office ceases to provide leaving care funding to the local authority within three months. The COLC will provide support to the young person until they turn 25, including accommodation and subsistence, on the basis that to remove accommodation/support would be to breach their human rights, given their express wish to claim asylum in the UK. The COLC will support the young person as a care leaver first.

## **12. Council tax**

From 1 April 2018 all City of London care leavers are exempt from paying council tax. The COLC will exempt care leavers who are resident in the Square Mile from paying council tax and will fund the balance of any council tax payable by care leavers in accommodation outside the Square Mile.

### **12.1. Care leavers living within the City of London**

Social workers should advise the City of London's Council Tax Manager of a new care leaver by emailing [counciltax@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@cityoflondon.gov.uk). They should provide the following information:

- Full name of care leaver
- Proof of age (they have to be under 25)
- Address within the City of London
- Written statement from the DCCS by email that the individual is a care leaver under 25 supported by the City of London
- Confirmation that they live alone at the address if known. This exemption will only apply to accommodation occupied solely by care leavers, but the Council Tax team should be notified of all occupation by any care leaver, even if a joint council tax liability applies. The team will review each on a case-by-case basis and may direct the care leaver to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, if relevant.

The Council Tax team will assess entitlement to statutory discounts, single occupier discount and student status first. Any resulting charge will be reviewed for a care leavers' discretionary discount. The Council Tax team will make necessary changes as part of their annual billing and will confirm to the DCCS when confirmation has been issued to the relevant individuals.

It is unlikely, but not impossible, that a care leaver under 18 is living alone in unsupervised accommodation. In these circumstances, they cannot be held liable for council tax. The Council Tax team should still be notified if this occurs.

### **12.2. Care leavers living in other boroughs**

The social worker will determine which borough the care leaver lives in. If the borough offers exemptions to all care leavers in their borough then the care

leaver should make an application for exemption, with support from their social worker when needed.

If the borough doesn't offer the exemption to City clients, then the cost will come from the child social care or asylum seekers budget. The social worker should liaise with the borough to raise an invoice to pay the council tax (after application of any financial assistance to which they may be entitled under the Local Council Tax Support Scheme of the borough in which they reside).

## **13. Payments**

### **13.1. Health costs**

The NHS Health Costs Scheme helps people who are on a low income to pay for the following chargeable NHS services:

- NHS prescriptions
- NHS dental treatment
- NHS sight tests
- glasses and contact lenses
- necessary costs of travel to receive NHS treatment under the care of a consultant, or through a referral by a doctor or dentist
- NHS wigs and fabric supports.

If the young person is a student or in receipt of certain universal credit, they can provide evidence of this to claim funds to help with these health costs. Eligible and relevant young people who receive a personal allowance from social care will need to complete a HC1 form to claim help with these costs, as will those over 18 who are working and on a low income.

HC1 forms can be obtained from Jobcentre Plus offices, NHS hospitals and from some doctors, dentists and opticians. A form can also be found on the NHS website at: [www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Documents/2016/HC1-April-2016.pdf](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Documents/2016/HC1-April-2016.pdf).

### **13.2. Setting Up Home grant**

Social Care have a duty to provide eligible and relevant young people a Setting Up Home Grant when they leave care and move into independent or semi-independent accommodation. This grant will be based on the young person's assessed needs, and will be up to a maximum amount of £3,000.

The grant will be administered by the young person's social worker, and will be used to ensure that the young person has the appropriate equipment and household items to set up safe, secure and stable accommodation. The young person will be able to choose the essential items that they need within this overall budget. These will include essential items of furniture, furnishings,

bedding, and kitchen equipment, installation of gas and electrical appliances as necessary, and removal costs.

**Decorating Allowance** – New COLC social housing tenants may be entitled to a decorating allowance. This amount will vary, depending on the condition and size of the property. The COLC Rents team, who sit within the Housing Department, can advise further. It is expected that social workers support their young people to claim the decorating grant, particularly for goods such as carpet or decoration which a young person may not be able to take with them to subsequent properties.

In addition, the COLC Housing Needs team has access to various furniture projects which are available for care leavers to access.

### **13.3. Discretionary £250 settling in allowance**

If a young person does not qualify for a Setting Up Home Grant and is required to move into new accommodation at short notice, the COLC may provide financial support by way of a £250 allowance to assist them to purchase the following items, should they need them:

- basic food supplies
- cleaning materials
- light bulbs
- essential toiletries.

### **13.4. Other payments**

#### **TV licences**

The first television licence fee required for eligible, relevant and former relevant young people will be purchased by the COLC. The young person will then be expected to budget for subsequent licences, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

#### **Winter heating allowance**

During their first winter of independent living, the COLC will give care leavers £10 per month from October to March. This will be paid directly to the young person who will need to budget.

#### **Birthdays/ religious festivals**

All eligible, relevant and former relevant young people will receive a birthday card and £50 from the COLC annually around their birthday, up until they are 25. This is the responsibility of the young person's social worker.

#### **Support for 16- and 17-year-olds living independently with cultural and leisure activities**

Young people are encouraged to make use of leisure facilities and to pursue sports and hobbies and cultural activities. Where the Pathway Plan identifies these activities and the young person shows a continued commitment, the COLC may provide financial support, depending on the need identified, and contribute towards related costs for eligible and relevant young people who are

living independently (i.e. not in foster care or residential care) such as membership fees for clubs, purchasing sports equipment.

### **Visits to friends/family**

The Social Care team will consider requests in relation to financial support to visit friends and family and will make a decision based on individual circumstances.

### **Payments and emergencies**

The COLC can provide discretionary financial support if the young person has no other resources while waiting for their universal credit claim to be processed once they turn 18. The Social Care team can also consider an emergency payment if a young person requests this for essential items and has no other means of paying for them.

### **Clothing**

The COLC will provide one payment of £150 per year to care leavers over the age of 18 for winter clothing. Any additional provision will be needs assessed. There will be an additional £30 available once a year to buy clothing for festivals or special occasions at a time they choose.

### **Emergencies**

In an emergency, the young person should initially contact their social worker or, in their absence, the duty worker.

If an emergency occurs out of office hours then the Emergency Duty Service can be contacted on 020 8356 2710. The service is open 365 days a year, Monday to Friday 5:00pm to 9:00am hrs and 24 hours Saturday and Sunday.

### **Other items**

The COLC Social Care team will be flexible at administering the payments to, or on behalf of, young people. Where possible, the payment will be made directly to the provider or supplier of goods or services. In some cases, where this is not possible, the young person can purchase the items themselves and provide receipts for reimbursement.

## **13.5. Payments to young people – grants and loans**

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Regulations and Guidance states that:

“No young person should receive a package for their accommodation and maintenance which comes to a value less than they would have received if they had been entitled to claim universal credit, and housing benefit. A relevant child has an absolute right that accommodation and maintenance should be provided by his or her responsible authority so long as his or her welfare requires it. This duty on the responsible authority is not qualified by any requirements on the young person.”

The Children Act 1989 states that no one on: income support; any element of child tax credit other than the family element of working tax credit; or income-based jobseeker's allowance is liable to repay any assistance that is paid to them [from ss.17, 23, 23 A-D, 24A, 24B].

***Payments should therefore, be grants not loans***

In view of the above legislation, it is not possible for Social Care to make payments to young people in the form of a loan. Any payments that are made would be a grant, and the young person should not be asked to repay them.

## **14. Identification documents**

Discretionary financial support for passports and travel documents (that may be required by UASC) will be considered.

### **14.1. Birth certificate**

Social Care will ensure that all young people have a copy of their birth certificate, paying the fees to obtain a new one where necessary.

### **14.2. Provisional driving licence**

The COLC will not provide financial support for a provisional driving licence as public transport is very accessible in London and assistance with travel expenses will be provided as detailed above. However, the COLC will cover the cost of a provisional driving licence for young people who don't have UK citizenship or indefinite leave to remain, as it is a useful ID.

### **14.3. Passports**

Social Care will apply for a passport for young people if a passport is required and agreed in the Pathway Plan. Social Care may provide discretionary financial support to purchase a passport should the young person require one. If the young person had a passport that expired before the age of 21, one renewal may be paid for by Social Care.

## **15. Housing**

### **15.1. The process for housing care leavers**

As soon as possible after a looked-after child's 16th birthday, a meeting will be arranged between the child, the social worker, a Housing Needs Officer and a Tenancy Support Officer, to discuss housing need for when the child leaves care, outlining all the options and potential housing routes. The COLC Social Care team do not encourage anyone under the age of 18 to apply for social housing and encourage young people to stay in care up until the age of 18 at least.



A housing application form will be completed with the care leaver and submitted to the Housing Needs team in addition to the Pathway Plan, which will be signed by the child's social worker and care leaver. These documents will also include confirmation of eligibility of recourse to public funds and other necessary information, such as medical forms. The care leaver should submit a 'top three' choices from the available estates that contain appropriate accommodation.

- The Housing Needs team processes the application and creates a housing file. They may request an additional risk assessment or extra information regarding support needs or special requirements.
- A package of information, advice, training and support for the next two years will be agreed to make sure that care leavers are prepared to become tenants and can sustain their tenancy. This will include money management and budgeting training and information on tenants' rights and responsibilities.
- The Housing Needs team should be notified that the care leaver will need accommodation at least three months in advance. The housing application will then be updated and activated.
- The care leaver will be placed on a priority list for the next allocated and suitable property, in accordance with the Housing Needs' Lettings Plan. If there is no suitable accommodation likely to be available immediately, then alternative accommodation such as private rental may need to be found in the interim. The Housing Needs team will endeavour to make a suitable offer of a property on one of the 'top three' estates selected by the care leaver. If the need to house is urgent, this may not always be possible.
- The Housing Needs team will notify Social Care of the upcoming void prior to advertising the property. Social Care will then inform the Housing Needs team of the care leaver they wish to be nominated for the upcoming property.
- Regarding length of priority, care leavers will remain on the priority list until offered social housing, unless they get permanent social housing from another provider, in which case they would no longer qualify for housing via the COLC and would be removed from the register. Furthermore, if a care leaver becomes an ordinarily resident out of London, they may no longer remain a priority and could be placed in an alternative allocations banding. However, they will remain on the social housing waiting list unless they are housed in social housing by another provider.
- The offer of priority for social housing will be a 'one-off offer'. The care leaver will be taken off the priority list if the social housing property is turned down, unless there is reasonable cause – for example, poor health, or social factors.
- Once an offer of a property has been made and accepted, a sign-up meeting will be held. This will involve the care leaver, the social worker, the Estate Manager, and a Tenancy Support Officer. The care leaver should also be introduced to the Income Recovery Officer and other estate staff. This



meeting will be used to welcome the care leaver to the estate, to provide information to help them settle in, and to make sure they understand the terms of the tenancy agreement, their responsibilities and the support that will be available to them.

- Social Care will work alongside the Tenancy Support Officer and the Estate Manager to maintain support after the care leaver has been allocated a property for a minimum of six months, unless the care leaver has been closed to social care. After this, if required, the Tenancy Support Officer and Estate Manager will provide ongoing support.
- If a care leaver who has limited leave to remain is allocated a property, they will remain on an introductory tenancy until indefinite leave to remain has been granted. An introductory tenancy would normally last 12 months but may be extended if Housing staff have any concerns about the future sustainability of the tenancy. Any serious or continuous breaches of the tenancy agreement would result in the tenancy being withdrawn.

If the tenancy is relinquished (for example, due to rent arrears) it is the duty of Children's Social Care to support the care leaver to help find an appropriate alternative if they are still open to Social Care.

## **15.2. For those who require tenancy support or are not ready for independent living**

Some young people leaving care may not be ready to live independently. Social Care has a service level agreement in place for the supply of housing-related floating support provided internally or by an approved organisation.

Six months of tenancy support will be provided as standard for all rehoused care leavers. A referral will be made for ongoing support if required.

The COLC Social Care team will seek accommodation appropriate to the care leaver's needs in conjunction with the care leaver. For example, if the young person leaving care requires higher support than that offered by the floating support service, the Social Care team will aim to accommodate the care leaver in specialist accommodation for young people, such as a foyer, where possible.

Social housing is a desired outcome for all care leavers due to the security of tenure and comparatively low rent. Some care leavers, however, wish to remain in the borough in which they have grown up in care. In such cases, COLC social care will liaise with the host borough to discuss other possible housing options. Where possible, the care leaver will be placed on the social housing waiting list. However, given the length of the list and that the young person may not be deemed a priority by the host borough, alternative options will also be sought. The COLC Housing Needs team will be available to meet the young person leaving care to discuss alternative housing options.

For information on alternative housing options please see Appendix 4.

## **16. Preparation for Independence**

The COLC offers a bespoke and tailored offer to support care leavers towards independence. Social workers work together with foster carers and their agencies to create bespoke plans for young people. Social workers work with My Life (a service for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs) to create bespoke plans for young people in supported lodgings. To add to our offer, social workers are able to refer to MyBnk (a charity that delivers financial education) to provide a mock week of independent living with training, which can be accessed on more than one occasion.

## **17. Preparation for employment**

All care leavers have access to the Information, Advice, Guidance and Resilience Practitioner (IAGRP), alongside the Virtual School Headteacher. Help is available for interview practice, support with application forms and careers guidance. Young people are encouraged to access career support in their colleges and universities.

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) looks at employment options alongside the Virtual School Headteacher, and offers interview practice in groups and with senior managers across the DCCS.

## **18. Risk management**

We are aspirational for our care leavers. Risk management is an important part of enabling care leavers to thrive. The practice standards set out the requirements for regular risk assessments for care leavers, in order to safety plan where needed. Social workers are able to use a generic, stand-alone risk assessment tool. Social workers have access to specific risk assessment tools where needed.

Risk management is best shared. Social workers should:

- use supervision to explore and respond to risk, and to consider the use of professional or strategy meetings
- refer cases to 'Top 3' for rigour and challenge by the People Senior Management team, chaired by the Assistant Director
- use the Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation and Vulnerable Adolescent Forum to support safety planning and risk management.

## **19. Comments and complaints**

Young people are offered advocates to help them express their comments and complaints. Young people are given details of how to complain or provide feedback on the service when entering care and on their looked-after children reviews. Social workers are able to support young people to make complaints and can also refer young people to their managers.

## Appendix 1: Local Offer

### What are care leavers supported by the COLC entitled to?

*Please note that financial support over and above the following must be agreed in advance with the budget-holding Service Manager.*

Social worker (SW) support*	Comments
Offer of SW support to all care leavers who the local authority had duties towards under section 23C of the Children Act 1989, up to age 25, irrespective of whether they are engaged in education or training. *subject to a human rights assessment where a young person has all rights exhausted.	<p>This includes care leavers who return to the local authority at any point after the age of 21 up to age 25 and <b>request</b> SW support. When a care leaver is approaching 21, their social worker will discuss with them whether they want SW support to continue.</p> <p>The social worker ensures that the young person is provided with the practical and emotional support they need to make a successful transition to adulthood, either directly or through helping the young person to build a positive social network around them.</p>
Each care leaver will have a Pathway Plan which will be reviewed at minimum every six months.	<p>For care leavers aged 21 or over, the duties in the Children Act 1989 introduced through the Children and Social Work Act 2017 – to assess care leavers' needs, and develop and keep their Pathway Plan under review – apply only where the young person <b>requests</b> support.</p> <p>The Pathway Plan may be partially completed after the age of 21 to reflect only the area where the young person requires ongoing support, unless the person is experiencing numerous or complex difficulties.</p>
Frequency of visits	<p>This will vary, dependant on need. A young person aged 16–17 who has moved into a foster placement or into independent or semi-independent accommodation is visited by a social worker within one week on first moving in and then every week for the first four weeks and subsequently every four weeks (six with agreement of the Team Manager). If more frequent (or less frequent) visits are required, this can be agreed by the young person, social worker and Team Manager to no less than one visit every three months.</p> <p>For care leavers aged 18 and over, the frequency of visits should be determined based on the care leaver's wishes and feelings, alongside their needs. They should be offered visits every six to eight weeks in line with the Pledge. Methods and frequency of keeping in touch should have some flexibility.</p>
Keeping in touch	The COLC will proactively keep in touch with all care leavers until they reach age 21. Where contact has been lost, they will take reasonable steps to re-

	establish contact until age 25.
Offering local authority support to every care leaver on an annual basis	The COLC will make care leavers aware that they can continue to request SW support when they turn 21, and at least on an annual basis thereafter to age 26.
Former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)	If a former UASC care leaver has not been recognised as a refugee, or been granted any other valid form of leave to remain, and becomes 'appeal rights exhausted' (ARE), the Home Office ceases to provide leaving care funding to the local authority within three months. The COLC will provide support to age 25, including accommodation and subsistence.

<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Payment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Accommodation	Dependent on need and recourse to public funding. Options are foster care (under 18/staying put), semi-independent accommodation, private rented or COLC housing tenancy.	Eligible young people must apply for universal credit, including the housing component, with the support of the City of London. Young people will be assisted to apply for COLC housing tenancy if eligible. If young people request private rented accommodation, this will be explored as part of their Pathway Plan.
Setting Up Home Grant (furnishings, equipment) for independent accommodation	Up to £3,000 (depending on condition of the property)	The young person does not get this in a lump sum. It must be spent on accommodation, agreed and allocated with the social worker.
TV	Up to £250	This comes from the Setting Up Home Grant but can be allocated in semi-independent accommodation.
Winter heating allowance for first winter of independent living only	£10 per month from October–March	This will be paid directly to the young person who will need to budget.
Clothing	Young people in care receive an allowance through their foster carer. Care leavers may get one £150 payment per year, depending on means.	Needs are assessed as part of the Pathway Plan.
Removal expenses	Up to full amount	One-off payment of removal expenses and associated expenses. Contribution towards removal expenses for subsequent or additional removals may be made with the agreement of the budget-holding service manager.
TV licence	First year paid in full	Young people will then be encouraged to pay in instalments towards the following year's licence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Education	Payment	Comments
Part or full-time further/higher education course fees	Only in exceptional circumstances	Care leavers are expected to claim from loans and grants to cover their tuition fees, accommodation and maintenance.  If they are unable to claim grants and loans, young people will be advised to contact Buttle UK.  Advice to be sought from the Virtual School Headteacher.
University payment	£2,000 per year of course (paid in instalments termly)	The higher education grant will continue to be paid for four weeks after the completion of a higher education course in order to assist the young people to make a transition.
Registration, examination and other miscellaneous fees (if required to meet curriculum)	Up to full amount	
Activities (e.g. school trips) and equipment required to meet curriculum (e.g. specified specialist clothing and essential textbooks/stationery) and computer	Per academic year, the following will be needs assessed: Stationery grant Educational trips grant Books and equipment Up to £300 computer grant – one-off between age 16 and 21–25	Activities required to meet curriculum (e.g. outings) are to be paid directly to the education provision.  Computer grant to be paid directly to the shop.
Education-related travel (public transport to and from education provision)	All students up to the age of 19 are entitled to travel free. We will cover education travel costs for students over 18.	Students must apply for subsidised travel card if appropriate.
Graduation	Up to £100 for robes, tickets and photographs.	

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Payment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Specified clothing/ uniform required	Needs assessed	
Specified equipment required	Needs assessed	This is usually a one-off payment, although the purchase of consumables should be considered.
Travel costs (for interviews and first month in employment)	Up to full amount	Young people should plan for costs of travel from their salary or wages after the first month in employment.

<b>Leisure and wellbeing</b>	<b>Payment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Leisure, religious and cultural activities	Social Care will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their leisure, cultural and religious needs where appropriate.	Leisure, religious and cultural activities should be identified in the Pathway Plan.
Eye and dental treatment, including glasses	Social Care will assist young people to access services to meet their needs. They will be assisted to complete the HC1 form, if applicable, which enables young people to get free or reduced-cost dental, optician and prescription services.	In exceptional circumstances, dependent on an assessment of need, Social Care may provide funds to secure health services.
Counselling and therapeutic needs	Social Care will assist young people to access counselling and/or therapeutic services via universal health services.	
Baby grant	One-off £200 just prior or subsequent to the birth of a baby.  If a young person is not eligible for the maternity grant, we will also match the maternity grant (currently £500) and give the additional £200.	Assistance to apply for maternity grant if eligible. Items for baby to be agreed between social worker and young person.

Driving	No support provided apart from exceptional circumstances, i.e. when required for identification, employment or training.	
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<b>Personal allowances</b>	<b>Payment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Celebration allowances (birthday and festivals)	£50 to be paid yearly around the young person's birthday	
Laptop	Up to £300 for children in care – so young people leaving care should have received a laptop. (If a young person has not received a laptop they will be given one as a care leaver.)  Maintenance/replacement costs will be considered on an exceptional basis.	
Essential travel to maintain contact with family or significant others	At the discretion of the Team Manager.	
Wedding gift	£100	One-off payment
Emergency payment	At the discretion of the Team Manager.	Payment made when the young person requests emergency payment due to budgeting difficulties for food or essentials, i.e. energy payments. The social worker will pay for these directly if possible.
Birth certificate	Payment for one birth certificate.	
Passport	Payment for one passport in full.	This will include checking and sending.
Citizenship	Up to £400 towards costs.	This is a discretionary payment.



## Appendix 2: Legislation and definitions

### Legislation

These pieces of legislation created four categories of young people and care leavers who are entitled to support from the local authority after their 16th birthday:

- Children Act 1989
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Higher Education Bursary Regulations 2009
- Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (March 2010)
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers (Oct 2010)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017

### Definitions

The following definitions are taken from The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers (Oct 2010) and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

All children who are over 16 and leaving care fall within one of the following categories.

#### Eligible child

Defined in paragraph 19B of Schedule 2 to the 1989 Act, and regulation 40 of the Care Planning Regulations as a child who is:

- (a) looked after
- (b) aged 16 or 17; and
- (c) has been looked after by a local authority for a period of 13 weeks, or periods amounting in total to 13 weeks, which began after they reached 14 and ended after they reached 16.

The main statutory obligations in relation to 'eligible children' include:

The local authority has the same statutory obligations to eligible children as they do towards other children looked after by them, including a duty to maintain their care plan, carry out regular reviews of their case and appoint an independent reviewing officer for the child.

In addition they must:

- prepare an assessment of the eligible child's needs with a view to determining what advice, assistance and support would be appropriate to provide them (while they are being looked after and post their looked-after period) [paragraph 19B (4) of Schedule 2 to the 1989 Act; the requirements for carrying out the assessment are set out in regulation 42 of the Care Planning Regulations]
- prepare a Pathway Plan (which includes the child's care plan) as soon as possible after the assessment of needs is completed [paragraph 19B(4) of Schedule 2 to the 1989 Act; the requirements for preparing the Pathway Plan are set out in regulation 43 of the Care Planning Regulations]
- keep the Pathway Plan under regular review [paragraph 19B(5) of Schedule 2 to the 1989 Act]
- appoint a social worker for the child.

### **Relevant child**

Defined in section 23A(2) of the 1989 Act as a child who is:

- (a) not looked after
- (b) aged 16 or 17; and
- (c) was, before he last ceased to be looked after, an eligible child.

Regulation 3 of the Care Leavers Regulations prescribes a further category of relevant child who is:

- (a) not looked after
- (b) aged 16 or 17; and
- (c) at the time he attained the age of 16 was detained (i.e. detained in a remand centre, a young offenders institution or a secure training centre, or any other centre pursuant to a court order), or in a hospital, and immediately before he was detained or in hospital he had been looked after by a local authority for a period or periods amounting in all to at least 13 weeks which began after he reached the age of 14.

Regulation 3 of the Care Leavers Regulations also provides that a child who has lived for a continuous period of six months or more with:

- (a) his parent
- (b) someone who is not his parent but who has parental responsibility for him
- (c) where he is in care and there was a residence order in force immediately before the care order was made, a person in whose favour the residence order was made then that child is not a relevant child despite falling within section 23A(2). Where those living arrangements break down and the child ceases to live with the person concerned, the child is to be treated as a relevant child.

The main statutory obligations of the local authority that last looked after the 'relevant' children are:

- take reasonable steps to **keep in touch** with the relevant child [section 23B(1) of the 1989 Act]
- prepare an **assessment** of the relevant child's needs with a view to determining what advice, assistance and support it would be appropriate to provide (unless they already did so when the young person was an eligible child) [section 23B(3)(a) of the 1989 Act; the requirements for carrying out the assessment are set out in regulations 4 and 5 of the Care Leavers Regulations]
- as soon as possible after any assessment of needs is completed, prepare a **Pathway Plan** [section 23B(3)(b) of the 1989 Act; the requirements for preparing the Pathway Plan are set out in regulation 6 of the Care Leavers Regulations]
- keep the Pathway Plan under **regular review** [section 23E(1D) of the 1989 Act; the requirements for carrying out reviews are set out in regulation 7 of the Care Leavers Regulations]
- appoint a **personal advisor** for the child (unless they already did so when the young person was an eligible child) [section 23B(2) of the 1989 Act; the functions of the personal advisor are set out in regulation 8 of the Care Leavers Regulations]
- safeguard and promote the relevant child's welfare by **maintaining** them, providing them with or maintaining **suitable accommodation** and providing **assistance in order to meet their needs in relation to education, training or employment** as provided for in the Pathway Plan [section 23B(8) of the 1989 Act and regulation 9 of the Care Leavers Regulations; regulation 9 also makes provision about the meaning of "suitable accommodation"].

### Former relevant child

Defined in section 23C(1) of the 1989 Act as a young person who is:

- (a) aged 18-25, and either
- (b) has been a relevant child and would be one if he were under 18, or
- (c) immediately before he ceased to be looked after at age 18, was an eligible child.

The local authority that last looked after the former relevant child must:

- take reasonable steps to **keep in touch** with the former relevant child, and if they lose touch, to re-establish contact [section 23C(2) of the 1989 Act]
- continue to keep the **Pathway Plan** under **regular review** [section 23C(3)(b) of the 1989 Act; the requirements for carrying out reviews are set out in regulation 7 of the Care Leavers Regulations]
- continue the appointment of the **personal advisor** for the child [section 23C(3)(a) of the 1989 Act; the functions of the personal advisor are set out in regulation 8 of the Care Leavers Regulations]
- if the child's welfare requires it, provide **financial assistance** by contributing to the former relevant child's expenses in living near the place where they are, or will be, employed or seeking employment [sections 23C(4)(a) and 24B(1) of the 1989 Act]

- if the child's welfare and educational and training needs require it, provide **financial assistance** to enable them to pursue education or training [sections 23C(4)(b) and 24B(2) of the 1989 Act]
- if the former relevant child pursues higher education in accordance with their Pathway Plan, to pay them the higher education bursary [section 23C(5A) and the Children Act 1989 (Higher Education Bursary) (England) Regulations 2009]
- continue the duties in section 23C(2), (3) and (4)(b) until the former relevant child reaches the age of 25.

The new duty to extend personal advisor support to all care leavers up to age 25 means that they will be able to continue to receive support when they reach age 21 or request personal advisor support at any point after age 21 up to age 25, even if they had previously indicated that they did not want the support. Any financial support that is agreed on and provided to the young person will be detailed in their Pathway Plan.

### **Persons qualifying for advice and assistance**

Defined in section 24 of the 1989 Act as a person who is:

- (a) aged at least 16 but is under 25
- (b) with respect to whom a special guardianship order is in force (or was in force when they reached 18) and was looked after immediately before the making of that order
- (c) at any time after reaching the age of 16 but while still a child was, but is no longer, looked after, accommodated or fostered.

The relevant local authority (as defined in section 24(5) of the 1989 Act) must consider whether the person needs the kind of help the local authority can give:

- under section 24A – to **advise and befriend** and give **assistance**
- under section 24B – to give **financial assistance** – see above; or where the person is under the age of 25 and qualifies for advice and assistance, or would have done if under 21, assistance in relation to securing vacation accommodation [sections 24A(2) and (3), and 24B of the 1989 Act].

A qualifying child who is 16–17 years old and has previously been looked after, but ceased to be looked after before their 18th birthday, does not have the same restrictions to claiming welfare benefits as eligible and relevant young people do. Because of this, COLC will not pay a personal allowance or pay for the accommodation costs for these young people.

All qualifying children aged 16 and over who would like a service from COLC will have their needs assessed. Where, following the initial assessment, it is concluded that support will be necessary over a period of time, a plan will be drawn up with the young person. The plan will outline the support to be provided to the young person, including any financial support, if appropriate. A social worker or suitably qualified person will draw up the plan.

## **Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)**

Asylum seeking young people within City of London usually have equal access to financial support from social care, as detailed within this document. However, depending on their immigration status, they may have differing entitlements to public funds, which could affect their entitlement to claim welfare benefits and to accessing education-related funding.

Most asylum-seeking children who arrive in the UK without a parent or guardian make an application to the Home Office and are granted Discretionary Leave for three years, or until they are 17-and-a-half years old, whichever comes first. They then have the opportunity to make an 'in-time application' for this leave to be extended. As long as they do this before their original leave has expired, they will usually have access to public funds, which includes entitlement to welfare benefits, while they are awaiting a decision from the UK Border Agency.

If the decision on their asylum claim is negative, but they make an 'in-time' appeal, they still have access to public funds until all of their asylum appeal rights have been exhausted.

For those young people who are refused asylum and have exhausted all of their appeal rights, their entitlement to public funds, including welfare benefits, would usually end. At this point, Social Care will liaise with the UK Border Agency to provide financial support to these young people while they are waiting for instructions and assistance in leaving the country. Social care will consider a Human Rights Assessment after the young person turns 21 to consider if financial and practical support should continue or if National Asylum Support Service (NASS) help is sufficient.

- This is the most common route for UASC entering the UK, but there are other possible outcomes of the asylum claim.
- The young person could be granted refugee status (i.e. granted asylum), they would have leave to remain and access to public funds for five years.
- The young person could be refused asylum but granted Humanitarian Protection (HP) with leave to remain for five years, again usually with access to public funds. HP is most commonly granted when the person is at some risk of 'ill treatment' in the particular country they left, but does not meet the criteria of the Refugee Convention. This is a rare category for UASC.
- There is also the possibility that the Home Office could refuse asylum with no grant of leave. In this case the UASC would be returned to his/her country of origin.

On 9 February 2011 new rules were announced concerning asylum seekers' access to higher education. From this date, only those with a settled status and right of permanent residence will be eligible to home fees and student support for a higher education course in England. This does not affect UASC who:

- are studying in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, or apply for student support in one of those countries
- are studying in England and their course began before 1 April 2011
- applied for Student Support before 9 February 2011
- are taking a further education course in England.

Plans for transition to adulthood must be in place for all looked-after children aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks after they reached the age of 14. The 13 weeks can be continuous or made up of separate episodes of care; they exclude short-term placements made by way of respite care, but must include a period of time (at least 24 hours) after reaching the age of 16.

Young people who were previously eligible and have returned home and become relevant and are subsequently qualifying, will revert to being relevant if this arrangement breaks down before their 18th birthday.

## Appendix 3: Universal credit

### Universal credit

Universal credit is a new benefit being rolled out across the UK. It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions and is now live in the COLC and the surrounding boroughs. It replaces housing benefit in most circumstances for working-age people. Whether you claim universal credit or housing benefit will depend on your postcode and your personal circumstances. For more information about universal credit, see the GOV.UK website: [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit).

If you have any questions on which benefit should be claimed, please contact the COLC Benefits Section on T: 020 7332 1622 or email: [benefits@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@cityoflondon.gov.uk).

For advice on universal credit, please contact City Advice at Toynbee Hall on T: 020 7392 2919 or email: [city.advice@toynbeehall.org.uk](mailto:city.advice@toynbeehall.org.uk).

## Appendix 4: Alternative housing options

**Private Rented Sector (PRS) and Rent Deposit** – Due to the shortage of social housing, the PRS is increasingly becoming a preferred housing solution. This is a quicker solution to accommodation and offers more flexibility of choice of area, however, there are drawbacks. First, the rent – which is particularly high in central London – may not be affordable for care leavers. Those on housing benefit need to develop a relationship with landlords who are willing to accept benefits. This will be explored further by Social Care and Housing Options. Also, in contrast to social housing, this option offers a less secure tenancy, and possible annual rent increments.

Where a young person's accommodation needs have been identified within the Pathway Plan as private rented accommodation, the COLC will consider paying the deposit for the rent if the property fulfils standard requirements in accordance to the City of London's Rent Deposit Scheme. Where possible, a minimum contract of two years may be negotiated.

**Social Housing in host borough and Homeswapper** – Some care leavers wish to remain in the borough they currently reside in. In this case, Social Care will work with the care leaver to apply for social housing in the borough. However, as the young person would not be a priority, they will be encouraged to access COLC housing stock with the long-term aim to use the Homeswapper scheme<sup>1</sup> to 'swap' with a social housing resident in another borough. In London, this could be a quicker process for the care leaver to access social housing in their desired borough. It is also possible to apply for mutual exchange with other local authorities directly in addition to the Homeswapper scheme.

**Real Lettings** – An alternative option may be Real Lettings, a specialist lettings agency set up in 2005 by the London charity Broadway,<sup>2</sup> giving people the opportunity to secure quality and affordable accommodation. Properties are sourced from private sector landlords and leased on long contracts. These properties are let to tenants on assured shorthold tenancies. This will be an option for those care leavers who are exempt from the single room rate allowance (e.g. those with a child) as currently houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) are not considered. The COLC can refer clients to this service, but it would be subject to a placement fee of £4,000 per tenancy.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.homeswapper.co.uk/](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk/)

<sup>2</sup> [www.reallettings.com/page/guaranteed-rent-letting-agent-london-home/1/3](http://www.reallettings.com/page/guaranteed-rent-letting-agent-london-home/1/3)



<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Community and Children Services Safeguarding Sub Committee Audit and Risk	11/01/2019 08/02/2019 12/03/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Ofsted Focused Visit on Care Leavers	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Chris Pelham, Assistant Director People	

## Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the outcome of the Ofsted focused visit undertaken in October 2018, which looked at City of London's offer for care leavers.

This visit was conducted under the new Ofsted Inspections of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework. Notice of the visit was given on 17 October 2018. Two inspectors were on-site on 24 October 2018, and provided feedback on 25 October 2018.

The visit generated a letter setting out the findings of the visit and recommendations for improvement. The visit does not generate a graded judgement of effectiveness – this is given during standard (two-week) or short (one-week) inspections.

The findings of the focused visit are set out in the Ofsted Letter (Appendix 1). The visit found much evidence demonstrating a strong offer for our care leavers, including:

- Care leavers in the City of London benefit from a strong service that ensures they are very well supported. They receive effective help which enables most to achieve good outcomes.
- Skilled, determined social workers are persistent in engaging effectively with care leavers.
- The accommodation needs of young people are being met effectively and all are in suitable accommodation.
- The emotional and physical health needs of care leavers are well considered and well met.
- Senior leaders and managers are making efforts to ensure that care leavers' views and experiences are being used to help inform service improvements.

Inspectors identified three areas for improvement:

- Risk assessments should more clearly articulate measures to address and minimise risk.

- The demonstration of young people's involvement in preparing their pathway plans should be more explicit and consistent.
- Social workers should receive consistently reflective, analytical supervision and clear management oversight.

There were no priority actions identified.

These findings have been built into our Service Improvement Plan. One key area of work that addresses the improvement recommendations involves the Children's Social Care workforce engaging in a system-wide development programme with the College of Social Work Systemic Practice. This issue was already in development prior to the focused visit. This 12-month programme will commence in April 2019. It will involve all qualified social workers up to assistant director level who are engaged in theory and practice-based learning that supports the implementation of the systemic model of social work practice in the City of London. This, in turn, will assist in further improving the quality of assessment, supervision and recording.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. In 2018, Ofsted introduced a new ILACS framework. This replaced the previous Single Inspection Framework and introduced a risk-based approach to determine the type and frequency of inspections that local authorities would receive.
2. This framework includes:
  - local authorities sharing an annual self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice with Ofsted
  - an annual engagement meeting between Ofsted regional representatives and the local authority to review the self-evaluation and to reflect on what is happening in the local authority
  - Ofsted analysing their local authority intelligence system which compiles data and information into a single record
  - undertaking focused visits that look at a specific area of service or cohort of children
  - undertaking standard inspections (usually for local authorities judged 'requires improvement to be good') and short inspections (for local authorities judged 'good' or 'outstanding')
  - joint targeted area inspections carried out by Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary.

3. Focused visits evaluate an aspect of service, a theme or the experiences of a cohort of children – in this case care leavers. The visits happen between standard and short inspections. Following five days' notice, two inspectors are on-site for up to two days in one week. Focused visits include some or all of the same inspection activity as a standard or short inspection.
4. Each focused visit will cover part of the scope of standard and short inspections. Leadership is a feature of all focused visits, principally through the lens of the impact of leaders on practice with children and families.
5. In carrying out a focused visit on care leavers, Ofsted inspected:
  - looked-after children aged 16 and 17
  - care leavers aged 18 to 25
  - accommodation
  - employment, education and training
  - transition to adulthood
  - staying close and in touch.
6. During the focused visit, inspectors evaluate the effectiveness of:
  - performance management
  - management oversight
  - supervision
  - quality assurance
  - continuous professional development of the workforce.
7. Inspectors do not make graded judgements at the outcome of a focused visit. Nor will they indicate what the grade may have been if the visit had been a short or standard inspection. The outcome will include findings about strengths and areas for improvement, reported in a published letter (see Appendix 1).
8. Where inspectors find serious weaknesses, they will identify areas for priority action. An area for priority action is either:
  - an area of serious weakness that is placing children at risk of inadequate protection and significant harm; or
  - unnecessary delay in identifying permanent solutions for children in care that results in their welfare not being safeguarded and promoted.
9. Priority actions may result from particular or localised failings to protect or care for children, as well as from systemic failures or deficits.
10. Inspectors will use findings from focused visits when planning their next short or standard inspection. The evidence from a focused visit will not be used as

primary evidence but may enable inspectors to target their evidence gathering more effectively.

### **Current Position**

11. In September 2018, Ofsted held the annual engagement meeting with the Director of Community and Children's Services, the Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board and senior managers from Community and Children's Services. This meeting noted that City of London had a good self-evaluation that was clear and well evidenced.
12. On 17 October 2018, City of London received notice of a focused visit in respect of care leavers. The visit took place on 24 October 2018, with feedback on 25 October 2018.
13. The focused visit involved meeting with social workers, partners, young people, managers and the Chairman of Community and Children's Services in their capacity as Lead Member for Children's Services.
14. The findings from the visit are detailed in the letter at Appendix 1. The letter highlighted the following good practice areas:
  - Care leavers in the City of London benefit from a strong service that ensures that they are very well supported. They receive effective help which enables most to achieve good outcomes. There is a determined and appropriately ambitious political and corporate focus to sustain and improve outcomes for care leavers. The service knows itself well and is aware of areas where further improvement is required.
  - Skilled, determined social workers are persistent in engaging effectively with care leavers. All care leavers are in suitable, safe accommodation and 'staying put' arrangements are actively promoted. There is a strong and consistent determination to ensure that care leavers access education, employment and training. Care leavers receive effective help in developing the necessary skills to live independently.
  - Social workers are consistently tenacious in their efforts to stay in touch with young people who leave care. The local authority has meaningful contact with all its care leavers. Young people who had been spoken to by inspectors reported that they felt safe where they lived.
  - The accommodation needs of young people are being met effectively and all are in suitable accommodation. The different levels of support needed by young people are well understood, including the need for staying put arrangements where this is indicated by the level of need.
  - Care leavers who are unaccompanied asylum seekers or refugees receive good support from their social workers. This includes help with understanding how to progress their application to stay in the UK.

- The emotional and physical health needs of care leavers are well considered and well met. Health assessments are conducted regularly and are of good quality. Care leavers consistently receive their health histories in a written form and meet with the designated nurse for children in care.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer is effective in improving planning for young people aged between 16 and 17 years.
- Senior leaders and managers are making efforts to ensure that care leavers' views and experiences are being used to help inform service improvements.

15. The report also identified areas for further development:

- Risk assessments to more clearly articulate measures to address and minimise risk.
- More explicit and consistent demonstration of young people's involvement in preparing their pathway plans.
- Supervision of social workers to consistently demonstrate reflective, analytical supervision and clear management oversight.

16. These development areas have been built into the Service Improvement Plan to ensure that sustained practice improvement is evident. This will be subject to review by the Service Improvement Board and the Safeguarding Sub Committee.

17. System-wide training will be undertaken from April 2019 with all qualified social workers, practice managers and leaders engaged in systemic social work training. This will support improvement in the quality of supervision and case oversight.

### **Corporate Plan**

18. The provision of services for care leavers sits within the Corporate Plan priorities of 'People are safe and feel safe'; 'People enjoy good health and wellbeing'; and 'People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential'.

### **Conclusion**

19. This report provides Members with the details of the outcome of the Ofsted focused visit inspection of care leavers services in October 2018.

20. The visit noted the good service delivered across a range of areas, including education, accommodation and social work engagement and leadership.

21. There were no priority action areas identified.

22. Three areas were identified for improvement work, which will be built into the Service Improvement Plan.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Ofsted Letter

### **Chris Pelham**

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16 November 2018

Andrew Carter  
City of London Children's Services  
City of London North Wing, Guildhall  
PO BOX 270  
London  
EC2P 2EJ

Dear Andrew,

### **Focused visit to City of London local authority children's services**

This letter summarises the findings of a focused visit to City of London local authority children's services on 24 October 2018. The inspectors were Andy Whippey, Her Majesty's Inspector, and Kate Malleson, Her Majesty's Inspector.

Inspectors considered the local authority's arrangements for care leavers. They considered a range of evidence, including case discussions with care leavers, partner agencies, social workers and managers. They also considered the local authority performance management information, quality assurance information and young people's records.

### **Overview**

Care leavers in the City of London benefit from a strong service that ensures that they are very well supported. They receive effective help which enables most to achieve good outcomes. There is a determined and appropriately ambitious political and corporate focus to sustain and improve outcomes for care leavers. The service knows itself well and is aware of the areas in which further improvement is required.

Skilled, determined social workers are persistent in engaging effectively with care leavers. All care leavers are in suitable safe accommodation and 'staying put' arrangements are actively promoted. There is a strong and consistent determination to ensure that care leavers access education, employment and training (EET), and care leavers receive effective help in developing the necessary skills to live

independently. Most of the care leavers in the City of London are unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. For these young people, there is proactive and sensitive consideration of their needs.

### **What needs to improve in this area of social work practice**

- Risk assessments to more clearly articulate measures to address and minimise risk.
- The more explicit and consistent demonstration of young people's involvement in preparing their pathway plans.
- The supervision of social workers to consistently demonstrate reflective, analytical supervision and clear management oversight.

### **Findings**

- Individual risks to care leavers, including those at risk of going missing and sexual exploitation, are clearly understood, and the necessary support is provided to reduce risks. Risk assessments are routinely undertaken and add real value in terms of the understanding of any actual or potential risks to young people. They are consistently reviewed to consider any changes in young people's circumstances. Good support is offered when young people experience day-to-day difficulties. Focused work by social workers enables care leavers to make informed decisions and choices to keep them safe. While risks are well understood in a minority of risk assessments, there is insufficient clarity about the risk minimisation measures that are necessary to reduce risk.
- Social workers are consistently tenacious in their efforts to stay in touch with young people who leave care. The local authority has meaningful contact with all its care leavers. Social workers use a broad range of ways of staying in touch that are proportionate to the needs of each young person. Social workers work hard to build rapport, and several young people reported positively about the quality of support and advice offered to them. Young people were appreciative that social workers were strong advocates for them.
- Visits to young people are mostly well recorded, with their wishes and feelings clearly evident. A minority, however, would benefit from clarity relating to the outcome of the visit in terms of determining any future actions or changes in care planning. While work is being undertaken with young people to understand their histories and to ensure identity needs are met, this is not always well evidenced on case records.
- The accommodation needs of young people are being met effectively and all are in suitable accommodation. The different levels of support needed by young people are well understood, including the need for staying put arrangements where this is indicated by the level of need. Commissioning arrangements are effective in ensuring that there are appropriate accommodation options. For this



reason, care leavers live in accommodation where they feel supported and with a level of support consistent with their need. Young people spoken to by inspectors reported that they felt safe where they lived.

- Effective tenancy support enables young people to sustain their tenancies when they are ready to move into independent accommodation. There have been no tenancy breakdowns in the past year. Tenancy support has an appropriate focus on any emotional health support needs. Any risks which threaten the stability of care leavers' living arrangements are quickly identified and support is put in place. While there is clear consideration given to changes in the level of support to young people in supported accommodation, the rationale and decision-making for such change is not always clear on young people's records in order to evidence the rationale for such changes.
- Care leavers receive good support to help them build their skills to live independently. Effective support is provided by social workers, commissioning arrangements and tenancy support. This has a focus on developing the skills that care leavers need, such as learning to save money, budget and cook for themselves.
- Care leavers who are unaccompanied asylum seekers or refugees receive good support from their social workers, including help with understanding how to progress their application to stay in the United Kingdom. These young people are in suitable accommodation and are supported to access education. Sensitive consideration is given to their histories and they are supported to access help for their emotional and mental health needs.
- There is a clear, determined focus on ensuring that care leavers are engaged in EET activity. Inspectors found positive examples of sustained help that enabled young people to engage in college/education or work opportunities, including attending interviews and information sessions with them. Positive support is provided by the virtual school and social workers, and the information, advice guidance and resilience practitioner helps to sustain opportunities for care leavers.
- The emotional and physical health needs of care leavers are well considered and well met. Health assessments are conducted regularly and are of good quality. Care leavers consistently receive their health histories in a written form and meet with the designated nurse for children in care. This helps young people to understand their histories and enables them to make informed decisions about their future healthcare. The availability of the designated nurse for advice and consultation after they reach 18 years old enhances the health provision on offer.
- Pathway plans are mostly comprehensive with a clear focus on the needs of care leavers. However, the records indicate variability in young people's involvement in preparing them. In a minority of plans, the voice of the young person and their contribution to the plan is insufficiently clear. Pathway plans are not always being consistently reviewed when young people's circumstances change, for example a

change in their living arrangements. It is not always clear from records if young people have had an opportunity to contribute or comment on them or suggest any alterations or amendments.

- The independent reviewing officer (IRO) is effective in improving planning for young people between 16 and 17 years. Effective midpoint reviews and consistent communication with young people ensure that care planning is focused on improving outcomes. Reviews of plans undertaken by the IRO are written to the young person and are of good quality.
- Senior leaders and managers are making efforts to ensure that care leavers' views and experiences are being used to help to inform service improvements. Care leavers are involved in determining the local offer required by recent legislation. The local authority is aware of the need to strengthen the voice of care leavers on the local authority's safeguarding subcommittee, which fulfils the role of the corporate parenting board.
- Care leavers highly value the opportunities to meet each other, and the professionals who help them, at regular children in care council meetings. Care leavers benefit from discussing relevant and important topics in these meetings, such as the issue of consent in relationships. The celebration of achievements, participation in a range of activities, visits and holidays are enjoyed by young people.
- Social workers reported that they enjoy working for the local authority and find their managers to be visible and supportive. Caseloads are manageable, and this enables direct work to take place with young people. Social workers benefit from access to a wide range of training opportunities applicable to the needs of care leavers.
- There is some variability in the quality of management oversight and supervision. Inspectors did not always see consistent examples of good quality, reflective, analytical supervision and management oversight. Some supervision records do not provide sufficient clarity as to the specific actions they need to complete and by when in order to improve outcomes for young people.
- Audit arrangements for the provision of services to care leavers are good. Audits are effective tools in identifying the difference that practice has made to improve outcomes for young people. They are qualitatively focused as well as compliance focused, and the outcomes of audits are evident in the local authority's self-improvement plan.

Yours sincerely

Andy Whippey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
<b>Safeguarding Sub Committee</b>	<b>08/02/2019</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Service Improvement Plan 2018–2019	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Rachel Green, Service Manager, Children's Social Care and Early Help	

## Summary

The Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was fully refreshed for April 2018–March 2019. The SIP was developed after listening to children, young people and their parents, following formal consultation by Action for Children (UK-wide charity), from our annual audits undertaken by Aidhour (a network of safeguarding and child protection services), multi-agency audit, specific internal case reviews, and staff feedback.

The SIP contains all six recommendations from Ofsted in 2016 to ensure consistency of oversight, challenge and momentum. The recommendations remain to ensure that, if there is any dip in practice standards, this can be identified and addressed.

The SIP contains recommendations from the very positive Ofsted review of our work with care leavers in October 2018. The Ofsted feedback letter has been used to evidence some of the completed actions.

The actions are largely 'green' and 'blue' (see below for an explanation of the colour coding) and work continues to progress the plan to completion in March 2019. A new SIP will be created by 1 April 2019, and will include feedback from children, young people and families.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## The SIP

1. The source of an objective is listed in red in brackets in the first column. In this way we can evidence 'you said, we did' to our children and young people and other partners.
2. The actions are 'BRAG' rated:

- blue meaning 'fully completed'
- red meaning 'fully stuck'
- amber meaning 'more work needed or resolvable issue in sight'
- green meaning 'in progress, no barriers to continuing'.

3. There are:

- 25 tasks marked blue
- 0 tasks marked red
- 8 tasks marked amber
- 32 tasks marked green

4. Key achievements in the last quarter include:

- Staff completed training on Modern Day Slavery.
- Staff participated in Hackney's Contextual Safeguarding Board.
- A systemic training programme for social workers, managers and leaders was successfully procured.
- All staff attended the first 'introduction to systemic social work' session.
- Youth Provision re-engaged in our Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation and Vulnerable Adolescents Forum.
- IT systems were amended to ensure that there were no blocks to case closures.
- A new Placements Officer is in post. This should mean better quality placements for young people, strong contract management and support for social work staff in spot purchasing services.
- The care leaver offer was signed off by young people and is ready to publish online.

### **Additional Capacity**

5. An additional social worker has been temporarily recruited to carry a caseload of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). This is due to an increase in UASC arriving in the City, and because the Croydon Rota stopped as a result. This means that young people are accommodated by the City of London temporarily, pending a move via the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) outside of London. The NTS is voluntary across England and Wales, and transfers are taking several months. Additional provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is in place via our Adult Education Service, pending their transfer. There is additional pressure on the service if transfers do not take place in a timely manner, as young people may have formed links in London and may not wish to move.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) Review**

6. This is an amber action, due to a review on our position.

We are proposing not to MASH review incoming contacts. This decision comes after a pan-London review in 2018 where we looked at relaunching MASH, and in the light of our front door activity. From reviewing the pan-London evidence, from other reading, and our own case audits, we think that partner agency information sharing can be undertaken within a Child and Family Assessment. The expectation will be that partner agency feedback is sought (including health visiting, school health, GP, education, police, and so on) within that

assessment. Key partners (health, education, police) are meeting at the end of January 2019 to review this together.

### **SMART Planning**

7. This is an amber action as work is ongoing.
8. Training took place in September 2018 for social workers and managers. Coaching is taking place between January and March 2019 on all Children in Need Plans, and on Pathway Plans. This is on-the-job training and supports staff as they create stronger, simpler Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely (SMART) plans that children and families should easily grasp.

### **Supervision**

9. This is an amber action.
10. In January 2019 we introduced new guidelines and a refreshed 'signs of safety' template. This action remains amber as implementation is reviewed in the next quarter. Our audit and an Ofsted review in the last quarter showed that supervision would benefit from having more depth. This work is complemented by the introduction of group supervision (January 2019) and with systemic supervision training (starting in April 2019). A permanent team manager is being recruited in advance of the training.

### **Conclusion**

11. The Service Improvement Plan is driving our development work forward. Audit and The Care Leaver Ofsted review have helped benchmark our progress. Our work plan between January to March is robust, and we are looking forward to having refreshed pathway plan guidance to strengthen our offer to care leavers.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Service Improvement Plan 2018–2019

### **Rachel Green**

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Name:	Children & Families Service Improvement Plan
Duration:	May 2018 - April 2019
Relevant Strategies	Corporate Parenting Strategy/Children & Young People's Plan
Previous version(s) of action plan /relevant plans:	new refreshed version for April 2017 to March 2018
Board responsible for monitoring action plan:	Service Improvement Board/Executive Group/DLT
Owner:	Service Manager Children's Social Care and Early Help
Implementation Date:	May 2018 - April 2019
Review Date:	Jan-19
Frequency of monitoring/reporting	Quarterly
Aims:	The aim of this plan is to improve services for children, young people and their families.

source of action

Priority 1 - SAFE - Children and Young People are safe and feel safe.									
	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End date	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
	1.1	Review of Virtual MASH arrangments and Information Sharing Agreement within the City of London. Protocol to be updated and process relaunched	May 18	February 2019	Audits will indicate that Virtual MASH process is used consistently, there is effective application of threshold at the front door and information sharing arrangements inform timely assessment process.	RG/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> following full review of MASH and review of pan-London MASH arrangements, we are now considering whether we need MASH in the City. We are consulting with our health and police partners and presenting paper to the CHSCB board on MASH arrangements.	Amber
Safe, informed and individualised decisions to be made for all children and young people referred to the City of London (Aidhour)	1.2	Ensure staff are clear about essential information to be collected at front door (father, family, ethnicity, language)	May-18	Dec-18	Information will be frontloaded. Decisions better informed making for more individualised and timely responses. Audits will confirm improvements and front door information will be more thorough.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> Multi Agency audits in January 2019, and audits in October 2018 undertaken on Early Help cases were largely outstanding, with excellent multi agency working. MASH update needed.	Green
Think Family to be central to all our interventions with childrenand young people (Aidhour)	1.3	Consider as routine convening a Family group Conference to contribute to planning and keeping children and young people safe.	May-18	Dec-18	Families will be enabled to find 'solutions' within their own sustainable networks. Less reliance on social care intervention where possible. Internal and external audtis will confirm through case/supervision record that FGCs were considered and held wherever possible early on in involvement with families.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> practice standards have been updated to mention Family Group Conferences for all cases. Note: a family meeting can be chaired by the early help/social worker where agreed by a manager, rather than contracting this out. A short assurance report was to be presented to the CSIB in December, but this meeting was cancelled. The report can go to the next CSIB. Ofsted annual engagement letter found that the systemic practice training was good evidence of the think family approach.	Green
To be confident in addressing abuse in affluent families (Neglect and Affluence Research)	1.40	Identify issues and areas for development for SW staff and source/deliver appropriately. Infividual supervision, group supervision to specifically consider whether this is an issue and impact it may have on interactions with the family and safeguarding of children.	May-18	Nov-18	Staff will feel confident and supported in addressing abuse regardless of family/background. Children and young people regardless of background will receive equitable service/protection. Internal and external audits will confirm via case and supervision notes that practitioners/managers have considered the implications of class/affluence/power on their interactions with family and the impact this may have on safeguarding and service delivery.	RG/JH/SA	CP	Service Manager held reflection feedback session. Areas identified for improvement - support from legal services re litigation; support from management to enable staff to deal with all families/parents without neccesarily defering to senior managers. Presentation made to OFSTED on this research. <b>January:</b> No issues raised by early help/other audit in November 2018. Systemic practice training will help build confidence in working with similarity and difference.	Green
Information is shared in a proportionate and timely way ensuring relevant partners contribute and have the information they need to safeguard and ensure well being of children and young people( Multi Agency Audit).	1.5	Liaison with health colleagues (designated nurse for safeguarding) to plan most effective way to ensure Inclusion of all involved professionals, to include out of borough GPs and school nursing service.	May-18	Nov-18	Audits will confirm that Plans/Assessments are multi agency. Partners feel sense of ownership and relevant informatin is shared to improve service to CYP. All relevant information about children/families will be collated at earliest instance to inform decision making.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> Multi Agency Audit January 2019 showed good strong multi agency working with good information sharing. Team managers routinely checke for agency input when signing off assessments. MASH review January 2019 will check on information sharing. Ofsted Oct 2018 found our health information sharing for care leavers was sensitive, timely and well supported by social workers.	Green

Notes:

Specific measures are in place to safeguard unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people in our care ( <a href="#">Learning Case Review 1 &amp; Report of Radicalisation and Modern Slavery</a> )	1.6	All staff to receive training on radicalisation and modern slavery.	May-18	Nov-18	Staff alert and informed about risk enabling early intervention and prevention, internal and external case audits will indicate that staff understand and are alert to signs of radicalisation and/or modern slavery.	RG/ZD	CP	<b>January:</b> Staff have received training on radicalisation. E-training for staff on modern day slavery is available, all staff attended a briefing on modern day slavery in November 2018. Additionally some attended a conference on Modern Day Slavery run by the diversity networks in October 2018. This will be followed up with a short briefing to staff at team meeting in October. All care leavers have a risk assessment on file. Training records need to be updated.	Completed
	1.6a	Specific risk assessment templates created for each risk.	May-18	Dec-18	Individual risk assessments on every case file and updated 6 monthly. Specific risk for individuals will be recognised and where possible mitigated against at earliest possible opportunity. Internal and external audits will confirm an individualised response to each young person.	RG/JH//SA	CP	<b>January:</b> Ofsted visit in October showed positive feedback on our use of risk assessments, with recommendation for developing risk mitigation strategies in a clearer way. Risk assessments are in place for all care leavers. There is not consistency across all other cases as yet. A revised pan London CSE risk assessment is to be introduced in February 2019 with the service.	Green
	1.6b	Guidance to be developed re risk assessments and referral pathways to Channel and NRM	May-18	Mar-19	Risk escalated appropriately ensuring timely expert intervention to reduce potential harm to CYP. Internal and external auditing will confirm that staff understand and where appropriate are able to use appropriate referral pathways.	PD/RG	CP	<b>January:</b> Ofsted Oct 2018 were positive about our use of risk assessments and found risk management was good. IOFsted recommended more specific risk mitigation, and this work is now amber. Guidance in place for referral pathways to Channel and NRM. Needs adding to the Practice Standards via hyperlink so it is accessible, and staff remember it is there. Guidance needs writing re risk assessments. Short assurance report to be produced to evidence impact by March 2019.	Amber
	1.6c	If concerns raised about CYP working illegally strategy discussion to take place with police and Sec 47 instigated. Practice standards updated accordingly.	May-18	Sep-18	Risk will be identified and managed early on. Protective/preventative measures can be put in place. Internal/external audit will confirm that processes are in place, understood and used.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>August:</b> Team managers fully aware of this new process. The practice standards are fully updated every six months, and were last updated and shared in September 2018. Next refresh due end February 2019.	Green
	1.6.d	Missing protocol to be reviewed to ensure that if a young person in our care goes missing, education establishments to be contacted within 24 hours. Practice Standards to be amended accordingly.	May-18	Mar-19	Multi agency response to any missing episode which is robust and understood by all - fully informed response will offer best chance of locating/safeguarding young person. Internal and external audits will demonstrate consistent multi agency response applied in line with updated practice guidance	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> Information from the charity 'missing' has been circulated to the team. The practice standards were refreshed in September 2018 on 'missing' and good practice with care leavers. The Service Manager has chaired missing strategy meetings to have oversight. 'Missing' was considered at the Vulnerable Adolescents Forum on 11 January 2019 and health agencies added in suggestions to update the guidance. The protocol will be refreshed by March 2018.	Amber
Address risks to vulnerable adolescents in the city of London in line with CHSCB strategy.( <a href="#">CHSCB Vulnerable Adolescents Strategy 2017-19</a> ).	1.7	Data collection around broader vulnerabilities to be collated in order to understand City picture	May-18	Dec-18	Information collated will inform and shape our bi-monthly Vulnerable Adolescent Forum and City of London's response.	RG/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> The last Vulnerable Adolescent Forum (August) asked partners to share information to build our wider profile, so we can address any risks identified. The data collection around vulnerable adolescents is good, and the draft City of London profile due to be presented at the next CHSCB board. We are considering anonymising our care leaver risk assessments to feed into this profile.	Green
	1.7a	Secure a more robust data sharing agreements with the CoF L schools to allow a more rigorous process of information sharing around vulnerable CYP	May-18	Dec-18	Vulnerable young people will be flagged at an earlier stage and from a wider referral network. It would be expected that there will be an increase in terms of referrals/consultation between C of L EH and CSC and City based schools.	RG/JH/PD	CP	<b>January:</b> Service manager met CoL police and Education lead on 19 September, looking at pan london work on data sharing with schools after an incident of domestic abuse. CoLP can use CoL Children's Social Care secure email to let schools know when there is an incident of domestic violence. Additional safeguarding education work is further underway.	Green
	1.7b	Review of our interface with British Transport Police in relation to major transport hubs in the City & vulnerable young people coming to notice.	May-18	Sep-18	Potential trends/hot spots can be identified which will inform planning at MASE/VAF. There will be a regular input of information to relevant forums and possibility of increase in referrals re vulnerable adolescents coming to notice.	RG/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> Police lead at MASE/VAF has regular contact with BTP. BTP data is sent directly to our data analyst for children's services. All relevant policing departments to attend/feed into bi-monthly meetings.	Green



	1.7c	Consideration to be given to ongoing programme of training to hotel and serviced apartment staff around awareness of vulnerable CYP	May-18	Sep-18	There will be greater awareness of CYP at potential risk of harm within our community which will inform our response. Potential trends/hot spots can be identified which will inform planning at MASE/VAF. There will be a regular input of information to relevant forums and possibility of increase in referrals re vulnerable adolescents coming to notice.	RG/PD	CP	<b>January:</b> The City of London police tested hotel awareness by sending in cadets to test out their practice. On the spot training was offered. A conference is planned for the new year 2019 to share evidence and train hotel staff.	Completed
	1.7d	Liaison with neighbouring LA's around their Contextual Safeguarding response. Attendance at neighbouring MASE, Vulnerable Adolescent Forum meetings. Invite neighbouring colleagues to C of L MASE/VAF to share information.	May-18	Oct-18	We will develop an effective forum for sharing of information, planning and intervention to reduce risk to vulnerable young people which is able to take account of trends from neighbouring boroughs that may impact on City CYP. We can consider how to develop our own 'Contextual Safeguarding response'.	RG/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> Service Manager has attended Hackney's Contextual Safeguarding Board. We are going to peer review our vulnerable adolescent work with another LA in September 2019. Our VAF profile is being presented to the CHSCB board. Service Manager to visit another MASE in this quarter.	Completed
	1.7e	MASE & VAF to be held bi monthly to develop and coordinate safeguarding of young people from abuse and exploitation. Specific Action Plan will detail s	May-18	Sep-18	MASE & VAF will become a regular process, ingrained and valued and understood by relevant professionals as having a worthwhile role in understanding our local picture and how to inform our response. It will be well attended and information shared/ actions agreed will positively impact our response to safeguarding vulnerable YP.	RG/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> MASE/VAF is routinely now well attended and has been taking place bi monthly since August. Commissioning attended the last session and will be presenting their work on youth services and safeguarding at the next session, to evidence risk management and intelligence from our new array of youth services. This was a gap we identified in October 2018.	Completed
Embed a theory of practice into the social work function within the City of London Children's Services. (Aidhour case review).	1.8	Scope and source a Systemic model of Social work practice to be rolled out across the service.	May-18	Dec-18	This will result in a common understanding and application of social work theory across our workforce and greater engagement with and understanding of children and families. Children and their families will be supported in a consistent and systemic way reflected and evidenced in practice and supervision.	RG/ZD	CP	<b>January:</b> Systemic social work programme in place. Introductory session with staff to be held on 16 January 2019. Next service improvement plan for 2019/20	Completed
Ensure we have a skilled and appropriately trained workforce to support service users in the city. (New National framework to be introduced 2020)	1.9	Ensure that the Knowledge and Skills Statements are embedded into Social Work practice for Adults and Children's Services	Aug-18	Mar-19	1. Job descriptions for Social Workers / Practice leaders are revised to ensure compliance with KSS 2. Learning needs are identified as appropriate and action plans put in place.	RG/ZD	CP	<b>January.</b> Work has further developed over the last quarter. The Team Manager Job Description has been updated in line with KSS and social work JDs are next. Oversight of the work and progress with the KSS is in place, with the last monitoring meeting taking place in early January 2019.	Green

**Priority 2: - POTENTIAL - Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well prepared to reach their potential in adulthood.**

Specific aim:	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End:	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	Green
Children, young people and their families have clear plans with focused, measurable outcomes. Progress is monitored and evidenced. (Aidhour audit and Ofsted recommendations 2016 - see also Ofsted SIP Priority 5 attached)	2.1	Review our assessment templates, plans, meetings and supervision process to ensure that it is informed by 'Signs of Safety' model of practice.	May-18	Nov-18	Families will be clear about why social care are involved, what they are working towards and the difference this will make. Plans are clear, pertinent, measurable and time limited. Next external audit will confirm this.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> SMART training has been undertaken by all staff. Audit and Ofsted (in October and November 2018) found that pathway plans could be SMARTer. A consultant is working on a review CIN and review pathway plan system, to improve the 'SMART' planning and offer additional management oversight. She is using the signs of safety model in this work.	Green

	2.2b	Targeted training to ensure all practitioners are able to produce plans that are timely, have clear measurable outcomes, that are child focused and able to support, monitor and evidence progress.	May-18	Jan-19	All plans (CIN, CP, CLA, Pathway, PEPs ) are consistently SMART with clear outcomes that are child focused, and where possible integrate CYPs views. Progress traced through thematic audits.	RG/JH/PD/ZD	CP	<b>January:</b> Much work has taken place to improve performance. The IRO/CP chair ran staff/manager training on 19 September 2018. The topic was on our management meeting agenda on a monthly basis September - December, with managers aware that this is a key performance area to achieve change across the workforce. Ofsted in October recommended that plans could still be SMARTer. An independent consultant is chairing CIN reviews and pathway plans in January - March 2019 and writing a new process to boost management oversight and embed improvement.	Amber
	2.2c	Plans to be updated as circumstances and needs change whilst ensuring original purpose for involvement is not lost	May-18	Jan-18	Plans are dynamic and relevant to the child/young persons current situation. As above, management review, supervision notes, internal and external audit will confirm improvement.	RG/JH/SA		<b>January:</b> SMART training has taken place. All CIN reviews are being independently chaired in January 2019 to boost SMART dynamic work, and managers will chair the reviews in the future, to improve SMARTness and oversight.	Green
	2.2d	All Social work staff to have objectives in their individual Performance Development appraisals that focus on ensuring all plans are completed to a high standard within statutory timescales.	May-18	Nov-18	Staff understand the importance of routinely completing all plans to a consistently high standard within statutory timescales and that failure to do so could be treated as a performance issue.	RG/JH/SA	CP	May 2018: All SW staff now have performance development outcomes that are specifically related to this action which will be reviewed throughout the year at every supervision .	Completed
Intervention should be timely, focused and regularly reviewed with clear exit strategies identified in order to avoid drift (Aidhour audit)	2.3	Consideration to be given to exit strategies in planning and throughout case management. TM and SM to consider how this can be implemented/formalised as part of the ongoing process of our involvement with families.	May-18	Jan-19	Cases are ended confidently when families chose to discontinue where does not reach CP threshold. Internal/external audits will confirm that involvement is purposeful and timely and there is no 'drift'.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> early help audits showed good timely closure . There was evidence on audit of one case drifting, the audit led to improvement work. Getting to outstanding meetings are being held monthly and offer an additional level of oversight.	Green
	2.3a	Review of case closure process for practitioners on electronic case file system to expediate case closures. For discussion with Mosaic support service to identify barriers to prompt closure once work has ceased.	May-18	Jan-19	There is no delay to closing cases due to process issues on electronic recording system. Internal/external audits/ data performance confirm cases are closed when work with family ceases.	RG/JH/SA/KW	CP	<b>January:</b> no barriers to closing cases due to IT systems, good work has been done with new IT provider Agylisis - more responsive than previous service.	Completed
Social workers are supported and enabled to offer children, young people and their families the best possible service.(Aidhour Audit & Multi-Agency Audit).	2.4	Supervision takes place regularly and is reflective, providing Social Workers with the opportunity to explore their assessment and progress of plans.	May-18	Mar-19	Supervision is a dynamic process that improves and informs the journey of the child, young person and their family.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> as August 2018 there are two team managers job sharing, supervision was not consistent with team manager's leave/illness. Audit and Ofsted in Oct/Nov 2018 showed supervision quality and frequency needed to be improved. The Supervision Policy is being reviewed with clear guidance for frequency and expectation of supervision (before March 2019). The systemic practice model will offer support to supervisors.	Amber
	2.4a	Supervision template is updated and draws on 'Signs of Safety' to support practitioner and manager to achieve supervision that is both productive and reflective.	May-18	Mar-19	There is consistency in the supervision process for practitioner and manager that aids planning. Internal and external audits to measure.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> template used was 'signs of safety', but quality not consistent. Audit showed inconsistency in quality and frequency of supervision of social work staff (October 2018). Ofsted also found work needed in supervision of social workers to consistently demonstrate reflective, analytical supervision and clear management oversight. There have been changes in team managers, and the guidance is being refreshed so that staff are clear on expectations. The supervision policy is being updated and reviewed using the signs of safety model. This is in advance of systemic training for all supervisors in April 2019.	Amber

	2.4b	Develop a forum that can provide regular, possibly multi agency, group supervision for practitioners who are feeling overwhelmed or where cases have become 'stuck'	May-18	Jan-19	This provides another forum with wider view point to aid and assist assessment and planning for families. Case notes indicate that group supervision has taken place with information about outcomes/ suggestions clearly recorded on case notes. SW will know that they can request such a peer supervision opportunity to aid planning. Supervision notes will confirm that this has been considered.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> the first group supervision took place on 2 January 2019, and will be offered at least monthly. This is in advance of the systemic practice training in April. It is expected that this group will evolve with the learning from the programme, and with the appointment of a (very part time) systemic practitioner.	Completed
All children & young people in our care and care leavers are encouraged to achieve, be ambitious and have the opportunity to succeed in education ( <b>Action for children consultation and IRO case review</b> )	2.5	Information is given to all young people about the Virtual School Head to ensure that they understand the purpose and how to contact.	May-18	Nov-19	All young people are aware of, and able to contact the VSH so that they are clear about the support and guidance they are entitled to in respect of their education. Consultation with young people will confirm that they understand the purpose and process of VSH support.	SA/VSH	CP	<b>January:</b> The new VSH is well established, and has met with care leavers at the CiCC, chaired PEPs. All care leavers are in work or education. The VSH is presenting the annual report for the last school year to boards. Feedback from Ofsted 2018 found there is a 'strong and consistent determination to ensure care leavers are in EET.	Completed
Extra support to be put in place at the earliest point should a young person in care be excluded from school to enable earliest return to education. ( <b>IRO case review</b> )	2.6	LAC review to be triggered when a young person who is looked after is excluded from school. Practice Standards to be amended to reflect this.			This would coordinate earliest response to returning a young person to education.	SA/RL	CP	<b>January:</b> this is in the practice standards. One young person has been near exclusion, and a LAC review was held in the middle of discussions with college. The VSH has been involved in working with the young person around improving education.	Completed
Given our current cohort of children looked after are all unaccompanied asylum seekers our service needs to further develop an expertise around best meeting their needs in and around education and employment.( <b>Action for children consultation and IRO case review</b> )	2.7	Virtual School Head to continue to support and monitor access to ESOL and functional skills courses	May-18	Nov-19	Children and young people are given the opportunity to take part in a course/education most suited to their needs. Our cohort will aspire and achieve to the best of their ability and will be given equal access to educational opportunities and resources. Consultation will tell us young people believe this to be the case.	VSH	CP	<b>January:</b> new VSH in post, with experience of UASC and education. Adult Education offers additional opportunities. Our young people would benefit further from more work shadowing, practice interviews. The VSH is working with our education department to include care leavers in their work experience week.	Green
	2.7a	New VSH to develop specialist knowledge of UASC and ESOL to ensure they are able to meet the specific needs of our looked after cohort.	May-18	Dec-19	UASCs in our care are offered service that best meets their very specific needs. Consultation with our cohort of LAC and care leavers will confirm that they feel supported and enabled to achieve in education to their full potential	VSH	CP	<b>January:</b> new VSH is well experienced in UASC and ESOL, and has met with care leavers at PEPs and CiCC. Annual consultation will happen in the next quarter.	Green
Unaccompanied Asylum seeking children who start education upon their arrival in the UK to be prepared in order that they have best opportunity to integrate into a school placement in order to maximise their opportunity to succeed( <b>IRO case review</b> ).	2.8	Protocol/practice guidance be created for integrating children/YP who have had limited or no access to education in their home country to school/college in England.	May-18	Dec-19	UASCs in our care are offered best opportunity to succeed in educational setting. Young people are 'ready' and prepared to achieve to the best of their ability. Attendance rates improve, engagement is consistent and young people achieve education qualifications.	RG/VSH	CP	<b>January:</b> new VSH in post, there is now an introductory ESOL programme that starts when new UASC arrive.	Completed
Support and advise UASC young people in our care in their asylum seeking process.( <b>Action for children consultation &amp; CiCC</b> )	2.9	Upskill our workforce in better understanding the process and procedure of claiming asylum through LASC consultation/ liaison and attendance at training events.	May-18	Dec-19	We will confidently be able to advise, support and advocate on behalf of our young people to assist and expedite the process where possible. Internal and external audits will confirm that timely and informed advice was offered or signposted and consultation process will confirm that young people feel they are getting the advice/support that they need.	RG/SA/J/ZD	CP	August: all staff receive LASC (London Asylum Seeking Consortium) monthly bulletins. A comprehensive training offer for all staff will be in place following tender, and this area of learning will be included. The tender was not successful, and learning opportunities will need to be found elsewhere. Staff must not advise our care leavers around their asylum applications, but do support young people to ensure access to timely legal advice. Ofsted found SW understanding of UASC experience was strong.	Green

Reduce numbers of placement moves/breakdowns for CLA( IRO case review & Radicalisation and Modern Slavery Research)	2.9a	Dedicated placements function within a managing post be recruited to within commissioning team - role will involve reviewing expectations of Independent Fostering Agencies and minimum standards required.	May-18	Dec-19	There will be a reduction in placement breakdowns/changes of placements. A cohort of specialist and experienced foster carers will be recruited who will enable better matching with regards needs of our children and young people.	RG/SA/J/ZD	CP	<b>January:</b> the new placements officer is in post. A strategic placements group has been set up to offer challenge and scrutiny of placement arrangements and moves. First meeting 16/1/2019	Completed
	2.9b	Until City Placements officer post recruited to, all placemtns to be coursed through Pan London arrangment. Any neccesity to go ourside of this needs senior management agreement.	May-18	Nov-18	As above	RG/SA/J/ZD	CP	August: Service manager has authorised 2 new UASC placements outside this framework in an emergency in August, when there was no capacity in commissioning to support the task. These placements are to last no more than 4 weeks, due to transfer to Croydon rota.	Completed

**Priority 3: Independence, involmment & choice.** We will co-produce services with our children and young people and provide support and resources so they can develop the independence and empowerment to play an active role in their communities and excercise choice over their services.

Specific aim:	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End:	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
All young people who are in our care will be consulted with and have their voices heard throughout all of their plans and reviews.(Ofsted & Aidhour)	3.1	Independent Reviewing Officer to update CLA review document template using CYPs own words to better reflect thei wishes and feelings	May-18	Nov-18	CYP will feel that reviews are a meaningful and useful process that they have a direct influence on their lived experience. This will be reflected throughout young people's plans, and case files and they will confirm to us, via consultation process that this is their experience.	RL	CP	<b>January:</b> IRO has updated CLA review document. The minutes are now written and addressed directly to the young people with photos sometimes included of achievements and trips etc. The only time it's written in third person is when child is very young. Ofsted October 2018 found we need to be more explicit about young people's voices in pathway plans. MOMO app has now been introduced to support young people in sharing their views. Pathway plan reviews are being chaired externally with young people in January/February to boost practice and to make recommendations for the future.	Completed
Care leavers have pathway plans that reflect their journey and contain their voice. These plans will be regularly reviewed and updated.(Aidhour)	3.2	Management sign off of the Pathway Plan to be undertaken on the basis that the plan has been shared with the young person. Practice Standards to be updated to reflect this.	May-18	Nov-18	Young people will feel a sense of ownership of their Pathway plans which will be dynamic and timely tools that they are involved in creating and progressing. Case records/ pathway plans will state specifically that the plan has been shared with the young person and their views have been incorporate and their voice heard.	RG	CP	<b>January:</b> practice standards were updated to this effect in September 2018. Ofsted Oct 2018 recommended that the more explicit and consistent demonstration of young people's involvement in preparing their pathway plans. ●All young people are having an independent chair of their pathway plan reviews in January and February 2019, to strengthen SMART planning and to improve timeliness. A new process is being drafted to improve independent oversight of pathway planning.	Green
	3.2a	Social workers have performance development objectives specifically linked to requirements and timescales for statutory tasks as defined in the practice standards.	May-18	Nov-18	Pathway plans will be completed regularly within prescribed timescales and as such will be reflective of young people's current lives. Internal/external audits will confirm that plans have been undertaken within timescales. Failure to do so may result in performance management.	RG	CP	<b>August:</b> Social Workers Performance development Appraisal frameworks now have specific outcomes linked to adhering to statutory timescales/requirements of assessments, plans and reviews. Performance management was needed to boost timeliness of plans. <b>January:</b> External chairing of reviews for January/February 2019 is ensuring that pathway plans remain timely.	Green
All young people in care and care leavers know about our pledge to them and that it reflects what is important and meaningful to them. (Action of Children consultation)	3.3	Our pledge is reviewed and updated in consultation with Children in Care Council.	May-18	Nov-18	Our pledge to young people in our care contains things that are important to them and guides our service delivery accordingly. Young people will confirm to us that they feel consulted with and listened to	RG/RdP	CP	<b>August:</b> the CiCC reviewed the Pledge in August. They liked it and did not want to make any changes.	Completed
	3.3a	Social workers ensure that all CYP in care and care leavers are informed and understand what the pledge is and how it relates to them.	May-18	Nov-18	All CYP in care and care leavers are informed and understand what our pledge means to them. External consultaiton will confirm this.	RG/SA/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> SWs are aware of and promote the current pledge. The IRO has confirmed this in every case (see July report). The CiCC reviewed the Pledge in Summer 2018. They did not want any amendments but valued the opportunity to revisit it.	Completed

Young people in care and care leavers know, what they are entitled to and how to contact us and share their views/feedback on the service they receive (Action for Children consultation)	3.4	Improve our communication channels to our young people so that they are aware of what is available to them and it is easier for them to contribute to consultations	May-18	Dec-19	Young people are active and vocal in contributing a view as to how services are structured and managed for them within the appropriate guidelines. Annual consultation will confirm that young people feel consulted with and listened to. Internal and external audits will evidence how young people are consulted with and what difference this has made.	RG/RdeP	CP	January: views are formally gained at CiCC reviews. The review forms were redesigned by the IRO, to make them more accessible. MOMO 'mind of my own' app is now in place. In addition, our young people have co-produced our info for care leavers at October CiCC.	Green
	3.4a	Work with the SPICE team to consider if we can use time credits to encourage participation and create an asset based approach to co-production.	May-18	Nov-18	Young people are rewarded for their contribution to how their services are designed and managed - Independent consultation will confirm this.	RG/RdeP	CP	August: Young people already gain SPICE credits for participation. Our young people, on the whole, do not use them as the activities are not near their homes. All young people receive vouchers, expenses and lunch if undertaking work for the CoL.	Completed
To have a Corporate Parenting Strategy that is relevant and reflects the needs, wants and aspirations of our looked after cohort.(CYPP 2018 - 2021)	3.5	In consultation with CYP who are looked after and care leavers we will review, renew and co-produce our Corporate Parenting strategy to ensure it is relevant and continues to reflect their needs.	May-18	Nov-18	Our Corporate Parenting Strategy will be refreshed with input and co-production from our CLA and care leavers. Young people will have a voice in the care and corporate parenting they receive.	RG/RL/RdeP		January: corporate parenting strategy full updated. Care leaver offer co produced with young people.	Completed
To utilise our CiCC to offer our children the opportunity to gain experience that will assist with independence and employment. (CYPP 2018 - 2021)	3.6	Deliver a regional Children in Care Council on behalf of London	May-18		Raise aspiration and ambition of our young people who are involved in the CiCC - provide them with opportunities and experience.	RG/RdP		January: The Regional CiCC is up and running.	Completed

Priority 4: Health and Wellbeing - Our children enjoy good health and wellbeing.	d								
Specific aim:	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End:	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
All children and young people within our care will have regular medicals and up to date medical information on their files.(2017/18 SIP)	4.1	All medicals will take place within statutory timescales and CLA medical reports will be received within 2 weeks of the appointment.	May-18	Nov-18	Whittington Health to provide an ongoing review of this every quarter. Management oversight/liaison with CLA safeguarding nurse will monitor.	RG/JH/SA	CP	January: bookings are made in good time by our admin support. Since April 2018, all medicals were on time. Admin now chase the report to ensure it is on file within 2 weeks.	Completed
All children and young people within our care will have individual and up to date health histories that will inform their medical care should they move areas(2017/18 SIP)	4.2	Social Workers to ensure that all young people have personal health histories and encourage young people and medical personnel to use.	May-18	Nov-18	Young people will have health records that are detailed and individualised to them which they can take to wherever they are living. Audit by designated CLA nurse to take place.	RG/JH/SA	CP	January: every care leaver has their health history. Service manager meets CLA safeguarding nurse quarterly. Health report written for the Ofsted October inspection. Health findings very positive in the Ofsted letter October 2018, and found our The availability of the designated nurse for advice and consultation after they reach 18 years old enhanced the health provision.	Completed
	4.2a	Explanatory notes to be provided for each young person, in their first language as to what health history is for.	May-18	Nov-18	Young people understand the purpose of the health history and use them appropriately. Audit by CLA nurse to take place.	RG/JH/SA	CP	June 2018: Explanatory notes have been produced by health and are held by CSC admin. A copy will be translated into CYPs language when health histories are issued. January: A one page health audit was prepared and shared with Ofsted in October 2018. To measure progress the LAC nurse will audit 2 CoL cases and will provided a report on her audit.	Green
	4.2b	GPs and Practice Nurses to routinely use the health histories and enter all relevant informaton at each appointment.	May-18	Jan-19	Medical personnel will complete routinely ensuring young people have detailed health histories. Audit by CLA nurse to take place.	RG/JH/SA	CP	January: Stickers have been produced explaining to professionals the purpose and process to be used with health histories. Existing records are being updated and all new records have note added. Service review with the CLA nurse shows that all health histories are sent to the GP of the young people.	Completed
All children and young people in our care and care leavers to be encouraged to engage with an independent mentor who can advocate on their behalf if required(2017/18 SIP).	4.3	All CYP to be offered a mentor through Action for Children and if they wish to take up the option introductions to be made by allocated SW.	May-18	Jan-19	Young people will feel more secure and listened to knowing that they can utilise an independent advocacy service. There will be evidence of advocate involvement in CLA review reports and pathway plans.	RG/JH/SA	CP	January: SWs offer every young person a mentor. The IRO ensures that every Child in Care is offered an independent mentor/advocate. This is evidenced in her IRO report (July 2018). In addition to this assurance, she will also track this in between reviews. A short assurance report was written in October 2018, and Ofsted commented on this being a strength in their report.	Green



Care Leavers to have at least one trusted friend or adult they can talk to (Action of Children annual consultation)	4.4	Social Workers to link young people with refugee groups and care leavers groups providing them with the opportunity to make and sustain meaningful relationships.	May-18	Jan-19	Young people will have the opportunity for wider social interactio and leading to increased opportunities and self esteem. Pathway plans will evidence this.	RG/SA/JH	CP	<b>January:</b> SWs aim to link every young person with a refugee organisation, the IRO monitors this in every CiC reviews (evidenced in July report). Our young people are well engaged with community, refugee and faith groups and the opportunity is there for lasting friendships. Ofsed commented that feedback from young people showed they were able to rely and talk with their social workers.	Green
Care leavers have the opportunity to become or link with a peer mentor.(Action of children consultation & 2017/18 SIP)	4.5	Discussion with commissioning re sourcing an appropriate organisation to develop peer mentoring programme for care leavers in the City of London.	May-18	Mar-19	Young people will be able to support and assist one another - developing confidence and self esteem. Case records/pathway plans will evidence this.	RG/MP	CP	<b>January:</b> starter discussions have been had with commissioning. Provision not yet in place.	Amber
Improve our understanding of the cultural practices and lifestyles of the young people in our care.(IRO case review)	4.6	Work and consult with relevant community organisations to improve our knowledge and understanding of our young people.	May-18	Jan-19	Greater understanding of the young people we work with will enable us to offer them a more personalised service. Management oversight will confirm that this is considered. Independent consultation will confirm young people are satisfied with the service they recieve.	RG/JH/SA	CP	<b>January:</b> SWs are good at seeking to understand the culture of the young person from listening to them. Staff to attend the cultural awareness training with the CHSCB this term. A strength is that an FGM/faith specialist social worker has joined the team. Systemic training will also help cultural competency and awareness of self. This work is ongoing and critical. Our staff team is now more diverse, but we do not reflect the backgrounds of our service users.	Green

Priority 5: improvements following from the July 2016 OFSTED

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection									
Recommendations:	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End date	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
Ofsted recommendation 1: Further improve the quality and consistency of written plans for children, including early help plans, child in need plans, personal education plans and pathway plans. These should be clear and simple, fully integrate the views of children and young people and clearly state what is to be achieved by when.	1.1	Review and revise layout of Early Help plans in partnership with Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum (MAPF)	Jan-17	Dec-19	1) Written plans for children are consistently SMART 2)Children and young people’s views are incorporated 3) Annual quality assurance audits of all cases confirm that actions on written plans have timescales, are achievable and reflect the voice of the child	RG	CP	August - This has been taken to EH subgroup to scope potential for consolidating a different planning frameworkto be led by CHSCB. <b>January:</b> early help audits show strong work. New Early Help Co ordinator in place.	Green
	1.2	Refresher training to take place re SMART planning , ensuring plans consistently have clear, measurable outcomes that are child focused and measurable thereby better supporting monitoring and evidencing progress (Aidhour Audit 4.20)	Apr-18	Jun-18		RG/SA	CP	January: training took place in September 2018 with staff and managers. Work still not consistently SMART. Independent chairing of CIN/pathway plans taking place between Jan-March to improve SMART planning.	Green
	1.3	Audit of all plans (CIN, CP, CLA, Pathway Plans, PEPs) to ensure that they are consistently SMART with clear outcomes that are child focused and integrate CYPs views (as above Aidhour Audit 4.20)	Apr-18	Jan-19		RG	CP	January: training took place in September 2018 with staff and managers. Work still not consistently SMART. Independent chairing of CIN/pathway plans taking place between Jan-March to improve SMART planning.	Green

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection									
Recommendations:	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End date	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
Ofsted recommendation 2: When families disengage from services and the threshold is not met to excalate the case further, ensure that any ongoing work is purposeful and that case records clearly evidence manager's rationale for ceasing or continuing support.	2.1	If case continues, review and revise the plan with clear timescales with a further review at no later than 3 months to determine case status.This stayed in because AIDHOUR audit identified some drift (4.18)	May-18	Jan-19	Short assurance report on drift.	RG	CP	January. New Child in Need process has been submitted, which includes Team Manager's chairing the first and third CIN reviews, to keep work on track.	Amber
	2.2	Ensure that an up-to-date chronology is on file and has been reviewed by the Team Manager as part of the sign off process (RG to lead) This stayed in as chronologies not regularly updated.	May-18	Jan-19	1) No drift on cases 2) Chronologies are updated every 3 months.	RG	CP	January: chronologies completed on all cases. This needs to be embedded as we had to bring a short term worker in to do this piece of work. Staff struggled in the summer with the arrival of extra UASCS. We have recruited an additional worker to hold new UASC cases, pending transfer nationally.	Green

	2.3	November audits to review evidence that the plan is updated to reflect continuation of work and plan meets requirements as set out above. <b>To review 2.1 and 2.2.</b>	May-18	Jan-19	1) Measure compliance through audits and supervision	PD	CP	January: there were a few cases of drift in the November audits. There is a tight monitoring of work and cases have progressed. All CIN and pathway plan reviews are being chaired by an independent social worker to boost capacity and quality. The worker is writing a process to provide more stringent oversight.	Green
Research on neglect linked to affluence draws on practioner experince and identifies strategies and practice methods to address non engagment from these families	3.1	Following findings of <b>Affluence and Neglect research</b> , reflective group supervision to take place with practitioners to /consider issues raised and identify areas for development.	May-18	Jan-19	Audit of Cases will clearly show that practitioners have been able to consider issues specific to engaging with this group thereby increasing the liklihood of successful engagement and intervention leading to better outcomes for C&YP.	RG	CP	January: a group session was run to look at the research. Audit of cases did not flag affluence as a means of case delay. This area of work will be strengthened by systemic training.	Green
	3.2	Development/training areas identified <b>as above</b> to inform Workforce Development Training Needs Analysis who will scope and coordinate appropriate training	May-18	Nov-18		RG/ZD		January: Workforce development officer has deployed a matrix to develop a needs analysis, this was used to put out a tender.	Completed
Increase the number of families taking up Early Help services, building on existing partnership working at a strategic and operational level (paragraph 8)	A5.4	Specific targets for commissioned services re. referrals/completing EH plans and performance management (City Gateway and Youth Offending Services (YOS)	May-18	January 2019	1) Invite commissioning to join EH sub-group 2) Bring commissioned services into conversation with partners re. future plans/development at an earlier stage	RG/JF	CP	August: Our numbers have increased due to using Early Help as a step down from Child In Need work, rather than from partners. Commissioning have worked closely with EH. Returning service manager is meeting commissioning manager on 18 September to review work.	Green
Ensure that case records are up-to-date and comprehensive, including case chronologies being kept up to date on children's files to maintain a clear record of significant incidents, themes and patterns in children's lives.	A8	<b>Aid hour audit recommended (4.14 - 4.18)</b> : Training needed to ensure consistency of recording as there is a wide variation on how, when and where SWs update case notes/chronolgies/visits etc	May-18	January 2019	Audits to confirm that case records are up-to-date and comprehensive, including chronologies	RG/ZD	CP	January: session was run in team meetings around chronologies. As November 2018, all cases had a chronology. Case recording varies in quality across the workers.	Green

The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence									
Recommendations:	Ref:	Action:	Start:	End:	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
Ofsted recommendation 3: Ensure that permanency planning records include a record of decisions about legalpermanence for children, along with the rationale for these decisions.	4.6	Draft child/language friendly version of process which will be led by practioners and IRO	May-18	Dec-19	CYP able to articulate understanding of why decision is made re. permanence	RL/RdP	CP	January: every permanency planning record includes a decision about legal permanence and rationale as per the Ofsted recommendation - this is fully embedded. The relevant process that needs desribing is the long term foster matching process. Returning service manager to take forward.	Green

The experience and progress of Care Leavers		Action:							
Recommendations:	Ref:		Start:	End:	Measure/outcome:	Lead officer:	DLT lead:	Comments:	RAG status:
	7.1	Social workers and health staff to be briefed via team meeting and LAC/CL Service Improvement Group on use of Health Passports and how they need to be used as a tool as part of on-going casework. <b>Kept in as needs to be audited to evidence impact.</b>	May-18	Nov-18		RG	CP	<b>January:</b> All young people who turned 18 have been given their health histories (CIC nurse audit August 2018). A one page health paper was written in October 2018 and evidences health history provision. This was recognised as strong in the Ofsted November 2018 report.	Completed

Ofsted recommendation 4: Expedite the provision of health histories for all care leavers	7.2	QA report to be undertaken by Anna Jones CLA Designated Nurse to evidence this is embedded in practice and that CYP understand the purpose of their individual health records and are encouraged and enabled to use them as a useful running record of health and health care.	May-18	Nov-18	1) All Care Leavers are able to clearly articulate how it is used to assist their healthcare	PD		January: the IRO has a standard question on her CLA reviews about receipt and understanding of health histories.	Completed
	7.3	Annual Consultation to include a question to determine impact of health histories for care leavers. <b>Kept in as audit in 7.2 should also cover.</b>	May-18	Nov-18		RG	CP	August: Service manager has asked for this question to be on the 2019 annual consultation, and that it be worded in a way young people understand.	Completed
Ensure that Pathway Plans are shared with care leavers (Paragraph 55)		Build requirement into Practice Standards. Management sign off of Pathway Plan to be undertaken on the basis that the plan has been shared with young person. Audits to monitor compliance and quality as per QA strategy.	May-18	May-18	All young people are able to evidence that they have a Pathway Plan that they have signed off. Audit to evidence compliance in this area.	RG	CP	January: this is in the practice standards. We have enhanced this provision by having an independent social worker chair CIN and pathway plan reviews with young people. MOMO app can be used to gain young people's views into the pathway plan.	Green

<p><b>Ofsted letter from their focussed visit on Care Leavers, October 2018</b></p> <p><b>Recommendations for improvement:</b></p> <p>Risk assessments to more clearly articulate measures to address and minimise risk.</p> <p>The more explicit and consistent demonstration of young people’s involvement in preparing their pathway plans.</p> <p>The supervision of social workers to consistently demonstrate reflective, analytical supervision and clear management oversight.</p> <p>Management decision making clearer written rationale on accommodation moves</p> <p>Pathway plans are not always being consistently reviewed when young people’s circumstances change, for example a change in their living arrangements.</p> <p>The local authority is aware of the need to strengthen the voice of care leavers on the local authority’s safeguarding subcommittee, which fulfils the role of the corporate parenting board.</p>	<p><b>Recommendations and actions are in the body of this service improvement plan, listed here for clarity.</b></p>
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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Special educational needs and disability (SEND) – Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Theresa Shortland, Head of Service – Education and Early Years	

## Summary

This report provides an update to the Safeguarding Sub Committee on the progress of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) work in the City of London (COL).

The City Parent Carer Forum (CPCF) has been established as the representative voice of SEND families in the COL. Although it is a small group, it is highly effective.

Work is underway to develop co-production with children and young people with SEND – those with the most complex needs that are being addressed through an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, and those who are receiving special educational needs (SEN) support through the resources available at educational settings.

The COL is currently working on the procurement of the Short Breaks provision for the City with the London Borough of Hackney. It has been agreed that the CPCF will be a part of the procurement process, with briefings provided to enable the CPCF to undertake this role. The COL Commissioning team is also represented on the SEND Programme Board and the Co-production Working Group, and is a standing agenda item on the Co-production Working Group.

The report notes the progress on outcomes for children since the Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2018. The report includes that aspirations and outcomes are reflected in the EHC Plans and makes recommendations for further improvements. This has been reported to the SEND Programme Board and steps are in place to take forward the recommendations.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to: Note the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The SEND Update of 19/09/2018 reported on the priorities for development for 2018/19 and progress following the Local Area SEND Inspection of March 2018. These priorities are set out in the SEND Improvement Action Plan 2018/19. The action plan is comprehensive and covers all the key actions from the Local Area SEND Inspection, as well as the priority areas identified in the SEND Joint Strategy 2017–2020.
2. The key priorities that have been a focus for the service during the autumn term 2018, and where the most progress has been made are:
  - increasing the participation of children, young people and families in co-production (a way of working where children and young people, families and those that provide the services work together to create a decision or a service that works for them all<sup>1</sup>) so that their voices are integral and impact on the design, quality and delivery of commissioned services
  - ensuring that the commissioning arrangements reflect and meet the needs of City children and young people with SEND, and developing ways to inform the joint commission of services and the monitoring of contracts for children and young people and their families
  - continuing to pursue ambitious outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and their families
  - developing closer relationships, including data-sharing protocols, with Early Years settings, schools and colleges outside the COL local area and in the independent school sector where City-resident children and young people with SEND are educated.

### **Update on progress**

#### **Co-production**

3. This action is being addressed with vigour. The CPCF was established as the representative voice of SEND families in the COL. Although it is a small group, it is highly effective. A representative from the CPCF is co-chair of the SEND Programme Board with the Assistant Director – People.
4. Since September 2018, the CPCF and the COL SEND team have been working together to revise how the CPCF can contribute further to the work of the SEND Programme Board. We have jointly developed an approach of focusing on co-production and established a set of priorities that are suitable within this context. The proposal for establishing a co-production working group was agreed at the SEND Programme Board on 7 December 2018. A working group was established in

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<sup>1</sup> Ofsted definition

September 2018, with representatives from the COL's Education, Social Care and Commissioning services and the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group.

5. Governance structures were enhanced, with the Co-production Working Group reporting to the SEND Programme Board. The group has identified what co-production means for them:

***Co-production means co-designing as equal partners through trusted relationships for the benefit of the COL SEND community.***

6. The structure of the meetings will include themed group workshops (education, health and social care). The development of the Carers Strategy 2019–2022 and the revised home-to-school transport policy are examples of the areas of work undertaken this term. The CPCF will also be part of the recruitment and selection process with Tower Hamlets SEND Information Advice and Support Service for a Family Partnership and Development Officer, a dedicated worker for City families.

### **Participation – Young people**

7. Work is underway to develop co-production with children and young people with SEND – those with the most complex needs that are being addressed through an EHC Plan, and those who are receiving SEN support through the resources available at educational settings.
8. The Council for Disabled Children and KIDS (a national charity providing support services to disabled children, young people and their families) have been commissioned by the Department of Education to deliver a participation programme for children and young people with SEND. This includes providing local areas with support in developing strategies to ensure the engagement of children and young people in co-producing services to best meet their needs. KIDS has drawn up a training programme in consultation with Prospects and the Education Service for training to be delivered on 22 January 2019.

### **Commissioning**

9. The COL is currently working on the procurement of the Short Breaks provision for the City with the London Borough of Hackney. It has been agreed that the CPCF will be a part of the procurement process, with briefings provided to enable the CPCF to undertake this role. The COL Commissioning team is also represented on the SEND Programme Board and the Co-production Working Group, and is a standing agenda item on the Co-production Working Group.

### **Outcomes for children and young people**

10. An independent review of the quality of the EHC Plans was carried out prior to the SEND inspection. The inspectors found that this had “enabled leaders to sharpen and simplify the expected outcomes that are included in the EHC Plans”.

11. This work has been extended with an independent review of the aspirations and outcomes in EHC Plans. Progress has been made in how children, young people and their families are supported to identify, set and achieve high aspirations. The report notes the progress since the Local Area SEND Inspection in March 2018. It highlights that aspirations and outcomes are reflected in the EHC Plans and makes recommendations for further improvements. This has been reported to the SEND Programme Board and steps are in place to take forward the recommendations.
12. The report also identifies key strands that run through the EHC Plans that need to be addressed through joint commissioning. These include support for the development of communication, for social, emotional and mental health and for independence.
13. Work on the communication strand has started with a planned workshop on oracy at the COL Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) Forum meeting in February 2019.
14. In terms of mental health, significant mental health developments were already underway prior to inspection and this work has continued. Two SENCO workshops have been held to improve knowledge and understanding in this area and Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School is participating in a major project with the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families (a children's mental health charity).

### **Data-sharing protocols**

15. One of the main areas for development identified by the inspectors was "for leaders to improve the City's data collection with providers that educate City children outside the local area".
16. Accessing this information is affected by the Department for Education's restrictions on the national pupil database. Also, there is no requirement for academies or independent schools to share information on pupil outcomes with local authorities. Despite this, progress has been made and three of the four independent schools in the City have agreed to sign data-sharing agreements, with the fourth agreeing to share statistical information that will allow us to gather data about the educational landscape of the school.
17. Data-sharing agreements have also been personalised for all schools located outside of the COL where City children have historically attended or are attending. These data-sharing agreements will help us to identify children receiving SEN support so that we can monitor outcomes for these pupils, including attendance and exclusions. There is a separate report to Committee which details this work and the progress made.

### **Conclusion**

18. The Local Area SEND Inspection provided an independent external evaluation of how well the COL local area carries out its statutory duties in relation to children and young people with SEND to support their development. The evaluation identified many strengths as well as areas for further development, which are being addressed through a SEND Service Improvement Action Plan and monitored through the SEND Programme Board.

19. Since the inspection of the local area, there has been development in terms of funding and support arrangements for local areas to further embed the SEND reforms. In December 2018, the Secretary of State for Education announced additional high-needs funding for local authorities, alongside the 2019–20 Dedicated Schools Grant allocations to local authorities.
20. For the COL, this is an additional £12, 631 for 2019/20. Another of the non-funded measures introduced by the Secretary of State is to support local areas in the establishment of the SEND System Leadership Board, which will work to improve joint working and commissioning in local areas. We will want to see the benefits of this, and will report the results to a future Committee meeting.

## **Appendices**

- None

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	<b>08/02/2019</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Education and Early Years Service Safeguarding Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Kirstie Hilton, Lead Advisor, Universal Education Services	

## Summary

In September 2017, the Safeguarding Sub Committee were updated on the work that the Education and Early Service was undertaking to improve the safety and welfare of City-resident children being educated in the City of London and other boroughs, as well as non-resident children attending schools within the City of London.

This report provides an update on developments and progress in the following areas:

- 1) The location of all City of London children and their schools
- 2) The 2016 children missing education (CME) regulations and the impact that this is having on the City of London
- 3) Children at risk of missing education
- 4) Electively home-educated children
- 5) Performance licences and work permits
- 6) Learning from the Hackney case review.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The City of London has a unique educational landscape in that it has only one maintained primary school and no maintained secondary schools. There are four independent schools; most children attending these schools are non-City residents. Most of the City of London's primary-age children and all secondary-age children in the maintained sector are educated either in the independent sector or outside the City of London altogether. Consequently, this puts them outside the standard reporting and/or legal framework that governs the City of London's statutory responsibilities.
2. In 2015, as part of its safeguarding children programme, and in the light of concerns about young people at risk of sexual exploitation and radicalisation, and the often invisible practice of private fostering arrangements, the City of London strengthened its systems and procedures for locating and monitoring its resident primary- and secondary-age children who fell within the statutory school age. Authorities are required to monitor and take appropriate action for those children who may be at risk of missing education, as well as those who fall within the statutory definition of CME.
3. In September 2016, new legislation was introduced to help local authorities and schools in England improve collaboration, communication and information sharing in identifying CME, and to help local authorities meet changes to the regulations. The regulations were strengthened to ensure that schools (including independent schools) provide regular and accurate information to their local authority about children as they are removed or added to school admission registers.

### **Current Position**

#### **The location of all City of London children and their schools**

4. Since 2015, the Education and Early Years Service has implemented a rigorous system to identify all City of London children of statutory school age and where they attend school. The City of London maintains this record of where children are placed through the primary and secondary transitions process. A school tracker is updated and reviewed regularly. The school tracker records the names of all City of London children, including those with child protection (CP) Plans and Children in Need (CIN) Plans, along with children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND).
5. Due to the level of resource required, it was decided that an annual census would be sufficient. This was due to take place during the summer term 2018. However, as a result of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force in May 2018, we were advised that data-sharing agreements were required with all the 84 schools we required data from. This work is very demanding on staff time and resources. See Appendix 1 for a



copy of a data-sharing agreement. Work was undertaken over the summer holidays to ensure that each school had its own data-sharing agreement. Work on the census began in October 2018 and is continuing.

6. Currently, it is estimated (through our own calculations) that there are 540 City of London children of statutory school age. Of those, during the current annual census, the service has so far identified 392 children who attend both maintained and independent schools. Some 280 of these children attend maintained primary and secondary schools. This figure has been substantiated by Department for Education data produced in 2017. Therefore, the service is satisfied that it has identified all the children and young people of statutory school age in the maintained sector.
7. There are key benefits to this work, including gaining a better understanding of where City-resident children attend school, as well as building up relationships with out-of-borough schools. Having those relationships in place will only improve communication, and schools are more likely to alert our service if there is a concern about a child.

### **The new CME regulations and the impact on the City of London**

8. Since September 2016, a change in the law meant that, for the first time, independent schools are within the scope of schools' duty to report CME. This means that, during the school year, at non-standard transition points, all City of London schools are required to inform the Education Service when pupils are about to be taken off or added to the school roll.
9. Following a review of information provided by schools, and in line with GDPR, two new data-sharing agreements have been set up with the four independent schools. This is to ensure secure data sharing of non-standard transition point information and a list of all children whose attendance is below the 90% threshold, twice a year. Statistical information has also been requested in response to the requirement from the Area Inspection carried out in March 2018 on identifying all children attending City schools who are on special educational needs (SEN) support.
10. All schools must provide attendance information, either directly to us in a report, or to the Education Welfare Consultant during visits; any reports that come to our Service are used as intelligence, which is then passed to our Education Welfare Consultant to provide a support and challenge role to the schools.
11. To explain the revised requirements, the Lead Advisor for Universal Education Services and the Admissions and Attendance Manager visited all City independent schools in the autumn term. A revised protocol, outlining the requirements for all City of London schools, was circulated in the autumn term 2018. A copy of this can be found at Appendix 2. To date, all four independent schools have agreed to sign a data-sharing agreement fulfilling their statutory duty on informing the City of London when there is a change of school roll during non-standard transition points.

## **Children at risk of missing education**

12. For children who are at risk of, or who are missing education, either as a result of medical reasons or exclusion, we maintain a CME database. For any children known to the Children and Families Team, notes relating to individual children are recorded on MOSAIC. Children on the CME database are given a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating depending on the level of concern. The Admissions and Attendance Manager monitors their attendance monthly.
13. Following a review of how the service manages and maintains its cases, in November 2017, the Lead Advisor for Universal Education Services began writing a monthly progress report for individual children under the following categories:
  - a. Children being electively home educated
  - b. Children missing or at risk of missing education (attendance below 90%)
  - c. Children unable to attend school full time/part time due to medical reasons.
14. In addition to this monthly report, a more detailed 'case updates' report is written and emailed every week to the Head of Service and the Assistant Director, People. Every term a meeting is held with the Director of Community and Children's Services to discuss individual cases and the work the service is doing to support those families.
15. For children who are unable to attend school due to medical reasons, following a referral from the school, a professionals' meeting is held and tuition is commissioned through a number of different agencies, including the National Teaching and Advisory Service (NT&AS) and Fleet Tutors. These agencies can provide a flexible service and tutors who have experience of working with vulnerable children and young people. For children who are excluded, we commission the services of Fresh Start in Education, an organisation that specialises in working with challenging or disruptive pupils.
16. The Education and Early Years Service also works closely with the Children and Families Team to ensure that support to families is co-ordinated. Our Education Welfare Consultant and Educational Psychologist work with our individual families and all schools within our locality to encourage and, where necessary, enforce attendance and to safeguard and promote the children's welfare so that they can reach their full potential.

## **Electively home-educated children**

17. A potentially vulnerable group of children are those who are electively home educated – children who receive an education 'otherwise than at school'. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children receive a suitable level of education. Although our aim in the City of London is to work constructively with parents to help them promote their children's learning and development,

parents have the right to refuse entry for their children to education services. This could potentially result in them suffering from significant harm. Last year, a Department for Education consultation took place which gave local authorities and parents the opportunity to consult on future guidance around key issues such as: the registration of children educated at home; monitoring of home education provision; and support for home-educating families. The City of London contributed to the consultation process. We are currently awaiting the outcome, including revised guidance.

18. The City of London is aware of these risks and has a rigorous process in place to ensure the safety and welfare of these children. Although the number of City of London children being electively home educated is small, cases are discussed with key professionals and referrals are made if required. Case information is shared on our case-management system to enable more effective information sharing. The City of London also ensures that home visits exceed the statutory minimum of one a year. Progress on cases is sent to the senior managers regularly.

### **Performance licences and work permits**

19. Children and young people of compulsory school age who are at an organisation or company in paid or voluntary work must have a valid work permit. The City of London is responsible for issuing licences to all organisations and companies located within the City of London. We continue to ensure that all employers carry out a health and safety risk assessment in the workplace, and that, at the point of application, all children are given adequate breaks, work no longer than they are legally permitted, and do not carry out dangerous or risky tasks.
20. There are also specific rules covering children working in entertainment. It is essential that local authorities recognise this statutory duty and fulfil their safeguarding responsibility towards children taking part in performances, paid sport and modelling. All children of compulsory school age require a performance licence to take part in any performance. There are also strict rules regarding the conditions under which children and young people can perform.
21. Over the last year, the Admissions and Attendance Manager has established an excellent working relationship with key individuals working in venues located in the City of London, such as the Barbican Centre. This helps to ensure that we are informed of all productions and performances taking place within the City of London where children are performing, and that we can offer support and advice on what the rules and requirements are. Inspections are carried out to ensure that children involved in performances are safe and happy. One of our additional duties is the employment of children's chaperones. This includes interviewing candidates, issuing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates, and acquiring references before a licence is issued.

## **The recent review of local policies, procedures and cases**

22. In October 2016, following his mother's fatal epileptic seizure, four-year-old Chadrack Mbala Mulo died at his home. Due to his vulnerabilities (Chadrak had special educational needs, was non-verbal and had health needs), the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board initiated a review of the case. This instigated a review of all local policies and procedures within schools located in the City of London and Hackney. The key issue for the review was that the child, although not of statutory school age, attended a primary school in Hackney. It was concluded that, rather than seeing Chadrack's absence from school as a welfare issue, the school had simply followed its current attendance policy..
23. In direct response to this work, the Education Service worked with Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School to review its attendance policy and drafted a 'rapid response flow chart'. This provides a clear guide to schools on what to do if a child does not turn up to school and the child's family cannot be contacted. The process has a timeframe of three days in which to locate a child from the first day of absence. The flow chart has been finalised and has been shared with all City of London schools. Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School has also reviewed its data-collection form to include additional emergency contacts, parents'/carers' medical conditions/disabilities as well as information about access restrictions to the properties where pupils reside. This form is sent to all parents and carers and is a valuable source of information.

## **Progress update on last year's priorities**

24. Over the last year, the Education and Early Years Service has reviewed its procedures for monitoring attendance. In line with the protocol, which has been sent to all City of London schools (see Appendix 2), the Admissions and Attendance Manager and the Performance Analyst will monitor all returns. Work will also continue to maintain the school tracker through an annual census.
25. The Education Service applied to the Department for Education for information held on the national pupil database which would have supported this work and our research into finding out the numbers of City-resident children who are receiving SEND support in schools located outside the City of London. Unfortunately, even with legal advice, our application was not successful, and we have to identify new ways to gain a City-wide picture of how many children and young people with SEND attend City schools.
26. Some reviews of relevant policies and procedures have taken place, including home-to-school transport policies, which affect all children of statutory school age and those aged up to 25 years with SEND.

## **Future Priorities**

27. Our main priority over the next year is to ensure full compliance with our statutory duties. Regular reviews will then take place to ensure that procedures are in line with best practice and national guidance. In order to support us with this work, a new Education Services Group has been established. The group is made up of local authority education professionals, including the Virtual School Headteacher, Educational Psychologist and a member of the Education, Culture and Skills Service. The group will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of key educational statutory duties such as the quality assurance of tuition services, school moderation and places for children who are excluded from school.
28. In September 2018, following national concern around mental health in schools, and an increase in schools reporting higher numbers of students with emotional wellbeing difficulties, as part of a multi-agency Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Alliance, the Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project was established in 40 schools across the City and Hackney locality. With Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School as an active participant, the project will continue for an initial 15 months, at which point it will be evaluated.
29. In addition, through the Education Safeguarding Forum, the Education and Early Years Service is launching its Safeguarding campaign in 2019. The campaign will focus on raising awareness of a range of identified needs in the context of safeguarding, particularly focusing on those more vulnerable pupils with mental health and wellbeing concerns. The campaign will include a full training programme around identified topics available to all staff in the City's education settings, including independent and sponsored schools. It is envisaged that this programme will be launched with a conference, which will follow training to include briefings and bite-sized training sessions.
30. With the establishment of the Education Unit, which oversees the City of London's schools and academies, an opportunity has arisen to explore the possibility of offering places to City of London children and young people if they become permanently excluded, or as part of a managed move. Currently, when a child is permanently excluded, the City of London is limited in how it can support families, including securing a new placement. This can cause uncertainty and expense for families, as a result of having to use other local authorities' Fair Access Panels.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

31. This work supports priorities 1 and 2 in the Children and Young People's Plan 2018-21:
- Our children and young people are safe and feel safe
  - Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well prepared to achieve in adulthood.

### **Conclusion**

32. Over the past year, one of our key priorities in the Education and Early Years Service has continued to be to ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of City-resident children accessing education, both outside and within the City of London. Even with the challenges we have experienced, we will continue to build on our success in locating our City-resident children and monitoring their attendance at school. Working in partnership with our City of London schools, we will continue to identify children at risk of missing education and offer support on attendance issues. We will also continue to collaborate with them to support mental health in schools. We intend to continue to develop the Education Services Group, to ensure that it plays an important role in overseeing our educational statutory duties. This will include: monitoring, reviewing and maintaining rigorous policies and processes to keep children safe; ensuring that they receive a suitable level of education; and safeguarding those performing in film, television and the theatre.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Example of a data-sharing agreement sent to out-of-borough schools
- Appendix 2 – Protocol for City Schools Post CME Legislation

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# **Information Sharing Agreement & Protocol – Children Missing / At Risk of Missing Education**

**Parties: Community and Children’s Services, City of London Corporation (“the City Corporation”) & [ADD SCHOOL] (“the School”)**

## **1. Purpose and data items to be shared**

This agreement between the City Corporation and the School provides a framework for disclosure by the School to the City Corporation of the personal data and special category data listed in the Appendix (“**the Data**”) for the purposes of ensuring that all City of London resident children of compulsory school age are safe and are receiving suitable education (“**the Purpose**”).

## **2. Compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (“the 2018 Act”) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - Legal Basis for Sharing**

The City Corporation has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within its area who are in need by providing appropriate services under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, and it is considered necessary to share the Data to effectively discharge this duty.

The Data will be shared, and otherwise managed, held, retained and processed, in accordance with Article 6(c) GDPR (processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation) and Schedule 1, Part 2, clause 18 of the 2018 Act – Safeguarding of children and of individuals at risk. And as specifically provided for in this agreement.

It is considered that the School may disclose the Data to the City Corporation for the purposes of the City Corporation’s exercise of its duties under the Children Act 1989 referred to above and that this disclosure is fair and lawful in relation to the child (the data subject).

Further, the disclosure of the Data is considered compatible with the purposes for which it was obtained and will be disclosed in accordance with the School’s data protection policies and the School’s privacy notices.

## **3. Sharing the information**

The School agrees to securely transfer the Data to the City Corporation when required during non-standard transition points.

Data will be shared using a secure method of transfer, preferably via an encrypted Egress email (The City Corporation can send an Egress email that you can respond securely to).

The method by which the data is presented is in the form of a *capture sheet*. This is a City Corporation proforma in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, which will be supplied to the school. It is expected that the data will be of the highest quality, up to date and accurate.

The City Corporation agrees not to share the information with parties outside of this agreement, unless it is necessary for the purposes of complying with the City Corporation's legal duties or is otherwise required by law.

#### **4. Storage, Security and access**

The City Corporation will comply with minimum storage and security standards and will be subject to its own data protection and security policies.

The City Corporation must ensure that any staff with access to the information exchanged, manage the data sensitively and comply with the principles of the 2018 Act and the GDPR.

Data shared with the City Corporation will be stored on a secure drive, within a password protected database which only select members of the Education and Early Years team and Strategy and Performance team will be able to access. The access will be controlled by attaching appropriate permissions and/or passwords to the Data. The Data of each child will not be kept by the City Corporation for longer than is necessary for the purposes of ensuring that child is receiving suitable education.

#### **5. Access and individual's rights**

The disclosure of the Data will be conducted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998, the Caldicott Principles, and the Common Law Duty of Confidence and subject to any express prohibition on disclosure.

#### **6. Reviewing this Agreement**

This agreement will be reviewed every five years or otherwise promptly if either party requests amendments to this agreement or if this agreement is breached by either party.

#### **7. Termination**

This agreement may be terminated by either party by written notice.

#### **8. Contact Details**

<b>City of London</b>	<b>School</b>
Kirstie Hilton, Education Service, 020 7332 3274, <a href="mailto:Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk">Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk</a>	[ADD]
	[ADD]



Amrul Khan, Education Service, 020 7332 3998, <a href="mailto:Amrul.khan@cityoflondon.gov.uk">Amrul.khan@cityoflondon.gov.uk</a>	
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## 9. Agreement and Signature

**Agreement date: Date: [ADD]**

By signing this document each party agrees to accept and implement this information sharing agreement and protocol and to adopt the statements and procedures contained within it.

### ***Party requesting information:***

Signature

**Theresa Shortland**

Education and Early Years Manager  
Department of Community and  
Children's Services  
City of London Corporation  
Guildhall  
London  
EC2P 2EJ

Date signed:

Signature

**Chris Pelham**

Assistant Director, People Services  
Department of Community and  
Children's Services  
City of London Corporation  
Guildhall  
London  
EC2P 2EJ

Date Signed:

### ***Party holding information:***

**[ADD]**

Signature

**Name**

Job Title

Address

Address

Address

Address

Address

Date signed:

## **Appendix (School Data)**

During the academic year, when required, the School will provide the City Corporation with the following information for each City of London resident child on school roll:

### **Personal data:**

#### **Section 1: Current Record of Children**

##### **To be provided for each request for information:**

1. Unique Pupil Number (UPN) if the child has one
2. Surname
3. Middle names (if any)
4. Forename
5. Date of Birth
6. Year Group
7. Home Address (including post code)
8. Current school
9. Is the child attending the school?
10. Leave Date (if no longer attending the school)
11. New Educational Provision details (if no longer attending the school)
12. Named contact for attendance/admissions

##### **Special category data:**

13. Gender
14. Any special educational needs of the child
15. Attendance if below 90%

#### **Section 2: Starters During the Academic Year**

##### **To be provided for each request for information:**

1. Unique Pupil Number (UPN) if the child has one
2. Surname
3. Middle names (if any)
4. Forename
5. Date of Birth
6. Year Group
7. Home Address (including post code)
8. Main parent/carer
9. Start date

##### **Special category data:**

10. Gender
11. Any special educational needs of the child

**This document sets out the requirements for schools identifying children missing (or at risk of missing) education (CME) and is for the attention and action of all schools with pupils of statutory school age (5 – 16). This includes Independent schools.**

## Background

During the education year there are two types of enrolments – standard transitions and non-standard transitions. Standard transitions include all children of statutory school age who move into Primary school (Reception class) or into secondary school (Year 7) in September. Non-standard transition entry includes children from all other year groups who move schools during the rest of the school year.

With effect from 1st September 2016, all schools have been required to notify their home local authority of any children and young people who start or leave school during Non-Standard Transition Points and at standard transition points, that is to say the beginning and end of the education year, if the local authority asks for this information. In line with the City's Safeguarding duties we would like to request all of this information during each term.

The government consulted on amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") to improve communication and co-ordination between schools and LAs. This includes independent schools. The consultation took place from 19 January to 7 March 2016. The outcome was circulated on 21 July 2016 and Guidance was issued, which can be found at the following:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children\\_Missing\\_Education\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

We can also provide you with a hard copy if required.

We have been working closely with all of our schools to offer support through our Education Welfare Consultant in the areas of attendance and individual case work and schools have been providing us with information as agreed in the Data Sharing Agreements. We would like to continue to build on these excellent working relationships.

## What we are asking you to do

During the education year we will request pupil information from all City schools. The key points to remember are:

1) All schools must inform their home LA (in this case the City of London) when they are about to delete a pupil's name from the admission register under the permitted grounds relevant to children of statutory school age (these are shown on the '**Migration Form**' form which will be sent to you electronically following our meeting with you);

2) For all children and young people leaving a school, an entry must be recorded on the Migration form and must include the following details for each pupil:

- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- At least one telephone number of the parent
- The pupil's future address (if applicable) and destination school

- The ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (this is attached as Appendix 2)

4) Schools must provide information to the City of London when registering new pupils within **five** days of the child or young person being enrolled, including the pupil's address and previous school (where they can reasonably obtain this information).

### **Additional Information Required**

Since September 2015 the City has been implementing a programme of tracking and monitoring school attendance so that we can address instances of children who are at risk of missing education or who are out of school. In addition to the above information, we would also like schools to provide us with a list of all pupils during the year whose attendance is below 90%, including all pupils resident in the City and those resident in other authorities. We will provide a '**Pupil Roll Form**' to enable you to do this. This will be sent to you as an electronic document following our meeting with you in the autumn term 2018.

In addition, we would like you to populate some statistical information for us, which will help us better understand our education landscape in relation special educational needs. Therefore on the '**Pupil Roll Form**' under the tab '**statistical information**' we would like the following information from you for all City and non-City children attending your school:

Year Group	Post Code	SEN Code (if a child has a special educational need)
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Children who are offered a school place, but who don't turn up to school are a particular concern. To ensure the safeguarding responsibly is consistent with state-maintained schools, it is requested that Independent schools use the Migration Form to notify the City of London of children that have not arrived as expected. The school must have carried out their own checks before passing to the City.

### **Passwords for Workbooks**

The password for both the Pupil Roll Form and Migration Form is City2018

### **Table of Requirements**

A timetable of what information we need from you and when is captured in the table below for easy referencing. Please see Appendix 1.

### **Secure method of notification**

We are asking all City of London schools to begin sending us the information as described above from November 2018.

As the information is highly confidential, it will need to be sent to us securely. In order to comply with GDPR, all personal information will need to be sent to us using the City's secure email system, Egress Switch. The system works by generating a secure email to the school. Therefore, an email will be sent to the designated person at the school by either the Admission and Attendance Manager or the Lead Advisor for Universal Education Services. Once that email has been sent, the email thread attached to the email is secure and the designated person at the school can securely send any personal information back to the City of London

All information returned to the City of London will be checked and monitored by the Education and Early Years Service. The key contact for any enquires are as follows:

**Primary notification officer** – Amrul Khan [Amrul.khan@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Amrul.khan@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

**Secondary notification officer** – Kirstie Hilton [Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

**It is the responsibility for each school to ensure that notifications are sent to the City's Education and Early Years Team. Reminders will not be sent but the designated officer will contact you if notifications have not been submitted for a period of 4 weeks**

**Other Useful contacts:**

**The Education and Early Years team:**

**Tel:** 020 7332 3998 / 3274

**Email:** [Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk) , [Amrul.khan@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Amrul.khan@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

**Early Help Service in City of London:**

**Tel:** 020 7332 3621 (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm), after hours please phone Hackney Emergency Duty Team on 020 8356 2710

**Email:** [children.duty@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:children.duty@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1: Table of Requirements**

<b>City or non-City children</b>	<b>Reason for Notification / information to be provided</b>	<b>Method of information</b>	<b>Timeframe / Frequency (deadline)</b>
City and non-City children	New starters and leavers and children who have attendance below 90% (and SEN if applicable)	Pupil Roll Form <i>Tab 'individual children'</i>	N/A
	Statistical Information	Pupil Roll Form <i>Tab 'statistical information'</i>	Autumn term 2018
City and non-City children	Children who have attendance below 90% and SEN	Pupil Roll Form	N/A
City and non-City children	New starters and leavers and children who have attendance below 90% and SEN	Pupil Roll Form <i>Tab 'individual children'</i>	N/A
	Statistical information	Pupil Roll Form <i>Tab 'statistical information'</i>	Autumn term 2019
City and non-City children	Children who have attendance below 90% and SEN	Pupil Roll Form	N/A
City and non-City children	New Starters	Migration Form	To be sent 5 days after registering a new pupil (in-year)
City and non-City children	Leavers	Migration Form	To be sent to the City of London before removing a child or young person from school roll (in-year)
City and non-City children	Children not arriving at school when expected	Migration Form	To be sent into the City of London immediately with concerns (beginning of the academic year)

## Appendix 2: Grounds For Deleting a Pupil from the School Admission Register

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended	
1.	8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2.	8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3.	8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4.	8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5.	8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6.	8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that —  (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;  (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and  (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7.	8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8.	8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and  (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in

	<p>accordance with regulation 6(2);</p> <p>(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and</p> <p>(iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.</p>
9.	8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10.	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.
11.	<p>8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and</p> <p>(i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school;</p> <p>Or</p> <p>(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.</p>
12.	8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
13.	8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
14.	8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
15.	<p>8(1)(o) where</p> <p>(i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy;</p> <p>(ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and</p> <p>(iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.</p>



<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public</b>
Aidhour Audits November 2018	
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, Department of Community and Children's Services	

## Summary

In October 2018 a team of three auditors from Aidhour (independent safeguarding and child protection services) audited a total of 31 cases open to the Children and Families Team. This is approximately half of all cases open to the team. As there was a focused inspection on care leavers by Ofsted, the priority was on auditing care leaver cases, with a small proportion from Early Help, Children in Need, Child Protection and looked-after children cases.

The auditors identified that the City of London Corporation continues to provide an overall good service to children and families, with some cases being judged as 'outstanding'. However, the auditors considered that improvements in certain areas could move cases from an overall judgement of 'good' to 'outstanding'. The auditors made recommendations to support the improvements required.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. In previous years, Aidhour has completed audits on all the open cases in the Children and Families Team on an annual basis. However, in 2018, the auditing cycle changed to bi-annually, with half the open cases being audited in the

autumn between October and November, and the other half being audited in spring between April and May. The reason for this change is to ensure that there are always current audits available. It also allows for a more focused approach, as demonstrated by the focus on care leavers which supported the Ofsted inspection.

2. Audited cases are graded and awarded using the following methodology:
  - Independent review of case file records on Mosaic
  - Interview with allocated social worker/early help worker
  - Discussions with team managers
  - Feedback form (where available) from child/young person and their carers/parents.
3. Aidhour developed the audit tool used in the auditing process. The process follows the model used by Ofsted and focuses on impact and outcomes for young people, as well as on the process. Considering user feedback and information from the workers themselves ensures that information is appropriately triangulated and quality assured. Audits were moderated internally by the City of London Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team.

### Current Position

4. Due to the changes around the auditing cycle, it has been difficult to draw on comparisons from previous years, as they involved auditing all cases. Therefore, this needs to be taken into consideration when looking at the outcome of the audits for 2018 in comparison to 2016 and 2017. As in the previous two year's audits and the 2016 Ofsted inspection, overall this audit found that the services that care leavers receive from the City of London Corporation continue to be very good. The table below shows the number of Care Leaver's cases that have been audited by year and the moderated grading that has been awarded.

	Total number of Care Leaver's cases audited	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Good	Outstanding
<b>2018</b>	17	0	5 (30%)	6 (35%)	6 (35%)
<b>2017</b>	16	0	5 (31%)	10 (63%)	1 (6%)
<b>2016</b>	13	0	0	12 (92%)	1 (8%)

5. Aidhour identified very strong positive direct social work practice and partnership working. There was also evidence of positive relationship-based practice. Social workers worked hard with Care Leavers to engage and motivate the young people to fulfil their potential. Aidhour also identified strong evidence of the positive impact this had on young people's lives.

6. Aidhour audits identified that social workers (and others – for example, the virtual school personnel) often went “above and beyond”. They were accessible to young people, who could contact them for help, support and assistance. The audits describe the social workers as being “compassionate and empathic, making themselves available to support young people to attend appointments, and attending university open days with them”. Many young people report that they like their social workers and appreciate their intervention and support. There is strong evidence of positive and proactive corporate parenting. The positive and responsive social work supports the development of good-quality pathway plans, based on sound assessments.
7. The audits identified that, while practice and outcomes were (broadly speaking) good and, in some areas, outstanding, there were some process issues that tended to impact on the grading. While these process issues did not impact directly on the outcomes for children, they were discerned as impairing the quality of the case work overall. Examples of this were delays in writing up case records, supervision notes, Pathway Plans and other documents. In a limited number of cases, Pathway Plans had fallen out of timescale.
8. Recommendations for audits:
  - Introduce case mapping in group supervision sessions to focus on complex case work to foster effective, shared understanding of risks and needs.
  - Team managers should undertake joint visits and direct observations of practice to improve management oversight and provide confidence in practice.
  - Ensure that the supervision policy is fit for purpose and that supervision is reflective, outcomes-focused and is driving care planning for children and young people.
  - With support from human resources, ensure that team managers and service managers have a clear understanding of policy and procedures in relation to managing poor staff performance.

## **Conclusion**

9. Overall the audits identified positive practice and that the outcomes for young people were good and, in some cases, outstanding. The areas for development related more to the implementation of the processes that underpin practice. This was identified by the independent auditors and was progressed by the allocated social workers.
10. The findings and recommendations from the audits are currently being progressed, and it is envisaged that they will be in place by the end of January 2019.
11. The Assistant Director for People chairs a meeting called ‘Getting from Good to Outstanding’ which is attended by the team managers, service managers and the Independent Reviewing Officer. This meeting focuses on the actions from

each individual case file audit. Timely actions are put in place to ensure that work is completed and follow-up audits check on compliance.

## **Appendices**

- None.

### **Pat Dixon**

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