



Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee

Date: MONDAY, 7 JUNE 2021

Time: 2.30 pm

Venue: VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING (ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY)

Members: Randall Anderson
Mary Durcan
Helen Fentimen
Marianne Fredericks
Susan Pearson
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
Ruby Sayed
Vacancy

Enquiries: Chloe Rew
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Accessing the virtual public meeting

Members of the public can observe this virtual public meeting at the below link:

<https://youtu.be/YGJpUmvY24U>

This meeting will be a virtual meeting and therefore will not take place in a physical location. Any views reached by the Committee today will have to be considered by the Director of Community & Children's Services after the meeting in accordance with the Court of Common Council's Covid Approval Procedure who will make a formal decision having considered all relevant matters. This process reflects the current position in respect of the holding of formal Local Authority meetings and the Court of Common Council's decision of 15th April 2021 to continue with virtual meetings and take formal decisions through a delegation to the Town Clerk and other officers nominated by him after the informal meeting has taken place and the will of the Committee is known in open session. Details of all decisions taken under the Covid Approval Procedure will be available on line via the City Corporation's webpages.

A recording of the public meeting will be available via the above link following the end of the public meeting for up to one municipal year. Please note: Online meeting recordings do not constitute the formal minutes of the meeting; minutes are written and are available on the City of London Corporation's website. Recordings may be edited, at the discretion of the proper officer, to remove any inappropriate material.

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To receive the Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference as agreed by the Community & Children's Service Committee on 30 April 2021.

For Information
(Pages 5 - 6)

4. **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN**

To elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 29.

For Decision

5. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

To elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 30.

For Decision

6. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on 8 February 2021.

For Decision
(Pages 7 - 14)

7. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

To note the sub-committee's outstanding actions list.

For Information
(Pages 15 - 16)

8. **GLOSSARIES**
For Information
(Pages 17 - 22)
9. **MISSING FROM HOME, CARE AND EDUCATION REVIEW**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 23 - 96)
10. **SHORT BREAKS STRATEGY**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 97 - 118)
11. **CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 119 - 136)
12. **QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK - REVISED AND UPDATED**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 137 - 170)
13. **SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY HELP**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 171 - 180)
14. **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) UPDATE**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 181 - 186)
15. **QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

17. **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

18. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 February 2021.

For Decision
(Pages 187 - 188)

19. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 12 2020/21
(MARCH 2021)**

Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 189 - 206)

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

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

SAFEGUARDING SUB-COMMITTEE

Constitution

8 Members appointed by the Community & Children's Services Committee, including the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

Quorum

Any 3 Members.

Terms of Reference

To be responsible for: -

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

Suggested frequency of meetings: 2-3 times a year

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SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Monday, 8 February 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services)
Committee held virtually on Monday, 8 February 2021 at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson (Deputy Chairman)
Mary Durcan
Helen Fentimen
John Fletcher
Marianne Fredericks
Susan Pearson

In Attendance

Officers:

Chloe Rew	- Town Clerk's Department
Aqib Hussain	- Chamberlain's Department
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Zoe Dhami	- Community & Children's Services
Rachel Green	- Community & Children's Services
Sarah Moore	- Community & Children's Services
Scott Myers	- Community & Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community & Children's Services
Andrew Russell	- Community & Children's Services
Teresa Shortland	- Community & Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community & Children's Services
Robert Wood	- Community & Children's Services
	-

Also in attendance:

Mary Lee	- Designated Nurse, City & Hackney CCG
Rory McCallum	- London Borough of Hackney
Sophie Mcelroy	- London Borough of Hackney

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Chairman Ruby Sayed and Alderman David Graves.

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

There were none.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-publics summary of the previous meeting held on 12 October be agreed as a correct record.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members received the Sub-Committee's list of outstanding actions and the following points were noted:

- Action 1 was completed; and,
- Action 2 would be addressed in the meeting and could be marked as completed.

5. **GLOSSARY - ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

The Adult Social Care glossary was read in conjunction with the reports.

6. **GLOSSARY - CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE**

The Children Social Care glossary was read in conjunction with the reports.

7. **CITY OF LONDON JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY (JHWBS) REFRESH - UPDATE AND ENGAGEMENT**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the City of London Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWBS), which was refreshed for the 2021-24 period.

Members sought assurance that children and families would be consulted in the development of the strategy, in particular vulnerable children, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), children in care and those known to social care. It was reported that there were many strategies in place which addressed these cohorts, many of which would fit into the JHWBS. Officers were working to ensure there were no gaps in services provided to those in need. Officers were working with the Health and Wellbeing Boards both at the City Corporation and Hackney Council, to identify target groups to reduce healthcare inequalities, and reduce barriers to accessing healthcare.

RESOLVED, that – Members note the progress made on developing the 2021-24 JHWBS.

8. **CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20**

Members received a report of The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership relative to the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) Annual Report 2019/20. New social care arrangements were established and had been implemented during the 2019/20 period, however the pandemic posed challenges in terms of consistent implementation. With two dedicated contingency oversight groups for the City Corporation and Hackney Council, this allows for more attention in each borough.

Members raised a number of questions and the following points were noted:

- *What permanent changes to the way operational and strategic safeguarding arrangements would be delivered post-pandemic?* Virtual arrangements (ie. for meetings and visits) which were implemented due

to the pandemic had changed the way the partnerships operated. The entirely virtual environment created challenges in terms of building relationships, and therefore it was hoped that a blended approach could be established once restrictions were eased.

- *How had the pandemic impacted identifying vulnerable children?* There had been a reduction in referrals due to the fact that children were not in school, which made it more difficult to identify vulnerable children as schools are typically where need and risk were identified.
- *Had there been an increase in mental health problems amongst young people?* The pandemic had exacerbated known issues such as the negative impact of social media on young people's mental health and cyber-crimes targeting young people.
- *Why had there been an increase in head injuries in babies and toddlers?* The increased pressure in the home due factors (ie. working and schooling from home; potential job losses; increased alcohol consumption) made the young and vulnerable potentially more exposed to harm. A child safeguarding practice review had been commissioned as a result of a head injury case in Hackney and this would be published in the next 4-5 months. There had been no head injuries for children under 1 year of age. There had not been any cases in the CoL.
- *What kind of leverage do safeguarding partners have to enforce compliance with self-assessments from sectors?* Legally, safeguarding partners can seek injunctions to enforce compliance, however collaboration was the preferred approach to emphasise the importance of cooperation in carrying out self-assessments.
- *How have the City of London Police (CoLP) been engaged with their safeguarding responsibilities?* The CoLP have been very engaged with the strategic leadership team and the new arrangements show that the CoLP are a statutory partner for safeguarding.
- *As the CoLP have moved to sector policing, as opposed to community policing, how are the CoLP able to connect with communities and identify risks?* Having officers embedded in communities was important to build trust and gain intelligence for community issues. Training opportunities were available to train police to focus on safeguarding over criminal justice in certain interventions, ie. in schools.

RESOLVED, that – Members noted the contents of the report, in particular the sections setting out progress on implementation of the new arrangements, COVID-19 and the strategic priorities of the CHSCP going forward.

9. CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 AND CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2019/20 and Corporate Parenting Strategy Update. The strategy set out how the Corporation delivers in its role as corporate parent, and how the Corporation meets the needs of children and young people in the City. The strategy reflected the changes that had been implemented due to the pandemic. The strategy annual report was also included to report on the Corporation's corporate parenting activities for 2019/20, including health and wellbeing, safeguarding education, employment

and accommodation. The annual report did not report on the pandemic, as this would be the subsequent year's annual report.

The Deputy Chairman noted an issue raised at a previous meeting where children were not aware of the City Corporation Corporate Parenting Pledge. Officers advised that children in care receive a lot of information on arrival, including the pledge, and often know the principles of the pledge but not that it is called a 'pledge'. Options were being considered to ensure children were aware of the pledge.

Members requested that Corporate Parenting Training be rescheduled, as this had previously been cancelled due to the pandemic, however could now take place virtually. The Deputy Chairman requested the report be presented to the Court of Common Council, as the entire Court was the Corporate Parent.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

10. CITY & HACKNEY CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UPDATE

Members received a report of the Designated Nurse, Safeguarding Children City & Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Members asked how meeting the health needs of children and families, including Looked After Children (LAC) had been impacted by staff redeployment in the health system. It was reported that there had been fortnightly meetings with the CCG and LAC health services team to monitor health provision to ensure health issues were identified before they were too severe to manage. In terms of staff redeployment, two junior doctors were redeployed from the LAC health team at an early stage in the pandemic, but the risk to health assessments had been mitigated by a locum doctor. Children requiring follow-up visits were seen in person.

There had been a lower footfall of children than typically seen during this time of year, however this could be related to fear of accessing health services due to the risk of contracting the virus, and lower instances of communicative illness as children were not mixing socially.

In response to a question on how agile and flexible mental health services were in meeting the needs of LACs, a social worker had been embedded in the London Borough of Hackney, particularly due to an increase in eating disorders. This trend was noted across London.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

11. VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN: ANNUAL REPORT FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Virtual School for Looked After Children Annual Report for the Academic Year 2019-20.

In response to Members' concerns about the implications of lockdown for Looked After Children (LAC) to fall behind in schooling compared to their non-LAC peers, and mitigate efforts in place to support LACs, it was reported that there had been challenges in the transition to digital schooling, as many of the young people and/or their carers had limited English language abilities and computer skills. All of the students were now fully equipped with laptops and work was underway for tech training and support. There was ongoing anxiety amongst the students regarding the wellbeing of family members abroad which impacted schoolwork and sleep. Nationally there had been an increase in exclusions from virtual schools, however this was not the case for the City school.

The Deputy Chairman noted that the libraries had been doing considerable work supporting those who could use assistance, and suggested the virtual school connect with the libraries to take advantage of these offerings.

In response to Members' concerns about the increased risk for children in care and care leavers to become NEET (not in education, employment or training), Members were informed that monthly monitoring meetings were held with relevant officers and interventions were held when necessary. Good work was taking place with the Information and Advisory Service Prospects to implement plans for CiC who were vulnerable to NEET.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

12. QUALITY ASSURANCE ANNUAL REPORT

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Quality Assurance Annual Report.

Members expressed concern regarding the impact of changes in social workers had on young people. It was reported that a number of social workers left the team about one year ago, however strong relationships have developed with young people and the new social workers.

Officers also confirmed, in response to Members questions, that up to date recordings of virtual meetings were in place to ensure accurate understanding of each session.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

13. ACTION FOR CHILDREN SURVEY OCTOBER 2020

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Action for Children Survey for October 2020. The survey was conducted every year for everyone who uses the service and the results of the 2020 survey were positive in comparison to the national picture. In response to Members' questions on work being done to address housing issues (both for families with children and care leavers), tenancy support arrangements were in place, and efforts were being made to manage expectations for housing that was available. For care leavers, shared housing was available, and support was available for those living alone.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

14. SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Service Development Plan. In light of the Excellent and Outstanding ratings from last year's Ofsted inspection, the plan looks at how these standards can be maintained. The plan also factors in the impacts of the pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement which impacts many of the children and families that use these services. Some examples of work that was underway in relation to the plan included the family therapy programme with Kings College London.

In response to Members' questions on how excellent standard was being maintained for LAC and care leavers, one example was the sleep support which involved sleep packs and working with psychologists and social workers to ensure young people sleep well to maintain wellbeing, along with diet and exercise.

In response to Members' questions on how the 'good' Ofsted judgement for children and need and children in need of protection was being addressed to establish excellent practice, these children and families were prioritised for the Kings College London family therapy clinic. Systems were also in place to support management oversight and assessment of risk for CiN and CP. For example, a CiN Tracker meeting had been established; the case closure and risk management panel continued to meet; the oversight of the performance data in the performance meetings enabled close tracking of new contacts and referrals, and there had been several audits undertaken which included threshold reviews.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

15. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Update.

In response to Members' questions on the virtual multi-agency meetings, such as the SEND Board and SEND Panel, it was reported that these meetings were working well and attendance had increase. The Deputy Chairman remarked that overall meetings of professionals were better attended since moving to virtual meetings.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

16. QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There were none.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

18. **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 I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

19. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 October be agreed as a correct record.

20. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 9 2020/21 (DECEMBER 2020)**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Children and Families Service Performance for Month 9 2020/21 (December 2020).

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

21. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX - ACTION FOR CHILDREN SURVEY**

The non-public appendix was read in conjunction with the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services at agenda item 13.

22. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX - SELF-EVALUATION FRAMEWORK**

The non-public appendix was read in conjunction with the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services at agenda item 14.

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

There were none.

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

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 11.50 am

Chairman

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Safeguarding Sub-Committee - Outstanding Actions – June 2021 update

Action	Date Action Added and Corresponding Agenda Item	Officer	Target Date for Completion
1. Report to be presented to the Court of Common Council as the entire court has responsibilities as corporate parent	9. Corporate Parenting Annual Report 8 February 2021	Town Clerk	As soon as possible
2. Corporate Parenting training to be rescheduled virtually, as this had been postponed due to the pandemic	9. Corporate Parenting Annual Report 8 February 2021	DCCS Officers	Completed on 18 May 2021

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Adult Social Care

AAR

Adult At Risk – the alleged victim of abuse at the centre of the investigation. Also referred to as the Adult

ADASS

Association of Directors of Adult Social Services

AMHP

Approved Mental Health Practitioner

ASC

Adult Social Care

BCF

Better Care Fund

BIA

Best Interests Assessor

DBS

Disclosure and Barring Service

DCA

Domiciliary Care Agency

DN

District Nurse

DoLS

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

EDT

Emergency Duty Team

GP

General Practitioner

IB

Individual Budget

IMCA

Independent Mental Capacity Advocate

IMHA

Independent Mental Health Advocate

LAS

London Ambulance Service

LFB

London Fire Brigade

LGBT

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

MASH

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

MCA

Mental Capacity Act

MHA

Mental Health Act

MHAA

Mental Health Act Assessment

MSP

Making Safeguarding Personal

OT

Occupational Therapist

PACH

The Person Alleged to Have Caused Harm

POC

Package Of Care

PPU

Public Protection Unit

RAS

Resource Allocation System

SA

Safeguarding Adults

SAM

Safeguarding Adults Manager – chairs safeguarding meetings and advises allocated SW

SAR

Safeguarding Adults Review

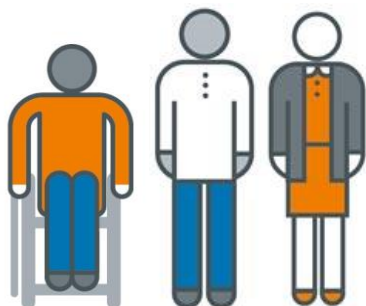
SSA

Supported Self Assessment

SW

Social Worker

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Glossary

Children Social Care



CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

C&FA	Child and Family Assessment – single assessment undertaken by Children Social Care
CAF	Common Assessment Framework (part of Early Help)
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CHSCP	City and Hackney Children's Safeguarding Partnership
CIC	Child/ren in Care
CICC	Children in Care Council
CIN	Child in Need
CL	Care Leaver
CLA	Children Looked After
CP	Child Protection
CPP	Child Protection Plan
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CSC	Children's Social Care
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
C&YP	Child and/or Young Person (up to 18 th birthday)
CYPP	Children and Young People's Plan
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DV	Domestic Violence
EDT	Emergency Duty Team (out of hours duty provided by Hackney)
EET	Education, Employment and Training
EH	Early Help

FE	Further Education
HMO	House of Multiple Occupancy
ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference
IFA	Independent Fostering Agency
IHA	Initial Health Assessment
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
LA Services	Local Authority Services
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LASC	London Asylum Seekers Consortium
MACP	Multi-Agency Child Protection
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MARF	Multi Agency Referral Form
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NFA	No Further Action
QSW	Qualified Social Worker
RCPC	Review Child Protection Conference
RHI	Return Home Interview
S47	Section 47 Enquiry, part of Child Protection investigation (the outcome may be that the subject is escalated to an ICPC)
SCR	Serious Case Review
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
TAC	Team Around the Child meeting (Early Help measure)

TAF	Team Around the Family (Early Help measure)
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child (up to 18 th birthday)
YTD	Year to Date, the time period from the 1 April to the current date

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	07/06/2021
Subject: Missing from Home, Care and Education Review	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1 & 2
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	NA
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report authors: Rachel Talmage, Service Manager, Children's Social Care and Early Help, People Department, DCCS Kirstie Hilton, Lead Advisor, Universal Education Services, People Department, DCCS	

Summary

Children missing from care, home and education is a critical safeguarding issue in the City of London. Research shows that a high proportion of children who go missing are at risk of harm, and that harm is likely to be sexual or other kinds of exploitation. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) can be at risk of control and movement by traffickers. Operation Innerste, which began in 2021, aims to reduce trafficking within the UK by fingerprinting all new UASC, and therefore making them less desirable to traffickers.

This report sets out the response of the City of London in respect of missing children and evaluates efficacy alongside efforts to strengthen the service.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Children missing from care, home and education is a critical safeguarding issue in the City of London. Research shows that a high proportion (25%) of children who go missing are at risk of harm, and that harm is likely to be sexual or other kinds of exploitation. The risk is higher for children in residential care. UASC are at further risk of trafficking once in the UK, if their

traffickers want them to move within the UK or across Europe or stay located and work illegally.

2. All children looked after by the City of London under the age of 18 have 24-hour care and/or support, have the benefit of oversight of looked-after child reviews, and the support of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). This means that children are identified and reported as missing quickly.
3. The Child Protection Procedures: Children Missing from Care, Home and Education Strategy,¹ outline the procedures to support assessment and response to risk. These were reviewed in the City of London and updated in March 2021 and are appended at Appendix 1. The main objective of the procedures is finding and returning the child to safety. Where there are concerns that a child who is missing may have suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm, child protection procedures will be initiated.

Children Missing From Home

4. Children running away from home/going missing is extremely rare in the City of London. No resident child has been reported missing in 2020/21. Paragraphs 5 and 6 below outline what would take place if a child was reported missing from home.
5. If a child is known to the service and there is a known risk that the child might run away from home, a safety plan would be devised with the family by the social/early help worker. In most circumstances, family members report the child missing to police, and take every step possible to find their child. This will involve children's social care in some situations, and a strategy meeting with involved professionals may take place. In the City of London, any child missing from home is offered a Return Home Interview within 72 hours. The purpose of the interview is to gain intelligence from the child on any risk indicators, health needs, and to reduce the risk of them going missing in the future.
6. If a child resident outside of the City is located inside the City of London after having gone missing from home, then the City of London Children's Social Care Service will hold a strategy meeting with the resident local authority. This ensures follow-up with the resident local authority, and any contextual safety issues are taken into account.

Children Missing From Education

7. The Education and Early Years Service monitors all children who are known to the service who are either missing education (not on school roll), at risk of missing education (where attendance is persistently below 90%), electively home educated, or who are unable to attend school full time due to medical reasons. Details of these children are kept and monitored until it is no longer

¹ https://www.londoncp.co.uk/ch_miss_care_home_sch.html

necessary to do so.

8. Children missing education is a safeguarding concern. Children are at increased risk of sexual, criminal and other forms of exploitation when they are missing education. This can be both in person or online, and can be compounded by social isolation, opportunistic risk and grooming.
9. Children can be missing education for reasons of ill health and exclusion. The Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care and Early Help Service work closely to improve outcomes for children, and record joint work on our Mosaic database. For example, the teams worked together on cases where children have low attendance, require educational welfare intervention or additional support with academic work in the lead up to GCSEs.
10. Not all children missing education are supported by Children's Social Care and Early Help as the presenting issues may not warrant intervention – for example, arranging education provision for a child who is in hospital for a period of time, or where the Education Welfare Consultant acts as the lead professional in delivering preventative services. The Education Service monitors the children every two weeks to increase attendance and prevent children missing out on learning.
11. Under usual circumstances, the Lead Advisor for Universal Education Services prepares a termly report on children missing from education, which is then discussed at the Children's Senior Management Team and with the Director of the Department of Community and Children's Services. Regular case updates are also sent to the Head of Service and to the Assistant Director, People. The Lead Advisor also attends the Multi Agency Child Exploitation and Vulnerable Adolescent Forum (MASE) that is jointly chaired by the Service Manager for Children's Social Care and the City of London Police (CoLP). The Lead Advisor's report makes reference to whether children are either not known to children's social care, are Children in Need, and subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Response to COVID-19

12. Following the restrictions placed on the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, the work carried out by the Education Service changed in response to the closure of schools and the need to ensure that children had access to devices to be able to fully engage with remote learning.
13. During the first lockdown in March 2020, a Vulnerable Children list was created in collaboration between the Education and Early Years' Service and the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service to ensure that all children at risk of not being able to access a device and those without internet access were identified. This list has continued to be an essential focus throughout the pandemic, and all services have continued to review it over the last 12 months on a monthly basis. These meetings, which are attended by the Children's Social Care Team Manager, Special Educational Needs and Disability

(SEND) Lead Advisor and Lead Advisor for Universal Services creates an opportunity to share vital information on family situations as well as agree on how to proceed with certain cases.

Performance

14. Over the last year, reporting mechanisms have been adapted to reflect the change of situation and focus. Termly reports have not been completed, but have been replaced with a monthly review of the Vulnerable Children List. In May 2020, there were 49 children on our list. Currently there are 51 children and young people on this list, including children with Education, Health and Care Plans, children known to the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, as well as the children being electively home educated.
15. Reports were presented to this Committee in June 2020 and October 2020 as an overview to the work that the Education Service was doing to support families. A separate report in May 2020 highlighted the current work being done to support our vulnerable children in relation to devices and internet access.
16. Since September 2021 there has been an increase in the number of children being electively home educated as a direct result of COVID-19. The number of children has gone from three in August 2020 to seven by the end of 2020, which is a 133% increase. In line with our policy, we have successfully engaged with all families and will continue to monitor educational progress to ensure that all the children are receiving a suitable level of education.

Children Missing From Care

17. The paragraphs below outline the key process in the reviewed guidance:

Before

- a. When a child moves to a placement, any risks (if any) of going missing are identified, alongside strategies for prevention, reduction of duration and frequency of missing episodes.

During

- b. Foster carer/keyworker tries to locate child if late home, e.g calls/texts child, school, friends.
- c. Foster carer/keyworker reports child missing to the police and calls children's social care (whether day or out of hours service), and birth family if available/safe to do so.
- d. Foster carer/keyworker to continue to make all reasonable steps to find child.

- e. Within at least three days, a strategy discussion between police, children's social care, health and relevant partners is held. The purpose is to have a shared action plan to locate the child and plan a safe positive return.

After

- 18. 'Safe and well' checks are made by the CoLP and an independent Return Home Interview is undertaken within 72 hours of their return. The purpose is to understand any harm the child might have suffered, listen to why they went away and where to, and any support needed.
- 19. There are UASC-specific risks in being missing from care:² going underground to avoid immigration control, modern day slavery (illegal working, such as in car washes, restaurants and nail bars, along with cannabis farming and the drug trade), debt bondage, new instructions from traffickers along with other criminality, and the risks inherent in being a young person from another country with limited English language skills in the capital city.

Current Position

- 20. Operation Innerste has been developed as a nationwide response to tackling trafficking from and within the UK. The CoLP and Children's Social Care have signed up and Operation Innerste is working in practice, involving CoLP using ink fingerprints for all new UASC on welfare (not criminal) grounds. The purpose of this is to reduce the suitability of a young person to be further trafficked from the City of London to elsewhere in the UK or EU – for example, for movement of drugs or illicit goods or for illegal work (modern day slavery). It is hoped that our young people will not be chosen by traffickers for further onward movement/illegal activity.
- 21. Children missing from care are reviewed at strategy meetings, with police, social care, and health (at least), and at the bimonthly Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Vulnerable Adolescent Forum, with drug workers, nurses, police, education, social care and youth workers. The point is to have a strategic review of child safety in terms of individuals, locations and patterns to reduce and prevent harm.

² https://www.londoncp.co.uk/ch_miss_care_home_sch.html

Key Data

	2020/21 (Period/Quarter End)			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Missing From Care / Home				
Children Looked After (CLA) missing at the end of the period	2	2	1	0
Total CLA who went missing during the period	2	2	2	1
Total CLA missing episodes during the period	2	3	2	1
Total CLA absent episodes during the period	0	1	0	0
Total of children Missing from Home	0	0	0	0
Total of children Missing from Education	0	0	0	0
Return Home Interview (RHI)				
Total RHI offered	2	1	2	2
Total RHI accepted	0	0	2	2
Total RHI completed within 72 hours	0	0	2	2
RHI for Missing Episodes only				
Total RHI offered	2	1	2	2
Total RHI accepted	0	0	2	2
Total RHI completed within 72 hours	0	0	2	2

22. In 2020/21 there were no children missing from their home in the City of London.

23. In 2020/21 there were seven children who went missing from care.

24. The seven children were all black boys aged 16/17, six of whom were subject to immigration control as UASC. Six of these children are Muslim, one is Christian; two are Sudanese, one Eritrean, one Ethiopian, one Ivorian, and one Algerian; one is a European Union citizen, and is Spanish (Moroccan heritage) and Muslim. Our child in care population is largely black boys from African and Middle Eastern countries.

25. Reasons for going missing included: not wanting to return home to Spain; wanting to move placement; being out with friends; and a move to France.

26. **Compliance with policy:** Return Home Interviews were offered promptly in all cases where the child returned. One child did not return, after making it clear he was not returning to the UK.
27. Quality of Return Home Interviews and the poor uptake of the interviews when offered were reviewed in December 2020; we had noticed that on four occasions young people were offered Return Home Interviews but did not take them up. Contract requirements were increased, with clear expectation of engaging all young people. Actions were set for children who have been recommissioned from April 2021 to undertake, and high-performance targets were set.
28. We have strengthened placement stability work at the outset of a placement move. Children in Care have been supported with additional early intervention sleep work (City of London/Coram Sleep Project). These pieces of work are helping happiness in placement, and a reduction in going missing to force a placement move.
29. There were less 'missing' episodes with COVID-19 regulations in place, with opportunities limited, and a clear stance on avoiding placement move unless for a critical reason, such as immediate safety.
30. **Corporate & Strategic Implications:** As corporate parents, we are responsible for our children in care. This fits within the corporate objectives that people are safe and feel safe, and that people enjoy good health and wellbeing. For example, keeping children away from county lines, by offering clear safety and boundaries, with immediate, skilled care and response to going missing is a clear strategic priority.
31. Operation Innerste is a CoLP initiative with Children's Social Care. CoLP are committed to supporting children who go missing and are attendant at every strategy meeting, often going above and beyond, linking in with the Metropolitan Police to find our missing children.
32. **Financial implications:** none
33. **Resource implications:** staff time is involved in ensuring children's safety. The number of missing episodes has reduced and additional staff time is not needed at this point.
34. **Risk implications:** there is the risk of serious harm occurring while a young person is missing.
35. **Equalities implications:** the Missing Persons Guidance complies with our public Sector Equality Duty 2010. The young care leavers who are going missing are brown or black teenagers. This is largely reflective of the Child in Care population. These young people are each facing uncertainty of security, (given immigration rules), and potential trafficking. These are vulnerable young black boys. The City of London response is to offer love and care through:

- a. highly trained social work practice
- b. upskilling of involved professionals around the child with our Early Intervention Mental Health project to support sleep, diet and exercise as the pillars of mental health
- c. mentoring, including via country-specific charities, such as Waging Peace
- d. well supported education
- e. leisure and creative opportunities
- f. Operation Innerste to offer safety from onward trafficking.

36. **Security implications:** Children's Social Care and CoLP are fully trained in and conversant in the Prevent agenda. Each looked-after child has a 'risk assessment', which is updated following any missing episode, subject to professional judgement. There has not been a reason to make a Prevent referral or invoke a Channel Panel.

Conclusion

37. The Children Missing from Care, Home and Education Strategy was reviewed in March 2021; little needed amending and the process works in practice. The number of home educated children has increased, and the number of children missing from care have reduced. Children are not going missing from home. There is a robust practical prevention and response to children going missing in the City of London.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Child Protection Procedures: Children Missing from Care, Home and Education Strategy reviewed March 2021

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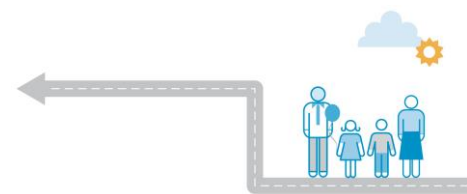
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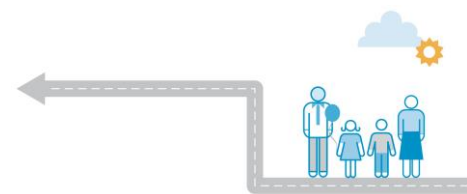


London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance

Including City of London Corporation supplementary guidance

3. Children Missing from Care, Home and Education

Document status:	Final
Prepared by:	Simon Cribbens
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Owner:	Chris Pelham
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- 3.3 Related Procedures

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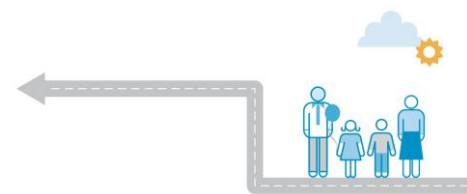
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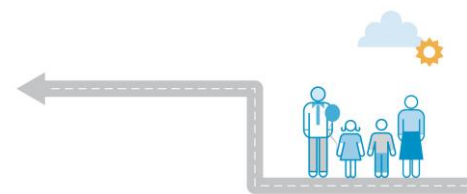
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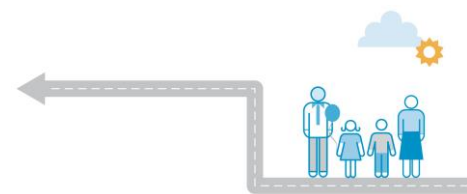
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3.1 Introduction

This guidance is the Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocol for London and should be followed by local authorities, the Metropolitan police and other partners when children run away or go missing.

Children running away and going missing from care, home and education is a key safeguarding issue for local authorities and local safeguarding children partnerships. This guidance is designed to ensure that when a child goes missing there is an effective, collaborative safeguarding response from all agencies involved. Current research findings estimate that approximately 25 per cent of children and young people that go missing are at risk of serious harm. There are particular concerns about the links between children running away and the risks of sexual exploitation. For example, according to recent studies [1], looked after children (LAC) missing from their placements are vulnerable to sexual and other exploitation, especially children in residential care.

This chapter provides guidance for assessing both the risk that a child may run away and the risk to the child if they do go missing. It sets out the actions that should be taken by professionals to locate the child, to assist with their return and to identify the issues which caused, and may continue to cause, the child to run away or go missing.

This guidance is based on guidance issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970[2] which requires local authorities in exercising their social services functions, to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State. Local authorities should comply with this guidance when exercising these functions, unless local circumstances indicate exceptional reasons that justify a variation.

This chapter complements: Working Together to Safeguard Children and related statutory guidance (2013)[3] and the Children Act 1989 guidance and regulation volumes in respect of care planning and review[4].

Acknowledgement: This guidance has taken account of the DfE Statutory Guidance on 'Children who run away or go missing from home or care', January 2014[5].

[1] The Ofsted report 'Missing Children' published in February 2013; the Joint All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Inquiry on Children Who Go Missing from Care 2012 and the accelerated report of the OCC's ongoing inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups.

[2] [Local Authority Social Services Act 1970](#)

[3] [Working together to safeguard children](#)

[4] [The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review](#)

[5] [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

This guidance should be used in conjunction with the London Child Protection Procedures, Part A, 2013.



City supplementary guidance

The City of London of London Corporation (City Corporation) follows the London Child Protection Procedures practice guidance (“the LCPP guidance”) for Children Missing from Care, Home and Education. These are the City’s “runaway and missing from home and care protocol” and procedures for Children Missing Education should be followed by the City Corporation, the City of London Police and other partners.

Supplementary information and procedures that are specific to the City Corporation are given in ‘City addition’ boxes in the relevant sections of this document. The LCPP guidance should therefore be followed in conjunction with, and not in isolation of, the LCPP guidance.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a key duty placed on the City of London Corporation. This includes planning to prevent children from going missing, protecting them when they do and understanding why children go missing to reduce the risk of them doing so again.

Contacts and designated lead officers - City of London

See City of London Appendices – Appendix A

Summary – procedure flowchart

Appendix B provides a summary procedure flow chart for children missing from care, or those missing from home who are assessed as a Child in Need.

3.2 Principles

The following safeguarding principles should be adopted by each Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and its partner agencies in relation to identifying and locating children who go missing:

- The safety and welfare of the child is paramount;
- Locating and returning the child to a safe environment is the main objective;
- Child protection procedures will be initiated whenever there are concerns that a child, who is missing, may have suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.



3.3 Related Procedures

The *London Child Protection Procedures Part A and Guidance in Part B* provide information to support professionals to recognise, respond to and manage circumstances in which children, who have run away or are missing, may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

In **Part B** there is additional practice guidance for:

- Asylum Seeking Children;
- Safeguarding Trafficked and Exploited Children;
- Safeguarding Children Abused through Sexual Exploitation.

These, and **Part A** can be accessed on the [London CPC website](#).

Nationally, the following information can be accessed:

- [The Missing Children and Adults strategy \(2011\)](#);
- [Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary Guidance \(2009\)](#);
- [The Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan \(2011\)](#);
- [Statutory guidance: Children who run away or go missing from home or care \(2014\)](#).

3.4 The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

City supplementary guidance

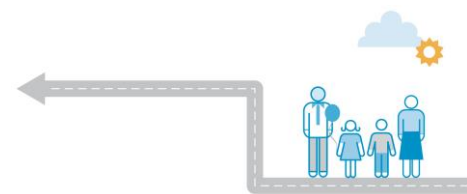
References to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in this LCPP guidance apply also to the City of London Police, as do the descriptions of the police role and definitions in section 3.4, and the legal powers set out in section 3.5.

All general references to the police and/or MPS in the LCPP guidance should be read to include the City of London Police as appropriate.

The Metropolitan police service, as the lead agency for investigating and finding missing children, will respond to children and young people going **missing** or being **absent** based on on-going risk assessments in line with current guidance. The police will prioritise all incidents of missing children as medium or high risk.

The police definitions of 'missing' and 'absent' are:

Missing



Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another'.

and

Absent

A person is not at a place where they are expected or required to be'. [6]

The police classification of a person as 'missing' or 'absent' will be based on on-going risk assessment. A child whose whereabouts are known would not be treated as either 'missing' or 'absent' under the police definitions.

It is important to note that professionals or others reporting a child missing to the police, should not make the judgement themselves as to whether a child is missing or absent – this decision will be made by the police on the basis of the information provided.

Where a child is recorded by police as being absent, they will agree review times and any on-going actions with the person reporting the absence. All persons recorded by police as absent are monitored on the police CAD system. Monitoring is ongoing and subject to regular reviews to ensure risk levels do not change. Where information comes to light which introduces any risk to that person, then the case may be re-categorised as 'missing' and a police investigation instigated.

One of the overriding principles of 'Absent' is that police are able to focus resources more effectively, in accordance with the police risk assessments of 'absent' and 'missing' incidents.

The Police will carry out a 'Safe and Well' check with a 'missing' child who returns and will also carry out an independent "Return Review" interview in exceptional circumstances.

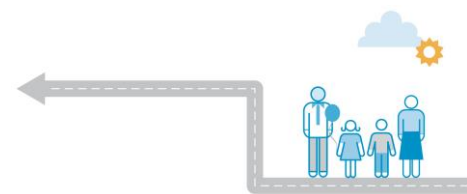
Risk Assessment

The police will prioritise all incidents of missing children as medium or high risk. Where a child is recorded as being absent, the details will be recorded by the police, who will also agree review times and any on-going actions with the person reporting.

A missing child incident would be prioritised as '*high risk*' where:

- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child is in danger through their own vulnerability; or
- The child may have been the victim of a serious crime; or
- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.

The high risk category requires the immediate deployment of police resources. Police guidance makes clear that a member of the senior management team or similar command



level must be involved in the examination of initial enquiry lines and approval of appropriate staffing levels. Such cases should lead to the appointment of an Investigating Officer and possibly a Senior Investigating Officer and a Police Search Advisor (PolSA). There should be a media strategy and / or close contact with outside agencies. Family support should be put in place. The UK Missing Persons Bureau should be notified of the case immediately. CEOP and local authority children's services should also be notified.

A missing child incident would be prioritised as '*medium risk*' where the risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others. This category requires an active and measured response by police and other agencies in order to trace the missing person and support the person reporting. This will involve a proactive investigation and search in accordance with the circumstances to locate the missing child as soon as possible.

[6] Guidance on how police services will apply the new definition of 'absent' to children was issued in interim guidance by [ACPO](#) in April 2013. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) ratified and implemented the new definitions in July 2014.

3.5 Legal powers: Local Authorities and the Metropolitan Police

The police can use the powers under Section 46(1) of the Children Act 1989[7] to remove a child into police protection *if they are at risk of significant harm* [8]. Police Protection lasts up to 72 hours.

Section 17 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984[9] provides police with powers to enter and search a premises in certain circumstances, notably, with regard to this guidance, for the purposes of saving life and limb or to arrest without warrant a person who has committed an indictable offence or certain other listed offences under the section.

Section 24 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984[10] provides police the power of summary arrest for any offence subject to certain provisions notably, for the purposes of this guidance, under S.24(5)(d) to protect a child or other vulnerable person from the person in question.

Should it be necessary to take the child into police protection, the child must be moved as soon as possible into local authority accommodation. The local authority should consider what type of accommodation is appropriate in each individual case. It is important that young people are not placed in accommodation that leaves them vulnerable to exploitation or trafficking.

The Local Authority may apply to the Court for a Recovery Order under Section 50 of the Children Act 1989[11]. A Recovery Order can only be sought when the child is subject to an Interim or Full Care Order and it is clear that the child is in no immediate danger of significant harm[12]. Social services may need to obtain an Emergency Protection Order under Section 44 of the Children Act 1989[13], before expiration of the Police Protection.



[7] **Children Act 1989** (1) Where a constable has reasonable cause to believe that a child would otherwise be likely to suffer significant harm, he may (a) remove the child to suitable accommodation and keep him there; or (b) take such steps as are reasonable to ensure that the child's removal from any hospital, or other place, in which he is then being accommodated is prevented.

[8] **Children Act 1989 Section 31**

[9] **Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984**

[10] **Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 Section 24**

[11] **Children Act 1989 Section 50**

[12] **Children Act 1989 Section 31**

[13] **Children Act 1989 Section 44**

3.6 Local Authorities

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and other named statutory partners to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes planning to prevent children from going missing and to do everything possible to ensure their safe return when they do go missing. Through their inspections of local authority children's services, Ofsted will include an assessment of measures with regard to missing children as part of their key judgement on the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection.

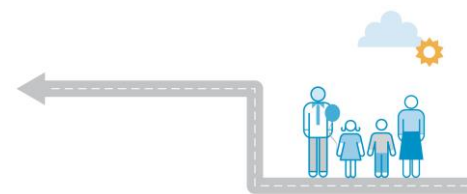
Local authorities should name a senior children's service manager as responsible for monitoring policies and performance relating to children who go missing from home or care. The responsible manager should look beyond this guidance to understand the risks and issues facing children missing from home or care and to review best practice in dealing with the issue.

Local authorities must ensure that all incidents where children go missing are appropriately risk assessed, and should record all incidents of looked after children who are missing or away from placement without authorisation.

Even with strong systems and services that minimise the likelihood of young people running away, some young people will still feel that they have to run away. In all circumstances local safeguarding procedures should be followed. If there is concern that the child may be at risk if returned home, the child should be referred to children's social care to assess their needs and make appropriate arrangements for their accommodation.

Children, who are looked after should have information about, and easy access to, help lines and support services including emergency accommodation. Support should also be made available to families to help them understand why the child has run away and how they can support them on their return.

It is important that emergency accommodation can be accessed directly at any time of the day or night. Bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation is not an appropriate place for any



child or young person under the age of 18 and should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Sharing information to locate a child who is looked after, subject to a child protection plan or a child in need.

The local authority should consult with the police regarding what action should be taken to share information about a missing child who is looked after, subject to a child protection plan or a child in need. This should include an assessment of whether to release information to the media. The local authority should also notify other local authorities according to degree of concern. Consideration should also be given to whether the child or their family has links to other areas in the United Kingdom.

On receipt of a notification from another local authority, a flag should be added to the electronic record system for children's social care and consideration should be given to notifying health and other relevant partners.

Data on looked after children who go missing or are away from placement without authorisation

The Department of Education Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care (January 2014) states the following:

Looked after children who go missing, or who are away from placement without authorisation, can be at increased risk of sexual or other forms of exploitation or of involvement in drugs, gangs, criminal activity or trafficking. Particular attention should be paid to repeat episodes. Data on these episodes should be analysed regularly in order to map problems and patterns. Regular reports on this data should be provided to council members and the LSCP.

Data for children missing or away from placement without authorisation should be reported to the Department for Education by the responsible authority (through their annual data returns on looked after children as part of the annual SSDA903 data collection).

Local authorities collect information about children missing from education and educational establishments and about children who access other local authority services, such as youth services and children who are looked after.

As the guidance says, early and effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for the identification of patterns of risky behaviour. This may be used to identify areas of concern for an individual child, or to identify 'hotspots' of activity in a local area.

Local authorities should collect data on children reported missing from care including repeat episodes of missing from care, unauthorised absences from care placements, and other relevant data and should regularly analyse this in order to map problems and patterns. This should include identifying patterns of sexual and other exploitation.



Good practice suggests that the following data should be collected and analysed by a multi professional group:

- Demographics of all children who are missing, absent or away from placement without authorisation;
- Associates of the above;
- The legal status of the children;
- Episodes, and length of episode by child;
- Numbers and themes from safe and well checks;
- Numbers and themes from return interviews;
- Cross match data with gangs matrix, CSE lists, home educated and missing from education lists, including information about children who go missing for part of the school day;
- Consideration should be given to analysing where the child is found as this information could help identify links between missing children and criminal enterprises like the current expansion of London gangs' drug sale operations outside of London (the 'county lines' issue);
- Analyse data by establishment and geographical area.

Data about children and young people who go missing from home, education or care should be included in regular reports to Council members, especially to the Lead Member for Children's Services and in regular reports by the local authority to the local LSCP.

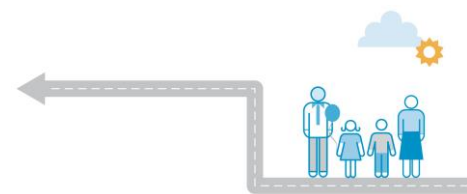
3.7 Ofsted: Disclosure to Police

On 1 April 2013 regulations came into force requiring Ofsted to disclose details of the locations of children's homes to local police services to support the police in taking a strategic and operational approach to safeguarding children particularly in relation to sexual exploitation and trafficking[14].

It should be noted that disclosure of this information to police services does not happen automatically and police services will need to request to receive this information on an on-going basis.

This duty is in addition to the existing obligation for Ofsted to disclose this information to local authorities. A protocol published alongside the regulations sets out the responsibilities of the public authorities to use information about the location of children's homes only for the purposes for which it was disclosed; and to share it onward only where this is compatible with safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

[14] Department for Education: Joint protocol: children's homes - procedure for disclosing names and addresses (2013)



3.8 Healthcare Professionals

Healthcare professionals have a key role in identifying and reporting children who may be missing from care, home and school.

Missing children access a number of services provided by a range of health providers, for example:

- Urgent Care Units;
- Accident and Emergency Departments;
- Genito-Urinary Medicine Clinics (GaUM);
- Community Sexual Health Services; and
- Pharmacy Services.

Health professionals should have an understanding of the vulnerabilities and risks associated with children that go missing. Staff working in health settings should be aware of their professional responsibilities and the responses undertaken by the multi-agency partnership. Risks include sexual exploitation, trafficking, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Radicalisation, also a risk factor for vulnerable young people, is managed via the national 'Prevent' strategy[15].

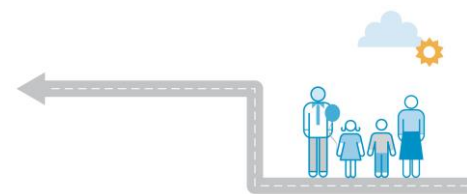
All health providers should provide a comprehensive service for Looked after Children (LAC). A Designated Nurse and Doctor for Looked after Children are located in each Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). They are statutory appointments and are responsible for the commissioning and delivery of appropriate healthcare, assessments and services. Designated health professionals for LAC should share relevant information and intelligence relating to high risk individuals or emerging themes and patterns indicative of organised and targeted abuse, to the NHS Patch Safeguarding Children Forum. They should also ensure that all health staff within their locality know how to identify, report and respond to a child who is missing from care.

[15] [Protecting the UK against terrorism](#)

3.9 Homeless 16 / 17 year olds

When a 16 or 17 year old runs away or goes missing they are no less vulnerable than younger children and are equally at risk, particularly of sexual exploitation or involvement with gangs.

When a 16 -17 year old presents as homeless, local authority children's services must assess their needs as for any other child. Where this assessment indicates that the young person is in need and requires accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989[16], they will usually become looked after.



The accommodation provided must be suitable, risk assessed and meet the full range of the young person's needs. The sustainability of the placement must be considered. Young people who have run away and are at risk of homelessness may be placed in supported accommodation, with the provision of specialist support. For example, a specialist service might be provided for those who have been sexually exploited, or at risk of sexual exploitation.

Local authorities should have regard to statutory guidance in April 2010[17] issued to children's services authorities and local housing authorities about their duties under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 and Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996[18] to secure or provide accommodation for homeless 16 and 17 year olds.

[16] **Children Act 1989 Section 20**

[17] **Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation**

[18] **Housing Act 1996**

3.10 Trafficking

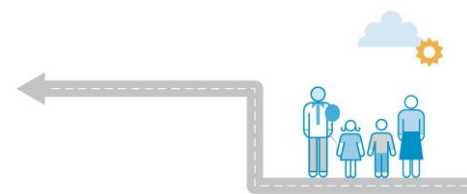
Some of the children who local authorities look after may be unaccompanied asylum seeking children or other migrant children. Some children in this group may have been trafficked into the UK and may remain under the influence of their traffickers even while they are looked after. Trafficked children are at high risk of going missing, with most going missing within one week of becoming looked after and many within 48 hours. Unaccompanied migrant or asylum seeking children, who go missing immediately after becoming looked after, should be treated as children who may be victims of trafficking. See Part B, Chapter 10: Safeguarding Trafficked and Exploited Children[19]

Children, who have been trafficked, may be exploited for sexual purposes and the link to sexual exploitation should be addressed in conjunction with Part B, Chapter 8: Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation.[20]

The assessment of need to inform the care plan will be particularly critical in these circumstances and should be done immediately as the window for intervention is very narrow. The assessment must seek to establish:

- Relevant details about the child's background before they came to the UK;
- An understanding of the reasons why the child came to the UK; and
- An analysis of the child's vulnerability to remaining under the influence of traffickers.

In conducting this assessment it will be necessary for the local authority to work in close co-operation with the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC)[21] and immigration staff who will be familiar with patterns of trafficking into the UK. Immigration staff should be able to advise on whether information about the individual child suggests that they fit the profile of a potentially trafficked child.



Provision may need to be made for the child to be in a safe place before any assessment takes place and for the possibility that they may not be able to disclose full information about their circumstances immediately. The location of the child should not be divulged to any enquirers until their identity and relationship with the child has been established, if necessary with the help of police and immigration services. In these situations the roles and responsibilities of care providers must be fully understood and recorded in the placement plan. Proportionate safety measures that keep the child safe and take into account their best interests should also be put in place to safeguard the child from going missing from care or from being re-trafficked.

It will be essential that the local authority continues to share information with the police and immigration staff, concerning potential crimes against the child, the risk to other children, or other relevant immigration matters.

'Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked: Practice Guidance (2011)' [22] contains practical guidance for agencies which are likely to encounter, or have referred to them, children and young people who may have been trafficked. Where it is suspected that a child has been trafficked, they should be referred by the local authority into the UK's victim identification framework, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) [23]. The Trafficked Children Toolkit [24], developed by the London Safeguarding Children Board, has been made available to all local authorities to help professionals assess the needs of these children and to refer them to the NRM.

The NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC [25]) provides specialist advice and information to professionals who have concerns that a child or young person may have been trafficked. CTAC can be contacted at free phone number: 0808 800 5000, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

[19] [Safeguarding Trafficked and Exploited Children](#)

[20] [Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation](#)

[21] [National Crime Agency](#)

[22] [Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked \(GOV UK\)](#)

[23] [Reducing and preventing crime](#)

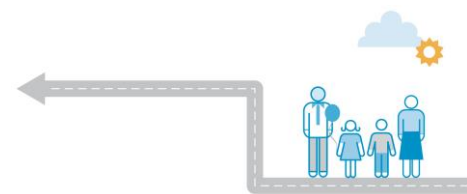
[24] [London SCB](#)

[25] [NCPCC](#)

3.11 Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse [26].



Children can be groomed for the purpose of sexual abuse as well as other forms of exploitation including involvement in criminal and extremist activity. Children who are missing are more vulnerable to being groomed and may also go missing as a result of being groomed.

Protecting children at risk of radicalisation

Children and young people can suffer harm when exposed to extremist ideology. This harm can range from a child adopting or complying with extreme views which limit their social interaction and full engagement with their education, to children being groomed for involvement in violent attacks.

Children can be exposed to harmful, extremist ideology in the immediate or extended family, or relatives/family friends who live outside the family home but have influence over the child's life. Older children or young people might self-radicalise over the internet or through the influence of their peer network – in this instance their parents might not know about this or feel powerless to stop their child's radicalisation.

Going missing is a risk factor in relation to radicalisation:

- A child may go missing because they have already been radicalised;
- A child's risk of being radicalised might increase because they are missing and are spending time with people who may seek to involve them in radical/extreme activities. The risk is heightened whilst they are missing, because the protective factors of family or care are not available to them.

Professionals should always assess whether a child who has gone missing is at risk of radicalisation.

Children at risk of sexual exploitation (CSE)

See London Child Protection Procedures, Part B3, Chapter 8, Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation [27].

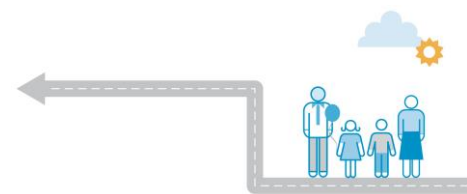
The sexual exploitation of children involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common.

Involvement in exploitative relationships is characterised by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice as a result of their social, economic or emotional vulnerability.

A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation.

Going missing is a significant risk factor in relation to sexual exploitation:

- A child may go missing because they are being sexually exploited;



- A child's risk of being sexually exploited might increase because they are missing and are spending time with people who may seek to involve them in sexual exploitation. The risk is heightened whilst they are missing because the protective factors of family or care are not available to them.

Because there is such a strong link between children going missing and risk of sexual exploitation, professionals should always assess whether a child who has gone missing is being sexually exploited or at risk of being sexually exploited.

City supplementary guidance

MACE Referral

Where a child or young person goes missing from home or care a referral should be made to the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) group using the MACE Referral Form (City of London Appendix D). This should be by either the City of London Police or, where the child or young person is missing from care, in receipt of Children and Families services or considered a Child in Need, by a social worker.

Poor school attendance, whether through missing whole or part days, may indicate a risk of CSE. Where the Educational Welfare Officer refers a pupil to the Children and Families team, social workers should consider a MACE Referral.

Children at risk of being drawn into offending behaviour

Children and young people who go missing from care, home and education also need safeguarding against the risk of being drawn into offending behaviour. For example, some children have become involved in what is colloquially known as the 'county lines' issue. This involves children being used by gangs to transport and distribute drugs outside of London as drug sales operations are expanded into the home counties and beyond.

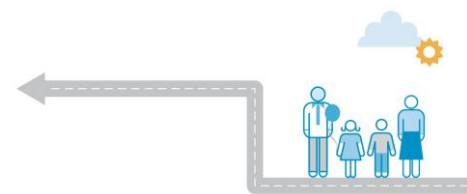
[26] [NSPCC](#)

[27] [Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation](#)

3.12 Care Leavers

From the age of 16 young people in care are referred to as care leavers, however, it is important to note that local authorities have very similar duties and responsibilities towards 16 and 17 year old care leavers as they do to children in care and for the purposes of this guidance, the response to a missing care leaver age 16 and 17 year old should be the same.

Local authorities continue to have a range of responsibilities towards children leaving care until the young person's 21st and in some instances their 25th birthday. It is good practice to follow the guidance set out below whilst a young person remains 'leaving care'.



Care leavers, particularly 16 and 17 year olds, are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and may go missing from their home or accommodation. Local authorities must ensure that care leavers live in "suitable accommodation" as defined in Section 23B (10) of the Children Act 1989 and Regulations 9(2) of the Care Leavers Regulations[28]. In particular young people should feel safe in their accommodation and the areas where it is located. Local authorities should ensure that pathway plans set out where a young person may be vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking or going missing, and put in place support services to minimise this risk.

[28] [The Care Leavers \(England\) Regulations 2010](#)

3.13 Out of Area Placements

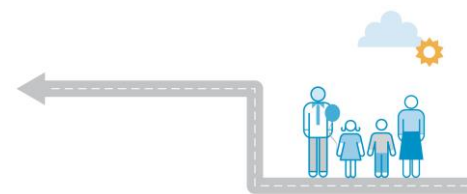
When a child is placed out of their local authority area, the responsible authority must make sure that the child has access to the services they need in advance of placement. Notification of the placement must be made to the host authority and other specified services. All children subject of a London pre-incident risk assessment should be notified to the local police service.

If children placed out of their local authority run away, this protocol should be followed, in addition to complying with other processes that are specified in the policy of the host local authority. It is possible that the child will return to the area of the responsible authority so it is essential that liaison between the police and professionals in both authorities is well managed and coordinated. A notification process for missing/ absent episodes should be agreed between responsible and host local authorities as a part of the care plan and the placement plan.

3.14 Looked after children who are away from placement without authorisation

Sometimes a looked after child may be away from their placement without authorisation. While they are not missing, they may still be placing themselves at risk (e.g. they may be at the house of friends where there are concerns about risks of sexual exploitation). The carer or social worker should take reasonable steps to ascertain the wellbeing of the child including, when appropriate, visiting the location. However, if there is a concern the child may be at significant risk of harm to themselves or to others then police should also be notified in order that appropriate safeguarding measures can be taken. This should not be confused with reporting a child missing.

3.15 Prevention and planning – risk assessment



Local authorities have a duty to place a looked after child in the most appropriate placement to safeguard the child and minimise the risk of the child running away. The care plan and the placement plan should include details of the arrangements that will need to be in place to keep the child safe and minimise the risk of the child going missing from their placement.

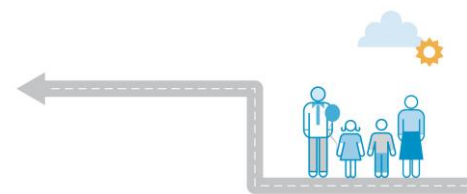
Remember:

- The Care Plan – should include strategies to avoid unauthorised absences and/or a child going missing. It should also include strategies to reduce the duration and risks associated if the child does have unauthorised absences/go missing;
- The Placement Plan – should include strategies for preventing the child from taking unauthorised absences/going missing;
- A pre-incident risk assessment should be completed for all children for whom there is concern that they may run away. Distance from home, family and friends should be considered as a risk factor;
- Provide the child with advice about an independent advocate and take the child's views in to account;
- Statutory reviews should consider any absences and revise strategies to prevent repeat absences and/or missing incidents and the care plan should be revised accordingly.

Where a child already has an established pattern of running away, the care plan should include a strategy to keep the child safe and minimising the likelihood of the child running away in the future. This should be discussed and agreed as far as possible with the child and with the child's carers and should include detailed information about the responsibilities of all services, the child's parents and other adults involved in the family network.

Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) should be informed about missing/ absent episodes and they should address these in statutory reviews. The pre incident risk assessment should be updated after missing incident and should be regularly reviewed.

Designated health professionals for **Looked After Children (LAC)** should be informed of children missing from care who are deemed to be 'high risk'. They should be included in any multiagency strategy meetings or activity to manage the child's retrieval and any subsequent health needs.



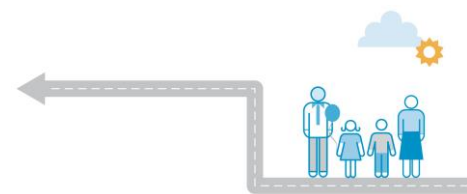
Pre Incident Risk Assessment

If, there are major concerns that a child/young person is likely to go missing, a Pre Incident Risk Assessment/Trigger plan should be completed. This should be completed at the point a child is placed in care, or at the point at which concerns about the risk of going missing subsequently arise. (City of London Appendices - Appendix c)

At the pre-placement meeting and consideration must be given to any associated risk factors in relation to the child young person absencing him/herself and any protective factors that may reduce the likelihood of going missing or of reducing potential harm to the child should they go missing. This also applies to children/young people placed at home on a care order.

The Pre Incident Risk Assessment of the child/young person should consider the following:

- the likelihood of going missing, including information about previous patterns of going missing or associated risks
- the level of risk presented if they go missing – for example a history of alcohol abuse, sexual exploitation, involvement in gangs, mental health or learning difficulties
- the child's view on the current placement or the stability of their relationships at home;
- the level of supervision/support available to the child/young person
- the views of those with parental responsibility on what action should be taken if the child/young person goes missing or regularly returns home late
- details of any medical condition and treatment that the child / young person is currently undergoing and the implications of this in terms of their absence
- consideration of any external influences which may result in the child's removal without consent
- recording all the contact names, addresses, telephone numbers and social media handles of both the virtual and real places where the child/young person may return to (with their consent).



A copy of the Pre Incident Risk Assessment should be held on the child's case record in all agencies working with the child and created and held on file. The child/young person should also be given a copy of their Pre-incident Risk Assessment if appropriate.

An up-to-date description or photograph of the child must be maintained on the case record of the child/young person. In obtaining photographs, appropriate permission should be obtained from the child or parent.

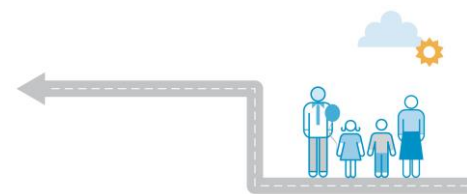
The Pre Incident Risk Assessment, where used, should be reviewed regularly as part of the social worker's pre- review report.

The child/young person and those with parental responsibility should always be informed what action will be taken if the child/young person absents her/himself without permission. Children/young people should also be informed of their right to speak to an independent party on or prior to their return and should be given information on advocacy options.

In cases where there are serious concerns regarding the risks associated with a child/young person going missing, consideration must be given to informing the local police and the relevant local authority (where the child/young person is placed out of borough), at the point of placement or once particular concerns are identified.

Grab Pack

It is good practice for foster or residential carers to prepare relevant information in the event a child goes missing that can be made easily available as a 'grab pack'. Its purpose is to ensure that the information needed to help locate a missing child is readily available. It should include a completed Information Sharing Form (LCPP guidance Appendix 4: Looked After Child Information Sharing Form) and should be updated on a regular basis.



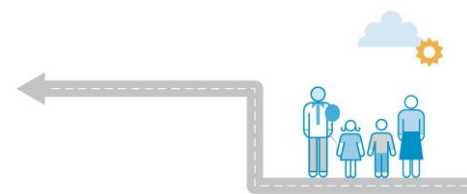
3.16 Actions when the whereabouts of a looked after child is not known

Whenever the whereabouts of a looked after child is not known, the foster carer or the manager on duty in the children's home is responsible for carrying out preliminary checks to see if the child can be located. For example, if a child was supposed to have returned home from school but has not arrived within the normal journey time, checks could include finding out if there are transport delays, phone calls to the child, phone calls to the school to see if the child has been delayed etc. If these initial checks do not succeed in locating the child or there are still concerns that, despite contact being made with the child they are at risk, the individuals and agencies listed below should be informed.

It is clearly important that a deadline is set at the outset of these initial checks so that they don't continue beyond a reasonable timeframe. What timeframe is reasonable should be based on an assessment of the risks relating to the individual child. In some cases, there might be particular reasons to be worried for the child's safety immediately and the individuals agencies detailed below should be contacted straight away – this in conjunction with on-going attempts to contact the child and find out why they aren't where they are supposed to be.

The individuals and agencies who should be contacted when a child is missing or they are away from placement without authorisation:

- The local police;
- The authority responsible for the child's placement – if they have not already been notified prior to the police being informed; and
- The parents and any other person with parental responsibility, unless it is not reasonably practicable or to do so, or would be inconsistent with the child's welfare;
- **The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).**



City supplementary guidance

Notification when missing

The process for notification when a child in care goes missing should be agreed as part of the care plan and placement plan as set out below, or as agreed at a placement meeting.

From foster care: the foster carer should inform the relevant social worker, team manager or the emergency duty team, unless it has been decided previously at the placement agreement meeting that the foster carer should contact the police directly. In an emergency situation, or where the child is considered high risk, the foster carers must call the police immediately.

From residential care: the procedures of that organisation should be followed. The residential staff must then inform the child/young person's social worker, team manager or the emergency duty team. In an emergency situation, or where the child is considered high risk, the foster carers must call the police immediately.

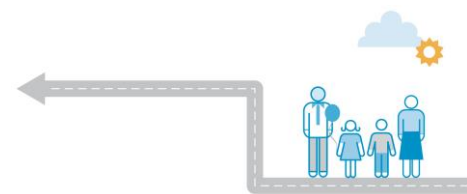
From placement at home on a care order: the parent/s should notify the child's social worker, team manager or the emergency duty team, who will notify the police immediately. In an emergency situation, or where the child is considered high risk, the foster carers must call the police immediately.

From an external event/activity: the member of staff in charge should immediately the police in the local area, the child/young person's social worker and the foster carer or residential home

Once it is established that the child / young person in care can be classified as missing and a risk assessment has been carried out, the police should be notified by the social worker/emergency duty team as soon as possible and within a maximum of 4 hours, unless the child is considered to be at serious risk, then the foster carer or residential staff should contact the police immediately and directly.

The foster carer/keyworker and social worker should be familiar with the social media platforms that the young person uses (with their consent and connect in this way with the young person and offer support.

If a child remains missing beyond a few hours, all agencies should keep a record of their discussions, decisions, actions. This information and details of any events or meetings held should be recorded within the child/young person's case notes. Foster carers and residential staff should record this information in the daily log/diary, which should be accessible to the social worker.



The social worker, team manager or the emergency duty team should alert parents or those with parental responsibility, unless there are clear reasons why this should not be done.

Missing Child Risk Assessment

This assessment is Appendix 3 of the LCPP guidance.

In all cases where a child / young person has gone missing from care, the foster carer (or residential staff) must complete a Missing Child Risk Assessment, to help gauge the seriousness of the situation.

This should be completed immediately and on every occasion that a child is classified as missing (even if it has previously been completed as part of the Pre- Incident Risk Assessment) and reviewed by the child's social workers as soon as practically possible.

The Risk Assessment is an aid to action and information sharing and should be used as an action tool, to inform single and multi-agency decision-making and planning in order to identify the child's whereabouts.

The Risk Assessment provides an indication of:

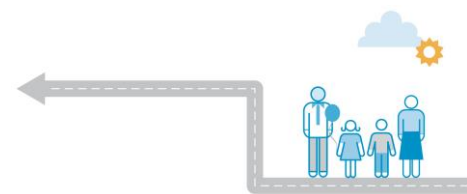
- the urgency of inquiries
- areas of inquiry e.g. where drugs are available or that certain adults frequent, country of origin or country children are trafficked on to etc.
- type of specialist knowledge that might be needed
- the supervision that may be required
- agencies who may be first alerted e.g. local Accident & Emergency services.

The completed Risk Assessment should be shared immediately with all agencies working with the child and kept on the child's file in each agency. In cases where new information becomes available and/or the child remains absent for a protracted period, the risks should be re-assessed, shared with the agencies and kept on the child's file in each agency. The most recently completed Risk Assessment should remain on the child's file in all agencies working with the child.

The following children/young persons should automatically be considered high risk and reported immediately to the police when missing.

- any child/young person who presents an immediate risk to themselves or to other people
- any child who is 12 years old or younger whose whereabouts are unknown
- any child/young person who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan
- any child/young person who is abducted from care
- any young person who is subject to a curfew and goes missing beyond the end of their curfew.

The risk assessment process should be informed by an assessment of the risk of child sexual exploitation. This should be assessed by the lead social worker using the SAFEGUARD tool found in the City of London CSE Operating Protocol.



Appendix 4: Looked After Child Information Sharing Form should be used when reporting the child missing to the police. As a minimum requirement, all reports should include the following information:

- The child's name/s; date of birth; status; responsible authority;
- Where and when they went missing;
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with;
- What was the child wearing plus any belongings such as bags, phone etc.;
- Description and recent photo;
- Medical history, if relevant;
- Time and location last seen;
- Circumstances or events around going missing;
- Details of family, friends and associates;
- Updated risk assessment.

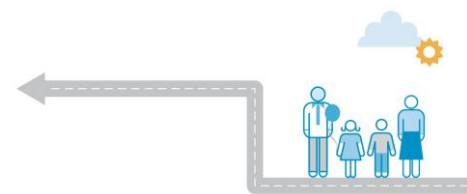
The carer/s should take all reasonable steps, which a good parent would take, to secure the safe and speedy return of the child based on their own knowledge of the child and the information in the child's placement plan. If there is suspected risk of harm to the child the carer/s should liaise immediately with the police.

Following initial discussions between the allocated children's social care worker and the police, they should agree an **immediate strategy** for locating the child and an action plan. This to include a range of actions to locate and ensure the safe return of the child, including:

- Arrangements for attempts to be made to contact the child on a daily basis by, for example, calling their mobile phone or the phones of friends or relatives that they may be with;
- **The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)** should also try and contact the child;
- Visiting their parents' address/es and of any friends or relatives with whom they may be staying;
- Police should consider requesting a trace on the child's mobile phone and/or oyster card.

Within 3 days, a missing from care meeting/ telephone discussion between relevant parties should take place and include the police, the child's social worker and the provider. The action plan and risk assessment should be reviewed and updated.

- Missing from care meetings/discussions should be held at least monthly to update the action plan and share information;
- The Assistant Director should be notified within 3 days of the child going missing. They will notify the Lead Member and Corporate Parenting Board within 7 days of the child going missing;
- Any publicity will be led by the Police, the use of harbouring notices etc. will be agreed at the missing from care meeting. Recovery Orders may be used where the child is Looked After;



- During the investigation to find the missing/run away child, regular liaison and communication should take place between the police, the responsible local authority children's social care services and the host authority (if an out of area placement) and any other agencies involved;
- The authority responsible for the child should ensure that plans are in place to respond promptly once the child is found and for determining if the placement remains appropriate.

City supplementary guidance

Strategy Meeting

When a child is missing from care the City Corporation requires the first 'strategy meeting' to be convened within the first working day of the child's absence being discovered, if possible, and at the latest, within 72 hours.

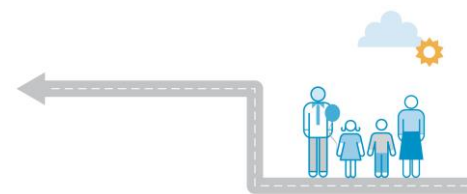
The purpose of the meeting is to agree an action plan to find the child/young person. It should be attended by the child's social worker, service manager, carer, parent (if appropriate), legal representatives, the police, the IRO, and members of other involved agencies, such as CAMHS, Youth Services, education, LAC Nurse or the Youth Offending Service.

The meeting should be recorded on the case file.

A further strategy meeting should be called once the child has been missing for 7 days, chaired by the service manager. If a child has been missing for more than 7 days, meetings should be held on a fortnightly basis. If a child remains missing after 3 months, monthly meetings should be held, which the Assistant Director (People) will chair. Additional strategy meetings can be called if deemed necessary.

The Strategy Meeting should consider the following:

- the CSE Risk as assessed through the SAFEGUARD tool;
- further attempts to contact known relatives, friends and regular places of visit and, where appropriate, setting out concerns about the child and the expectations to inform the Children and Families team of any relevant information obtained;
- informing other local authorities and local agencies with the information about the missing child/young person. Partner agencies should receive information from each other on the basis of their need to know and in order to take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child;
- use of publicity subject to consultation with the police and City POR, and the agreement of the Assistant Director (People). The child's parents must be informed prior to any press release being made and consent should be received from them and/or those with parental responsibility;
(Social workers should be aware that it is an offence for a person to publish material which is intended to, or is likely to identify a child as being involved in court proceedings under the Children Act 1989. However, the court can give leave for this restriction to be waived if the child/young person's welfare requires it).
- seeking a Recovery Order and deciding how the order should be exercised i.e. should there be a joint visit with police and Children and Families staff (see Section 50 Children's Act 1989);
- notifying national authorities and agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions and Child Benefit agencies, or if the young person is an



- appropriate legal interventions if there is any suspicion that the child may have been removed from UK jurisdiction;
- the need for a further strategy meeting to be called before the child/young person has been missing for 7 days (the Missing Child Risk Assessment should inform this decision).

The decisions of the strategy meeting and the timescales must be clearly recorded on the case file.

3.17 Actions when a child has been found

When the child has been located, care staff/ foster carers should promptly inform the child's social worker and the independent reviewing officer that the child has returned. Arrangements should have been made for Safe and Well checks and Independent Return Review interviews:

Safe and Well checks:

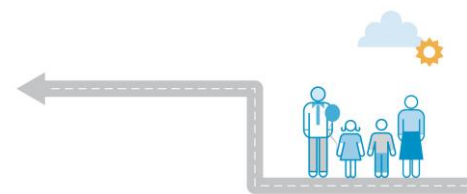
Safe and well checks are carried out by the police as soon as possible after the child has returned. Their purpose is to check for any indications that the child has suffered harm, where and with whom they have been, and to give them an opportunity to disclose any offending by or against them.

Where a child goes missing frequently, it may not be practicable for the police to see them every time they return. In these cases a reasonable decision should be taken in agreement between the police and the child's parent or carer with regard to the frequency of such checks bearing in mind the established link between frequent missing episodes and serious harm, which could include gang involvement, forced marriage, maltreatment or abuse at home, bullying or sexual exploitation. The assessment of whether a child might run away again should be based on information about:

- Their individual circumstances;
- Family circumstances and background history;
- Their motivation for running away;
- Their potential destinations and associates;
- Their recent pattern of absences;
- The circumstances in which the child was found or returned; and
- Their individual characteristics and risk factors such as whether a child has learning difficulties, mental health issues, depression and other vulnerabilities.

Independent Return Review:

The independent return review is an in-depth interview and should be carried out by an independent professional (e.g. a social worker, teacher, health professional or police officer,



not involved in caring for the child and who is trained to carry out these interviews and is able). The child should be seen on their own unless they specifically request to have someone with them. The child should be offered the option of speaking to an independent representative or advocate. The IRO should be informed.

The responsible local authority should ensure the return review interview takes place, working closely with the host authority where appropriate. Contact should be made with the child within 72 hours of them being located or returning from absence, to arrange the independent return review interview in a neutral place where they feel safe.

The interview and actions that follow from it should:

- Identify and deal with any harm the child has suffered – including harm that might not have already been disclosed as part of the 'Safe and Well check' – either before they ran away or whilst missing;
- Understand and try to address the reasons why the child ran away;
- Help the child feel 'safe' / understand that they have options, to prevent repeat instances of them running away;
- Understand what the child would like to see happen next whether short term and/or long term;
- Gather the parents or carers views of the circumstances, if appropriate;
- Provide the child with information on how to stay safe if they choose to run away again, including helpline numbers.

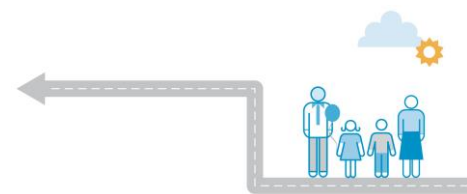
It is especially important that the independent Return Review interview takes place when a child:

- Has been reported missing on two or more occasions;
- Is frequently absent without authorisation;
- Has been hurt or harmed while they have been missing;
- Is at known or suspected risk of sexual exploitation or trafficking;
- Is at known or suspected risk of involvement in criminal activity or drugs;
- Has contact with persons posing risk to children; and/or
- Has been engaged (or is believed to have engaged) in criminal activities during their absence.

Follow up:

The local authority children's social care services, police and other agencies involved with the child should work together to assess the child and:

- To build up a comprehensive picture of why the child went missing;
- What happened while they were missing;
- Who they were missing with and where they were found; and,
- What support they require upon returning home;



- Whether a statutory review of the care plan is required.

Where children refuse to engage with the interviewer, parents and/or carers should be offered the opportunity to provide any relevant information and intelligence they may be aware of. This should help to prevent further instances of the child running away and identify early the support needed for them.

City supplementary guidance

The lead social worker should contact a child/young person who has been found or returned within 24 hours of notification of their return. An independent Return Reviews should be offered and arranged within 72 hours. The social worker will inform the child/young person that the City's independent provider will contact them to offer and arrange an independent review. If the child/young person refuses the independent review, the social worker will offer to undertake this role. The offer of a return home interview should be recorded within 72 hours on the child's Mosaic file.

A record of the Independent Return Review will be made and used to inform care planning. Intelligence from return reviews will be collated by the Service Manager and will be used to inform strategic planning by the City Corporation and shared with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership.

3.18 Repeat running away

If a child continually runs away actions following earlier incidents need reviewing and alternative strategies should be considered.

To reduce repeat running away and improve the longer-term safety of children and young people, the agencies involved may want to provide:

- Better access and timely independent return interviews, particularly for the most vulnerable;
- Safety planning with the child for their missing;
- Better access to support whilst a young person is away, which may come from the voluntary sector

There may be local organisations in the area that can provide repeat runaways with an opportunity to talk about their reasons for running away, and can link runaways and their families with longer-term help if appropriate. Local authorities should work with organisations that provide these services in their area.

Children's homes staff and foster carers should be trained and supported to offer a consistent approach to the care of children, including being proactive about strategies to prevent children from running away; and to understand the procedures that must be followed if a child goes missing.



The competence and support needs of staff in children's homes and foster cares in responding to missing from care issues should be considered as part of their regular appraisal and supervision.

The Children's Home Regulations 2001 (as amended) [29] requires children's homes to have a missing child policy. They also require that before implementing, or making substantive changes to an existing policy, children's homes shall consult with relevant partners and take into consideration any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. Finally, where a child is, or has been, persistently absent without permission from the children's home; or is at risk of harm, the children's home shall ask the local authority that looks after the child to review that child's care plan.

The National Minimum Standards (Standard 5.5) specifies that staff should actively search for children and work with the police where appropriate [30].

Please also refer to the Department of Education's, 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care: Flowchart to accompany the statutory guidance'. Available at: [GOV UK website](#).

[29] [The Children's Homes Regulations 2001](#)

As amended in: [The Children's Homes and Looked after Children \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

[30] [Children's homes: national minimum standards](#)

3.19 Children missing from home

When Local Authorities and the MPS analyse trends and patterns in relation to children, who run away or go missing from home, particular attention should be paid to repeat 'missing' and 'absent' episodes. Each Local Authority and LSCP needs to be alert to the risk of sexual exploitation or involvement in drugs, gangs or criminal activity such as trafficking and to be aware of local "hot spots" as well as concerns about any individuals, who children runaway to be with.

Local authorities and LSCPs should also consider the 'hidden missing', who are children who have not been reported missing to the police, but have come to an agency's attention after accessing other services. There may also be trafficked children who have not previously come to the attention of children's services or the police. Research demonstrates that children from black and minority ethnic groups, and children that go missing from education are less likely to be reported as missing. Local authorities and the police should be proactive in places where they believe under reporting may be more likely because of the relationships some communities, or individuals, have with the statutory sector.

Children missing from home are subject to risks and vulnerabilities similar to those for children who are looked after. NHS designated and named professionals hold a statutory role with



regards to safeguarding in the local health community and must be included in the information sharing and management processes being put in place for children deemed to be at high risk.

City supplementary guidance

Where a child missing from home is already in receipt of Children and Family services the procedures set out under 'Actions when the whereabouts of a looked after child is not known' should be followed.

3.20 Notifying the police

The police will respond to all notifications of children categorised as 'missing' as medium or high risk in accordance with this Guidance[31]. Where a child is categorised as being absent, the details will be recorded by the police, who will also agree review times and any on-going actions with the person reporting.

The information required by the police to assist in locating and returning the child to a safe environment is as follows:

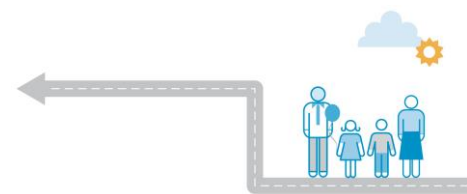
- The child's name/s; date of birth; status; responsible authority;
- Where and when they went missing;
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with;
- What the child was wearing plus any belongings they had with them such as bags, phone etc.;
- Description and recent photo;
- Medical history, if relevant;
- Time and location last seen;
- Circumstances or events around going missing;
- Details of family, friends and associates.

[31] See Part 2: The Metropolitan Police: [Risk Assessment](#)

3.21 Actions when a child is missing

Child protection procedures must be initiated in collaboration with children's social care services whenever there are concerns that a child who is missing may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

A risk assessment should be completed in line with this protocol and action by the police will include:



- An active and measured response by police and other agencies in order to trace the missing child and support the person reporting;
- A proactive investigation and search in accordance with the circumstances to locate the missing child as soon as possible;
- Family support should be put in place;
- The UK Missing Persons Bureau should be notified of the case;
- CEOP and children's social care services should be notified.

Where a child is living at home and is the subject of a child protection plan, or, are the subject of a s47 enquiry, additional action is required. This includes:

- Ensuring that a strategy meeting is arranged as soon as practicable and in any event within 7 days. If the child has returned prior to the date of the strategy meeting, it is not a requirement for the meeting to go ahead. Representatives from both the Police Missing Persons Unit and Child Abuse Investigation Team should attend the strategy meeting, as well as other practitioners involved with the child;
- In addition, a member of the senior management team or similar command level must be involved in the examination of initial enquiry lines and approval of appropriate staffing levels.

3.22 Actions when a child has been found

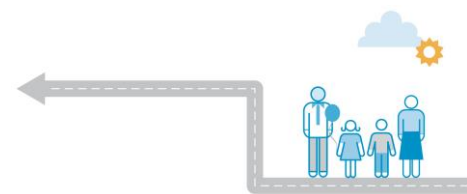
Where the child is known to children's social care services or meets the criteria for referral to children's social care services, the Local Authority will ensure that an assessment takes place and there are a range of service options available to address the child's needs following the safe and well check and independent return review interview.

Young people who have run away and are at risk of homelessness may be placed in supported accommodation, with the provision of specialist support, for example, for those who may have been sexually exploited.

Safe and well checks

Safe and well checks should be carried out by the police as soon as possible after the child has returned. Their purpose is to check for any indications that the child has suffered harm, where and with whom they have been, and to give the child an opportunity to disclose any offending against them.

Where a child goes missing frequently, it may not be practicable for the police to see them every time they return. In these cases a reasonable decision should be taken in agreement between the police and the child's parent with regard to the frequency of such checks bearing in mind the established link between frequent missing episodes and serious harm. In addition consideration should be given to a referral to children's social care services for an



assessment to understand the reasons why the child is going missing and to further assess the risk of harm.

The assessment of whether a child might run away again should be based on information about:

- Their individual circumstances;
- Family circumstances and background history;
- Their motivation for running away;
- Their potential destinations and associates;
- Their recent pattern of absences;
- The circumstances in which the child was found or returned; and
- Their individual characteristics and risk factors such as whether a child has learning difficulties, mental health issues, depression and other vulnerabilities.

Independent Return Review

The Independent Return Review is an in-depth interview and should be carried out by an independent professional (e.g. a social worker, teacher, health professional or police officer, who does not usually work with the child and is trained to carry out these interviews). Children sometimes need to build up trust with a person before they will discuss in depth the reasons why they ran away.

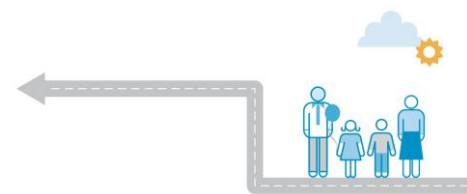
The police should make a referral to the children's social care services to ensure that a return review interview takes place. Contact should be made with the child within 72 hours of them being located or returning from absence, to arrange an independent return review interview in a neutral place where they feel safe.

The interview and actions that follow from it should:

- Identify and deal with any harm the child has suffered – including harm that might not have already been disclosed as part of the 'Safe and Well check' – either before they ran away or whilst missing;
- Understand and try to address the reasons why the child ran away;
- Help the child feel 'safe' and understand that they have options, to prevent repeat instances of them running away;
- Understand what the child would like to see happen next whether short term and/or long term;
- Gather the parents or carers views of the circumstances, if appropriate;
- Provide the child with information on how to stay safe if they choose to run away again, including helpline numbers.

It is **especially** important that the independent return review interview takes place when a child:

- Has been reported missing on two or more occasions;



- Is frequently absent without parental agreement;
- Has been hurt or harmed while they have been missing;
- Is at known or suspected risk of sexual exploitation or trafficking;
- Is at known or suspected risk of involvement in criminal activity or drugs;
- Has contact with persons posing risk to children; and/or
- Has been engaged (or is believed to have engaged) in criminal activities during their absence.

Following the safe and well check and independent return review, the local authority children's services, police and voluntary services should assess the child's needs and work together:

- To build up a comprehensive picture of why the child went missing;
- What happened while they were missing;
- No they were missing with and where they were found; and,
- What support they require upon returning home

Where children refuse to engage with the interview, parents should be offered the opportunity to provide any relevant information and intelligence they may be aware of. This should help to prevent further instances of the child running away and identify early the support needed for them.

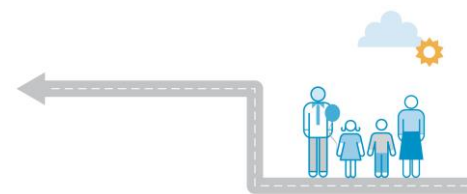
Information about local help lines and agencies working with runaways should be provided to the child and family.

City supplementary guidance

Where the child is known to children's social care services or meets the criteria for referral to children's social care services, a social worker should contact a child/young person who has been found or returned within 24 hours of notification of their return. An independent Return Reviews should be offered and arranged within 72 hours. The social worker will inform the child/young person that City's independent provider will contact them to offer and arrange an independent review. If the child/young person refuses the independent review, the social worker will offer to undertake this role.

A record of the Independent Return Review will be made and used to inform care planning. Intelligence from return reviews will be collated by the Service Manager and will be used to inform strategic planning by the City Corporation and shared with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership.

Intelligence and monitoring (City supplementary guidance)



City supplementary guidance

The Safeguarding Partnership will monitor responses to missing children. This will include receiving data on missing episodes and intelligence gained from return interviews. An annual report of incidences, trends and responses will be reported to the Board, the City's Children's Partnership Board and the lead member for children's services.

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership will also review this protocol to ensure that it is adequate and up to date. They will also receive reports from the City Corporation reporting children missing from home or care.

The City Corporation will also report data for children missing or away from placement without authorisation to the Department for Education (through the annual data returns on looked after children as part of the annual SSDA903 data collection).

The City Corporation will work with professionals and local agencies to support the early and effective sharing of information to identify patterns of risky behaviour. This may be used to identify areas of concern for an individual child, or to identify 'hotspots' of activity in a local area.

3.23 Relevant legislation and statutory guidance

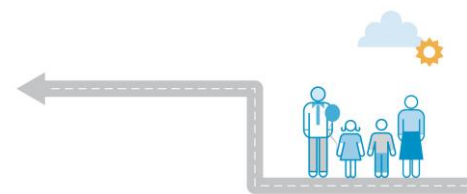
This section sets out the actions to be taken when a child is missing from school and may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm or may be a child in need.

This guidance should be read in the context of the statutory duties upon local authorities and parents as set out in the following:

- **The Education Act 1996;**
- **The Education Act 2002;**
- **The Children Act 1989;**
- **The Children Act 2004;**
- **Statutory guidance for local authorities: Children missing education (September 2016);**
- **The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) regulations 2006**, as amended (Education law regarding pupil registration where a child is on a school role): **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.**

In particular the guidance provides for professionals seeking to exercise their duty under the following Acts to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

- **Section 175 of the Education Act 2002;**



- And **Section 11 of the Children Act 2004**.

Additionally, this guidance seeks to ensure that the duty to co-operate to improve the well-being of children under section 10 of the Children Act 2004[32] is discharged. All schools will have a designated teacher for looked after children. These teachers are ideally placed to assist when identifying those looked after children currently in school who may be at greater risk of going missing from education.

[32] **The Children Act 2004**

3.24 Definition of Children Missing Education

For the purpose of the Statutory Guidance on Children Missing Education (2016), children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'

3.25 Recognition and response

Enquiries into the circumstances surrounding a child who is missing from school can be effectively supported by schools adopting an admissions procedure which requires a parent/carer to provide documentary evidence of their own and the child's identity and status in the UK, and the address that they are residing at. These checks should not become delaying factors in the admissions process.

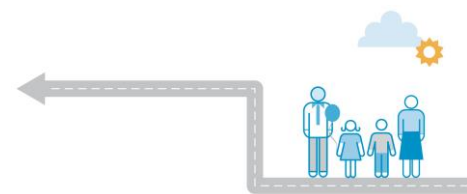
If a member of school/educational establishment/college staff becomes aware that a child may have run away or gone missing, they should try to establish with the parents/ carers, what has happened. If this is not possible, or the child is missing, the designated safeguarding teacher/advisor should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.

From the first day that a child does not attend school and there is no explanation or authorisation of the absence, the following steps should be taken:

- A trained staff member will make contact with the parents/carers (person with parental responsibility for the child) to seek reassurance that the child is safe at home;
- The outcome of the contact should be assessed and if there are any concerns a consultation with the school/establishment/colleges designated safeguarding adviser should take place to consider the child's vulnerability.

In the following circumstances a referral to children's social care and /or the police should always be made promptly:

- The child may be the victim of a crime;
- The child is subject of a Child Protection plan;



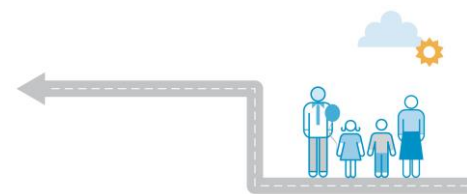
- The child is subject of s47 enquiries;
- The child is looked after;
- There is a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household;
- There is a history of the family moving frequently;
- There are serious issues of attendance.

The answers to further questions could assist a judgement whether or not to inform LA children's social care and the police:

- In which age range is the child?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Has the child been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g.
- Does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g.
- Rites of passage or forced marriage planned for the child?
- Has the child got a disability and/or special educational needs?
- Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying? e.g.
- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
- Is there any known history of domestic violence?
- Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?

The length of time that a child remains out of school could, of itself, be an alerting factor of risk of harm to the child. Accordingly if a situation is not resolved within 3 days the Education Welfare Service should be contacted, then referrals should be made to the police and LA children's social care, as appropriate over the next two weeks.

Extended leave of absence can be authorised by the head teacher, at which point a return date is set. In these cases the time line for enquiries starts from when the child does not attend school on the expected return date, not from the day the extended leave started.



City of London Supplementary Guidance

All children on school roll should have a minimum amount of information on their file. Following the recommendations of the Chadrack Review, The City of London's maintained primary school, The Aldgate School has amended its pupil collection form to include the following to ensure that basic demographic information is collected:

- Three emergency contact details of three,
- any known professionals known to the family
- any known restrictions to the property where the child lives,
- Whether the parent has a medical condition, which they are happy to disclose to the school.

Schools can then make an immediate assessment based on the vulnerability of the child.

The length of time that a child remains out of school could, in itself, be an alerting factor of risk of harm to the child. Accordingly, if a situation is not resolved within three days then the police should be contacted to carry out a welfare check. If the child is not located at their home address and all attempt to contact the family via the emergency contacts on the school list have been exhausted then referrals should be made to the local authority's CME team and to other agencies.

From the first day that a child does not attend school and there is no explanation or authorisation of the absence, the following process should be followed and the case should be treated as a welfare issue as opposed to an attendance issue (See Appendix E – Rapid Response Flow Chart).

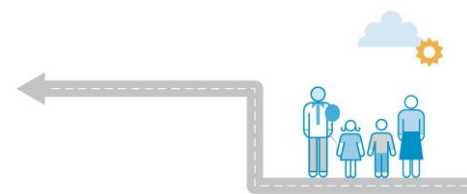
3.26 Notifications and actions

Day one

If the answers to any of the points set out in the previous section indicates that there are concerns about the child's safety then a referral should be made to the police and children's social care on day one. The education welfare service should be informed and requested to assist in locating the child.

Step one:

- Contact the local police station (24 hour response);
- Any suspicion/evidence of crime must be clearly stated;



- The circumstances and all available information regarding the child and family will be required.

Step two:

- The missing person report will be risk assessed and the local police response team will carry out immediate actions;
- The investigation will be progressed by the police response team, in conjunction with either the local Missing Persons Unit and/or the CID.

Step three:

- The missing person report will generate a notification to the police;
- The police will work with, and refer information to, LA children's social care;
- LA children's social care, who must be contacted as soon as possible in these circumstances, will also liaise with the Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) in order to identify, and act upon, any suspicion of child abuse or child related crime.

Step four:

The school / educational establishment / college should work in collaboration with Children's social care and the police and a safeguarding education representative should participate in any strategy discussions, s47 enquiries and Child Protection Conferences which may arise.

Reasonable enquiry:

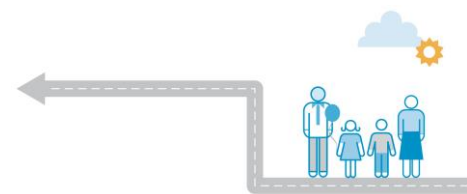
If the judgement reached on day one is that there is no reason to believe that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, then the school may delay making a referral. The process of 'reasonable enquiry' has not been identified in regulations, however this includes school staff checking with all members of staff whom the child may have had contact with, and with the pupil's friends and their parents, siblings and known relatives at this school and others.

School staff should also make telephone calls to any numbers held on record or identified, sending a letter to the last known address, home visits by some school based staff and consultation with local authority staff.

Days two to twenty-eight

If the above response was unsuccessful, the school should contact their local authority CME Officer. The local authority should make enquiries by visiting the child's home and asking for information from the family's neighbours and their local community – as appropriate.

The LA CME team should also check databases within the local authority, use agreed protocols to check local databases, e.g. LA housing, health and the police; check with agencies known to be involved with the family, with the local authority the child moved from originally, and with any local authority to which the child may have moved.



The child's circumstances and vulnerability should be reviewed and reassessed regularly jointly by the school's nominated safeguarding advisor and the CME Officer in consultation with children's social care and the police as appropriate.

Child missing from school for more than four weeks

A child may not be removed from the school roll before the end of four weeks. After 4 weeks the child's Common Transfer file should be uploaded to the Department for Education secure site for the transfer of pupil information when a pupil moves between schools. The CME Officer in the Local Authority must also be informed.

City of London Supplementary Guidance

When a child doesn't turn up for school, an assessment of vulnerability or potential vulnerability should take place using the prompts discussed in the previous section. If the answers to any of the prompts indicates that there are immediate concerns about the child's safety then a referral should be made to the police and children's social care on day one. The school and education welfare service should be informed and requested to assist in locating the child.

Day One

From day one, school staff should follow the process as highlighted in the Rapid Response Flow Chart. If the judgement reached on day one is that there is no reason to believe that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, then the school may delay making a referral. The process of 'reasonable enquiry' has not been identified in regulations, however this includes school staff checking with all members of staff whom the child may have had contact with, and with the pupil's friends and their parents, siblings and known relatives at this school and others.

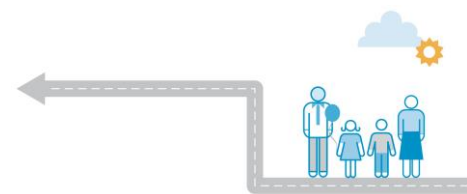
Day Two

If after 24 hours the child is still not in school and is not present for morning registration the contact will be made with the parents once again to identify that the child is safe. If not then the case will immediately be referred to the designated safeguarding lead. All emergency contacts will be made and another assessment will be made as to the child's vulnerability.

Day Three

If after 48 hours and the child is still missing from education and the school hasn't been able to speak to any emergency contacts and confirm that the child is safe, the school will undertake a home visit. If there is a problem accessing the property, then the estates management should be called. If there are unsuccessful attempts at accessing the property and the child is believed to be in need of immediate assistance due to a health condition, injury or some other life-threatening situation then the police should be called.

If the above response was unsuccessful, and the child is not located at home then the school should contact their local authority CME Officer. The local authority should make enquiries by visiting the child's home, checking local databases, check agencies known to be involved with the family and ask for information from the family's neighbours and their local community – as appropriate. The child's circumstances and vulnerability should be reviewed and reassessed regularly jointly by the school's nominated safeguarding advisor and the CME Officer in consultation with children's social care and the police as appropriate.



Transfer of information when a pupil changes school

The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2000[33] (SI 2000/297) (as amended by SI 2001/1212 and SI 2002/1680) governs the transfer of information between schools.

- Regulation 10(3) states that 'The head teacher of the pupil's old school shall send the information within fifteen school days of the pupil's ceasing to be registered at the school'.

However:

- Regulation 10 (4) states that 'This regulation does not apply where it is not reasonably practicable for the head teacher of the old school to ascertain the pupil's new school or where the pupil was registered at his old school for less than four weeks'.

If the CME team or any other agency becomes aware the child has moved to another school the service should ensure all relevant agencies are informed so that arrangements can be made to forward records from the previous school.

[33] [The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2000](#)

City of London supplementary guidance

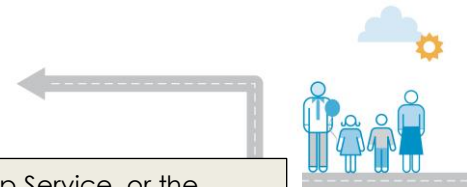
Primary and Secondary schools located outside of the City that have City pupils on school roll will ordinarily escalate any attendance issues with their own education welfare services.

Notifications of children missing education or of concern about pupils' attendance may be received from schools, agencies, the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service and will be directed to the CME lead officer. Notifications should be sent to EEYService@cityoflondon.gov.uk

The Admissions and Attendance Manager shall maintain and update a CME monitoring spreadsheet on behalf of the CME lead officer to include all pupils of statutory school age missing education or at risk of missing education.

All such notifications are considered and if required will be recorded on the CME spread sheet and cross checked against children's social care and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) records. Where the pupil is known to the City because of SEND, follow up actions will be overseen by the SEND team who will seek resolution and provide feedback to the original referrer/notifier.

Where the case is open to the Children's Social care and Early Help Service, it will be referred to the Children and Families Team for follow up who may secure resolution, share with Virtual Head (where the child is looked after), or refer on to the MACE as required. Where a pupil is found to be missing from home or care, the procedures for care and home above should be followed.



Where the pupil is not known to the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service or the SEND team, or where there are specific attendance issues, the Education Welfare Consultant (EWC) will be asked to follow up with the school and host local authority, and make contact with the family if necessary. If the EWC is able to resolve matters with the school, this will be recorded and closed. If there are concerns about the home/family situation, onward referral shall be made to the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service.

The Education and Early Years' Service will be responsible for monitoring children missing education in line with its statutory duties.. Where required, cases will be referred on to the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service or the MASE.

All these cases are reported termly to the Director of Community and Children's Service and the Assistant Director, People Service and discussed accordingly. Monthly meetings are also held between the officers in the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care and Early Help Service to ensure effective information sharing for our most vulnerable children.

3.27 Definitions

This section applies to children who are 'subject to restriction'. I.e. who have:

- Proceeded through immigration control without obtaining leave to enter; or
- Left the border control area Border Force accommodation without permission; or
- Been granted temporary admission; or
- Been granted temporary release or bail; or
- Released on a restriction order; or
- Served with a 'notice of liability to deport' or is the dependant of a foreign national offender whose status in the UK is under consideration by criminal casework – these dependants could be British Citizens or have extant leave

3.28 Action and responsibilities when the whereabouts of a child 'subject to restrictions' is not known

A missing person's referral must be made by Home Office staff to the police, the UK Missing Person Bureau and the local authority children's social care in a number of circumstances including:

- When a child 'subject to restriction' is identified as having run away from their parents;
- Where they are looked after and have gone missing from their placement;
- Where they are being hidden by their parents and where there is concern for the child's safety because they are being hidden by, or have gone missing with, their family.



A copy of the missing persons notification form must be faxed or emailed to the local authority duty desk and the UK MPB.

If it is believed by Home Office staff that a child is being coerced to abscond or go missing, this must be reported as a concern that the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm to the local police and children's social care services.

Notifications will also be made where a missing child is found by Home Office staff. See Home Office Guidance: Missing Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidance[34].

The local authority and health are responsible for:

- Reporting any missing child who is in their care to the police;
- Notifying the Home Office when a child is reported missing to the police or is found.

The police are responsible for:

- Investigating all children reported missing by the Home Office - following receipt of a missing person's notification;
- Conducting joint investigations with the Home Office where necessary;
- Circulating a missing child on the Police National Computer (PNC).

The Police central point of contact is the PNC Team in Liverpool.

The local authority will also notify the Home Office Evidence and Enquiry Unit when a child in their care goes missing or when a missing child returns or is found. The Home Office must maintain regular weekly contact with the local authority and the police until the child is found and record all contact with the police and local authority.

[34] [Chapters 19 to 22a: restrictions](#)

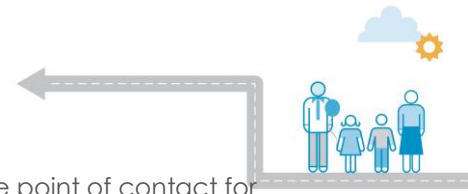
3.29 Action when the child 'subject to restriction' is found

Found by Home Office Staff

The local police and local authority must be informed immediately.

In consultation with the local police and local authority children's social care, a decision will be made as to where the child is to be taken, if they are not to be left at the address where they are encountered. The Home Office must follow up enquires with the local police and children/adult services in order to identify if there are any safeguarding issues.

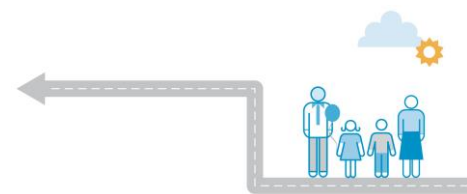
Found by the police or local authority



The Home Office Command and Control Unit[35] will be the single point of contact for the local police and the Evidence and Enquiry Unit Evidence and Enquiry Unit[36] will be the single point of contact for local authorities to notify the Home Office that a child has been found.

[35] CommandandControlUnit@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

[36] [Home Office UK Border Agency](#), Evidence and Enquiry Unit, 12th Floor Lunar House, 40 Wellesley Road, London, CR9 2BY



City of London Appendices

Appendix A - Contacts and designated lead officers

When a child goes missing the police should be informed:

- if there is concern of an **immediate risk** to a missing child this should be reported without delay by **calling 999**, or
- if there is **concern a child is missing** this should be report by **calling 101**

Children's Social Care should also be informed by calling the Children and Families team on:

- **020 7332 3621 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, or**
- **by calling the emergency duty team outside of these hours on 020 8356 2710.**

Designated lead officers

Designated lead officers are responsible for monitoring policies and performance relating to children who go missing from home or care. They will also, with the support of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board, monitor and address compliance with this protocol.

Local Authority

Rachel Green: Service Manager – Children's Social Care and Early Help, is the responsible lead for children missing from home of care in the City of London

Rachel.Green@cityoflondon.gov.uk; 020 7332 3621

Generic email: Children.Duty@cityoflondon.gov.uk

City of London Police

Gareth Dothie: Detective Inspector - Public Protection Unit, City of London Police

Gareth.Dothie@city-of-london.pnn.police.uk; 101

Youth Services

Monica Patel; Senior Commissioning Officer

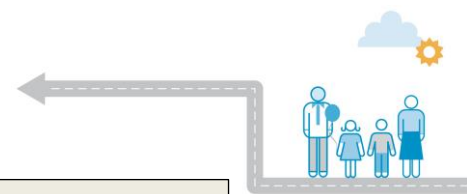
Monica.Patel@cityoflondon.gov.uk; 020 7332 3638

Health

Anna Jones, Designated Nurse Looked After Children

a.jones2@nhs.net; 0203 816 3289, 07950882880

Generic email: CAHCCG.CITYANDHACKNEYSAFEGUARDING@NHS.NET



Other relevant contacts:

Local authority

Chris Pelham: Assistant Director (People)

Chris.Pelham@cityoflondon.gov.uk; 020 7332 1636

Ria Lane: Independent Reviewing Officer

Ria.Lane@cityoflondon.gov.uk 0207 332 3919

Andrew Russell: Virtual School Head

Andrew.Russell@cityoflondon.gov.uk 0207 332

Children missing education

cme@cityoflondon.gov.uk

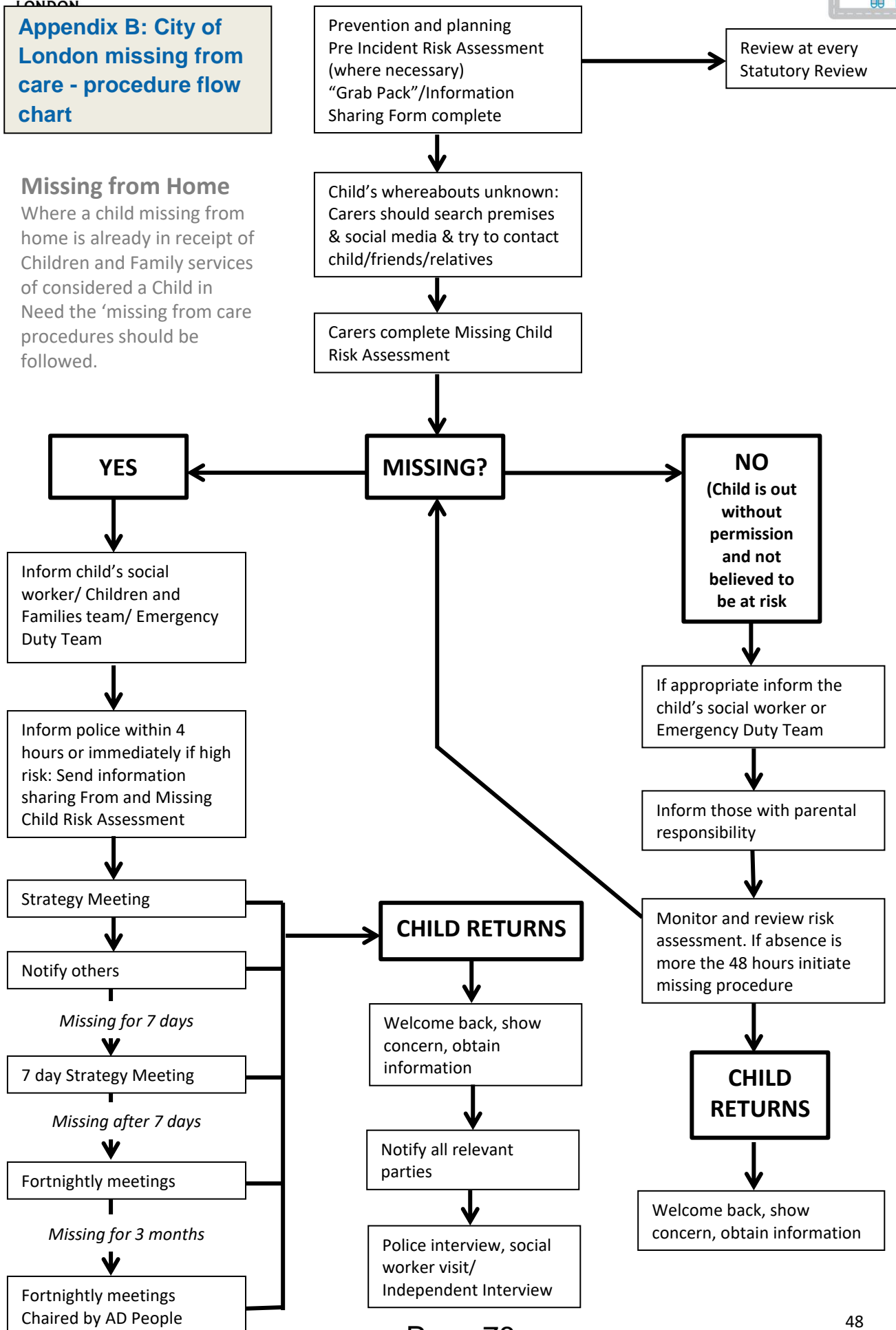
Kirstie Hilton: Lead Advisor- Universal Education Services

Kirstie.hilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk 020 7332 3274

Appendix B: City of London missing from care - procedure flow chart

Missing from Home

Where a child missing from home is already in receipt of Children and Family services of considered a Child in Need the 'missing from care' procedures should be followed.





Factor impacting on the likelihood of a child going missing	Details and Explanation
Child's view on current placement	
Stability of child's relationships at home	
Level of supervision/support that care staff propose to provide for the child	
The degree of risk to the child if they do go missing – using the Missing Child Risk Assessment Record at Appendix 4	
The views of parents/carers on their child's needs and the action that needs to be taken if their child is missing	
Consideration of any external influences which may result in a child's removal without consent (See also <i>Safeguarding Trafficked and Exploited Children, LCPC 2006</i>)	



Protective Factors that may reduce the likelihood of child/ young person going missing	Details and Explanation
<p>E.g. use of voluntary/ street based agencies by child/ young person</p> <p>Positive relationships with social workers/ carers</p>	

Completed by (Name):

Date:

Position:

Organisation:

Seen by child/ young person: YES/NO

Date for review:



MACE Referral Form

Once form is complete - email to
dccsdutyf&ypteam@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Referring Professional	
Referring Professional:	Agency:
Telephone:	Email:

Subject		
First Name:	Middle Name:	Surname:
Any Alias:	Ethnicity: Please select	
DOB:	Gender: Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address including postcode:		



School:	Social Worker:
Borough/Force Area where Subject resides 	

Family		
Name	DOB	Relationship to Subject e.g mother

Additional Linked Subject (Please complete Separate form)



First Name:	Middle Name:	Surname:
DOB:		
Additional Linked Subject (Please complete Separate form)		
First Name:	Middle Name:	Surname:
DOB:		
Additional Linked Subject (Please complete Separate form)		
First Name:	Middle Name:	First Name:
DOB:		

Perpetrator 1 (if known)	
Name of perpetrator:	DOB:
Any known alias:	Ethnicity: Please select
Address:	
Gender: Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/>	
Borough/Force Area where perpetrator resides	

Perpetrator 2 (if known)	
Name of perpetrator:	DOB:
Any known alias:	Ethnicity: Please select



Address:	Gender: Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/>
Borough/Force Area where perpetrator resides	

Perpetrator 3 (if known)	
Name of perpetrator:	DOB:
Any known alias:	Ethnicity: Please select
Address:	Gender: Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/>
Borough/Force Area where perpetrator resides	

Risk factors (Mark those that apply - see guidance form for further details)		
S	Sexual health and behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
A	Absent from school or repeated running away	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	Familial abuse and or problems at home	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	Emotional and physical condition	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	Gangs, older age groups and involvement in crime	<input type="checkbox"/>
U	Use of technology and sexual bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
A	Alcohol and drug misuse	<input type="checkbox"/>



R	Receipt of unexplained gifts or money	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	Distrust of authority figures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns/Other Information		

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For completion by MACE Coordinator

Case suitable for discussion:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Rationale for above:		



PRE-PLANNING – FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN TERMS OF VULNERABILITY

Checklist – immediate response (within 24 hours)

Think! **Safeguarding First**

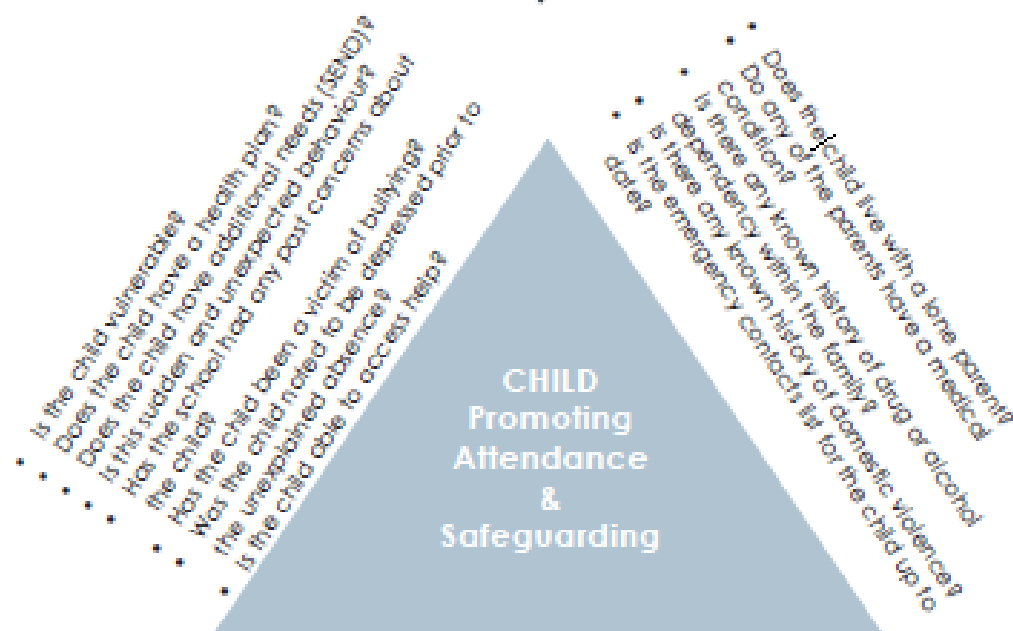


If the following apply, then Children's social care / Education Welfare or the police should be contacted within the first 24 hours of a child missing from education

- Is it possible the child is a victim of a crime?
- Is the child a subject of a Child Protection Plan?
- Is the child subject of s47 enquiries?
- Is the child looked after?
- Is there a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household?
- Is there a history of the family moving frequently?
- Is there a serious issue of attendance?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – TO ASSESS VULNERABILITIES / RISKS

Think! **Safeguarding First**

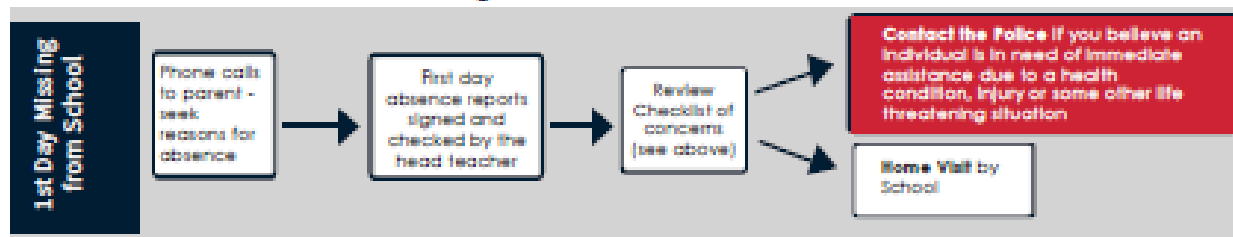


- Are there access issues to the property?
- Are there any religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk (including risk of forced marriage)?

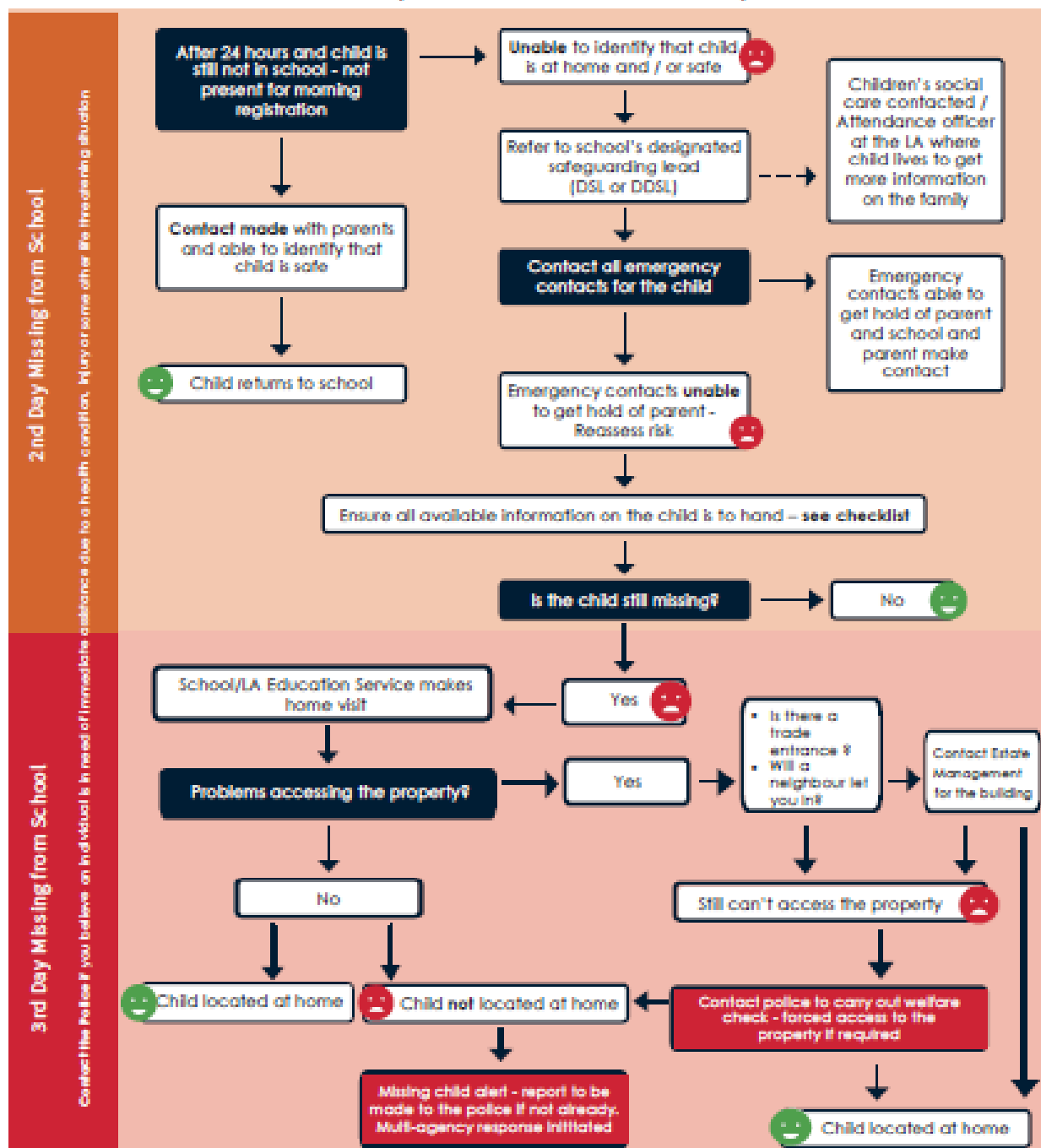


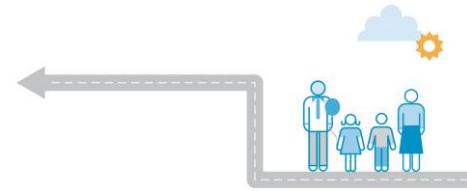
RAPID RESPONSE FLOW CHART – SCHOOLS

Making sure the child is safe and well



On each day of absence assess vulnerability and risk





LCPP Guidance Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions

Based on the DfE 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care' (2014)[37] the definitions which should be used are set out as follows:

- *Child*: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' and 'young people' are used throughout this guidance to refer to anyone under the age of 18;
- *Young runaway*: a child who has run away from their home or care placement, or feels they have been forced or lured to leave;
- *Missing child*: a child reported as missing to the police by their family or carers;
- *Looked after child*: a child who is looked after by a local authority by reason of a care order, or being accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989;
- *Responsible local authority*: the local authority that is responsible for a looked after child's care and care planning;
- *Host local authority*: the local authority in which a looked after child is placed when placed out of the responsible local authority's area;
- *Care leaver*: an eligible, relevant or former relevant child as defined by the Children Act 1989;
- *Missing from care*: a looked after child who is not at their placement or the place they are expected to be (e.g., school) and their whereabouts is not known;
- *Away from placement without authorisation*: a looked after child whose whereabouts is known but who is not at their placement or place they are expected to be and the carer **has concerns** or the incident has been notified to the local authority or the police[38];
- Care leavers cover young people from aged 16-24;
- For Metropolitan Police definitions of missing and absent see [The Metropolitan Police Service](#).

[37] [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

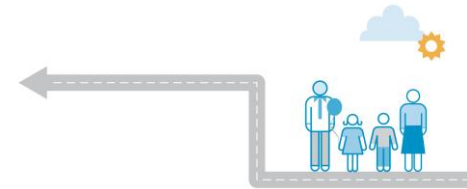
[38] [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care January 2014](#)



Appendix 2: Agenda for Missing from Care meeting

Items to cover:

1. Information on child and family and presenting risks, including history of missing episodes and background of child;
2. Plans to locate/ recover the child, including as appropriate:
 - a. Visits to known address;
 - b. Contacting family/ friends, parents and professionals;
 - c. Police- tracing of phone, social networking sites and oyster card;
 - d. Use of the media to publicise details of the case;
 - e. Application of recovery orders and serving of abduction orders;
 - f. Notifications to local authorities, hospitals, ports, airports.
3. Additional risk factors including CSE/ offending/ abduction abroad/ substance misuse;
4. Parental involvement/ notification;
5. Plans once the child is located including the safe and well check, return home interviews, medical attention and social work visit;
6. Plans to prevent a repeat missing episode;
7. Actions and next meeting.



Appendix 3: Missing Child Risk Assessment Record

Name of Child Missing _____

Date _____

Address from which missing _____

Factor	Details and Explanation
10 years old or under	
11 to 14 years of age	
15 up to 18 years of age	
Has a Child Protection Plan	
Needs essential medication or treatment not readily available to them e.g. asthma inhaler, insulin	
May not have the physical ability to interact safely with others or in an unknown environment, e.g. visually impaired, history of abuse or inappropriate adult/stranger relationships, Downs Syndrome etc.	
Lacks reasonable awareness of the risks associated with running away, incl. learning disabled	
Known to associate with adults or children who present a risk of harm e.g. Sexual Offenders, Offenders against children	



Mental illness or psychological disorder that may increase risk of harm to themselves or others	
Drugs and/or alcohol dependency	
Suspicion of abduction	
Suspected suicide or self-harm	
Involved in violent and/or racial incident or confrontation immediately prior to disappearance	
Concerns about state of mind e.g. unusual behaviour prior to disappearance or disappeared with no prior indication, or seemed troubled etc.	
Inclement weather conditions where exposure would seriously increase risk to health	
Family/relationship problems or recent history of family conflict/abuse	
Employment problems	
Financial problems	
School or college problems	
On-going victim of bullying, harassment, or exploitation e.g. racial, sexual etc.	



Previously disappeared and suffered or was exposed to harm whilst missing	
Victim or potential victim, of forced marriage, FGM or trafficking, incl. for sexual exploitation	
Known to associate with gang members and other violent offenders	

Summary of Risk

(Summarise the risks in a couple of sentences)

Summary of Actions Taken

Include attempts to talk to child on mobile phone and attempts to contact friends & family

Review Date for Actions Decided

Completed by, full name	Signature
-------------------------	-----------

This Risk Assessment is an aid to action and for information sharing and recording.

Aid to action: As an action tool the purpose of the Risk Assessment is to inform single and multi-agency agency decision-making and planning to locate a '**missing**' child. The Risk Assessment provides an indication of:

- The urgency of inquiries
- Areas of inquiry e.g. where drugs are available or that certain adults frequent, country of origin or country children are trafficked on to etc.
- Type of specialist knowledge that might be needed
- The supervision that may be required
- Agencies who may be first alerted e.g. local Accident & Emergency services

Aid for information sharing and recording: At the time that a child goes '**missing**' the completed Risk Assessment should be shared with all agencies working with the child and kept on the child's file in each agency. In cases where new information becomes available and/or the child remains absent for a protracted period, the risks should be re-assessed, shared with the agencies and kept on the child's file in each agency. The most recently completed Risk Assessment should remain on the child's file in all agencies working with the child.



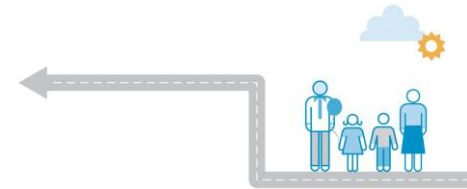
Appendix 4: Looked After Child Information Sharing Form

COMPLETED and UPDATED record to be provided to POLICE
Please use this template to update information on children in your care, or for whom you are responsible.

Section 1

To be completed at the start of the placement and maintained throughout

Full Name: Previous names Nickname/Street name:		Recent Image of Child
DoB: 	Current home address: 	
Contact and Social Media Mobile phone number: Facebook Username Twitter Username BBM detail/PIN Access Code: Email addresses: Any other social media: (Instagram etc)	Primary contact: Office Tel No: Mobile Tel No:	Height: Weight: Build: Complexion: Eye Colour: Hair: Marks, scars, tattoos:
		Physical/Psychological disabilities
		Ethnicity: Nationality:
Legal status (including orders/Immigration)		School/College/Employer (including contact details)
Medical requirements – Including Medication		
Placing Authority:		Social Worker name: Contact (phone/Mobile/email)



Childs Next Of Kin – Including relationship and contact:	Detail of Child protection plan if relevant
OYSTER Card Number & Adult Sponsor (U16):	Bank Account Details and Access to funds: Eg Debit card etc
Does the child smoke, consume alcohol or illegal/recreational drugs? Provide full details:	Provide details of the child's friends, include their home address and contact details:
Locations Frequented/Places or worship <i>If the child has been missing before, include where they were found</i>	Details of other associates and family members that the child has contact with, include their home address and contact details:
Risk Factors – Victim or potential victim, of forced marriage, FGM or trafficking, or sexual exploitation	
Risk Factors – At risk from Gang Involvement/Membership <i>Consider new acquaintances, unexplained cash funds, regular travel patterns</i>	
Risk Factors – Is the child previously known for Suicide Attempts or Self Harm Tendencies: <i>Provide details including dates</i>	

Section 2
To be updated when the child goes missing

Circumstances:
Risk Factors - Recent Behaviour or incidents that have occurred leading up to being missing <i>Victim of crime or bullying, problems with school/college, bereavement/life changing events.</i> <i>Include recent ABSENT or UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE details</i>

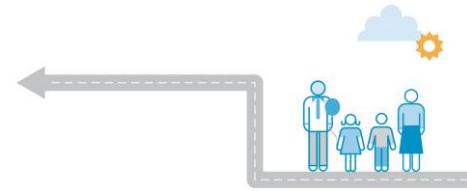


Risk Factors - Does the child need essential medication or treatment not readily available to them
e.g. asthma inhaler, insulin

Place last seen:	
Time & Date:	
By whom:	
Who with:	
Description:	
Reporting person Name, role and contact details	

Missing Incident – Attempts to Locate			
Contact Enquiries with Known Friends, Relatives and Acquaintances			
Date	Time	Name/Contact No and Address	Result
Notes			
Completed by			Date / Time
Received by			Date / Time

This form should be emailed to police when the child goes missing, and must include an up to date photo



Appendix 5: Children Missing Monitoring Form (Children's Home)

[Click here to view Appendix 5: Children Missing Monitoring Form \(Children's Home\)](#)

Appendix 6: Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care: Flowchart to accompany the statutory guidance

[Click here to view Appendix 6: Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care: Flowchart to accompany the statutory guidance](#)

Appendix 7: Information Sharing between Schools & LA Children's Social Care

[Click here to view Appendix 7: Information Sharing between Schools & LA Children's Social Care](#)

Appendix 8: Safeguarding Children Missing Education Process for Schools

[Click here to view Appendix 8: Safeguarding Children Missing Education Process for Schools](#)

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	07/06/2021
Subject: Short Breaks Strategy	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Sadie Carnegie, Early Help Lead, Children's Social Care and Early Help	

Summary

Short Breaks is an umbrella term used to describe social/leisure activities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The Short Breaks Strategy seeks to improve outcomes for disabled children and young people, by providing statutory guidance on how to safeguard and promote their welfare through the provision of short breaks. The City of London guidance describes an approach that focuses on the needs of disabled children and their families and is proportionate, so that the level of administration and safeguards increases in line with the level of needs and the services required to meet those individual needs.

Short breaks are part of a continuum of services, including the provision of day, evening, overnight and weekend activities for the child/young person. This can take place in community settings, the child's home (with an approved carer) or a residential setting. The breaks usually have two aims:

1. To enable the child to participate in fun social and leisure activities which are safe
2. To provide a break for parents/carers.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Research shows that disabled children are four times more likely than non-disabled children to be abused or neglected. They and their families can also be more susceptible to mental health challenges, anxiety, bullying, higher levels of stress and lower levels of parental wellbeing. It is therefore very important that good services are available to these families.
2. There are a range of relevant legal duties in relation to the funding, commissioning and provision of short breaks by local authorities. These duties require local authorities to:
 - a. Take into account a range of important considerations in making strategic decisions about the commissioning and funding of short breaks
 - b. Assess the needs of any disabled child whose family may want or need services above the level available locally without an assessment
 - c. Provide short breaks to children where an assessment shows that a break is necessary to meet their needs, taking account of the family context.
3. The key statutory duties are found within the following legislation:
 - Children Act 1989
 - Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 ('the 2011 Regulations')
 - Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008
 - Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
 - Children Act 2004
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012)
 - Care Act 2014 (in relation to transition to adult social care).
4. There are a number of overlapping duties and regulations that make up the complex legal framework relating to short breaks, however, the fundamental purpose of the law is relatively straightforward: seeking to support families to continue in their caring role while providing positive opportunities for children and young people to live 'ordinary lives' and to be able to enjoy the activities that all other children and young people enjoy.
5. Regulations have been made to supplement the Short Breaks duty, in the form of the 2011 Regulations. The key regulations are as follows:

Regulation 3: Duty to make provision

Regulation 4: Types of services which must be provided

Regulation 5: Short Breaks Services Statement.
6. Regulation 5 requires local authorities to publish a Short Breaks Services Statement which must set out the available range of services, any eligibility criteria and how the range of services should meet carers' needs. The Short Breaks Services Statement must be published as part of the Local Offer. The

Local Offer gives children and young people with SEND information about what support services the local authority has available.

7. The City of London Short Breaks Statement has also been updated, in line with the latest version of the Short Breaks Strategy (Appendix 1). The Short Breaks Statement is an important document, as it contains the eligibility criteria that the local authority is operating to govern access to short breaks.
8. Our Short Breaks Statement explains the range of short breaks we offer, who they are for and how to apply for them:
 - Short breaks are for children and young people with disabilities, up to the age of 18.
 - We offer a range of short breaks because everyone's needs, and circumstances are different. We aim to give families the right support at the right time.
 - Short breaks can be individual or group sessions, daytime or overnight, in the child's home or in another setting.
 - The aim is to benefit the whole family. Short breaks give the child opportunities to socialise and develop, while giving the family a break from caring duties.
 - Most short breaks in the City of London are provided via direct payments/individual budgets.
9. Short breaks are administered by the Children and Families Team through both Statutory Social Care, Early Help pathways and universal services.
10. The strategy was written by the Early Help Lead in collaboration with Children's Social Care, the Education and Early Years Service, and a representative from Contact who represents and supports the City Parent Carer Forum.

Current Position

11. One of the main updates to this current strategy is the commissioning approach. The City has now jointly commissioned a range of specialist short breaks providers in conjunction with Hackney. This is in response to parent/carer feedback which has historically been received requesting specialist short breaks providers, to widen the options for children with a greater level of need over and above the universal threshold. It is also an alternative to receiving direct payments.
12. We have successfully commissioned seven new specialist short breaks providers who are able to offer a range of social, leisure and respite activities to the children and families of the City. As a result, the report has been updated.
13. Families who request their short break in the form of a direct payment are no longer required to have a bank account in order to receive their allocated funds. We now allocate money to families for short breaks via a pre-paid card, which the family can use to directly purchase short break support and services. The money

cannot be used for the purchase of goods or services that are not linked to short breaks.

14. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden closure to some services and providers, an agreed exception was passed that relaxed the conditions under which the money could be spent. As an example, we are happy for families to spend this money on IT equipment, books, board games, apps, indoor and outdoor games as well as any other equipment required to help support the children's social and leisure needs or to provide respite for the parent/carer. This flexibility has been reviewed regularly during monthly Short Breaks Panel meetings.
15. Parents/carers have requested the Short Breaks pages on the Local Offer website include more information and FAQs on the services that are being run, as well as imagery and testimonials from young people.

Options

16. We would hope that there would be an uptake in requests for short breaks. We also would like to see children and young people using our specialist providers to help meet their needs. There are currently nine children accessing both the core and enhanced short breaks offer, and there could be greater numbers accessing universal services.
17. The Short Breaks page on the Local Offer website has recently been updated to reflect service user feedback and now contains an extensive FAQs sections on Short Breaks as well as a video showcasing short breaks. We expect to see an increase in visits to the site and potentially more enquiries about this service.

Proposals

18. It is hoped that the strategy will enable parents/carers to have more clarity and understanding on what services they are entitled to, when they are available, eligibility criteria, thresholds and the range of pathways. This would then lead to a greater uptake of children and families using Short Breaks services, ensuring that children with disabilities have the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers, while allowing their parents/carers/families a degree of respite.
19. We will continue to collate feedback from parents/carers and our partners on how to make improvements to our Short Breaks service.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

20. Strategic implications –

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing. Short breaks enable children with disabilities to access leisure opportunities.
- People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential. Short breaks enable children's lives to be enriched.

- Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need. Families have access to leisure for their children with disabilities.
21. Financial implications – there is a budget set for Short Breaks. This will need to be reviewed if the number of children and young people with disabilities in the City increases.
22. Resource implications – none.
23. Legal implications – none.
24. Risk implications – covered insurance and contract monitoring with Hackney.
25. Equalities implications – disability is protected under the Public Sector Equality Duty. This strategy helps ensure equity of access.
26. Climate: these opportunities are all local to families and are accessible via walking or public transport.

Conclusion

27. The Short Breaks Strategy seeks to improve outcomes for disabled children and young people, by providing statutory guidance on how to safeguard and promote their welfare. The City is challenging itself to provide the best support possible for children with disabilities, and to ensure they are given the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers. We will do this by reviewing the strategy yearly, taking on board feedback provided from the voice of the child as well as from the parents/carers. This coupled with annual Short Break reviews will allow us to improve the provisions we can offer, where possible, to support and provide good short breaks to children and their families.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Short Breaks Strategy
- Appendix 2 – City of London Short Breaks Statement

Sadie Carnegie

Early Help Lead, Children's Social Care and Early Help

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E: sadie.carnegie@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Short Breaks Strategy Guidance and Pathways

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

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Revision Date	Status	Summary of Changes
1	26.2.16	Draft	First draft written by Early Help Coordinator
2	14.3.16	Draft	Minor amends to draft following feedback from Early Help sub-group held 01.03.16
3	8.4.16	Final	Version 2 approved by Service Manager
4	4.11.17	Re-draft	Additional visual pathways and feedback forms requested by SEND Parent Forum (added prior to 2018 review)
5	07.3.18	Final	Visual pathways and Parent Forum amends approved ahead of SEND Inspection
6	03.08.18	Re-draft	Commissioning approach added
7	April - September 2019	Re-draft	Update by Early Help Co-ordinator to reflect national short breaks guidance, thresholds, eligibility criteria, overnight short breaks and provide clarity.
8	19.03.21	Review	Updated by Early Help Co-ordinator. Old commissioning approach removed, added information about pre-paid cards personal budgets and testimonials.

DISTRIBUTION

Title
Early Help Sub-Group – Full membership
SEND Programme Board – Full membership
City Parent Carer Forum – Full membership
Service Manager – Children and Families
Head of Service – Education and Early Years
Assistant Director – People

Approved by Chris Pelham

Review date: March 2022

Review responsibility: Chris Pelham

Review body: SEND Programme Board



Short Breaks

1. What are Short Breaks?

Short Breaks is an umbrella term used to describe social/leisure daytime activities for children and young people with, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They enable children with disabilities to participate in social/leisure activities and can provide a respite for their parents/carers.

Access to short breaks can play an important part in supporting the personal and social development of disabled children and young people by enabling them to explore different activities and interests while having a break away from their main carer.

2. Legal context

The City of London provides short breaks according to the duty outlined in section 25 of the 2008 Children and Young Persons Act *'to assist individuals who provide care for [disabled] children to continue to do so, or to do so more effectively, by giving them breaks from caring.'* This duty was expanded by the 2011 Short Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations which specifically require local authorities to provide a sufficient range of short breaks services to enable family carers to study or undertake leisure activities, to meet the needs of other children, or to carry out household tasks. This duty is in addition to the requirement to have regard to the needs of carers when in crisis.

The Children Act 1989 and 2004, says we must provide a range of social care services to support children in need. The act also requires us to assess and prioritize the way we meet the needs of children in the local area and permits us to use 'eligibility criteria' to take into account available resources when deciding whether to provide services to a child in need.

This means that, although the act defines all disabled children as children in need, it does not oblige us to provide specialist services to all disabled children. In relation to short breaks, we fulfil this obligation by providing a range of short break provisions.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as 'a physical or mental impairment', which has a 'substantial and long-term adverse effect' on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Act places a duty on local authorities to 'safeguard and promote the welfare' of children in need, and 'promote the upbringing of these children by their families'. This duty can be met through a range of services that are appropriate to those children's needs.

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004, obliges us to provide a range of services to support carers, including those who care for disabled children. This Act does not oblige us to provide services to all carers in the City of London, however, it does give all carers the right to have a Carers Assessment. A Carers Assessment can identify any additional needs that carers may have and the types of services that might meet them. One of the ways that we support carers of disabled children is by helping them to take short breaks from their caring responsibilities through universal, targeted and specialist short break services.

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires us to assess if parents and carers within the City of London have support needs and, if so, what those needs are. We must also take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are parent/carers within the City who may have support needs.

Under the Act, we must assess what support the parent needs as soon as we become aware that they need help to look after a disabled child or young person if the parent makes a request for an assessment. This is called a Child and Family Assessment. Once completed, this will determine what help the parent/carer might require. In conjunction with the family, we will then decide on the best form of support to enable the parents/carers to look after their disabled child or young person. The support could be signposting, advice or provision of a service.

3. City of London approach

The City of London is committed to working in partnership to provide quality services that are responsive to the individual needs of children, young people and their families. Short breaks are administered by the Children and Families Team (both via Children's Social Care and Early Help), with other partners involved as appropriate. Our approach to support planning is based on the following principles:

- Children, young people and their families should be fully involved in all planning and decision-making
- Support should focus on achieving specific outcomes for the child, young person and family and will be reviewed and monitored accordingly.
- Support should be accessible, with clear and transparent pathways and procedures.

4. Eligibility

Basic eligibility for Short Breaks from the City of London is as follows:

Short Breaks 5-17 years

- Age 5-17 years with a disability
- City of London resident
- Have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (Not mandatory)
- Be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at Middle or High Rate care component or receive Personal Independence Payments (PIP) at Intermediate or Advanced and can provide an original copy of the child's DLA award letter or PIP award letter which covers the current year.

Short Breaks Under 5's provision

- Children aged 3-4 will be able to access a range of universal services such as the Children Centre, nursery provision and child-minding services. Some 3–4-year-olds are also entitled to 30 hours free childcare a week.

If more support is required for your disabled child under aged 5, please contact the Children and Families Team on 0207 332 3621.

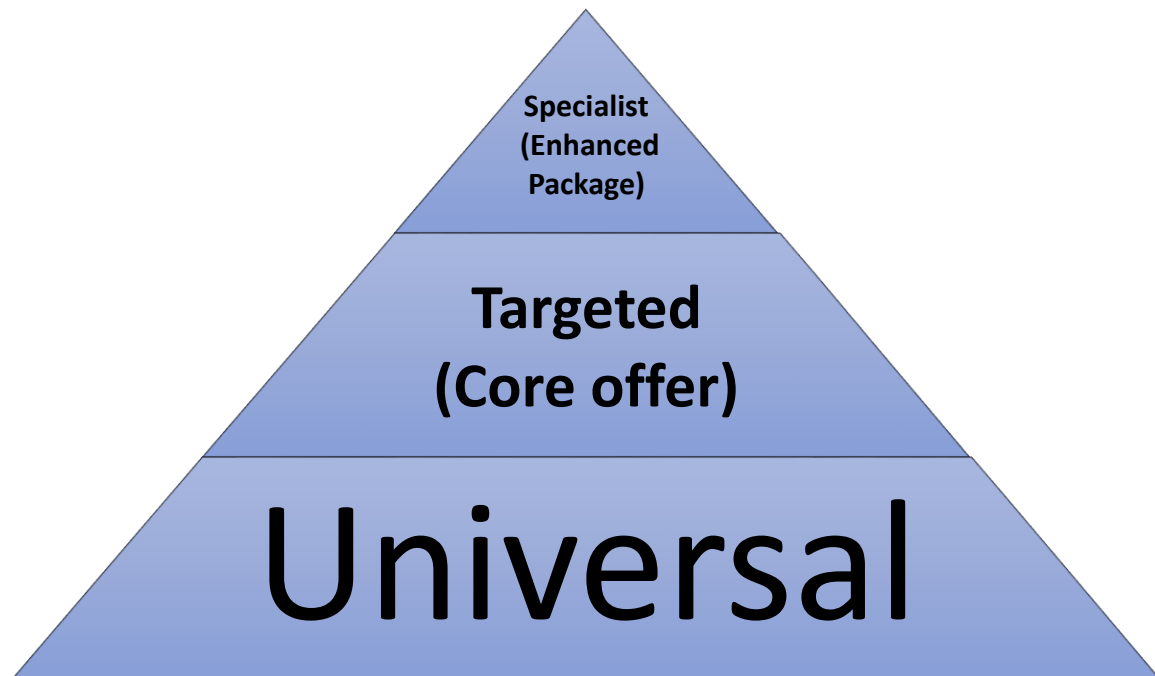
18+

There are a range of social and leisure activities available for adults aged 18 and over. For more information, please visit www.fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk

[If more support is required, please contact the Adult Social Care Team on 0207 332 1224](#)

There are three tiers to the City of London Short Break offer

Short Break three-tiered system: Universal/Targeted/Specialist



4.1

Universal services - open to all children and young people

Universal services are available to all, including children with SEND, and can be accessed without the need for assessment. These are services delivered in various settings which can be accessed independently. Families can seek advice from involved professionals or from the Family and Young People's Information Service and the Local Offer to help them decide which activity to access.

Examples of these services may include:

- Children's Centres Services
- After school clubs and Extended Services
- Sports and leisure activities
- Youth provision
- Commissioned services available in neighbouring boroughs.

The core specification for services commissioned for children and young people requires service providers to ensure that their services are inclusive, accessible and flexible to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND so that they can easily participate in the activities/services available.

The City of London can seek support from the Hackney Integrated Targeted team (HIT Squad). They offer a support service to short break providers which includes specific tailored training and advice. This is to enable disabled children to fully participate in their services.

4.2

Targeted - Core offer of funding for up to 120 activity hours per year

The Core offer is available to those who meet the eligibility criteria, who may not be able to independently access services within their community. Support to access the Core offer will be designed to meet the specific needs of a child or young person. Services might include a targeted short break, such as a specialist play scheme, one-to-one outreach service or help to access a universal service. The Core offer can be accessed through a successful short break application and assessment. Some children who access the offer may have an EHCP or will have been assessed via a Child and Family Assessment (Children's Social Care) or a Family Early Help Assessment (Early Help). All families accessing the Core offer will have an allocated worker from the Children and Families Team (Children's Social Care or Early Help). Further assessment and support may be required where young people or their families would like to access the Short Breaks offer via a direct payment. Direct payments are accessed through a pre-paid card or our third-party accounts manager.

4.3

Specialist - Enhanced offer

The Enhanced offer is for children and young people with severe and complex needs who require significant support to enable them to access a short break in a mainstream setting or within a specialist service. The short breaks available for this group of children and young people could include additional top-up activity hours or an overnight short break.

Overnight Short Breaks

All decisions to award overnight short breaks will need to be agreed by the Short Breaks Panel. Overnight short breaks are also known to some as overnight respite. This is usually only awarded in a very small number of cases, where children have the most complex medical or high-level needs. In these cases, children will usually have an EHCP or be subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan. City of London does not commission providers to deliver overnight breaks. If overnight short breaks are awarded, a carer will usually be provided to deliver overnight respite within the child's family home. We will also consider providing direct payments for overnight short breaks to a maximum cost value of £20 per hour. All payments for overnight short breaks will have to be paid through our third-party accounts manager.

If families do request more than the Core offer of up to 120 hours per year, or would like to access overnight short breaks, a social worker will complete a Child and Family Assessment to determine eligibility, and will recommend an appropriate support package. The recommendations will then need to be approved by the Short Breaks Panel. In most cases when a family has been awarded overnight short break/respite, the Core offer of up to 120 activity hours will cease, and/or will be reduced. Typically, the core offer maximum of 120 activity hours will reduce to **70 activity hours per year**, in addition to the allocated overnight respite hours, awarded as part of a new Enhanced offer.

Families who receive the Enhanced offer could have an EHCP and may also have additional social care or continuing care needs. Those accessing the Enhanced offer will usually have an allocated social worker and will receive ongoing appropriate professional support to access Short Breaks services.

5. Access to short breaks provision

5.1 Who can apply for short breaks?

Children and young people, or their parents/carers can apply directly for the Targeted (Core) and Specialist (Enhanced) short breaks offer from the City of London using the short breaks application form. Short breaks requests can be made using the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF). Please ensure you have checked the eligibility criteria before making an application. Alternatively, if the child/young person is already receiving support from professionals in the City of London and have a current EHCP, an Early Help Plan with a diagnosed disability, or are being supported by a social worker under Child in Need (section 17) or Child Protection (section 47) then the involved professionals can recommend short breaks as part of the support plan.

5.2 How do you apply?

A completed short breaks application form can be returned by email to short.breaks@cityoflondon.gov.uk, given directly to the allocated worker, or sent by post to the below address:

**Children and Families Team, Department of Community and Children's Services,
City of London, Po Box 270, Guildhall, London, EC2P 2EJ.**

If a professional is requesting short breaks on behalf of a child or young person, they can either do this as part of your support plan or can complete a short breaks application for you. All applications should have the original documentation, to confirm eligibility, attached to the form. All original documents will be copied for our records and returned securely to the applicant.

5.3 What happens next?

The Children and Families Team will acknowledge receipt of all short break application forms within five working days. All requests for short breaks need to be approved by the Service Manager for Children's Social Care and Early Help (the budget holder) and will be considered by the Short Breaks Panel. A decision to approve or decline provision of the short breaks offer will then be made. In some cases, it may be necessary to gain further information from Education, Health or other partner agencies as part of the assessment process. If appropriate, they will also be invited to attend the Short Breaks Panel. When further information is required, consent will be obtained from the child or young person and parent/carers as appropriate.

All children and young people who are eligible for support under the short breaks offer will be allocated a named worker if they do not already have one. The allocated worker will arrange to meet with the family and will confirm the level of support to be provided under the short breaks, offer within 30 working days. Short breaks provision should be accessible as soon as possible within these timescales. If it's not possible to confirm the short breaks offer within 30 days, you will be notified of the delay by your worker or a member the short breaks team.

Once the level of support is agreed, a full support plan, including timings and costs, will be co-produced with the family, identifying specific outcomes to be met through each aspect of short breaks provision. All support plans will be authorised by the Service Manager for Children's Social Care and Early Help.

Where an application for short breaks is made but a child or young person is assessed as not being eligible (for the targeted or specialist offer), the Early Help Team or Social Worker will signpost the family and encourage them to access universal services.

6. Available provision and commissioning approach (Sufficiency Strategy)

6.1 Funding for Core offer / Enhanced offer

The Core short breaks offer is up to 120 activity hours per year and this is reviewed on an annual basis. Access to the Core offer is single source funded from the Short Breaks

Budget (Children and Families Team). The total annual cost available for the Core offer will be £2,400 per year (120 hours x maximum hourly rate of £20). Activity hours may be less than 120 hours per year if the hourly rate from the short breaks provider exceeds £20 per hour. Families are welcome to 'top up' their current provision with other funding, this would be an arrangement between the parent/carer and provider directly.

For those children with multiple and/or complex needs who access the Specialist/Enhanced offer, it may be that Short Breaks form one element of a much broader package of support and funding may be split across other budget areas (for example in Children's Social Care the child is supported under Child in Need (section 17) or Child Protection (section 47). There may also be a situation where funding is sought from Health (for example, if there are complex medical needs supported by a continuing care package).

6.2 Commissioning approach

The City of London and Hackney have now jointly commissioned a range of specialist short breaks services. This will mean that children, young people and their families will get to choose an activity from a range of providers. The full list and details of these services and/or activities can be accessed via the Short Breaks pages on the Local Offer website. Further information can be obtained from the Children and Families Team. Please see contact details at the end of this document.

- *Other local authorities – Tower Hamlets / Islington*
Many residents of the City of London live very close to the border with Tower Hamlets or Islington. For this reason, some families may prefer to access provision within these boroughs. Commissioning are building links with these local authorities and the Children and Families Team are already aware of providers within both areas that are happy to accept City of London resident children.
- *Bespoke*
Where none of the above options are appropriate for the child or young person, the City of London Corporation may consider sourcing bespoke provision for a child or young person. This option will need to be considered by the Short Breaks Panel.

6.3 Access to provision

Some families choose to request all or part of their short breaks entitlement in the form of a personal budget – this is an amount of money allocated for the provision of support and enables the child or young person, together with their family and allocated worker, to plan, arrange and pay for their own specialist short break activities. For further details of this, please see the City of London Corporation's Personal Budget Guidance, which is a joint document covering both the Children and Families offer (including short breaks) and the Education and Early Years offer (including education provision).

Personal budgets from the City of London Corporation are accessed in two main ways:

- **Personal/individual budget - direct payments**

A personal/individual budget is available to some families who are eligible for short breaks. Any direct payments will be placed on a pre-paid card (evidence of personal budget spend on short breaks will be required quarterly. Misuse of short breaks money will be fully investigated. If money is not being spent on the agreed regular short breaks activities, the account will be frozen, and the City of London will discontinue any further payments. The City of London will take all necessary steps to recoup all misused monies.

- **Personal budget - managed account**

The Children and Families Team can refer families to a third party (Barry Bookkeeping) if you would prefer someone else to manage your budget. All families who may require a carer to provide support, will automatically be referred to Barry Bookkeeping & Payroll Solutions Ltd.

(The City of London can also arrange to pay short breaks providers directly)

What is a Pre-Paid Card?

A pre-paid card is a short breaks allocation converted into money which the family can use to directly purchase short break support and services (it cannot be used for the purchase of goods) of their choice. It gives the parent/carers greater control and choice of the short break services that are best for their disabled child or young person. All decisions to award a direct payment will be made at the Short Breaks Panel.

Universal services

Families can access a range of universal services including play schemes, sports/youth clubs, Police cadets as well as many others within the City of London as part of their Short Breaks package.

7. Review of Support

Short breaks offered by the City of London are planned to meet specific needs and outcomes agreed by the child or young person, their family and the allocated worker. In addition to this, good support via short breaks should be both enjoyable for the child or young person and beneficial to the involved carers. To monitor outcomes and service quality all new short breaks agreements will be formally reviewed at three and six months from the date first arranged. Following successful initial reviews, short breaks will be reviewed on an annual basis as an absolute minimum. Where an EHCP is in place, the short breaks will be reviewed in line with the annual review of the EHCP. Where a child or young person has ongoing involvement from professionals from the City of London (e.g. a social worker), short breaks provision may also be informally reviewed during visits and other contact with the child or young person and their family.

If a child or young person accesses specialist services (such as a SEND play scheme) funded by the City of London either directly or via a personal budget, the allocated worker will visit the child at the provision on an annual basis to monitor the provision and assess whether the identified outcomes are being met.

Where short breaks provision is offered as a personal budget and administered as a direct payment, the parent/carer or young person will be supported by the City of London to understand the joint agreement as to how the money will be spent and how the short breaks will be monitored. For example, every three months families must show what the direct payments have been used for when short breaks are accessed via direct payments.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I get support with transport arrangements?

The City of London promotes and encourages independence and can provide independent travel training where appropriate. In most cases, we expect parent/carers to take responsibility for travel arrangements to and from the chosen short break activity. The mobility element of DLA is to help assist in the transportation of children with a disability.

Will the City of London need evidence of what I have spent the money on?

Yes, we will request copies of statements from the pre-paid card account as well as all receipts you have from paying for short breaks activities. Statements and receipts will be requested by your allocated worker after an initial three month period and on an ongoing quarterly basis.

Can I use my direct payment to cover costs for a sibling or for myself?

Direct payments may be used to pay for a sibling if you consider this to benefit you as a short break. We also understand that, on some occasions, covering your costs as a parent/carer might be necessary (i.e. entrance fees). We expect you to contact your short breaks worker to discuss covering costs of a sibling. We also expect that the parent/carer contacts the places of interest in advance to make sure you get the best concession rate possible.

Can I employ a respite carer with direct payments for short breaks?

Yes, direct payments can be used to employ a respite carer – this is more common if your child is eligible for the Enhanced short breaks offer, and may need to be considered alongside continuing healthcare needs as detailed in your child's EHCP. Within the Core offer, some families have used direct payments to cover the costs of a registered childminder or carer for respite at the weekends or in school holidays. Please note that, if you are using direct payments for respite care, you will be referred to our third-party organisation to manage the account and to offer support to employ an appropriate carer.

Do I have to choose an activity from the City of London list of Short Breaks Providers?

Some children and families will need more specialist provision in order to enjoy a short break. In the City we have a range of specialist services for children and young people with disabilities

from which families can choose. We aim to promote choice and independence in the provision of our short breaks and encourage children and families to select their preferred short break from the list of providers approved by the City of London. In some circumstances, where the families are not able to choose from the list of providers, direct payments will be offered.


Can direct payments be used to pay for holidays and school trips?

Direct payments cannot be used to fund family holidays. Short breaks money is to be spent on regular social, leisure and daytime activities only. The money can also not be used to fund school daytime or residential trips, as this will be considered an educational trip.


Please contact your allocated worker or email short.breaks@cityoflondon.gov.uk if you have further questions.

Visit our Local Offer website pages for information, advice and support for children with SEND aged 0-25 living in the City. localoffer.cityoflondon.gov.uk

Testimonials

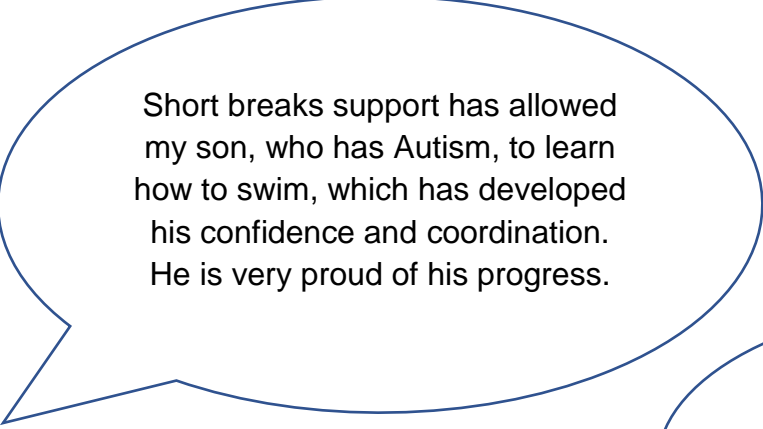


Whilst my child is at after school/holiday club. I use the spare time to run some errands and just relax.




We are very grateful to be receiving Short Breaks Support from the City.

It is fantastic!



Short breaks support has allowed my son, who has Autism, to learn how to swim, which has developed his confidence and coordination. He is very proud of his progress.



I love trying different sports, activities and meeting new people. I also use short breaks to have sessions with my Mentor who supports me.

Appendix 2



City of London Short Breaks Statement

This statement provides an overview of:

- The range of Short Breaks services available to disabled children and their families
- Eligibility criteria
- Short breaks provision

1. Introduction and background

This information is for families living in the City of London who have a disabled child aged 0 to 17 years inclusive.

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. Regulations relating to this duty came into force on 1 April 2011 and require each local authority to produce a Short Breaks Service Statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for these services and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of the families with disabled children in this area.

More information can be found in the [City of London's Short Breaks Strategy](#).

2. What are short breaks

Short breaks offer activities for disabled children and young people to make sure they have the same opportunities as other children to have fun, spend time away from home with their friends, and develop a range of skills and independence.

Having access to short breaks can play an important part in supporting personal and social development of children and young people by enabling them to explore different social and leisure activities which could also include having a break from their main carer. Short breaks can also support families by providing a break for parents and other family members from their caring responsibilities. A full list of our short breaks providers is available on the [City of London's Local Offer website](#).

3. Eligibility

Children and young people are eligible for short break services if they have a disability which results in a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out everyday activities. This may include:

- A physical disability
- A learning disability
- A sensory disability, for example, a hearing or visual impairment
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Children with complex health needs or who have a life-limiting or life-threatening condition
- Children whose behaviour may be challenging as a result of their disability.

We believe it is important to allocate short breaks in a fair way. Not all children and families will need the same level of short breaks; some will need more than others because of the impact of their child's disability or their individual family circumstances. Every child and their family are different; therefore, we provide a range of short breaks support.

In the City of London, we have three levels of support available for children and young people who are entitled to receive short breaks

- ***Universal Services and Inclusion***

Many families with children and young people with disabilities can use the same services used by all families, to have a break. This includes children with a lower level of need such as those with a special educational need to those with moderate learning disabilities; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) without any further associated difficulties; high functioning Autism; a visual or hearing loss; a physical disability only, such as cerebral palsy.

We believe that those disabled children should be able to access universal services, experience fun and enjoy themselves with friends the same way as other children and young people. Genuine inclusion means that services in the City of London are designed and equipped to enable disabled children and young people to enjoy the same activities and opportunities as non-disabled children. As an example, this includes activities such as breakfast and after school clubs, Police cadets and Scouts, school-holiday activities, leisure activities at Golden Lane Leisure Centre, Youth Club and Youth Forum. You can find out more about these services on the City of London Local Offer website.

Children with a disability who are aged 0-4 years old, can be supported into an age-appropriate setting such as a Children's Centre or Early Years provision.

Two-year olds with Disability Living Allowance (DLA) are eligible for free 15 hours nursery or childminding, which can be used for 'respite'.

- ***Core offer***

Some children and families will need more specialist provision in order to enjoy a short break.

In the City we have a range of specialist services for children and young people with disabilities which families can choose from. We aim to promote choice and independence in

the provision of our short breaks and encourage children and families to select their preferred short break from the list of providers approved by the City of London. In some circumstances, where the families are not able to choose from the list of providers, direct payments will be offered. A direct payment allows families to access a short break or other specialist support service independently. Direct payments are where the family is allocated a budget, they can use to purchase their own short break, e.g. swimming lessons. Families will need to have an assessment from the Children and Families team before they are allocated direct payments.

Eligibility for the Core Offer of Short Breaks from the City of London.

- Be aged between 5-17 years old
- Reside in the City of London on a permanent basis
- Be in receipt of DLA at Middle or High Rate care component or receive Personal Independence Payments (PIP) at Intermediate or Advanced and can provide an original copy of the child's DLA award letter or PIP award letter which covers the current year
- Have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (Not mandatory)
- Require a targeted/specialist short breaks service and be unable to access universal provisions without additional support

- ***Enhanced offer***

Some children and families need more help than is available through a targeted specialist service (core offer). If you think that this applies to your family, then you can request a social care assessment by ringing the Children and Families team on 0207 332 3621 and asking to speak to a Duty Social Worker, or you may be referred by a professional working with you.

To be eligible for the enhanced offer a child or a young person must also meet the following criteria:

- A complex health or developmental needs, or
- A diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder with an associated severe learning disability, or
- Sensory disabilities or
- A severe physical disability, or
- A life-limiting condition
- Be in receipt of DLA at Middle or High Rate care component or receive PIP at Intermediate or Advanced and can provide an original copy of the child's DLA award letter or PIP award letter which covers the current year
- Have an EHCP

Enhanced offer services might include overnight breaks, support in the home, or direct payments to enable you to purchase the services that you need.

4. How to apply

A completed short breaks application form can be returned by email to short.breaks@cityoflondon.gov.uk, given directly to the allocated worker or sent by post to the below address:

**Children and Families Team, Department of Community and Children's Services,
City of London, Po Box 270, Guildhall, London, EC2P 2EJ.**

If a professional is requesting short breaks on behalf of a child or young person, they can either do this as part of your support plan or can complete a short breaks application for you. All applications should have the original documentation, to confirm eligibility, attached to the form. All original documents will be copied for our records and returned securely to the applicant.

If you are a parent or carer of a disabled child and would like to access a short break in the City or have an informal chat about our offer, please contact us on 0207 332 3621.

5. Complaints

If you are unhappy about the type or level of service on offer, you can complain. We aim to resolve any disputes quickly and effectively. In the first instance, contact the team manager for an informal discussion. If there are continuing concerns, City of London has a formal complaints process, which can be initiated by contacting us by calling 0207 332 3621, or emailing short.breaks@cityoflondon.gov.uk



Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	07/06/2021
Subject: Corporate Safeguarding Policy	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For information
Report author: Scott Myers, Strategy Officer, Department of Community and Children's Services	

Summary

This report presents the Sub-Committee with the latest version of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, following its annual review.

The Corporate Safeguarding Policy provides guidance for all City of London Corporation staff, Members and individuals, consultants and agencies contracted by the City Corporation who, in the context of their work, may come across concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and adults at risk.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. It is a duty of the City Corporation to ensure that children and adults are safeguarded from harm. Safeguarding is everybody's business within the City Corporation, and everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk – whatever the role of the individual, or the City Corporation service or department they work in.
2. The significance of safeguarding to the wider organisation is recognised by each department having its own Safeguarding Champion, who ensures sufficient oversight of the City Corporation's safeguarding responsibilities, including those outside of the local authority area and those which apply to its charitable elements.

Current Position

3. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and updated as part of its annual review, to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and guidance. The policy now references modern slavery and self-neglect as types of abuse, using wording from the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance.
4. The policy has been reviewed by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager, who leads on corporate safeguarding for the City of London Corporation. The policy has also been reviewed by the Adult Social Care Service Manager, who leads on safeguarding for adults.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

5. The review and update of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy is consistent with the aims and priorities of the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan, to ensure that people are safe and feel safe.
6. Strategic implications – n/a
7. Financial implications – n/a
8. Resource implications – n/a
9. Legal implications – n/a
10. Risk implications – n/a
11. Equalities implications – n/a
12. Climate implications – n/a
13. Security implications – n/a

Conclusion

12. This corporate policy provides safeguarding guidance for all City of London Corporation staff, Members and individuals and organisations commissioned by the City Corporation. It outlines how the City Corporation will ensure that children and adults are safeguarded from harm.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Safeguarding Policy 2021

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City of London Corporation

Safeguarding Policy

June 2021

Document status:	Draft (updated March 2021)
Prepared by:	Scott Myers / Ellie Ward
Reviewers:	Ria Lane and Ian Tweedie
Owner:	Chris Pelham
Approved by:	Safeguarding Sub Committee
Implementation date:	Ongoing
Review date:	June 2022
Document end date:	Annual Review and update
Version:	5

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1 Purpose and Scope

- 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 supports the City Corporation in achieving Corporate Plan (2018-23) outcome 1: 'People are safe and feel safe'. It is relevant to the work contained in all corporate strategies that aim to impact children and vulnerable adults, from the apprenticeship strategy through to the volunteering strategy, and is key to ensuring that we are a responsible business.
- 1.3 The policy is relevant to all of the City Corporation's work it delivers, commissions and funds. In some cases, such as the schools and academies it sponsors outside the Square Mile, *statutory* safeguarding responsibilities will sit with the local authority in the area concerned but the City Corporation still holds some wider safeguarding responsibilities.

2. Wider context

2.1 This policy also sits in a wider context of safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance. This includes:

- the **London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures**
<https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>
- the **London Safeguarding Adults Board Policy and Procedure**
<http://londonadass.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019.04.23-Review-of-the-Multi-Agency-Adult-Safeguarding-policy-and-procedures-2019-final-1-1.pdf>
- COL guidance on **safer recruitment**
<https://corpoflondon.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/SitePages/HR-Topic-Recruitment.aspx#safeguarding>
- Range of information and guidance on **Safeguarding Children and Young People** from the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Partnership
<http://www.chscb.org.uk/>
- Range of information and guidance on **Safeguarding Adults** from the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board
<https://hackney.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-board>
- Guidance for **Charitable Organisations**
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>
- Guidance on **Safeguarding Adults for Housing Staff**
<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/practice/housing>
- Guidance on **Safeguarding in Public Places**
<https://saferlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Safeguarding-in-Public-Spaces-Toolkit-March-2018.pdf>
- **Prevent – Counter Terrorism Strategy**
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/prevent-counter-terrorism-strategy>

3. Overview

- 3.1 It is a duty of the City Corporation to ensure that children and adults are safeguarded from harm.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The City Corporation will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse or a safeguarding adult's investigation is necessary.
- 3.7 For this policy to be effective it is essential that each City Corporation Department and related agencies and people working within them have 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.

4. Safeguarding

- 4.1 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.

Children and young people at risk

- 4.2 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

- 4.3 The definition of a child and/or young person for the purpose of this document is anyone under the age of 18 years or under 25 years in the case of a child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND).
- 4.4 It should be noted 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.

Safeguarding adults at risk

- 4.5 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 Corporation.
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 An adult at risk is a person who is or may be in need of social 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.
- 4.8 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)

5 Signs of abuse

- 5.1 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
 - **domestic violence or abuse** - any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are, or

have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

- **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
- **modern slavery** – encompasses human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude
- **discriminatory abuse** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion
- **organisational abuse, or institutional abuse** - Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **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
- **Self-neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding

5.2 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.

6. Legal Framework

6.1 The City Corporation's local authority functions mean that it 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).

6.2 For adults at risk the Care Act 2014 as well as the Mental Capacity Act 2005 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 Corporation 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.

7 What this means for our work

7.1 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.

7.2 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

- have at least a basic understanding of child protection and adult safeguarding as part of their training and induction if they work directly with children and young people or with adults at risk
 - 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.
- 7.3 The City Corporation will ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of staff are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Working effectively with partners and other agencies means:
- supporting the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership 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, adults at risk, 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.
- 7.6 Schools located within the City of London boundaries are invited to participate in the Safeguarding Education Forum with the Assistant Director People regarding safeguarding issues. Statutory safeguarding responsibilities for academies outside the Square Mile rest with the relevant local authorities.

8 Responsibilities of individuals

- 8.1 The Director of Community and Children's Services is the designated person with overall responsibility for safeguarding of children, young people and adults.
- 8.2 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.

8.3 In addition, Chief Officers, senior managers and Safeguarding Champions of the organisation should ensure they have sufficient oversight of the City Corporation's safeguarding responsibilities particular to their areas. They should ensure they:

- 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
- are responsible for communicating to all staff 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;
- have effective working relationships with other parts of the Corporation 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
- that the policy and procedure is adhered to; and
- that all staff know how to access the whistle blowing procedures.
- Chief Officers will provide safeguarding assurance to the Director of Community and Children's Services every 6 months.

8.4 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.

9 Acting on concerns

9.1 If you are worried about:

- i. **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

Or outside office hours (emergency only) call:

020 8356 2710

Email: 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: adultsduty@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

020 8356 2300 - for all other times, including weekends and Bank Holidays

- iii. **an adult or a child or young person who lives outside of the City of London**

Staff working outside the Square Mile who have concerns need to liaise with the Local Authority safeguarding arrangements in that area. Unless there is immediate risk of harm which requires an immediate response (i.e calling 999 as indicated below), they should be liaising with the local Children and / or Adult Social Care Services. If they are unsure, they should liaise with their line manager, their Service area's Safeguarding Champion or they can seek advice from the Corporate Safeguarding Lead.

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

10 Responding to allegations made against professionals

- 10.1 Where an allegation is made in relation to a professional working with children or young people you must contact the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Pat Dixon. You can make a referral by emailing LADO@cityoflondon.gov.uk or phoning 020 7332 1215.
- 10.2 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 or phoning 020 7332 3129.
- 10.3 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.

11 Oversight and challenge

- 11.1 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 Partnership and City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board. Annual Children's Safeguarding Audits are undertaken where all local agencies and organisations who provide services to children and young people are asked to self- assess the extent to which they meet the safeguarding requirements and standards as set out in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. Similarly the City Corporation also completes the London Safeguarding Adults Partnership Audit tool. Both of these have to demonstrate how the City Corporation discharges its safeguarding responsibilities across the whole organisation and agencies it works with.
- 11.2 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.

Key contact numbers

Children's Social Care Services	0207 332 3621
Adult Social Care Services	0207 332 1224
Out of hours Children's Social Care	0208 356 2346; or 0208 356 2710
Out of hours Adult Social Care	020 8356 2300
Police Public Protection Unit	0207 601 2941 (or in an emergency 999)
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Designated Officer (Allegations against a professional or someone working with children)	020 7332 1215

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Champions

Each department has its own Safeguarding Champion, who ensure sufficient oversight of the City Corporation's safeguarding responsibilities, including those outside of the local authority area and those which apply to its charitable elements:

Position	Department
Chris Pelham - Assistant Director People Pat Dixon – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager Ian Tweedie - Service Manager, Adult Social Care and Safeguarding Lead for Adults Andrew Trathen – Public Health City & Hackney	Community and Children's Services
<i>To be announced</i>	Town Clerk's
<i>To be announced</i>	Comptrollers and City Solicitors
<i>To be announced</i>	Chamberlains
<i>To be announced</i>	City Bridge Trust
<i>To be announced</i>	Culture, Heritage and Libraries
<i>To be announced</i>	Open Spaces
<i>To be announced</i>	Markets and Consumer Protection
<i>To be announced</i>	City Surveyor's
<i>To be announced</i>	Built Environment
<i>To be announced</i>	Barbican Centre
<i>To be announced</i>	City of London School for Girls
<i>To be announced</i>	Guildhall School of Music & Drama
<i>To be announced</i>	City of London School
<i>To be announced</i>	City of London Freeman's School

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Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	07/06/2021
Subject: Quality Assurance Framework – revised and updated	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Pat Dixon, with revisions and updates by Chris Sands	

Summary

This report gives Members an overview of the revised Quality Assurance Framework.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The People's Directorate in the City of London is situated within the Department of Community and Children's Services and is responsible for delivering the whole range of children's services in the City of London: Children's Social Care, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Education and Early Years Services.
2. The Quality Assurance Framework covers the quality assurance work that takes place within children's services. These services include commissioned services, such as Independent Fostering Services and Youth Services.

Current Position

3. The Quality Assurance Framework has been reviewed and updated by an independent consultant.

4. There is a focus on Education and Early Years.
5. There is increased focus on the use of systemic theory in social work and how this is audited.
6. There has been a revision of the audit process with a new template.
7. Audits focus more on the outcomes achieved by intervention on children and young people, and how this has been evidenced in practice.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. Strategic implications – none
9. Financial implications – none
10. Resource implications – none
11. Legal implications – none
12. Risk implications – none
13. Equalities implications – none
14. Climate implications – none
15. Security implications - none

Conclusion

16. The key changes to the Quality Assurance Framework have been around moving the focus from the descriptive in relation to the quality of practice to the of the impact of practice on children and young people. To support this, there has been a review and update of the auditing process, whereby the focus is on outcomes and the difference that has been made to the lives of children and young people through the intervention that has taken place.
17. The City of London is committed to providing services of excellence that deliver the best possible outcomes for children and families who reside within the City. This Quality Assurance Framework sets out the mechanisms for how we will make sure that our services meet this high standard.
18. This framework draws together the quality assurance activity that takes place across the People's Directorate. It includes how the impact of our work is confirmed by feedback from children and families.

Appendices

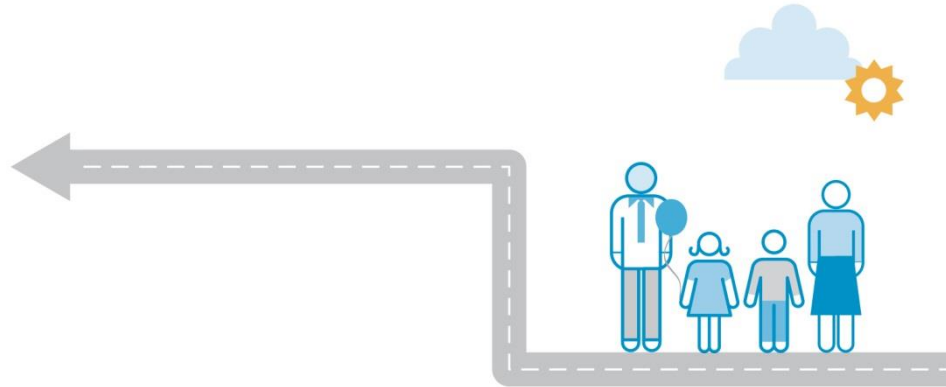
Appendix 1 – Quality Assurance Framework

Pat Dixon (Original author) and Chris Sands (author of amendments)

Pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Chris.sands@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Quality Assurance Framework

Promoting and supporting excellence in practice

May 2021

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Introduction

The Peoples Directorate in the City of London is situated within the Department of Community and Children's Services and is responsible for delivering the whole range of children's services in the City of London; Children's Social Care, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Education and Early Years Services. This Framework covers the quality assurance work that takes place within children's services. These services include commissioned services, such as Independent Fostering Services, the Education Welfare Service and Youth Services.

The City of London is committed to providing services of excellence that deliver the best possible outcomes for children and families who reside within the City. This quality assurance framework sets out the mechanisms for how we will make sure that our services meet this high standard. This framework draws together the quality assurance activity that takes place across the Peoples Directorate, and how the impact of our work is confirmed by feedback from children and families.

Principles and Purpose of Quality Assurance

The principles and purpose of this quality assurance framework are aligned with the journey of children and families through the services they receive, their lived experience and the outcomes achieved. This will be attained through being:

- **Child Centred:** focusing on the experience of children and young people, making sure that they are safe and protected from harm, and that their voice is heard clearly.
- **Restorative:** quality assurance will be restorative. This approach reflects the significant investment and training in systemic thinking and practice. Instead of a 'top-down' approach, quality assurance work will be based on working with staff and managers and building relationships. As a restorative process, quality assurance will be characterised by high support and high challenge.
- **Outcomes Based:** the focus of quality assurance will be on outcomes rather than processes. While processes play an important part, the real test is on the impact of our services for each child and family. We expect staff to have a relentless focus on impact and outcomes.
- **Positive:** our approach to quality assurance will be positive. By doing so, we shall inform and encourage improvement and support the development of staff and services.
- **Reflective:** our quality assurance framework is designed to promote reflective practice and shared learning.
- **Creative:** having a pioneering and 'can do' culture.
- **Consistent:** maintaining a consistently high standard of practice.

Key Sources of Information

Quantitative:

"How much?"

"How many?"

"How often?"

Performance Indicators and key metrics.

Wide range of data about service users, needs, services and intervention including timeliness and results.

Finance and resource data.

Partnership data such as health, education, housing, police, etc.

Qualitative:

"How did we do?"

"What did the frontline services think and feel about it?"

"What did children, young people and their families think and feel about it?"

Audits/practice and impact reviews (single and multi-agency)

Section 11 audits.

Learning reviews.

Practice observations.

Management oversight.

Feedback from staff and other professionals.

Feedback from service users.

Complaints and compliments.

Evaluation of training (single and multi-agency)

Serious case reviews

Evaluations and inspections.

Impact/Outcome:

"What difference have services/strategies/individuals made to the lives of children and young people?"

"Is anyone better off?"

"How can we improve?"

Outcome performance measures.

Voice of the child/practitioner.

Self-evaluations

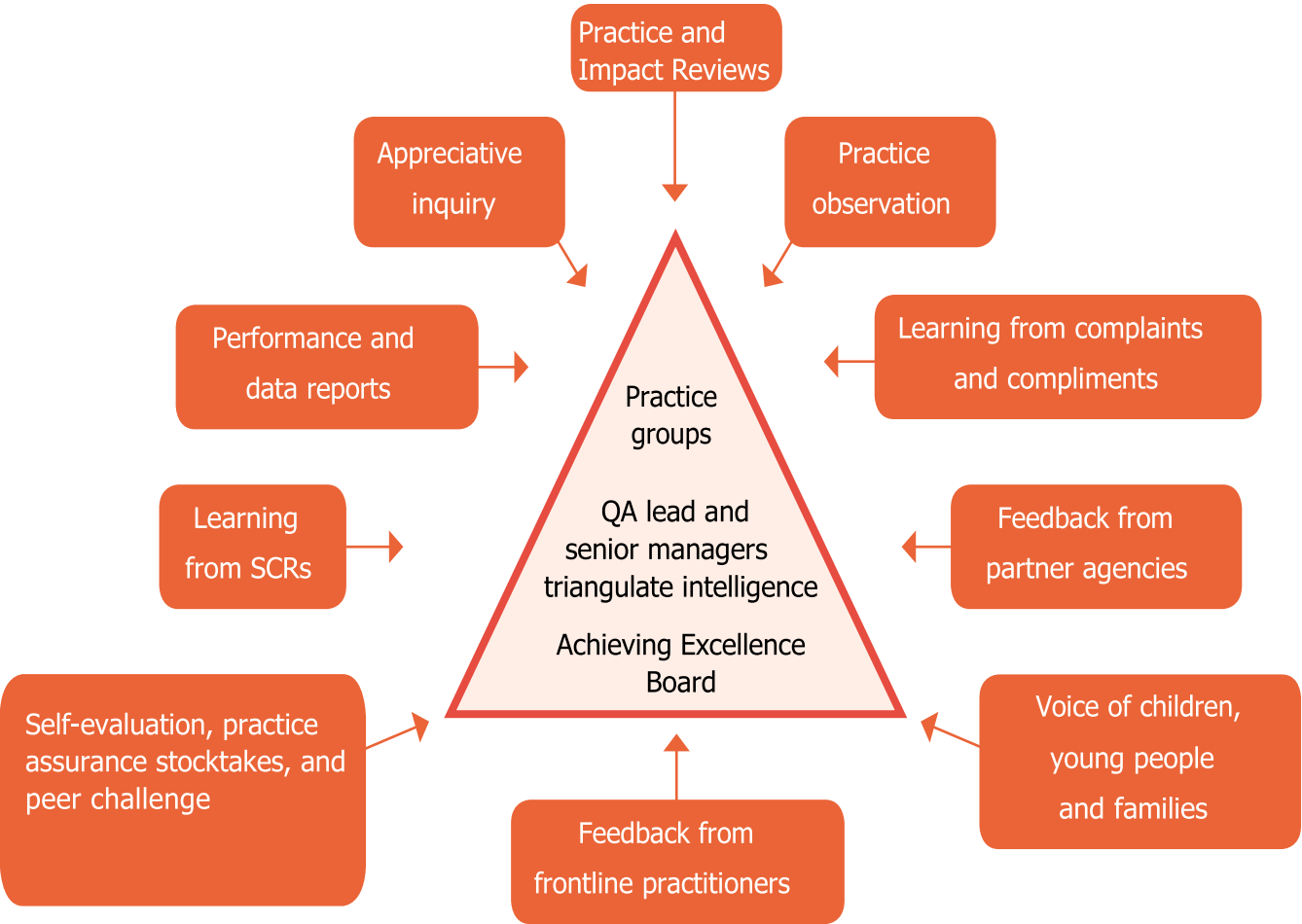
Direction of travel tools.

Annual reports.

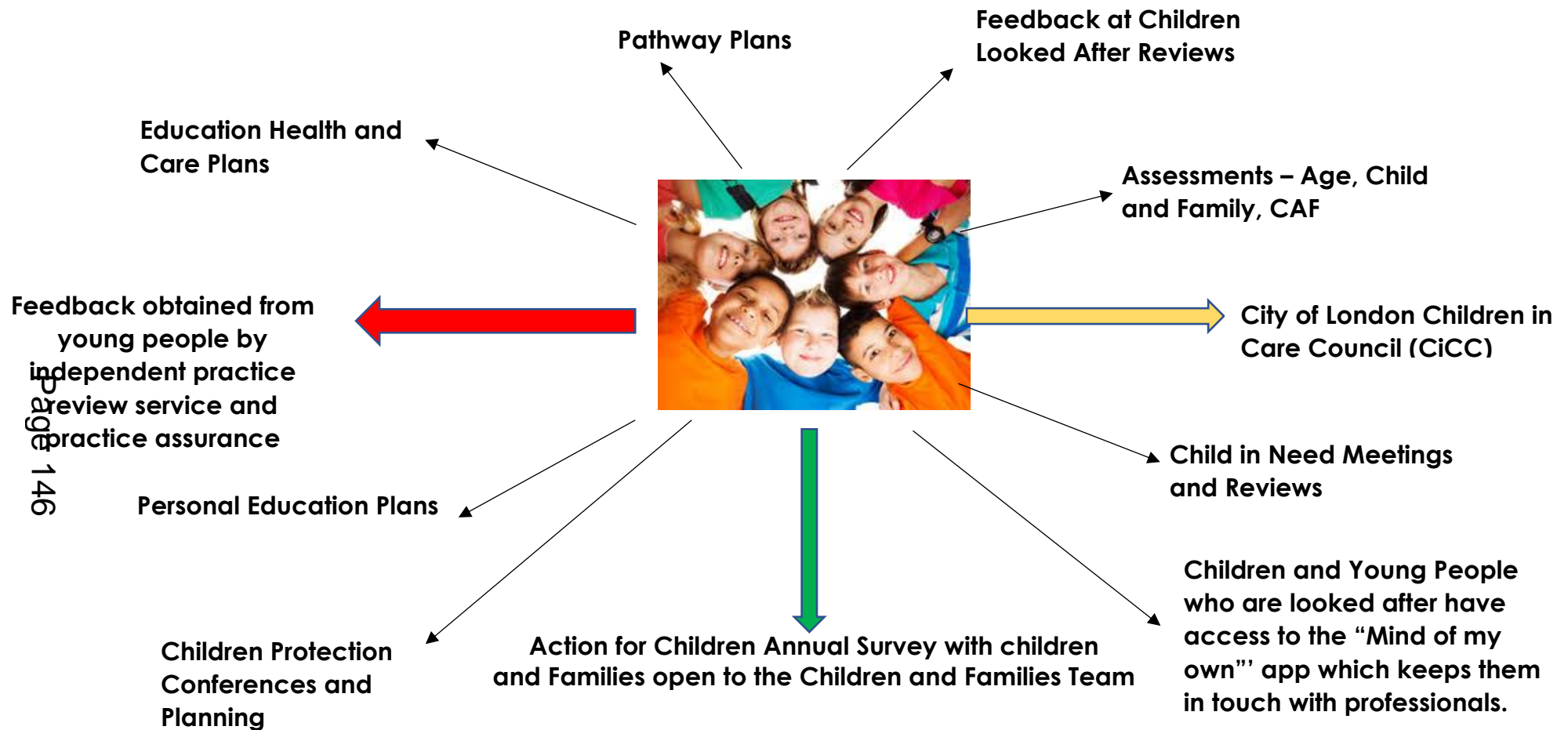
Development days, Deep Dives and Challenge events.

Evaluations and inspections.

Framework for a whole-system approach to Quality Assurance Management



Mechanisms for feedback from children and families



Making sure we hear and listen to the voices of children and that we help to make a difference.

Children and young people who are known to services are consulted in many ways about their views. However, these views are not always visible or heard and they can become lost within the plethora of information collected. Additionally, some children may not be able to communicate verbally and/or English may not be their first language.

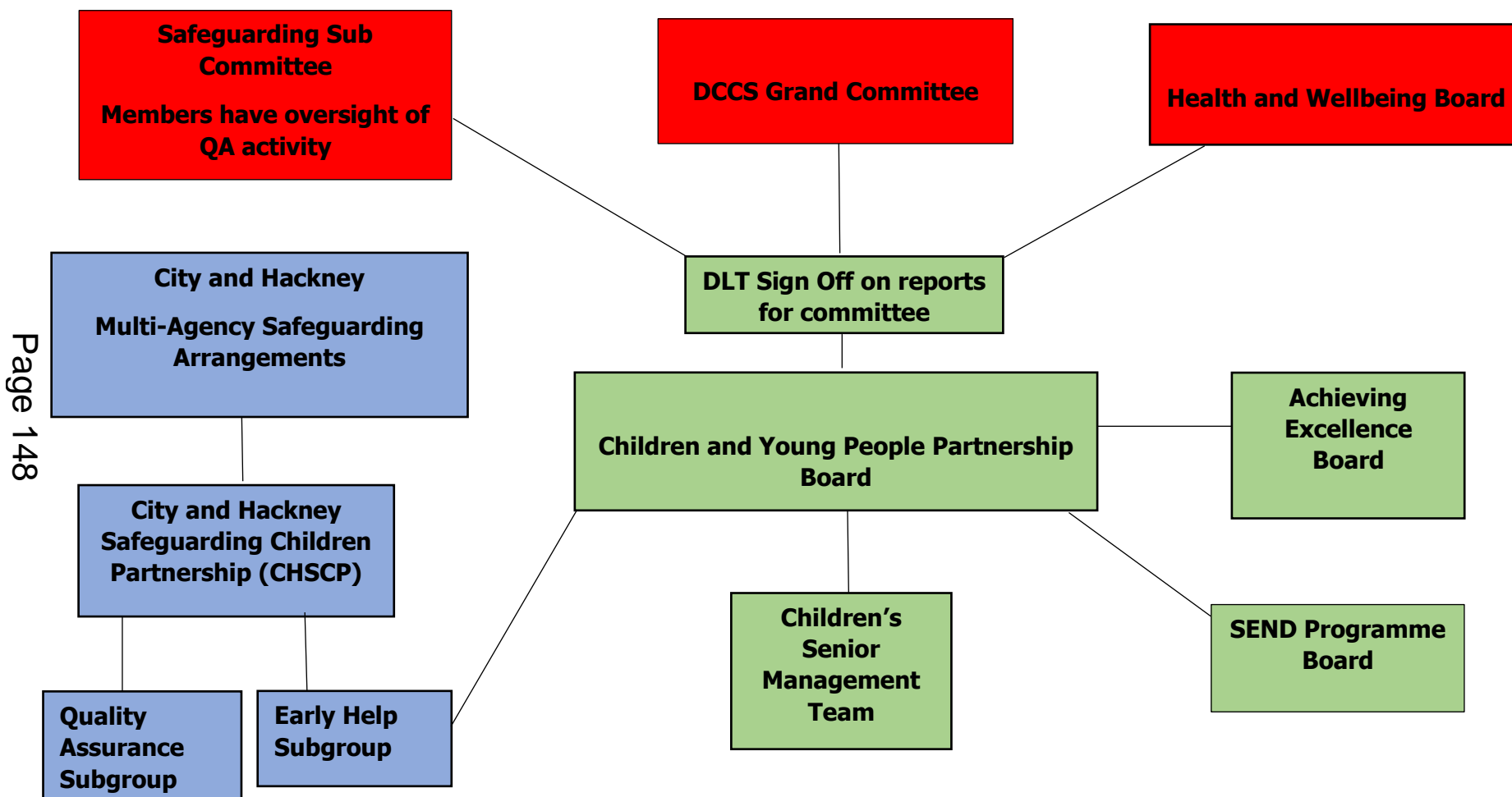
Children and young people can speak with a wide range of professionals who will ask them about their opinions and feelings. However, these views are not always captured or shared, and after time they become lost. By ensuring that we are consistently hearing and recording the child and young person's views (or recording our observations of a child's responses), we can build a more in-depth understanding of their needs and show themes in relation to their wellbeing. Where we do collect the views of children and young people, it is important that their views are represented in their entirety, and not interpreted or given from a third person perspective.

This framework seeks to ensure that the voice of the children and young person is visible and heard by:

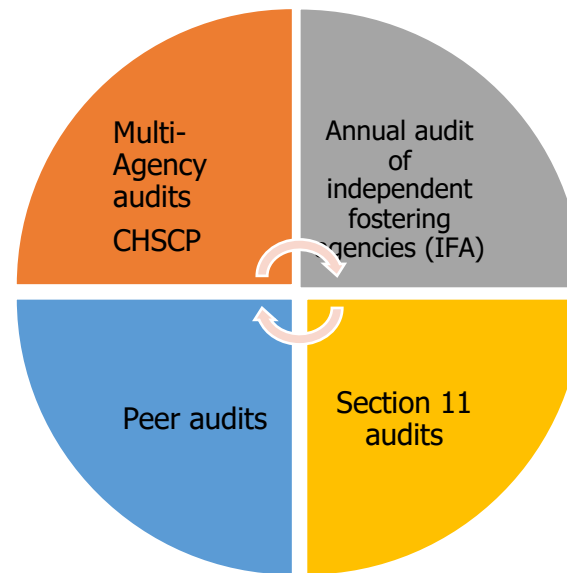
- Using different methods to collect children and young people's views, such as audio tapes, videos and/or Apps, which the young people can use with the support from their social workers or on their own. These will give the child or young person the opportunity to record their journey, aspirations, and views. They can also help to make life story work meaningful to them.
- Providing the capability on Mosaic, the electronic recording system for the views of children and young people to be more visible, by differentiating their views from other interaction taking place with professionals and other family members.
- Making sure that plans, reports, and assessments evidence the child/young person's perspective, in relation to what they want to change, and how they feel, through direct work which is age appropriate and supports their learning, language and diverse needs.
- Making sure that front line practitioners have the skills and confidence to engage with children and young people. Through a range of activities and methods, frontline practitioners can understand child development and undertake effective direct work with children and young people.

Governance

Effective governance provides an extra layer of quality assurance and scrutiny. The governance arrangements for the Corporation are set out below.



Audit Cycle involving Partner agencies, City of London Corporation and Commissioned Services



- Multi-agency audits are carried out bi-annually through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership. Partner agencies from Social Care, Education, Health and Police are involved. Learning from these audits is picked up through multi-agency action plans.
- Commissioned independent fostering agencies (IFA) and semi-independent provisions for care leavers are audited annually. Checks are made regarding how they meet national minimum standards in respect of IFAs, and standards of care in supporting young people towards independent living in relation to care leavers. Audits are also completed on youth services provision.
- Section 11 audits and peer audits are co-ordinated through the multi-agency safeguarding partnership between the City of London and Hackney (CHSCP).

**Practice and
Impact
Reviewing
Cycle Children
Social Care &
Early Help
Services**

June/July: evidence of
recommendations being
progressed from case file
practice and impact reviews.
Reviewed and signed off in
"Achieving Excellence"
meeting chaired by AD
People

In October/ November,
practice and impact
reviews are completed on
half of the cases open to
the Children and Families
team and feedback is
then provided

Reports on practice
and impact reviews,
Service
Improvement Plan
and Workforce
Development Plans
are scrutinised and
signed off within
governance
arrangements

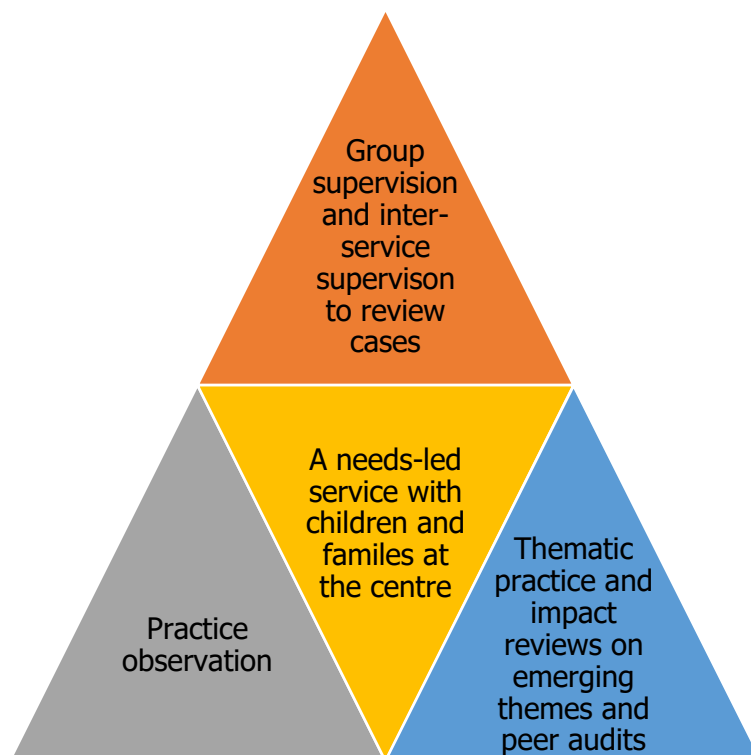
In April/ May: practice
and impact reviews are
completed on those
cases that were not
reviewed in the October
using the same
methodology

December /January: evidence of
recommendations being progressed
from case file practice and impact
reviews. Reviewed and signed off in
"Achieving Excellence" meeting
chaired by AD People

Training needs
identified from practice
and impact reviews
are incorporated into
the WFD Plan and
recommendations for
service improvements
included in the
Achieving Excellence
Board

Practice Quality Assurance

Qualitative Information



Frontline practitioners (social care and early help) have group supervision within their service area and with partner agencies where live cases can be discussed with constructive challenge and support. A systemic thinking approach is applied.

Thematic practice and impact reviews are carried out to explore hypotheses and emerging themes which may identify gaps in service.

Practice Observations take place across all levels of management in children's services. Senior managers have a line of sight over frontline practice. Practice observation guidance is attached in Appendix 2.

Operational Quality Assurance in the Children and Families Team & Early Help

Rigorous and regular management oversight of the quality, decision making, direction and outcomes relating to contacts, referrals, assessments, Early Help, CAF processes, s47 investigations, processes, and planning for children in need, children looked after and care leavers.

Group supervision, using systemic practice and thinking, individual supervision, and appraisal framework.

Monitoring through Reviews and Panels:

- **Adoption and Permanency Panel.**
- **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) at Child Looked After Review and Child Protection Conference.**
- **Reviewing of Pathway Plans by the IRO.**
- **Management oversight on the review of Child in Need cases.**
- **“Top three” meeting with Senior Manager, which looks at cases where there may be block in moving plans forward for child and young people.**
- **Practice Observations which are carried out across all the tiers on management.**

Virtual School Head

- **Oversight of Personal Education Plans (PEP) and the education section of pathway plans.**
- **Quality assuring PEP meetings with social workers and giving constructive feedback.**
- **Offering support and advice on what information should be contained on PEPs and pathway plans, and desired outcomes.**
- **Offering challenge to support improvement of education plans for children and young people.**

Operational Quality Assurance in the Education and Early Years' Service

SEND Panel; Reviews and Monitors SEND process including the quality of Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, annual reviews of EHC Plans, and the transition of children and young people 14 years to adult services.

Termly reports to the Children's Senior Management Team on children who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) and at risk of missing education and weekly case updates to the Assistant Director of People.

SENCO network, which reviews and promotes good practice through peer support.

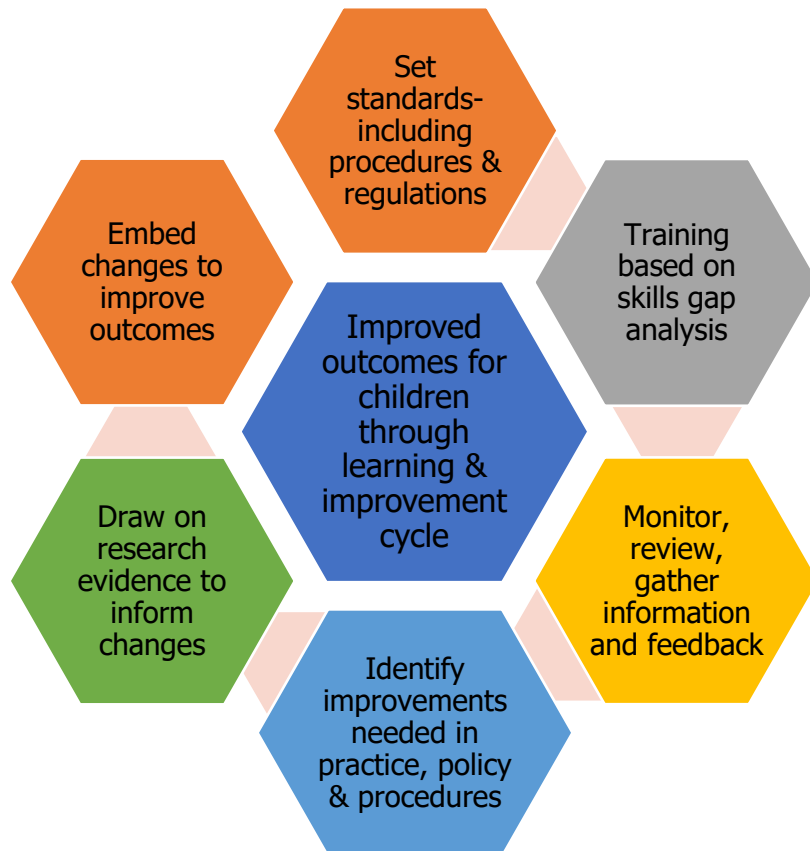
Annual audits of Early Years Settings, reviewing Leadership, Management and Safeguarding, this is usually completed in the summer term.

SEND Programme Board; Strategic Oversight of the SEND joint strategy, self-evaluation form (SEF), Implementation of the SEND Service Improvement Action Plan, which is reported into Members Safeguarding Subgroup and Health & Wellbeing Board.

Monthly meetings with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social care team to review the vulnerable children list. This enables collaborative working and information sharing

Continuous improvement through learning

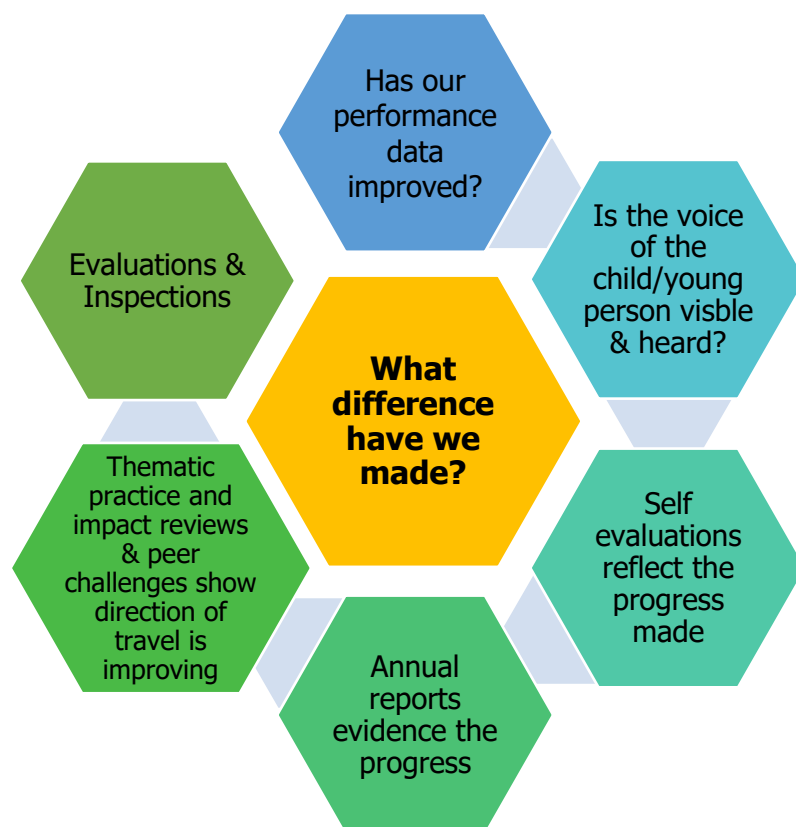
Quality assurance is a continuous improvement cycle using a range of interdependent methods to measure prevalence, monitor practice, listen to people's experiences, identify areas of improvement, and enact change as a result. An effective model will identify both "what is working well and why" and "what we need to do better". A key aspect in sustaining continuous improvements in practice is a learning and development programme that is responsive to the skills analysis of the workforce in meeting the needs of the service.



- Front line staff are supported by online procedures provided by Tri-x, guidance on regulations through policies and practice standards.
- Children's social care have access to a learning and development programme that is compliant with the DfE Knowledge and Skills Statement (2018). (See appendix 1)
- Training and support in systemic practice.
- Group supervision within children's social care and between services.
- Practice observations taking place across all tiers, from DLT, SMT, Line Managers and frontline staff.
- Learning from serious case reviews and internal management reviews
- Research based reports and assessments that help to inform practice and performance information.
- Measuring integration of learning into practice within appraisal and supervision.
- People's Learning – programme coordinated by The Workforce Development team

Measuring Impact and Outcomes

Yvette Stanley, National Director for Social Care in May 2018 described how LAs could reach outstanding in child protections services by acknowledging that even the best performing LAs will have areas where they will need to make improvements in learning. This is achieved by learning from serious incidents and feedback from children and families, creating a learning environment that uses constructive management oversight and reflective practice to develop practitioners and manager.



"Outstanding child protection requires that senior leaders of the organisation have a clear line of sight on casework, so they can challenge and support the judgements of managers in a way that ensures the culture of the service is not risk averse but one that supports learning in a complex and challenging environment". (Yvette Stanley)

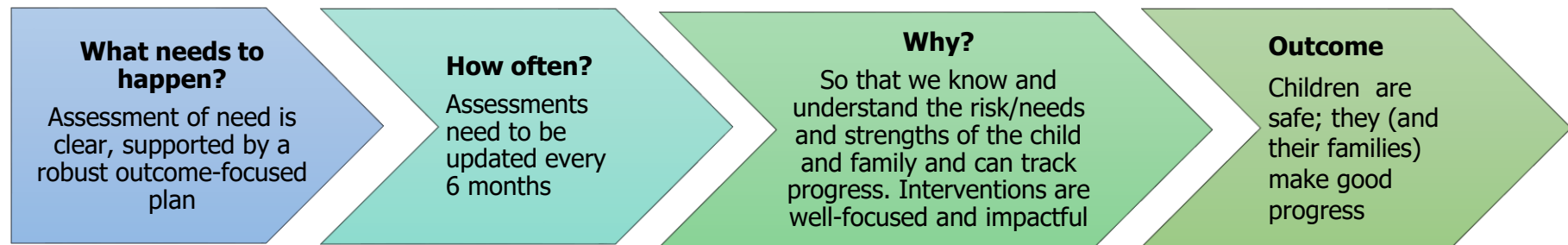
Local Authorities also need:

- ✓ A focus in getting basic social work practice right.
- ✓ A child-centred system with robust arrangements and processes.
- ✓ Consistent understanding and application of thresholds.
- ✓ Quality Assurance arrangements that support managers.
- ✓ Manageable caseloads.
- ✓ A strong learning culture.
- ✓ Collaborative working between teams to ensure effective information sharing
- ✓ Effective working with other agencies.
- ✓ A focus on achieving sustained improvements in the lives of children and their families.

In addition to the above, in 2021, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector emphasised the importance of being professionally curious by referring to, 'The right questions protect children.'

Outcomes

Outcomes are the results or impact of services or interventions. A relentless focus on outcomes for children and young people help frontline staff understand the direct correlation with their actions in making a difference to the lives of children and families who receive services. Often the focus is on the process rather than the outcome. The diagram below shows the outcome of assessments being updated on a regular basis. An outcomes approach puts children and families at the centre rather than the process.



Using an outcomes-based approach reinforces for frontline practitioners their role and responsibility, enabling them to see the direct link between their actions and the impact these have for children, young people, and families. If an assessment does not look beyond the superficial presentation of that child or family's life, then all you are dealing with are the behaviours resulting from the underlying issue. Consequently, change will be limited and unsustainable. This leads to poor outcomes, as plans become task focused with limited evidence of change or impact. An outcomes-based approach combined with a strong ethos around learning and development supports improved outcomes for children, young people and their families, in making meaningful and sustainable change.

The Corporation has invested significantly in systemic thinking and practice. Systemic practice is a way of working which emphasises people's relationships as key to understanding their experiences and affect change. Families are worked with rather than 'done to'. They are better supported to stay together, and practitioners are more satisfied with their jobs and more likely to stay in them. The idea is that every conversation is an opportunity for change, and so social workers must be given the tools to be more adaptable and react to different and complex situations as they arise.

Systemic Practice has been and continues to be deployed across several authorities. It has proven to be an effective change to the way services interact and work with families. Key features of systemic practice are that:

- it is an evidence based therapeutic approach, which refers to a range of psychological interventions for individuals, couples and families based on systemic concepts and theory,
- systemic theory holds that people make sense out of their lives and derive meaning through relationships. Relationships are all important in the construction and therefore the dissolution of problems,
- systemic interventions are designed to help people make changes in their thinking, behaviour, and understandings to relieve distress, improve the quality of significant relationships and make positive changes in their lives: this gives the systemic approach a particularly good fit with the aims of intervention in children's social work,
- a systemic approach focuses on the key relationships around children, young people, and their families, in order to build on strengths and resources and make lasting change, thereby reducing the future demand on services from the identified child, young person and their family.

Systemic family therapy has a strong evidence base (Carr, 2009, 2014, Stratton 2010) in the treatment of: child and adolescent mental health problems including conduct problems, emotional difficulties, ADHD, eating disorders, depression; the impact of parental mental health difficulties on children and families; abuse and neglect; trauma; poverty and social marginalisation; the needs of looked after children; family and couple relationship difficulties; changing family structures.

References

Susannah Bower, Carole Brooks and Jane Shuttleworth (April 2018) Research in Practice, Strategic Briefing, Building a Quality Culture in Child and Family Services.

Yvette Stanley, National Director for Social Care (May 2018) <https://socialcareinspection.blog.gov.uk/2018/05/how-do-we-achieve-outstanding-help-and-protection>.

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government July 2018).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

Workforce Development Strategy – Peoples Directorate 2017 – 2022 (currently under review)

Timeline of QA activity

January

- Update Service Improvement Plan. (quarterly basis)
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- CHSCB Multi-Agency Audits (Completed bi-annually).
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team. (termly)
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

February

- Practice Standards updated (although urgent updates will be completed on an ad hoc basis).
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Annual Tendering Process, QA of Safeguarding requirements.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

March

- Virtual School Head attends Children and Families Team Meeting to update staff on Education matters and discuss quality of PEP's and Pathway Plans.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- End of Year Appraisals.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Achieving Excellence Board
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

April

- Update Service Improvement Plan (quarterly basis).
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Appraisal and objectives for coming year.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Action for Children Survey completed with all young people open to the Children and Families Team.
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

May

- Independent practice and impact reviews completed on half of cases open to Children and Families Team.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team. (termly)
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

June

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Virtual Head produces and annual and interim report on the work that has been covered.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Audits completed in Early Years settings.
- Achieving Excellence Board.
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Annual audit on Independent Fostering Agencies and Semi-Independent accommodation.
- Achieving Excellence Meetings; reviewing progress made on recommendations from independent practice and impact reviews.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

July

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Update Service Improvement Plan (quarterly basis).
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.

- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

August

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer produces an annual report on Children Looked After in the City of London, which covers performance and QA of the work carried out with young people.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

September

- Practice Standards updated (although urgent updates will be completed on an ad hoc basis).
- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Appraisal mid-way review.
- SEND Panel.
- CHSCB Multi-Agency Audits. (Completed bi-annually).
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Achieving Excellence Board.

- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

October

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Update Service Improvement Plan (quarterly basis.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Children's Social Care and Early Help Service Manager, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Annual Ofsted Meeting and Self-Assessment update.
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

November

- Independent practice and impact reviews completed on half of cases open to Children and Families Team.
- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

December

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Reports on Electively Home Educated Children to Children's Senior Management Team (termly).
- Achieving Excellence Board.
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Achieving Excellence Meetings; reviewing progress made on recommendations from independent practice and impact reviews.
- Practice Observation carried out across all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors.
- Monthly meeting with the Education and Early Years Service and Children's Social Care team to discuss the Vulnerable Children list

Direct observation of staff across all levels is carried out throughout the year, the data from these observations will be on each individual's supervision record and support their learning and development record. Guidance for direct observation is in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1

Knowledge and Skills Statement for Child and Family Practitioners

A child and family social worker should be able to do the following:

1) Relationships and effective direct work

Build effective relationships with children, young people and families, which form the bedrock of all support and child protection responses. Be both authoritative and empathic and work in partnership with children, families and professionals, enabling full participation in assessment, planning, review and decision making. Ensure child protection is always privileged.

Provide support based on best evidence, which is tailored to meet individual child and family needs, and which addresses relevant and significant risks. Secure access to services, negotiating and challenging other professionals and organisations to provide the help required. Ensure children and families, including children in public care, receive the support to which they are entitled.

Support children and families in transition, including children and young people moving to and between placements, those returning home, those being adopted or moving through to independence. Help children to separate from, and sustain, multiple relationships recognising the impact of loss and change.

2) Communication

Communicate clearly and sensitively with children of different ages and abilities, their families and in a range of settings and circumstances. Use methods based on best evidence. Create immediate rapport with people not previously known which facilitates engagement and motivation to participate in child protection enquiries, assessments, and services.

Act respectfully even when people are angry, hostile, and resistant to change. Manage tensions between parents, carers and family members, in ways that show persistence, determination and professional confidence.

Listen to the views, wishes and feelings of children and families and help parents and carers understand the ways in which their children communicate through their behaviour. Help them to understand how they might communicate more effectively with their children.

Promote speech, language and communication support, identifying those children and adults who are experiencing difficulties expressing themselves. Produce written case notes and reports, which are well argued, focused, and jargon free. Present a clear analysis and a sound rationale for actions as well as any conclusions reached, so that all parties are well informed.

3) Child development

Observe and talk to children in their environment including at home, at school, with parents, carers, friends and peers to help understand the physical and emotional world in which the child lives, including the quality of child and parent/carer interaction and other key relationships. Establish the pattern of development for the child, promote optimal child development and be alert to signs that may indicate that the child is not meeting key developmental milestones, has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Take account of typical age-related physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural development over time, accepting that normative developmental tasks are different for each child depending on the interactions for that child between health, environmental and genetic factors. Assess the influence of cultural and social factors on child development, the effect of different parenting styles, and the effect of loss, change and uncertainty in the development of resilience.

Explore the extent to which behavioural and emotional development may also be a result of communication difficulties, ill health or disability, adjusting practice to take account of these differences. Seek further advice from relevant professionals to fully understand a child's development and behaviour.

4) Adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability

Identify the impact of adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability on family functioning and social circumstances and in particular the effect on children, including those who are young carers. Access the help and assistance of other professionals in the identification and prevention of adult social need and risk, including mental health and learning disability assessment.

Coordinate emergency and routine services and synthesise multi-disciplinary judgements as part of ongoing social work assessment. Use a range of strategies to help families facing these difficulties.

Identify concerning adult behaviours that may indicate risk or increasing risk to children. Assess the likely impact on, and inter-relationship between, parenting and child development. Recognise and act upon escalating social needs and risks, helping to ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded and that a child is protected, and their best interests always prioritised.

5) Abuse and neglect of children

Exchange information with partner agencies about children and adults where there is concern about the safety and welfare of children. Triangulate evidence to ensure robust conclusions are drawn. Recognise harm and the risk indicators of different forms of harm to children relating to sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect. Take into account the long-term effects of cumulative harm, particularly in relation to early indicators of neglect.

Consider the possibility of child sexual exploitation, grooming (on and offline), female genital mutilation and enforced marriage and the range of adult behaviours which pose a risk to children, recognising too the potential for children to be perpetrators of abuse. Lead the investigation of allegations of significant harm to children in consultation with other professionals and practice supervisors.

Draw one's own conclusions about the likelihood of, for example, sexual abuse or non-accidental injury having occurred and the extent to which any injury is consistent with the explanation offered. Commission a second professional opinion and take legal advice where necessary.

6) Child and family assessment

Carry out in-depth and ongoing family assessment of social need and risk to children, with particular emphasis on parental capacity and capability to change. Use professional curiosity and authority while maintaining a position of partnership, involving all key family members, including fathers. Acknowledge any conflict between parental and children's interests, prioritising the protection of children as set out in legislation.

Use child observation skills, genograms, ecomaps, chronologies and other evidence-based tools ensuring active child and family participation in the process. Incorporate the contributions that other professional disciplines make to social work assessments.

Hold an empathic position about difficult social circumstances experienced by children and families, taking account of the relationship between poverty and social deprivation, and the effect of stress on family functioning, providing help and support. Take into account individual child and family history and how this might affect the ability of adults and children to engage with services.

Recognise and address behaviour that may indicate resistance to change, ambivalent or selective cooperation with services, and recognise when there is a need for immediate action, and what other steps can be taken to protect children.

7) Analysis, decision-making, planning and review

Establish the seriousness that different risks present, and any harm already suffered by a child, balanced with family strengths and potential solutions. Set out the best options for resolving difficulties facing the family and each child, considering the risk of future harm and its consequences and the likelihood of successful change.

Prioritise children's need for emotional warmth, stability, and sense of belonging, particularly those in public care, as well as identity development, health and education, ensuring active participation and positive engagement of the child and family. Test multiple hypotheses about what is happening in families and to children, using evidence and professional judgement to reach timely conclusions. Challenge any prevailing professional conclusions in the light of new evidence or practice reflection.

Make realistic child centred plans within a review timeline, which will manage and reduce identified risks and meet the needs of the child. Ensure sufficient multi-disciplinary input into the process at all stages. Apply twin and triple track planning to minimise chances of drift or delay, being alert to the effectiveness or otherwise of current support plans.

8) The law and the family and youth justice systems

Page 167 Navigate the family and youth justice systems in England using legal powers and duties to support families, to protect children and to look after children in the public care system, including the regulatory frameworks that support the full range of permanence options.

Participate in decisions about whether to make an application to the family court, the order to be applied for, and the preparation and presentation of evidence.

Seek advice and second opinion as required in relation to the wide range of legal issues which frequently face children and families involved with statutory services including immigration, housing, welfare benefits, mental health and learning disability assessment, education and support for children with learning difficulties.

Use the law, regulatory and statutory guidance to inform practice decisions. Take into account the complex relationship between professional ethics, the application of the law and the impact of social policy on both.

9) The role of supervision

Recognise one's own professional limitations and how and when to seek advice from a range of sources, including practice supervisors, senior practice leaders and other clinical practitioners from a range of disciplines such as psychiatry, paediatrics and psychology. Discuss, debate, reflect upon and test hypotheses about what is happening within families, and with children.

Explore the potential for bias in decision-making and resolve tensions emerging from, for example, ethical dilemmas, conflicting information or differing professional positions. Identify which methods will be of help for a specific child or family and the limitations of different approaches. Make use of the best evidence from research to inform the complex judgements and decisions needed to support families and protect children.

Reflect on the emotional experience of working relationships with parents, carers and children, and consciously identify where personal triggers are affecting the quality of analysis or help. Identify strategies to build professional resilience and management of self.

10) Organisational context

Operate successfully in a wide range of organisational contexts complying with the checks and balances within local and national systems which are a condition of employment. Maintain personal and professional credibility through effective working relationships with peers, managers and leaders both within the profession, throughout multi-agency partnerships and public bodies, including the family courts.

Act in ways that protect the reputation of the employer organisation and the social work profession, whilst always privileging the best interests of children. Manage the specific set of organisational tasks relating to lead responsibility for children with the support of an appropriately qualified supervisor and use of the multi-agency support network.

Contribute to the organisation's role as corporate parent to children in public care, encouraging and advocating for organisational focus, resource and support so that children and young people can thrive and enjoy their childhood and move into independence with confidence in and ambition for their futures.

Appendix 2

Preparing for observation

- Decide with the person who will be observing you what aspect of your practice they will be looking at i.e. is it within a professional setting or with service users.
- Ensure that prior to any observation taking place you have explained the purpose of the observation to the service user/users and obtained their permission.
- Ensure that consideration has been given to the impact in relation to power imbalance and equalities.
- Think about the purpose of the intervention taking place, and what you are hoping to achieve. You may want to have a conversation about this with the person who is observing you.
- Try not to be anxious. The observation of practice facilitates reflection, coaching and constructive feedback which can help to support learning.
- Remember it is a joint discussion, focusing on how you felt during the process, how you felt it went with the service user/s, and whether there is anything you would do differently.

Observer

- Please ensure that the observation has your full attention and refrain from using your phone and that it is on silent.
- Be clear as to the purpose of the observation and check whether professionals/ service users are happy for you to be there to observe.
- Be clear that you are not involved in the intervention and are only to observe. To reinforce this, it may be helpful to sit away from the interaction.
- It can be distracting if you are taking notes during the meeting and you could easily miss important aspect of the intervention.
- Following the observation write up your findings, reflecting on not only what you have heard, but also what you have observed and felt in relation to the observation.
- When giving feedback it is important that it is a two-way conversation. Establish how the person being observed felt the intervention went, be honest and constructive when giving feedback, working from a strength-based approach rather than a deficit model.
- Reflect on the discussion that has taken place and the learning that has been achieved.

A copy of the completed observation should be given to the person being observed and the person line managing the individual and should be kept with the supervision records. The quality assurance lead/principal social worker is to be notified of when the observation has taken place so it can be centrally recorded for auditing purposes.

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Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	07/06/2021
Subject: Service Development Plan, Children's Social Care and Early Help	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1 & 2
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	NA
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report authors: Rachel Talmage, Service Manager, Children's Social Care and Early Help	

Summary

The Service Development Plan has been updated to provide evidence of progress in the last quarter with the work of the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service.

The cover report highlights work that has had a good impact on children and families such as the City of London and Kings College London Trainee Family Therapy Clinic, and our work supporting children in care and care leavers around covid.

The report shows plans for the forthcoming year.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Service Development Plan sets out objectives that aim to improve outcomes for children and their families. Objectives are drawn from listening to children and families, from staff, from audit and from the Achieving Excellence Board.

2. Ofsted made two recommendations in their judgment on our practice¹ published April 2020. These recommendations remain at the start of the Service Development Plan to keep sight on them. Actions resulting from the recommendations are complete, save for establishing the pilot Deputy Team Manager post. This recommendation has been put forward as part of the Target Operating Model and an outcome awaited.
3. The Covid Section from 2020/21 has been retained as the pandemic continues, although restrictions are lifting. The other actions outlined in the plan are new for 2021/22 and serve to develop the service and keep pace with excellence in practice.

Current Position

4. A new 2021-22 plan has been created following the completion of actions from the 2020-21.
5. Key achievements from 2020-21 include:
 - a. *Timely child in need plans*: managers chair multi agency meetings at the outset and where needed due to complexity or confrontation. Cases have been closed in a timely way when outcomes have been achieved.
 - b. *Virtual family therapy*: Families open for child in need and child protection support accessed family therapy virtually, with attendance being exceptional. Kings College London found that the trainee therapists had a diverse caseload, with very high engagement with families in the City, which reflects parental commitment, social work support and value of the project.
 - c. *Covid confidence*: Young people knowing and understanding covid rules and safety. Feedback from a keywork provider in April 2021 evidenced that our young people were knowledgeable, and the social work service provided clear and updated advice.
 - d. *Reducing immigration delay*: Work with the home office to enable virtual interviews for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, which reduced anxiety for young people.
 - e. *Specialist Sudanese Support*: Establishment of professional relationship with Waging Peace, a charity providing support to Sudanese refugees in the UK, leading to mentoring and emotional support to our Sudanese young people.

¹ <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50149902> accessed 19 May 2021

- f. *Improving sleep*: and reducing the impact of trauma via a joint project between City of London and Coram.
 - g. *Social work development*: three students joined the service in the second half of 2020-21, two social workers members undertook Practice Educator training and supported the students, one social worker was attached to the trainee therapy clinic.
6. This 2021-22 plan seeks to extend the sleep work to include foster carers and widen this work across all keywork providers used by the City. The contract is set up and work to start in June 2021.
 7. The 2021-22 plan seeks to strengthen our parenting support offer by running a face to face programme in the autumn term. This action is the only amber action, as the group could not run this Spring as hoped due to covid restrictions.
 8. Strengthening our special educational needs and disability (SEND) transitions work is a key action for quarter one/two and will be undertaken jointly across the People Department. The purpose is to ensure early planning and clear expectations for children with disabilities and their parents in looking forward through teenage years and into adult services.

Corporate & Strategic Implications:

9. *People are safe and feel safe*: children's social care and early help services aim to improve safety and reduce harm. The service is governed by statute and if the service were to not meet its obligations this would have significant corporate and strategic implications.
10. *People enjoy good health and wellbeing*: the transitions work with SEND children is a good example of promoting good health and wellbeing with co ordinated care and support, with clear long and short term plans.

Climate implications:

11. none

Financial implications:

12. Children's social care is a statutory service. If, for example, children arrive in the city with additional needs, or further UASC arrive, then a service has to be provided. If risks escalate, then court action might be required. These unexpected needs will have financial implications.

Resource implications:

13. Children's Social Care and Early help is a responsive service and is seeking to establish additional social work posts which have been filled temporarily by locums

as part of the Target Operating Model. The benefit of establishing the posts is consistency of worker for children and families.

Risk implications:

14. There is risk to children if harm is not identified and responded to. There is reputational risk to the City if outstanding children's services were to drop in quality. The drive to maintain and develop quality services is strong and the oversight rigorous. Audit cycles are frequent and there is extra scrutiny and challenge from the Achieving Excellence Board.

Equalities implications:

15. Systemic practice is the practice model used throughout children's social care and early help. The 'social graces' are used in individual and group supervision, looking at similarity and difference in every piece of casework. Equalities implications are core in every interaction. The 'social graces' include gender, geography, race, religion, age, ability, appearance, class, culture, ethnicity, education, employment, sexuality, sexual orientation and spirituality.
16. Social Care and Early Help require that every contract review considers the Public Sector Equality duty, and that every commissioned service provides a short report on the equalities implications of their service.
17. The book club on race and racism should upskill and enable staff across the People Department to notice microaggressions and be able to use the learning in their work with families in as sensitive and helpful way as possible, and to advocate for/with and provide an anti-racist service.

Security implications:

18. The social care and early help service are trained in the Prevent agenda, although have not needed to refer for a Channel Panel in the last year. Staff follow the lone working policy in respect of personal safety, and have a personal safety Skyguard device which allows for additional protection.

Conclusion

19. The Service Development Plan sets out the actions for the next year, with an overall ambition of providing the right help in the right place at the right time, to promote safety and wellbeing of children and their families. This is a live document and will grow in response to family and staff feedback, national research and audit.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Service Development Plan 2021-2

Rachel Talmage (Green)

Service Manager

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Service Development Plan 2021-22

Rachel Green, Children's Social Care and Early Help

Recommendation	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	Outcomes for Children	RAG rated progress	
OFSTED FINDINGS							
The management overview of families stepped down to early help to ensure that families receive help with in a timescale that is right for them	Early Help Co-Ordinator & Mosaic Lead	Make Early Help Assessment work step & TAF meeting process live on Mosaic	complete	EH worker will have tested the work steps.	Children are helped quickly.		complete
	Early Help Co-Ordinator	Runs a weekly report on referral into early help and timescale of completing an EH assessment.	complete	Report is produced	Children are seen and supported quickly. 100% of families said communication from EH was good.		complete
	CSC & EH Management Team	Reviews EH step downs at weekly management meeting for 8 weeks & records overview on Mosaic.	complete	Management Meeting notes evidence overview. Mosaic notes evidence oversight. Service manager to evidence at AEB in writing with examples.	Children experience seamless transition between teams, and families aren't on hold/experiencing delay in meeting need. Our data shows that there is no delay Sept-Dec		complete
The recording of management decision making at all stages of a child s journey.	Assistant Director & Service Manager	Build management capacity. Draft review in place, need to take forward.	01/09/2021	Revised structure chart published. Staff in place.	Children and families experience an exceptional service, with access to speak with managers.		The proposal has been submitted as part of the TOM. Is under consideration and outcome awaited.
	Assistant Director & Service Manager	Extend Deputy Team Manager Pilot, to retain capacity whilst CV-19 has put service review on hold.	complete	DTM postholder is in place throughout CV-19 and to end of service review	as above		Extension request approved.
	CSC & EH Management Team	Has recording as a standing item on management meeting agenda. Team to remind each other on recording reasons as well as decisions on case files.	complete	Management meeting notes show discussion.	Children and families experience consistent and timely decision making.		November 2020 audit shows strong management recording of reasons for decision making
	CSC & EH Management Team	121s with each level of managers includes a section on recording, with spot checking.	complete	121s evidence spot checking and discussion.	Children and families experience consistent and timely decision making, if staff are on leave or absent.		Audit shows strong management recording of reasons for decision making
BLACK LIVES MATTER							
Staff are able to support children and families through experiences of racism, and are able to be anti racist in work. The service is actively anti-racist in the way it operates. Work is broadened across People Dept as part of think family approach	Service Manager and People Equality Group	Facilitate 28 fortnightly anti racism sessions, across the People Dept, following the workbook 'Me and White Supremacy' by Layla Saad	01-Mar-22	One page report completed, including the anonymous staff feedback gained.	Children and families are able to share experience of racism, and be able to talk about the impact on themselves. Children and families has social workers that advocate against racism. EG challenging school decisions - e.g. with hair. Excellence in Practice		3 sessions have taken place to date. Update provided to People Dept Senior Management Team

COVID ACTION PLAN

Young people know about Covid and are able to follow PHE guidelines	CSC & EH Management Team	Social workers/EH workers to be in touch weekly and give messages about Covid using WhatsApp, email, call, video links as suits the young person/family.	complete	Visit data shows weekly contact for March/April/May. 121s covered covid with each client throughout this period.	children and young people understand covid rules and safety and reduce risk of infection/illness.		retained as covid continuing. Feedback from providers show that our young people are confident in understanding about transmission, rules and vaccines.
Mental Health of UASC is supported, and trauma reduced.	Service Manager	Coram UASC early intervention project runs. Providing sleep training to front line and keywork staff. In addition to charitable therapeutic input and CAMHS and the CoL Systemic Clinic.	30-Aug-20	Training has been offered to keywork staff and social workers. MyLife and Pathfinders in August.	Sleep is improved, and ability to live with trauma is extended. Excellence in Practice		Training took place with social workers and keyworkers online. The project is now working direct with young people and their support systems to improve sleep, with sessions on a weekly basis. The plan is to develop this work across London.
Mental health of local children and families is supported.	Service Manager	Set up, run and review CoL trainee systemic family therapy clinic weekly. Joint project with Kings College London.	30-Oct-20	Mid way review report to CSMT October 2020	Children and parents are able to emotionally manage day to day life better, with therapy being offered in their homes online throughout the pandemic. Excellence in Practice.		Clinic now up and running, and is seeing four families (3 CIN, 1 EH and two UASCs currently). A report is underway from the Systemic Psychotherapist running the programme, which will look at impact and outcomes alongside the 9 equality characteristics.
From Audit Findings in 2020-21 (note: May 21 audit underway)							
MANAGEMENT NOTES	MANAGERS	RECORDS INFORMAL AND FORMAL DISCUSSIONS - CONSISTENTLY ACROSS MANAGERS	01-Dec-21	DONE	Transparency for children. Decisions can easily be challenged. Children don't need to retell their story.		Audit (Nov) shows good timely management recording. Keeping on plan as will be change in managers in August with TM returning from maternity leave
VIEWES OF EXTENDED FAMILY/ABSENT PARENTS IN ASSESSMENT	MANAGERS	QUESTIONS BEING ASKED IN 121. WORKERS TO THINK ABOUT THE WHOLE FAMILY IN EXTENDED SYSTEM	01-Dec-21	Supervision notes evidence this. Audit findings show it.	Family systems are understood, risks and resources identified. Children protected.		This is in place. Kept on 2021/22 tracker to ensure embedded and to give opportunity to check against audits.
AEB action tracker							
Travelling to placement overnight. Expectation of practice.	SM	Police to accompany YP to placement where able. Contract with EDT to be reviewed.	Feb-21	Contract has changed	Children do not go missing on travel to placement overnight. Excellence in practice.		No child has gone missing due to EDT having moved them from police to first placement. All children accompanied in the daytime - by police/social worker/keyworker. Kept on as AEB review: young people chose to go to police for safety, therefore we deem police ok to accompany overnight to placement. Different if criminal route.
Develop CIN/CP work to be outstanding in terms of impact and outcomes.	Managers	Actively include CIN/CP families in Family Therapy Clinic	Dec-21	Midway report evidences take up	Families at home who are struggling get help in their home (online) together. Children are supported in their own safety by their families. Excellence in Practice		in place. CP/CIN families taking up therapy. Extended date to end Dec, to ensure tracking of CIN/CP case inclusion with the next set of clinic sessions. Midway report went to CSMT and is going to AEB in June 2021
2021/22 Self Assessment to be completed	SM	To write SEF	31/08/2021	SEF in place	Full accountable review of overall service to children and their families. Excellence in Practice		
Annual Survey October 2020							
CIN/CP							
Housing: overcrowding	SM & Housing department	Ideas session with housing and tenancy support	Feb-21	housing strategy in place	children in safe good quality housing. Parents aware of choice and limitations. Excellence in Practice		

knowledge of complaints process	SWs/Managers	At C&F stage, and every CIN review	Feb-21	Audit findings	children and families are able to say if something is wrong Excellence in Practice		reviews always include a reminder of complaints
Immigration clarity	SWs and Managers	Coram legal support, UASC lead	Feb-21	quarterly immigration review	permanent legal stay in the UK Excellence in Practice		Lead UASC worker in place, excellent team understanding of immigration, cover of legal costs good
Employability support	SWs & managers	Adult Education/Prospects/CoL Champions	Nov-20	Monthly ETE review notes show prospects know of every YP	young people have timely ETE support, with professionals working together Excellence in Practice		All services work together every month for every child NEET.
Care Leavers							
Housing. Good quality. Permanent housing.	SM & Housing	workshop with housing and tenancy support	Nov-20	Video and session on tenancy support has taken place	young people have realistic expectations on housing Excellence in Practice		video's shared, tenancy support sessions held
Pledge awareness	SWs	Staff session. Participation officer.	Dec-21	Pledge session undertaken. CICC session.	children confident in our promises		Pledge session undertaken with Cicc Feb 2021. Kept on 2021 tracker to ensure consistency and awareness with newly arriving UASC
Knowledge of advocacy/complaints	SWs	At PPM/LAC Review/Visits	Nov-20	LAC review minutes record reminder of advocacy/complaints	Young people know how to complain and argue if they disagree		
Loneliness	SWs	Independent visitors. Perhaps link with Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities? Waging Peace.	Mar-22	Independent visitor numbers higher at next quarterly review and sustained each quarter. Waging Peace have our YP to work with.	Young people have at least one trusted adult Excellence in Practice		Have increased capacity for Independent Visitors. Waging Peace procurement checks underway, and they are working with YP now. Retained on plan to extend and secure offer.
	SM	Review opportunity with new Family Action service, a support line every evening till midnight	Aug-21	A decision will have been made to use or not use the support, if it will be of use to our young people and if it is possible in budget, or if funding can be found. An update to CSMT in August, with minutes to evidence if this is the right service for COL	Young people have someone to call if lonely/worried		
Immigration support	SWs	Waging Peace to help with applications for Sudanese children	Mar-22	Waging Peace work with our boys. And see above re legal support.	culturally appropriate immigration support. Excellence in Practice		as above
Early Help							
Housing - overcrowding and pace of response	SM & housing	reflects on family feedback and makes a plan	complete	a housing strategy for EH & CSC is in place	children in safe good quality housing. Parents aware of choice and limitations. Excellence in Practice		kept on 2021 tracker, to make sure staff are clear with resident families about limited options within the city for bigger properties and to encourage moves out of the city to bigger homes where space is so tight it is affecting family functioning and wellbeing of children.
April 2021 stretching plans							
Preparation for independence: building on the keywork sessions, running a rolling preparation for independence training programme.	Participation Service, with input from SM	Creates a training programme	Sep-21	training programme in place and young people have joined in,	Ready and able to take on own tenancy		in development stage
CIN - Transitions for children with SEND Transitions pathway strengthened between adult and children's social care and education.	TM with Education and Early Years' Service	Creates a written pathway document with clearly outlined expectations and resources for children/teens and their families	Sep-21	Written documents in place	Ease of moving from children's to adults services. Clear educational pathway. Reduction of stress for families.		First session planned and in diaries. No barrier to work forseen

Review work with children with SEND and look to develop further. Following audit and following feedback from SEND board and specialist consultant.	SM	Reviews feedback on audits around disability. Reads updates from council for disabled children. Reviews need for a Designated Social Care Officer. Uses feedback from SEND board.	Sep-21	SWOT analysis to Children's Senior Management Team with recommendations in September 2021	healthy, achieving children with leisure opportunities. More relaxed family environments.	
Set up parenting programme in the City, to enable parents to learn from one another	EH	Runs first strengthening families strengthening communities programme in the Square Mile	Dec-21	Programme will have taken place and record of numbers attendees taken	safer happier home lives.	Planned programme due to start in April, but delayed due to risk assessment re covid. Note families offered virtual parenting programme as an alternative
Develop sleep programme with foster carers and early help	SM & EH, with Coram	Adapts sleep programme offer to a wider audience.	Dec-21	Programme of training delivered. Audits show usage of sleep work	better sleep, better mental health	contract agreed for 2021/22. This work will also be research evaluated.
Review of MASH, given London wide review of MASH	SC	learns about pan london changes as they evolve, reviews our MASH processes	Aug-21	two page paper to CSMT	timely response to queries/referrals. Children safer.	Review project underway.
CIN/CP work is consistently outstanding.	SM	Hold systemic management session on strengthening CIN/CP work.	Sep-21	AEB chair is undertaking a thematic audit on EH/CIN/CP in September 21	Children are not experiencing or at risk of significant harm	Our CIN tracker and systemic therapy offer has strengthened this work to date.
Family feedback is captured quickly and effectively. Postal feedback requests are not working.	SM	Creates feedback call/email process at end of our involvement.	Oct-21	tracker evidences feedback discussion and if this has worked	learning captured from other children/families to help keep children safe	

Committee	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	07/06/2021
Subject: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
What is the source of Funding?	The Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Y
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Theresa Shortland, Head of Service – Education and Early Years	

Summary

The SEND Strategy 2020–2024 sets out the City of London's (COL's) ambitious vision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) from birth to 25 years, and details what we will do to achieve this vision.

This report informs Members of the key priorities identified in the strategy, which will be progressed over this year. This report provides an update on the progress in implementing the SEND Strategy and an update of the SEND work the Education and Early Years Service have undertaken since September 2020 at the start of the new academic year.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Education and Early Years Service has maintained the capacity to provide services and has continued to meet statutory deadlines in relation to Education, Health and Care needs assessment and annual reviews of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The SEND Team has maintained regular contact with all children and young people with EHCPs to ensure their continued access to education and other essential services. At the start of the pandemic, a Vulnerable Children's Register was set up with the Children's Social Care

Service, and access to education and essential services has been regularly monitored through this register.

2. During each COVID-19 lockdown, schools have been required to remain open for vulnerable pupils, and on average, 50% of children and young people with EHCPs continued to attend school, with home-to-school transport enabling those with EHCPs to attend where required. For the remaining children and young people with EHCPs, the SEND Team has actively encouraged their attendance at school where appropriate and confirmed that they have been able to engage with, and access, the remote learning with the required IT and digital technology. All childcare providers in the CoL have remained fully open since June 2020.
3. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) reported concerns about the number of children who did not return to school after the first two periods of the national lockdown, and who were being home educated because of fears about COVID-19. As reported previously, this was also seen in the COL. The COL Education Welfare Service and schools worked with families during the lockdown periods to ensure that they were fully aware of the undertaking and their responsibilities.
4. With the reopening of the schools in March 2021, all children and young people with EHCPs, including those who previously expressed concerns about returning, are now being educated in school.

Current Position – update

5. The SEND Strategy 2020–2024 sets out three key outcomes to be achieved by 2024:
 1. We have a robust and inclusive multi-agency approach to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.
 2. All children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for and have successful transitions to adulthood.
 3. Children and young people with SEND are integral and valued members of the City of London community.
6. A self-evaluation form (SEF) and action plan are in place to plan and track the progress of these outcomes. These are being monitored through the SEND Programme Board and will be reported to the Sub-Committee during the year.
7. The SEND Implementation and Development Project was commissioned to provide the expertise needed to support the SEND Team with the development of the SEND Strategy priorities. The new contractors have been engaged since 1 April 2021, they bring a wealth of experience gained in advising local authorities on SEND issues and is a former teacher, headteacher and Ofsted Inspector.
8. In terms of the first priority, the Principal Educational Psychologist and Early Years Advisor have resumed making visits to schools and Early Years settings. These visits comply with all necessary COVID-19 guidance and

protocols. This engagement has been important in meeting the needs of our children and young people.

9. In March 2021, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator.(SENCO) Network ran a special training session on 'Returning to School: the wellbeing of children and adults in school' to help prepare the SENCOs in schools where children and young people from the City attend. This was led by the Counselling Psychologist who supports the Aldgate School through the City and Hackney Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS) Project.
10. Guidance for schools and settings around the provision that the local authority expects to be available for children and young people with SEND, and provision tables showing the interventions, responses, resources and outcomes that could be expected, have been refreshed. These will further support schools and settings in identifying and assessing needs. We are already considering how this can be further strengthened to provide guidance for post-16 and to also inform decision-making at the SEND panel meetings.
11. COL Early Years providers can access Early Years SENCO Level 3 training and six staff are currently enrolled on the course. Further training is currently being planned to ensure that practitioners have the necessary knowledge and skills to assess and support the needs of children attending their settings.
12. The work of the SEND Consultant will further strengthen this work as they undertake visits and works with all education settings attended by COL children and young people. This work, which will begin in the second half of the summer term, will assess how the educational settings are identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.
13. March 2020 to April 2021 saw a 25% increase in the number of children and young people with EHCPs, and a 50% increase in children and young people being referred for an EHC needs assessment. The majority of those with EHCPs are from black and Asian ethnicity. Despite this increase, statutory timescales have been met and the rigour around assessing needs and arranging provision has been maintained.
14. In terms of children and young people transitioning to adulthood, there has been an increase since March 2020, with 35% of those with EHCPs within the 14 to 25 years age group. Person-centred planning meetings for those in this age range have been further developed to ensure that their views about the life they would like to have are captured during the annual review of their EHCPs. An independent facilitator has been commissioned to use creative ways to develop plans with children and young people which focus on the three key areas for preparing for adulthood: employment, further education and/or training; independent living; and community inclusion and health. These collaborative and informal meetings, which include the young person's family, friends and key professionals, ensure that their views, wishes, and aspirations are at the heart of the meeting.

15. Transition to adulthood is a key area for us to develop further. There are also plans for a task and finish group with the SEND Team, Children's and Adult's Social Care to develop a pathways document for families and young people, which will detail what to expect and consider at key stages from 14 to 25 years old.
16. Alongside the Education and Skills Service, the SEND Team is pursuing opportunities in the City for work experience and apprenticeships for children and young people with EHCPs.
17. These three outcomes were co-produced with COL families and we want to ensure that children and young people, as well as their parents and carers, are integral and valued members of the COL community are fully aware of these outcomes. We want their views to be at the heart of decisions when services are being developed. To support this, an easy-read version of the SEND Strategy is in production and consideration is being given to developing a video with children and young people so that they can readily understand and access the strategy and the plans. These will sit on the COL Local Offer, alongside the SEND Strategy.
18. We are also planning to carry out a review of how we work with the City Parent Carer Forum (CPCF) to ensure that we have a wider representation of the views of the local SEND community.
19. Ensuring that the needs of children and young people with SEND are considered when policies are being developed is an important part of our work.
20. The City of London's Children and Young People's Plan is currently being reviewed. It is essential that the voice of children and young people with SEND is reflected within this plan, and that this includes support for them to transition into adulthood.
21. The City and Hackney Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020–26 is currently being consulted on and the Education and Early Years Team have been actively engaged in providing feedback to ensure that it meets the needs of COL families. It is therefore hoped that we will see improved services for our young people with SEND in this strategy going forward.
22. It is essential that we have access to up-to-date data that shows trends and tells the story about the COL SEND community to properly inform our work. There continues to be work on developing the SEND Data Dashboard with the Strategy and Performance Team, who are leading on this, and the progress of this is reported to the SEND Programme Board.

Key Data

23. The key data on those in transition to adulthood is held on the Transitions Register with the SEND Service. A SEND Data Dashboard is in development to provide the SEND Programme Board with a data overview of SEND and quarterly monitoring. The numbers of children on EHCPs and SEND support in the City are small, and much of the data cannot be shared in the public

domain due to safeguarding issues. The data held by the SEND Team is used to keep an overview and monitor EHCP process from referral for assessment to final plan.

24. Key data from health services is available but COL does not currently receive health data systematically. Some data is shared on individual cases, but not for the City as a whole. Disaggregation of data for COL can be difficult for health services to complete. The effective commissioning of services to meet the needs of those children and young people with SEND in the City relies on accurate and current data. We are in the process of developing a data dashboard for SEND and finalising the data-sharing agreement with Homerton University Hospital.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

25. Strategic implications – Corporate outcome: Contribute to a flourishing society by ensuring that all children and young people with SEND and their families have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.
26. Resource implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
27. Financial implications – The SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
28. Legal implications – The duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with SEND are contained in the Children and Families Act 2014. This legislation sits in the context of the Equality Act 2010. The Ofsted/CQC inspection framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.
29. Risk implications – If children's SEND issues are not identified early, assessed and supported, this will impact the educational attainment, progress and wider lifetime chances for those young people.
30. Equalities implications – All children and young people, regardless of their special educational needs and disabilities, will be part of a community where they can learn, achieve and participate in activities with other children and young people, and will be prepared to have a fulfilled adult life.
31. Disability and Race are protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.
32. Climate implications – n/a
33. Security implications – n/a

Conclusion

34. Progress in implementing the SEND Strategy is on track and work has commenced on the three key outcomes to be achieved by 2024. The SEND service continues to meet statutory deadlines and provide resources to support schools. The SEND service also continues to work with children and

young people with SEND and our key partners to deliver SEND services in the City.

Appendices

- None

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