



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

**Date:** THURSDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2023  
**Time:** 1.45 pm  
**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

**Members:** Ruby Sayed (Chair)  
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chair)  
Joanne Tufuo Abeyie  
Anne Corbett  
Mary Durcan  
Deputy John Fletcher  
Benjamin Murphy  
Ceri Wilkins

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**Michael Cogher**  
**Acting 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. **MINUTES**

To agree the minutes meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 7 - 16)

4. **THE CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

Report of the Independent Chair, City and Hackney Safeguarding Board.

*Please note - the appendix to this report is a very large document and will be circulated separately.*

**For Information**  
(Pages 17 - 18)

5. **CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 AND CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY UPDATE**

Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

*Please note a non-public appendix at agenda item 20.*

**For Information**  
(Pages 19 - 36)

6. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q2 2022/23**

Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

*Please note a non-public appendix at agenda item 21.*

**For Information**  
(Pages 37 - 38)

7. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER ANNUAL REPORT FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022**

Report of the Virtual Headteacher.

*Please note a non-public appendix at agenda item 22.*

**For Information**  
(Pages 39 - 40)

8. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022/2023**

Report of the Virtual Headteacher.

**For Information**  
(Pages 41 - 56)

9. **ACTION FOR CHILDREN SURVEY 2022**  
Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.  
*Please note - the appendix to this report is a large document and will be circulated separately.*

**For Information**  
(Pages 57 - 60)
10. **PARTICIPATION SERVICE - CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC) UPDATED PLEDGE**  
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 61 - 66)
11. **CARE LEAVERS AND THEIR EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT**  
Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 67 - 74)
12. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 7 2022/23 (OCTOBER 2022)**  
Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.  
*Please note a non-public appendix at agenda item 23.*

**For Information**  
(Pages 75 - 82)
13. **LOCAL AUTHORITIES DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) ANNUAL REPORT 2021 TO 2022**  
Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 83 - 96)
14. **PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2021 TO 2022**  
Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 97 - 106)
15. **OFSTED FOCUS VISIT INSPECTION OF CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY HELP**  
Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 107 - 116)
16. **QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

18. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

**For Decision**

**Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda**

19. **COMPLEX NEEDS NATIONAL REVIEW**

Report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 117 - 130)

20. **CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 AND CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY UPDATE – NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX**

**For Information**  
(Pages 131 - 138)

21. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q2 2022/23 - NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX**

**For Information**  
(Pages 139 - 148)

22. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER ANNUAL REPORT FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022- NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX**

**For Information**  
(Pages 149 - 160)

23. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 7 2022/23 (OCTOBER 2022)- NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX**

**For Information**  
(Pages 161 - 180)

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

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

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

Monday, 7 November 2022

**Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 3.30 pm**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Ruby Sayed (Chairman)	Ceri Wilkins
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chairman)	Joanna Tufuo Abeyie
Mary Durcan	Deputy John Fletcher
Anne Corbett	

#### **Officers:**

Chris Pelham	- Assistant Director, People – Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks
Sharon Cushnie	- Community and Children's Services
Pat Dixon	- Community and Children's Services
Rachel Talmage	- Community and Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Teresa Shortland	- Community and Children's Services
Kirsty Hilton	- Community and Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services
Ria Lane	- Community and Children's Services
Scott Myers	- Community and Children's Services
Ian Tweedie	- Community and Children's Services
Dr Adi Cooper	- Independent Chair, City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board
Kelly Duggan	- Youth Offending Service, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Sharon Long	- Director, Partnership for Young London
Anna Jones	- Designated Nurse for Looked After Children
Dr Ninethrie Weerasinghe	- Designated Doctor for Looked After Children

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ben Murphy.

Members welcomed new Member Deputy John Fletcher, who had replaced Alderman Gregory Jones.

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

There were no declarations.

### **3. MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2022 be approved.

**4. CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board, which outlined the Board's Annual Report for 2021/22. It focused on the key achievements, data for 2020/21 and future priorities for the Board.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

1. Significant progress in homelessness and rough sleeping, safeguarding and health and wellbeing reviews.
2. Good work despite challenges from the pandemic, which had severely limited engagement with residents. Preparations were now underway for next year's CQC inspection.
3. Historically it had been difficult to engage with people with safeguarding experience. Officers are confident of more success with the new Advocacy Project; an independent voluntary sector agency, which has been commissioned by the London Borough of Hackney.
4. Adult Social Care is covered later on this agenda. Members noted current workforce challenges, together with the cost of living and rising poverty levels, and how Local Authorities need to be prepared for the impact on services.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**5. YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE (YOS) INSPECTION REPORT AND ACTION PLAN**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the YOS. Members noted that the City of London Corporation commissions the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to provide this, as it is a statutory requirement for local authorities to provide a service to resident children who use offending behaviour. In April 2022, an inspection of the commissioned service was undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation (HMIP). This report presented the inspection findings and the subsequent improvement plan.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

1. Since 2021, the entire management team had been replaced, there were now additional resources in the team, including an improvement officer.
2. There had been extensive consultation with staff and the wider service to ensure that all concerns were being captured.
3. The Governance Board had been split into Executive and Operational, which would enable it to hold the Management Team to account. The

Executive Board is multi-agency, comprising of Youth Justice, the Metropolitan Police, City of London Corporation, Tower Hamlets, Public Health and schools. Board Members are being offered enhanced training and a new handbook, setting out expectations in terms of disproportionality and all aspects of prevention.

4. There had been considerable investment in data, with a new analyst joining the team in January.
5. Out of Court Disposals had been re-designed, using turnaround funding.
6. There had not been any City children in custody over the past 3 years but the improvement plan will ensure the service is prepared.
7. There are 3 KPI's measuring:
  - Re-offending - one of lowest rates in London.
  - Numbers in custody – one of the lowest rates in London.
  - The number of first time entrants – this is relatively high and the team are using a triage resolution, from turnaround funding, to divert children away from the criminal justice system.
8. In 2021-22 there were 72 children in the system and at the same point this year it had reduced to 25.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

#### 6. **PAN LONDON CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Partnership for Young London, which provided an update on the Pan London Children in Care Council, which is sponsored by the City of London Corporation, in conjunction with the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS). The report covered progress on deliverables, outcomes and partnerships developed.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) Members asked if there are any areas of good practice in the private sector, noting that care leavers are three times more likely to be unemployed. The Officer advised of a covenant whereby organisations can pledge their commitment; i.e. - two high profile organisations have offered laptops and training to care leavers. The Chair advised of a free prescription service and a group of dentists across London, who are offering support to care leavers.
- b) In respect of the 2-year funding, the Department will be looking to maximise resources in other organisations: i.e. – HMIP, in respect of getting young people back into employment, and a lot of private sector employers are supporting this. There is a strong governance group across London, feeding into leading care networks.

- c) The Chair had met with the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, to organise a member briefing promoting apprenticeships in City Organisations.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. **PARTICIPATION SERVICE - SUMMER ACTIVITIES**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services which outlined Summer activities, provided by the Participation Service over the summer holidays, for looked-after children and care leavers.

Members noted that young people from the CiCC would be invited to attend the Safeguarding Sub Committee, when the Pledge is reviewed. This will also provide an opportunity for them to provide feedback on the activities they enjoy. Members asked if the City could resume hosting CiCC meetings at Guildhall, with lunch provided, as this had ceased during the pandemic.

The Assistant Director advised that, as of August 2022, there are currently 13 children in care and 52 care leavers. Some prefer not to engage, and some attend all events and activities. The CiCC meetings average attendance is between 10 and 15. Although the number of boys is greater, there is no gender bias in terms of the choice of activities. Some of the older female care leavers choose to go on trips and activities with their Social Worker. Members noted that a recent paintballing event in Croydon was in a fairly remote location, so transport provision would be reviewed in the future.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. **CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services which provided the latest version of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, following its annual review.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **AN INTRODUCTION TO ADULT SAFEGUARDING**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which outlined the legislative context for adult safeguarding.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The distinction between areas which fall under Section 42 of the Care Act, which is aimed at immediate risk, and others which have less defined responsibilities around prevention. The officer explained that Adult Safeguarding focusses on the outcomes that the adult might be seeking, but they don't always align with the preferences of the family or the advice of the Social Worker.



- b) In terms of the ageing population, officers had been analysing census data in order to model liberty protection, which appears later on this agenda, and the anticipated increasing demands on adult social care. Similar modelling was also underway in terms of the energy crisis, using the City's demography. Whilst there is a 10-year plan for Health Integration, there is still uncertainty about government funding, and the Health and Care Levy has changed. However, the modelling and transformation will help the service to prepare within available resources.
- c) The City Corporation is fortunate in that its numbers are low but it has less resources than other local authorities. However, the City also knows its clients very well, and the home care provision was recently re-tendered to provide intensive support on discharge and/or preventing hospital admissions. Members noted that the risk is active but being mitigated as far as possible.
- d) All urgent concerns about safeguarding should be acted on without consent. However, if assistance is refused, then it becomes a matter of mental capacity and consent. Staff in public facing services receive safeguarding training; a recent rise in reporting suggests a higher level of awareness.
- e) The Safeguarding Adults Board commissions training for multi-agency professionals in terms of identification and awareness of Safeguarding and the Department monitors take up.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

#### 10. **LIBERTY PROTECTION SAFEGUARDING**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019, which replaced the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) with the Liberty Protection Safeguards.

During the discussion on this item, the following points were noted:

- a) The legislation was postponed during Covid but there are currently no implementation dates, nor details around the training and qualification pathways for new Mental Capacity Professionals. Once these details are known, the Department will need a minimum of 6-months to train staff. Members noted that a liberty protection safeguard, or deprivation of liberty, had previously been defined by the Courts. As this had been a very wide definition, it was likely that it would narrow within the new Code of Practice, which is expected during the Winter of 2022/23. In the City, the numbers had always been low.
- b) Under current case law, anyone under continuous supervision will be subject to deprivation of liberty protection, including those who are allowed into the community but need to be back at a certain time. Early indications suggest that these clients might fall out of scope of the new legislation.

Following an initial impact assessment, the implementation group do not expect a significant impact on the City. The biggest changes are likely to be in respect of 16-17 year olds, as the deprivation of liberty safeguard only applied at age 18 or above. There was also an expectation that it would be cost neutral, with government funding becoming available for training and development.

- c) Members asked if they could have further training once the new procedures had been published and noted the recent training session around Children's Safeguarding had been very well attended by Sub Committee Members.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**11. WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which advised Members of plans to respond to new guidance from the DfE (Published in May 2022) in respect of improving school attendance.

Members noted that the number of home educated children has been fairly static for the past few years, except during the pandemic.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**12. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) - UPDATE REPORT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the City of London's Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2020–24. The report provided an update on progress in implementing the second key outcome; i.e. – to ensure that all children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for a successful transition to adulthood.

Members noted that officers were preparing for the new inspection framework, which would take effect from January 2023. The officer agreed to provide members with information in respect of the number of Education Welfare Officers on SEND support after the meeting – THIS IS DONE.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**13. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO), ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021-2022**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which provided an overview of the Independent Reviewing Service in the City of London, as set out in the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report for 2021–2022.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2022/23**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which provided an update on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service. Members noted the additional detail in respect of the Mental Capacity Act, which will be part of the transformation project.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

15. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 4 2022/23 (JULY 2022)**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which provided an update on service performance across the Children and Families Service.

Members noted that there are currently 17 cases in early help, 20 children in need, none on child protection plans, 10 looked after children and 59 care leavers. Officers were looking to move data onto a more interactive dashboard and would like to trial this with Members. The Chair welcomed this suggestion as it would be very helpful in terms of strategic planning.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SELF EVALUATION AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which presented the self-evaluation for the City of London Corporation's Children and Families Service for 2022. It also set out the Service Development Plan (SDP).

During the discussion on this item, the following points were noted:

- a) Whilst it would not be prudent to train everyone in every aspect of social care, the officer explained that each member of the management team has at least 10 years' experience. Each professional has a lead area; i.e. – unaccompanied minors; gangs etc. and this enables social workers to develop expertise in a particular field. Regular basic training is provided, and an action learning set approach, with safeguarding at the core. For example, if a social worker has a case in court, then it is a learning opportunity for all. Training needs are also picked up as part of the appraisal process and supervisions. Since the 2020 Ofsted Inspection, the team produce a 'child in need tracker', which links to supervision notes. Some concerns raised about supervision had been unfounded but it was being monitored on the service development plan.
- b) The capacity of the management team had increased in line with the number of new social workers, and in response to the growing number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

- c) The recruitment and retention policy requires caseloads to be allocated across the service, with resilience built in for leave and sickness cover. Pan London peer work also enables learning from colleagues in other authorities.
- d) A bid submitted last year, seeking funding for short breaks for parents of children with SEND, but this was unsuccessful as the provision in Hackney was deemed to be sufficient. However, the Team strive to go beyond statutory responsibilities and had submitted another bid this year, seeking an additional support worker and a project manager. Pre-paid cards and bank accounts had been introduced to give families more flexibility.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**17. QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

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

There were no items.

**19. 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.

Items	Paragraphs
21 - 24	1 and 2

**20. NHS NORTH EAST LONDON (NEL) (CITY & HACKNEY) CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Designated Doctor and Nurse for Looked After Children, City and Hackney. Members noted that the allocated nurse provision had been increased to 1 fte and a recruitment process was underway. However, as the numbers in the City are very small, it can cause a large swing in percentages. Given the increased mental health challenges since the pandemic, there is now a family therapy clinic at Kings College. Members also noted that a ‘Healthy Smiles’ campaign for vulnerable children is underway.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**21. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO), ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021-2022 - APPENDIX**

The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 13.

22. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2022/23 - APPENDIX**  
The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 14.
23. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 4 2022/23 (JULY 2022) - APPENDIX**  
The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 15.
24. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SELF EVALUATION AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN - APPENDIX**  
The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 16.
25. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**  
There were no questions
26. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB-COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**  
There were no items

**The meeting closed at 4 pm**

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Chairman

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# Agenda Item 4

<b>Committee(s):</b> Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information Grand Committee – For Information Safer City Partnership – For Information City Health & Wellbeing Board – For Information	<b>Dated: 09/02/2023</b>
<b>Subject:</b> The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership annual report 2021/22	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>Contribute to a flourishing society - People are safe and feel safe.</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jim Gamble QPM, Independent Safeguarding Children Commissioner / Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Advisor, CHSCP	

## Summary

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership annual report for 2021/22 sets out examples of the impact, evidence, assurance and learning arising from the safeguarding arrangements in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney. It covers and reports on activity between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022 and includes the following:

- The governance and accountability arrangements for the CHSCP’s safeguarding arrangements.
- The context for safeguarding children in the City of London, highlighting the progress made by the City of London partnership over the last year.
- The context for safeguarding children in the London Borough of Hackney, highlighting the progress made by the Hackney partnership over the last year.
- The lessons that the CHSCP has identified through its Learning & Improvement Framework and the actions taken to improve child safeguarding and welfare.
- The range and impact of the multi-agency safeguarding training delivered by the CHSCP.
- The CHSCP’s priorities going forward and its most recent Strategic Threat Assessment.
- The key messages for those involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.

## **Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to note the CHSCP Annual Report

### **Main Report**

The Annual Report can be accessed via the CHSCP website: [HERE](#)

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1

#### **Jim Gamble QPM**

Independent Safeguarding Children Commissioner, CHSCP

#### **Rory McCallum**

Senior Professional Advisor, CHSCP

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20 and Corporate Parenting Strategy Update	<b>Public – Non-Public - Appendix 2</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1,2,3,4
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Claire Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Kate Bygrave, Strategy and Projects Officer, Community and Children’s Services	

## Summary

This report informs the Committee of the performance of the City Corporation as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in its care from April 2021 to March 2022. It also informs the Committee that the Corporate Parenting Strategy has been reviewed and updated.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The City of London Corporation is a corporate parent to the children who are in its care. These looked-after children are children and young people aged from 0 to the eve of their 18th birthday who cannot safely remain with their family, or those for whom the City Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. Children in care can include unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), children with multiple disabilities, and those who have suffered abuse and/or neglect. As such, looked-after children and young people are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.
2. The City Corporation’s Children’s Services were inspected by Ofsted in March 2020, with the findings published in June 2020. The service was found to be

overall 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, its independent evaluation finding that corporate parenting within the City is "very strong, and there is a high commitment throughout the service to ensuring a personalised response to individual need". A focused visit was carried out in November 2022.

3. The Corporate Parenting Strategy was last reviewed in October 2021 and was reviewed again in July 2022.
4. The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 require local authorities to provide an annual report on the outcomes for looked-after children. This report fulfils that requirement and provides a profile of the City Corporation's activities for looked-after children and care leavers for the year 2021/22.

## **Current Position**

### *Corporate Parenting Strategy Update*

5. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out how the City Corporation will deliver its role as a corporate parent and ensure that children and young people have the support, care and encouragement to reach their full potential.
6. The strategy was reviewed in July 2022. No changes were made to the strategy due to no changes in guidance and legislation in relation to looked-after children since the previous strategy update.
7. A copy of the updated Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

### *Annual Report*

8. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2021/22 covers areas including, but not limited to, health and wellbeing, safeguarding, education, employment, accommodation and the activities of the Children in Care Council.
9. The report contains relevant statistics such as the number of children and young people under the age of 18 who were being looked after by the City Corporation as of 31 March 2022, as well as how many young people left our care. It also includes relevant statistics related to the Independent Reviewing Officer service, UASC and the health and wellbeing of our looked-after children and care leavers.
10. As a corporate parent, the City Corporation will continue to drive the achievement of ensuring that all children in and leaving its care meet their full potential and have lives in which they thrive. The Annual Report details the targeted actions that the service undertook during 2021/22, some of which have been affected and influenced by the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

11. A copy of the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021/22 can be found in Appendix 2.

## **Implications**

### Strategic implications

12. The Corporate Parenting Strategy and Annual Report are both statutory requirements as set out by the relevant legislation.
13. Reporting on the progress of the City Corporation as a corporate parent, with a regularly updated strategy, helps contribute to the City Corporation's Corporate Plan for 2018–23, and helps to ensure that people are safe and feel safe, people enjoy good health and wellbeing, people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and their full potential, and communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

### Equalities implications

14. The City Corporation's Department of Community and Children's Services strives to improve outcomes for our children and young people who often experience several areas of inequality. The vast majority of looked-after children within the City are UASC, and therefore it is important that any actions of the service reflect the specific needs of this group. This is ensured by carrying out adequate Equality Impact Assessments for all new services and initiatives that are developed.

### Financial implications

15. N/A

### Resource implications

16. N/A

### Legal implications

17. N/A

### Risk implications

18. N/A

### Climate implications

19. N/A

## Security implications

20. N/A

## **Conclusion**

21. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report provides oversight of the work undertaken by the service during 2021/22, and the priorities for the year ahead, which are reflected in the strategic aims set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Strategy (Updated July 2022)
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021/22 – Non-public

## **Kate Bygrave**

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# **City of London Corporation**

## **Corporate Parenting Strategy**

**Document status:**

**Prepared by:** Kate Bygrave – Strategy and Projects Officer,  
Department of Community and Children’s  
Services

**Reviewers:** CSMT

**Owner:** Chris Pelham – Assistant Director People,  
Department of Community and Children’s  
Services

**Approved by:** Director – Department of Community and  
Children’s Services

**Review date:** Annually

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The City of London Corporation (the City) wants the children in and leaving its care to meet their full potential and have lives in which they thrive. As a corporate parent we will keep our children safe, and support, encourage and nurture them so that they reach the heights we all aspire to for our own children.
- 1.2 Corporate parenting is when the local authority takes on the role of a good parent to the children that it looks after and those who have left care and who are starting their independent adult life. As a corporate parent the City has a moral and legal duty to provide the kind of support that any good parent would provide for their own children. We know we cannot replace or replicate all aspects of parental love, but we can share the same personal concern, desire to support fulfilment and aspirations for the lives of the children in our care.
- 1.3 Our commitment to this role is set out in this strategy. It sets out our “Pledge” to the children in our care, and the expectation they can have of us as corporate parents. In doing so it challenges us as corporate parents to ensure that we act to continuously improve the life chances of our children looked after, young people, care leavers and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. It builds on the work that has already been progressed to drive, support and strengthen it further, and it places corporate parenting as a responsibility that sits across all of the City’s elected Members, departments and officers and our partner agencies.

## **2 Context**

- 2.1 The outcomes for children in care (CIC) can often be worse than those of their peers. Our children will have come into care having faced difficulties and disruption in their lives and many continue to face challenges. Nationally, the educational, physical and psychological wellbeing, training and employment outcomes for children and young people looked after tend to be poorer compared with their non-looked after peers. However, as with all children, their experiences are individual, their response to those experiences is their own and their needs are distinct.
- 2.2 The City has a duty under the Children Act 1989 to “safeguard and promote” the welfare of each child we look after. The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 extended the responsibility of local authorities to young people leaving care, requiring them to plan the young person’s transition to adulthood and provide ongoing advice and assistance until at least the age of 21.
- 2.3 The Children Act 2004 introduced a duty on named agencies both to cooperate with the local authority and to ensure that they take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in fulfilling their own functions.



- 2.4 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 outlines principles in how local authorities should look after CIC. The principles include acting in the best interests of CIC, promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing; encourage expression of their wishes and take account of those wishes; and help children gain access to and best utilise local authority services. The Act also introduced a new duty on local authorities to provide Personal Adviser support to all care leavers up to age 25, if they want this support.
- 2.5 The success and impact of these duties can only be measured through the positive difference we make to the safety, health and wellbeing, educational attainment and transition to adulthood of children and young people. To ensure that we focus on and deliver this positive difference, and that there is a clear line of accountability for its delivery, the City has a lead Member for children’s services to provide the political leadership, and a Director of children’s services to provide professional leadership.
- 2.6 This leadership operates in an authority that is unique. Our size is such that we can develop a very close relationship with, and in-depth knowledge of, our children and young people. No child looked after or care leaver will contact the City and not be known to a professional in the team. This creates a relationship with our children and young people that is personal, and offers stability and security.
- 2.7 Ofsted recognises the quality of the service we provide: in inspections in 2020 our Children’s Services were rated overall as ‘Outstanding’. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership was also rated ‘Outstanding’ in its most recent inspection in 2016.
- 2.8 As corporate parent to a small and diverse number of children and young people, the City does not, and would not, offer uniform services based on standardised approaches. We are flexible and creative in our approach – tailoring our support and care to the needs of the individual.
- 2.9 We support the children in our care and our care leavers through our generic children’s social work team within the City’s Children and Families services. This support is enhanced by a workforce that is stable and allows for the development of trusting relationships with our children and young people. It is an approach that is supported by an Early Years offer that provides universal services for children at all levels of need.
- 2.10 The geography of the City and its role as the world’s leading international finance centre mean that there are no opportunities to place children into care within our boundaries. This places an even greater responsibility on us to ensure that our children are connected and feel an attachment to the City. This focuses not only on our children knowing our workers and Members, but also on helping them to discover our history and the opportunities the City can offer. As corporate parents the City Corporation takes responsibility for assessing and promoting good physical and mental health among the children and young people

## *Outcomes*

- 2.11 As corporate parents the City Corporation takes responsibility for assessing and promoting good physical and mental health among the children and young people in our care. This is achieved through annual assessments of health and dental health, and by ensuring children and young people are fully immunised. The City Corporation's performance in achieving health and dental assessments and immunisations has exceeded national performance.
- 2.12 Our CIC population largely (but not exclusively) comprises unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have often experienced very difficult journeys to the UK, involving increased risk of health conditions and trauma.

### **3 The City as a corporate parent**

- 3.1 Everyone who works for the City of London is a corporate parent to the children and young people who are in our care. This is not just those who have direct day-to-day contact with our children, such as social workers and foster carers, but all those who work for the City, including our elected Members and chief officers. A key role for elected Members and the City's officers is to promote opportunities for our looked after children and care leavers, and to be a challenge and a champion on their behalf.
- 3.2 The City is responsible for delivering a vision of corporate parenting which ensures that all children in care and those leaving care have the support, care and encouragement to reach their full potential.
- 3.3 As a good and effective corporate parent we will make decisions and behave in ways that:
- keep our children and young people safe
  - help children and young people's material wellbeing
  - support children and young people in their education and training
  - provide appropriate health care for children looked after
  - promote employment
  - encourage enjoyment and achievement through leisure and continuing interests
  - help to develop personal skills
  - provide stability and a sense of security and belonging
  - understand family life
  - promote exercise and a healthy diet
  - supporting our children and young people to get a good sleep
  - provide support after leaving care
  - empower our children and young people.
- 3.4 We have a safeguarding responsibility to all of our children. As corporate parents this means that any risk of harm to our individual children looked after must be assessed

and plans put in place to keep them safe. These risks may include emotional and physical harm, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, bullying, gang activity, self-harm or suicide. Many of our children come into care with a first language other than English and may struggle to communicate issues that identify risk – a barrier we must overcome to ensure their safety. We must also make sure that our children have someone “outside the system” such as an advocate or independent visitor to look out for their interests.

- 3.5 To support us to deliver our responsibilities as a corporate parent, the City has a lead elected Member for children’s safeguarding, and a Safeguarding Sub Committee made up of six elected Members meeting three/four times a year. The Safeguarding Sub Committee acts as the City’s corporate parenting board – providing oversight, challenge and leadership to achieve the best outcomes for our children and to ensure that these outcomes are delivered by all partners. This is a vital role through which our Members examine and address the needs of our children and young people through the consideration “if this were my child”.
- 3.6 The City of London’s Children in Care Council (CiCC) established in 2014 met regularly in person prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. During term time, meetings have generally taken place in the Guildhall during the morning and are followed by lunch in the Guild and an activity together during the afternoon, during the school holiday’s the meeting is part of a wider programme of activities. Meeting at the Guildhall is a link for CiCC members to come into the City of London, particularly as often they live beyond the City’s boundaries. The Children in Care Council is chaired by a young person elected by their peers.
- 3.7 The City’s corporate parenting role is also supported and challenged by the City and Hackney Children’s Safeguarding Children Partnership, and the Children’s Partnership Board (CPB). The CPB is a City-specific multi-agency strategic partnership which is responsible for delivering the priorities and objectives of the Children and Young People’s Plan, in which the needs of children looked after and care leavers are paramount.

#### **4 What our children want**

- 4.1 The City has developed a “Pledge” for its children looked after, young people and care leavers. Our Pledge is the City’s promise to provide the care and help that our children and young people have told us what they want. We have also included the promises the City made in signing up to the Government’s “charter for care leavers”.

#### **5 The Pledge**

The CiCC reviewed the pledge in August 2019 and feedback was very positive. The Pledge will be reviewed again in 2021 to consider the change in the service due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We have also translated the Pledge into several of the languages our young people speak.

## 5.1 We will:

- be open and honest with you
- believe in you and encourage you to be the best you can be
- listen to you and respect and work with you to understand your point of view
- inform you at every point of your journey of the support that is available and your entitlements
- support you with information, advice, and practical and financial help, and provide emotional support and a named person you can contact when you want to
- find you a home that is right for you
- respect and honour your identity, encouraging you to be an individual but not make you different
- be there to support you and never judge
- provide space to talk one to one
- support you and help you to build life skills, and be a lifelong champion
- listen to your complaints and act on them
- help you to have your say
- provide chances to get involved in positive activities
- help you to meet other children and young people who are looked after or who are care leavers
- help you to work towards living independently and to plan for your future
- help you to stay with the right foster carer for you
- listen to your views about family contact and help that happen where possible
- help children and young people who have been in care for a while or who have left care to become a mentor to those who are new to care.

## 6 Delivering for our children and young people

6.1 To develop this strategy, we have examined our role and responsibilities as a corporate parent and reflected on the Pledge that our children have asked us to make to them. We can only be held to account and continuously improve if our vision and promises translate into detailed commitment and action. To ensure that this strategy is about what we are doing, and what we will do, we have set out below some of the ways in which the City is working, and will work, with our children to raise their life chances. These are grouped under the following headings:

- healthy and safe
- learning, achieving and enjoying
- listening and contributing
- independence and working
- individual and community.

## **7 Healthy and safe**

7.1 We want our children to be healthy and safe. To achieve this we will:

- ensure that children and young people looked after have a comprehensive health assessment once a year – or twice a year for those aged under five years
- Recognise that immigration status is one of the biggest barriers to staying healthy and ensure that every child and young person has decent immigration representation
- help our children understand why they have a medical assessment and its benefits as part of a “coming into care” pack
- ensure that children are immunised
- ensure that each child/young person is registered with a GP and a dentist, and has access to eye care
- monitor and track medical, dental and optical health checks to ensure that they happen
- ensure that language or literacy issues do not create a barrier to receiving or understanding health services
- provide information on promoting healthy lifestyles and sexual health that is appropriate to the age and maturity of our children
- meet the mental health needs of young people
- provide information, advice and assistance in respect of the use of drugs and/or alcohol if these are causing or likely to cause harm to health
- develop a “health passport” for our care leavers as a record of their health care
- support emotional wellbeing through tailored activity and, where necessary, specialist intervention
- provide age-appropriate and comprehensive multi-agency teenage pregnancy and parenthood support, prioritising the needs of children looked after, where a young person in our care becomes pregnant or a young father
- maximise the inclusion of children/young people with a disability in mainstream education, leisure and social activities
- ensure that our staff and partners remain trained to meet the health needs of children looked after, including sexual health, mental and emotional health, child sexual exploitation and substance misuse issues
- provide specific training for staff to identify the risk and/or experience of child sexual exploitation that may be experienced by unaccompanied asylum seeking minors
- establish a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on child sexual exploitation for children in care
- support and encourage activity as part of a healthy lifestyle
- place children with foster carers who can best meet their needs – including those needs and preferences expressed by the child, young person and his or her parents

- ensure our foster carers are able to identify the risks of child sexual exploitation and can support online safety that includes the risks specific to children looked after
- only place with Independent Fostering Agencies that are rated “good” or “outstanding” by Ofsted
- commission quality placements and systematically monitor these arrangements to ensure that they provide stable placements which meet the physical, emotional and social needs of children
- risk assess the suitability of any placement prior to it progressing
- allocate a qualified, skilled social worker to ensure that the statutory requirements for the child’s care and protection are met
- ensure that our social workers regularly visit children looked after in line with statutory requirements, as a minimum
- allocate an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to chair review meetings, monitor the appropriateness and progress of plans, and ensure that the wishes and feelings of children are taken into account
- provide as much stability of placement as possible
- ensure that a permanency plan is in place for each child by the second child looked after review meeting
- provide access to an advocate and independent visitors
- safeguard children from bullying, racism, discrimination and harassment.

## **8 Learning, achieving and enjoying**

8.1 Educational achievement is a significant factor in improving the life chances of children and young people in care. Participating in leisure activities can enhance self-esteem and confidence. We want our children to achieve outcomes and enjoy leisure activities that are as good as those of their peers. To achieve this we will:

- make the learning and educational needs of each of our children looked after a high priority
- support educational achievement and progress through a Virtual Head Teacher
- ensure that all school-aged children in care have a suitable full-time school place
- develop a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for all children and young people
- be ambitious for our children and young people and committed to supporting their progress and attainment
- monitor educational progress and attendance quarterly
- provide specialist therapeutic support, extra tuition or specialist equipment based on individual needs to support learning
- celebrate educational achievements such as exam results
- monitor expenditure of the Pupil Premium Plus to confirm that it correlates with

the additional actions recorded in the PEP

- prioritise children in care for school admissions
- provide targeted support to those who are not in education, training or employment
- provide immediate alternative educational provision where school exclusion occurs
- ensure that all children looked after have access to local youth service provision
- provide local leisure centre membership for all children in care
- support involvement with leisure and community opportunities that reflect our children's ethnicity, religion and culture
- provide equipment such as sports equipment or musical instruments to support involvement in chosen leisure activities
- ensure that children and young people in care have holidays, visits and outings in order to broaden their horizons
- enable access to play, leisure and recreation services for disabled children and young people.

## **9 Listening and contributing**

9.1 Children and young people, and those leaving care, have the right to share their views, wishes and feelings. We are committed to listening to our children and young people to ensure that their views shape decisions made about their lives and the services we deliver. To achieve this we will:

- consult children and young people about the decisions made about their lives and to help us to shape their futures through regular review meetings and meetings with their social worker
- seek creative and innovative ways to facilitate and encourage listening to our children and young people, both individually and collectively
- give children and young people the opportunity to influence our practice and policy through our Children in Care Council
- involve children and young people in the recruitment and induction of staff in Children and Families, and the commissioning of services for children and young people
- make sure that children and young people know how to make a complaint, and how to make a compliment, about the services they receive
- make sure that children and young people have information on services and the teams providing them through a "coming into care" pack
- provide a variety of opportunities for children and young people to meet senior staff and elected Members so that they can share their experiences, ideas and views
- provide an Independent Review Officer and advocacy service to help children

and young people to contribute their views when they want someone to speak up on their behalf

- develop opportunities for children in care and young people to deliver training to professionals and our elected Members on what it is like to be looked after and how to talk with young people about their issues.

## **10 Independence and working**

10.1 We want our children looked after to develop and sustain independent lives. Developing life and employment skills is crucial for the future of our children and young people, and their economic wellbeing. To support this we will:

- review independent living skills within the pathway planning process to identify any needs for care and support in adulthood from adult services as part of the transitions process
- develop life skills training and peer learning to support young people in meeting the challenges of independent living – including budgeting, paying bills and dealing with emergencies
- help them to choose when to move on and give them the chance to stay put with their foster carer if they are not ready to do so
- support care leavers to appropriately remain in their semi-independent placement where it is in their best interests to do so
- help them to save for their future whilst they are in care
- give them apprenticeship opportunities with the City
- help them to gain confidence and skills through volunteering opportunities, work experience and participation in our time credits scheme
- provide chances to learn about how to deal with stress and how to be assertive in order to help our children and young people to deal with challenges in life and speak confidently for themselves
- provide tailored support and advice through our careers advisory service
- provide semi-independent accommodation for those who need a stepping stone into full independence
- remember them and provide them with ongoing support as they become an independent adult
- support young people in their tenancy to help them to settle into independent living.

## **11 Individual and community**

11.1 We want the children and young people in our care to thrive as individuals. We want them to know themselves, their heritage and their community, and to support them to achieve this we will:



- help children and young people to understand their rights through the development of our “coming into care” pack
- help children and young people to keep photos and memories about important people in their life and places they have been
- help children and young people to feel proud and strong about their own culture, language and religion
- promote and facilitate contact with family members where this is in the best interests of a child or young person
- support our unaccompanied asylum seeking children to find and contact family members
- take into account any cultural, religious, communication or disability needs when matching children and young people with placements
- help our unaccompanied asylum seeking children to understand their heritage
- help children and young people to connect with the City and each other through events, outings, residential trips and the Children in Care Council
- support engagement and participation in cultural, religious and community activities.

## **12 Taking the strategy forward**

12.1 The progress of delivery of this strategy will be reported to and monitored by the Safeguarding Sub Committee, the Children’s Partnership Board and our Children in Care Council.

12.2 The strategy will be refreshed annually to ensure that it continues to drive improvements and meet the changing needs of children and young people.

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance Report Q2 2022/23	<b>Public</b>  <b>Appendix 1 (Non-public)</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1, 2 and 3
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	No
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Ellie Ward, Head of Strategy and Performance	

## Summary

This report updates Members on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The Adult Social Care Service at the City of London Corporation provides a range of services, including safeguarding.
2. The service collects and monitors a range of performance information to ensure that statutory duties are being met, and that services are delivering the best possible outcomes for people.
3. Appendix 1 presents the safeguarding performance dashboard for Q2 2022/23. It provides a range of detailed information in different areas of safeguarding.

### Current Position

4. Overall, performance across the service is good, meeting a range of statutory requirements and local targets.
5. It should be noted that, due to small numbers in cohorts in the City of London Corporation, there can sometimes be significant variance in out-turns. These are noted where this is an issue.
6. Appendix 1 includes a summary and some of the headlines from the Q2 data.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

7. Strategic Implications – The Adult Social Care Service provides a range of statutory services and also a range of early intervention and prevention services. These all contribute to meeting outcomes 1, 2 and 3 of the Corporate Plan.
8. Financial implications – N/A
9. Resource implications – N/A
10. Legal implications – N/A
11. Risk implications – N/A
12. Equalities implications – Monitoring intelligence on all of our social care processes and associated demographics allows us to assess and then investigate if there are any unintended impacts of any processes or practices.
13. Climate implications – N/A
14. Security implications – N/A

### **Conclusion**

15. This report provides a summary of performance data from the Adult Social Care Service in relation to safeguarding for Q2 2022/23, comparing it to performance from the previous quarter or year, and other benchmarks, where appropriate.
16. It demonstrates strong performance across this area of the service.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance Dashboard Q2 2022/23 (Non-public)

### **Ellie Ward**

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# Agenda Item 7

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> January 2023
<b>Subject:</b> Virtual School Headteacher Annual Report for Academic Year 2021-2022	<b>COVER REPORT:</b> <b>PUBLIC</b>  <b>Appendix : NON-PUBLIC</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>To contribute to a flourishing society</b> 1d, 2c,3b,3c.3d
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Andrew Russell, retired Headteacher of Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker, with summary and recommendation by Debby Rigby, Headteacher of Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker, from 30 <sup>th</sup> August 2022.	

## Summary

This report provides Members with information about The City of London Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker. This report covers the period September 2021 to August 2022, when Andrew Russell was the headteacher and Helen Priest was employed to fulfil the extended role duties. The report gives a background to the school, its purpose and role in supporting children and young people with their education. It describes the work that has taken place during the last academic year.

In September 2021, 670 people from Afghanistan were accommodated in The City and this report describes how well the Virtual School and Social Care and Education staff adapted to provide an excellent service to the families, organising an emergency school and processing large numbers of school place applications. The report contains information on attendance and Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and describes the findings of a review into the tuition service, used to support our young people.

Andrew Russell and Helen Priest retired from The City of London Virtual School in July 2022 and Debby Rigby was appointed on a three day a week, term time contract, on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022. Debby has taken on the extended duties as part her role and has met with colleagues across The City, contacted pupils, visited schools,

attended meetings, and produced a School Development Plan for the academic year 2022/2023. As well as monitoring, supporting, and challenging the education our children and young people receive, she is working on enrichment projects, including one with The Aldgate School, to help break down barriers to learning for all children, especially those who have had a social worker in the past.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

- Note the report and contact email of the new Virtual Headteacher [debby.rigby@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:debby.rigby@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 8

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> January 2023
<b>Subject:</b> Virtual School Development Plan 2022/2023	<b>COVER REPORT:</b> <b>PUBLIC</b>  <b>APPENDIX: PUBLIC</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>To contribute to a flourishing society</b> 1d, 2c,3b,3c.3d
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Debby Rigby, Headteacher of the Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker	

## Cover Report

The Virtual School Development Plan sets out the planned developments of the City of London Virtual School over the next twelve months. The plan promotes high expectations of attendance, attainment and achievement for all pupils and students from 0-25 years. The plan builds on the outstanding work of the previous headteacher, who retired in July 2022, and contains his ideas for the development of the Virtual School, as well as the ideas of the newly appointed headteacher.

The plan identifies success criteria, where possible, that are both specific and measurable. The plan reflects the school’s priorities for development and how they are to be monitored and evaluated. The plan is updated termly and reported on at Senior Management Team meetings throughout the year.

This Virtual School Development Plan sets out the plans for the academic year 2022/2023. It is divided into five priority sections.

## Sections

1. To meet the statutory duties of a Virtual School.
2. To ensure a successful transition between the outgoing and incoming Headteacher.
3. To monitor and raise the attendance of all Children and Young People in the care of the City of London.
4. To embed the extended duties of the Virtual School to include all Children with or who have had a social worker.
5. To develop partnerships and run successful enrichment projects for groups of Children and Young People.

Each section contains actions, targets, and success criteria.

Details of work completed is updated as it takes place and completed termly.

The Virtual School Development Plan is costed, and RAG rated.

- **Red** indicates that work has been identified and has begun.
- **Amber** indicates that some work has been completed and that some of the success criteria have been met.
- **Green** indicates that all the success criteria has been met.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the Virtual School Development Plan attached as Appendix 1



# City of London Virtual School



Pride Pace Passion Professionalism Relevant Reliable Responsible Radical

## School Development Plan

2022-2023 January Update

*"The City of London is a place where children and young people feel safe, have good mental health and well-being, fulfil their potential and are ready for adulthood whilst growing up with a sense of belonging." CYPP 2022 -2025*

## Introduction

This School Development Plan sets out the planned developments of the City of London Virtual School over the next twelve months. The plan promotes high expectations of attendance, attainment and achievement for all pupils and students from 0-25 years. The plan builds on the outstanding work of the previous headteacher, who retired in July 2022 and contains his ideas for the development of the Virtual School, as well as the ideas of the newly appointed headteacher. The plan identifies success criteria, where possible, that are both specific and measurable in terms of success. The plan reflects the school's priorities for development and how they are to be monitored and evaluated. The plan is updated termly and reported on at Senior Management Team meetings throughout the year.

## Related Documentation and Supporting Evidence

Evidence to support the content and judgements within the School Development Plan can be found in a variety of documents held by the City of London.

- Ofsted Self-Evaluation Documentation
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Meeting reports and minutes
- Case notes and studies
- Personal Education Plans
- Asset Information System

## Virtual School Key Functions are to:

- Monitor and promote the educational progress and achievement of looked-after Children and Care Leavers
- Ensure that Personal Education Plans are current, relevant and effective
- Promote and advise on the use of the Pupil Premium Plus Grant
- Support schools and Designated Teachers to develop effective strategies and support for looked-after children and previously looked-after children
- Provide advice and guidance for social workers, parents and carers on issues relating to the education, employment and training of looked-after children, previously looked-after children and Care Leavers
- Commission or fund additional resources to support education of looked-after children and Care Leavers
- Provide information, advice and guidance to looked-after children and care leavers about education, employment and training

## Additional Functions from September 2021 – March 2023

- Identify, monitor and promote the educational progress and achievement of all children with a social worker or who have had a social worker in the past
- Enhance partnerships between education settings and social care, promoting high expectations of all children with a social worker or who have had a social worker
- Provide information, advice, education and guidance for schools, social workers, parents and carers on possible barriers to learning and issues relating to education, employment and training of all children with a social worker or who have had a social worker
- Commission or fund additional resources to support the education of all children with a social worker or who have had a social worker

## Priorities and RAG Rating System

These are the priorities which will form the basis of the school improvement this academic year. Each section has its own action plan. Each priority is RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated to indicate progress being made towards the success criteria. This rating is updated every academic term.

- Red indicates that work has been identified and has begun
- Amber indicates that some work has been completed and that some of the success criteria have been met
- Green indicates that all the success criteria has been met

Priorities for Improvement		RAG Rating		
		R	A	G
<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>To meet the statutory duties of a Virtual School</b>			
1.1	Identify, monitor, and promote the educational progress and attainment of children in the school			
1.2	Ensure Personal Education Plans are current, relevant, and effective, overseeing the use of pupil premium plus grant funding is linked to PEP targets			
1.3	Provide advice and guidance to all working with the children and young people on education, employment, and training			
1.4	Establish clear line of reporting and accountability to elected members, DfE and external partners			
<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>To ensure a successful transition between the outgoing and incoming Headteacher</b>			
2.1	To meet with and collate information on all key services and professionals working with the school's children and young people			
2.2	To ensure data systems and key information are transferred and updated efficiently and effectively			
2.3	To build strong relationships between the school and its children and young people			
<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>To monitor and raise the attendance of all children and young people in the care of the City of London</b>			
3.1	To effectively collect and monitor attendance of all Children in Care			
3.2	To promote the importance of raising the attendance of all children and young people			
3.3	To introduce additional attendance monitoring of identified groups of children within the school			
<b>Priority 4</b>	<b>To embed the extended duties of the Virtual School to include all children with or who have had a social worker</b>			
4.1	Enhance partnerships between education settings and social care			
4.2	Identify cohort's needs and address barriers to education			
4.3	Advise and support key professionals			
<b>Priority 5</b>	<b>To develop partnerships and run successful enrichment projects for groups of children and young people</b>			
5.1	Increase opportunity and participation in sports and Arts activities			
5.2	Increase knowledge and experience of Parenting and Life Skills			
5.3	Widening experience and developing resilience			
5.4	Celebrate the successes and achievements of all the children and young people in the school			

## Action Plan for Priority 1

### To meet the statutory duties of a Virtual School

#### Targets

- 1.1 Identify, monitor, and promote the educational progress and attainment of children in the school
- 1.2 Ensure Personal Education Plans are current, relevant, and effective, overseeing the use of pupil premium plus grant funding is linked to PEP targets
- 1.3 Provide advice and guidance to all working with the children and young people on education, employment, and training
- 1.4 Establish clear line of reporting and accountability to elected members, DfE and external partners

#### Supporting Evidence

Asset Information System  
 Monthly data sheets  
 Reports  
 Mosaic entries

Ref	Target	Actions	Success Criteria	Who	Cost	When
1.1 Page 44	Identify, monitor, and promote the educational progress and attainment of children in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update all data systems</li> <li>• Complete education information on mosaic</li> <li>• Attend meetings and keep in regular contact with social care staff to promote educational access and achievement</li> <li>• Work with School Improvement Partner to ensure outside scrutiny, support and challenge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data systems accurate and updated regularly</li> <li>• All CIC have up to date education information on mosaic</li> <li>• Evidence of social care staff seeking advice and support</li> <li>• Attainment progress of most children and young people good or outstanding</li> <li>• Positive School Improvement report</li> </ul>	Debby Ismail Data support	In house support given	Ongoing throughout year
1.2	Ensure Personal Education Plans are current, relevant, and effective, overseeing the use of pupil premium plus grant funding is linked to PEP targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Asset system to ensure accurate records</li> <li>• Set dates for PEPs with social workers and educational establishments</li> <li>• Write and provide information to support social workers with PEPs</li> <li>• Purchase and distribute resources, including tuition for children and young people linked to PEP targets</li> <li>• Quality assure all PEPs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children up to age 18 have termly PEPs recorded on the Asset system</li> <li>• All PEPs are quality assured as good or outstanding</li> <li>• Social workers receive training and advice on what makes an effective PEP</li> <li>• Pupil Premium grant funding linked to PEP targets</li> </ul>	Debby Social Care colleagues	Pupil Premium grant funding based on pupil numbers £6,000 tuition/learning support Resources PEP Date system ASSET £5,000 Laptop investment £2,500	Ongoing throughout year

1.3	Provide advice and guidance to all working with the children and young people on education, employment, and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update all Virtual School policies and procedures, agree with SMT and circulate to all professionals working with children and young people with a social worker</li> <li>• Make contact with all social workers offering support and advice</li> <li>• Update education section on mosaic for all children</li> <li>• Attend Headteacher forums and make visits to the family of City of London schools</li> <li>• Work with Virtual Schools across the UK, but especially Pan London for advice and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and procedures updated</li> <li>• Policies and procedures passed by SMT</li> <li>• Policies and procedures circulated</li> <li>• Attend Social Worker away day</li> <li>• Email all social workers regularly, offering and providing support and advice</li> <li>• Attend four forums</li> <li>• Visit six of the family of schools</li> <li>• Pan London Virtual Heads advising on best school and college provision in their area, providing contacts and support</li> </ul>	Debby Teresa Kirstie Ismail	£250 travel to City of London schools	Ongoing throughout year
Page 45.4	Establish clear line of reporting and accountability to elected members, DfE and external partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table the Annual report to the Children’s Safeguarding Board for 2021/2022 in Spring Term 2022</li> <li>• Table Annual report for 2022/2023 in Autumn Term 2023</li> <li>• Publish the Annual Report on the CofL website</li> <li>• Ensure there is an effective line of performance management between the Virtual School Head and their Senior Manager</li> <li>• Ensure that the work of the Virtual School, including PEPs, are quality assured</li> <li>• Set up a Virtual School Advisory Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update last year’s Annual report written by the previous Headteacher and take to members in the Spring Term</li> <li>• Discuss moving the report to the Autumn Term following the academic year reported on</li> <li>• Publish Annual Report on CofL website</li> <li>• Complete three and six month probation successfully and start appraisal cycle</li> <li>• QA work of Virtual School by independent SIP</li> <li>• Decide on criteria and set up Virtual School Advisory Board</li> </ul>	Debby Chris Tony	Cost of Virtual School SIP	<p>Annual Report 2021/2022 Feb/March 2022</p> <p>Probation December and March</p> <p>VSAB set up with T&amp;Cs by July 2022</p>

**Ongoing evaluation and impact**

<p><b>Autumn</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collated all data sets and cross-referenced information</li> <li>• Met with data team to increase access to changing information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ismail Ibrahim appointed to act as Interim Deputy Head from January 2023-March 2023</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met with and email regularly all social workers to promote education and ensure educational access and progress</li> <li>• Met with school improvement partner to discuss school developments</li> <li>• PEP completion, attending 100% of meetings and supporting social workers in the writing of the documents</li> <li>• Attended social worker away day to build relationships</li> <li>• Order additional tuition sessions and resources identified at PEP meetings</li> <li>• Attended headteacher forum, partnership meeting, family of schools meetings and pan London Virtual heads meeting</li> <li>• Met with health colleagues to discuss support for CIC and Care Leavers</li> </ul> <p>Regular contact with Virtual Heads across London advising on most suitable colleges for Care Leavers and 16-18 year olds</p> <p>Annual report for 2021/2022 updated</p> <p>October DfE return submitted, further return due in December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training planned for December delivery to social care colleagues on education systems, developments and the importance of high attendance and engagement</li> </ul>		
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**Action Plan for Priority 2**

**To ensure a successful transition between the outgoing and incoming Headteacher**

<p><b>Targets</b></p> <p>2.1 To meet with and collate information on all key services and professionals working with the school's children and young people</p> <p>2.2 To ensure data systems and key information are transferred and updated efficiently and effectively</p> <p>2.3 To build strong relationships between the school and its children and young people</p>	<p><b>Supporting Evidence</b></p> <p>Pledge to Children and Young People</p> <p>Asset Information System</p> <p>Welfare Call</p> <p>Mosaic Education Information</p> <p>Diary of visits and meetings</p> <p>Questionnaires</p>
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Ref	Target	Actions	Success Criteria	Who	Cost	When
2.1	To meet with and collate information on all key services and professionals working with the school's children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend all induction meetings with key staff</li> <li>Diary meetings throughout the year with key professionals</li> <li>Seek and find colleagues to support the Virtual School with data and information</li> <li>Complete online courses for City of London</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Induction meetings completed</li> <li>Diary entries made for meetings six weeks in advance</li> <li>Network of support for Virtual School in place</li> <li>Online induction courses for City of London completed</li> </ul>	Debby		October 2022
Page 47 2.2	To ensure data systems and key information are transferred and updated efficiently and effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend training on data systems</li> <li>Update Welfare Call lists for attendance collection</li> <li>Update Asset system</li> <li>Transfer information between Welfare call, asset and Mosaic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training attended on Asset, Mosaic and Welfare Call</li> <li>All data systems accurate and regularly updated</li> <li>Support in place for Virtual School to assist with data inputting to ensure accuracy</li> </ul>	Debby Ismail Andrew D Guy Mosaic Asset Team Welfare Call Team	Additional ASSET attendance collection to be confirmed	October 2022
2.3	To build strong relationships between the school and its children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create photograph introduction and contact cards and distribute to children and young people</li> <li>Attend children and young people's meeting at half term to update the pledge</li> <li>Gather information about interests and cohort needs to provide relevant projects and experiences</li> <li>Make contact with children and young people's advocates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cards designed, produced and given to children and young people, social workers and advocates</li> <li>Attendance at meeting to update pledge</li> <li>Questionnaires with information on special interests and needs</li> <li>Projects being developed</li> <li>Contact made with all Advocates and contact details recorded on systems</li> </ul>	Debby Pat Ismail	£200 cards and postage £6,000 (application with Education strategy Team) well-being and Resilience Project	December 2022

### Ongoing evaluation and impact

<u>Autumn</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All induction meetings attended and online courses completed in fire safety, data protection, ACT preventing terrorism and video presentations by The Town Clerk</li> <li>• Training attended on data systems used</li> <li>• Continued to update systems and transfer information</li> <li>• Met with commissioning to rationalise Virtual School systems used to increase effectiveness and avoid repetition</li> <li>• Photo cards distributed to staff and young people</li> <li>• Attended CICC to meet young people, collect interest for projects and help to update the pledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

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### Action Plan for Priority 3

**To monitor and raise the attendance of all children and young people in the care of the City of London**

<u>Targets</u>				<u>Supporting Evidence</u>		
3.1 To effectively collect and monitor attendance of all Children in Care 3.2 To promote the importance of raising the attendance of all children and young people 3.3 To introduce additional attendance monitoring of identified groups of children within the school				Attendance Strategy Welfare Call Attendance Collection Asset Information System Mosaic Education Information		
Ref	Target	Actions	Success Criteria	Who	Cost	When
3.1	To effectively collect and monitor attendance of all Children in Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make contact with colleagues, at Welfare Call to decide collection system and distribution</li> <li>• To update children and young people lists and information for attendance collection</li> <li>• To receive weekly data and enter it into Asset Information System</li> <li>• To contact social workers, if, and when attendance falls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare Call meeting taken place and collection system agreed</li> <li>• Lists updated and information accurate</li> <li>• Weekly data entered into Asset system</li> <li>• Social workers contacted if, and when required to support to increase attendance</li> <li>• Children who are NEET are monitored and quickly return to education</li> </ul>	Debby Ismail Andrew D (Data) Sacha (contract renewal)	Welfare Call/ASSET costs being negotiated cost neutral	September 2022



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure children and young people who become NEET, return to education at the earliest possible opportunity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance discussed in all PEP meetings for CIC</li> </ul>			
3.2	To promote the importance of raising the attendance of all children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with colleagues in education to develop an attendance strategy for all children including specific groups</li> <li>Help to develop a coherent strategy that meets the statutory guidance on attendance for all children including specific groups</li> <li>Collate attendance data for all children with a social worker</li> <li>Work with City schools to help promote high attendance</li> <li>Provide rewards and incentives to children and young people to encourage high attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy developed and agreed</li> <li>Attendance collation agreed for all children, including specific groups</li> <li>Meetings attended with schools to discuss and promote high attendance</li> <li>Autumn Term attendance collated for all children with a social worker</li> <li>Incentives in place to reward children and young people for high attendance</li> </ul>	Debby Teresa Kirstie Ismail	£1,500	December 2022
Page 3 49	To introduce additional attendance monitoring of identified groups of children within the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look into possibility of moving all attendance collection to one system, with support to keep data accurate and current</li> <li>Increase attendance monitoring for all children with a social worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance collection and collation system agreed and set up</li> <li>Updating of all attendance data and reporting agreed</li> <li>Regular attendance monitoring for all children with a social worker</li> </ul>	Debby Ismail Teresa Kirstie		April 2023

**Ongoing evaluation and impact**

<p><b><u>Autumn</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked with Welfare Call to collect attendance</li> <li>Working with commissioning to ensure contracts are in place to continue collection</li> <li>Worked with social workers and Prospects staff to improve attendance and reduce NEET population</li> <li>Attended all Vulnerable Children meetings to discuss individual cases</li> <li>Working with education staff to develop attendance strategy</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Spring</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Summer</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted attendance incentives during PEP meetings</li> <li>• Visited residential provision to QA education provided</li> </ul>		
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#### Action Plan for Priority 4

**To embed the extended duties of the Virtual School to include all children with or who have had a social worker previous grant spend £13,282 by previous VH**

<p><b>Targets</b></p> <p>4.1 Enhance partnerships between education settings and social care</p> <p>4.2 Identify cohort's needs and address barriers to education</p> <p>4.3 Advise and support key professionals</p>	<p><b>Supporting Evidence</b></p> <p>Asset Information System</p> <p>Welfare Call</p> <p>Mosaic Education Information</p> <p>Training log and Education Information Updates</p> <p>Questionnaires</p>
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Ref	Target	Actions	Success Criteria	Who	Cost	When
Page 50 4.1	Enhance partnerships between education settings and social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as conduit between education and social care colleagues, attending meetings, training, away days</li> <li>• Clean data systems used to provide accurate and timely information</li> <li>• Collect, collate and share contacts from every school in the City Family of Schools</li> <li>• Visit a selection of schools</li> <li>• To take on a short term extended duties manager to support the Virtual headteacher specifically with this cohort and school attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent communication systems</li> <li>• Named contacts at every school in the City Family of Schools</li> <li>• Successful project at The Aldgate School</li> <li>• 'Getting to know your world' training sessions for education and social care staff</li> <li>• Report to DfE on spending of grant for extended activities</li> <li>• Extended Duties Manager in place effectively supporting the Virtual Head specifically with school attendance and the extended duties</li> </ul>	Debby Teresa Rachel Ismail	£250 transport costs £12,000 Spring Term costs £500 costs for training, speakers, refreshments, handouts	December 2022
4.2	Identify cohort's needs and address barriers to education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate data across social care and education systems to identify cohort of children with a social worker</li> <li>• Contribute to information sharing using the Vulnerable List held by Education</li> <li>• Collate data on The Aldgate School on children who have had a social worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate cohort information</li> <li>• Questionnaires and discussions with young people</li> <li>• Barriers to education help sheet for all schools</li> <li>• Vulnerable list regularly updated</li> <li>• Successful project started at The Aldgate School</li> </ul>	Debby Teresa Kirstie Ismail	The Climb Project £12,000 £2,500 additional resources to prevent	November 2022

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify 'Aiming High' curriculum project for The Aldgate School to support children who have or who have had a social worker to increase engagement and raise attainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to DfE on spending of grant for extended activities</li> </ul>		barriers to education	
4.3	Advise and support key professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide monthly reports with SMT groups showing trends, changes, challenges and successes</li> <li>Respond in a timely way to questions and requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at meetings</li> <li>Monthly reports</li> <li>Case study support</li> <li>Report to DfE on spending of grant for extended activities</li> </ul>	Debby		Ongoing throughout the year

### Ongoing evaluation and impact

#### Autumn

- Attended social care away day and met regularly with social care and education colleagues
- Met with Education strategy staff to promote partnership projects
- Visited The Aldgate School twice, collecting data on children with or who have had a social worker
- Set up aiming high project called 'The Climb' for Aldgate pupils working with Open Spaces and the education strategy team
- Monthly dashboard set up to report to CSMT and PSMT
- Casework to ensure education is promoted at all stages of care planning

#### Spring

- 

#### Summer

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### Action Plan for Priority 5

#### To develop partnerships and run successful enrichment projects for groups of children and young people

#### Targets

- Increase opportunity and participation in sports and Arts activities
- Increase knowledge and experience of Parenting and Life Skills
- Widening experience and developing resilience
- Celebrate the successes and achievements of all the children and young people in the school

#### Supporting Evidence

Project Case Studies  
Photographs  
Asset Information System  
Mosaic Education Information

Ref	Target	Actions	Success Criteria	Who	Cost	When
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5.1	Increase opportunity and participation in sports and Arts activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make contact with sports and arts organisations that provide activities for identified groups of children and young people</li> <li>• Arrange sessions to suit cohort offering a range of times and activities</li> <li>• Arrange visits to theatre/Art Gallery/museum/bowling</li> <li>• Contact City of London Schools to arrange joint project to suit groups within cohort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful sports and arts projects</li> <li>• Visits offered and well attended</li> <li>• Joint art and design project with City of London schools</li> <li>• Theatre trip using London Palladium support for vulnerable families</li> <li>• Work with Whiteread at The Tate on 'Identity' project</li> </ul>	Debby Chantelle	£7,000	March 2023
5.2	Increase knowledge and experience of Parenting and Life Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and provide parenting courses online and face to face for new parents</li> <li>• Work with Early Help to promote parentcraft offers</li> <li>• Select company to offer healthy living and cookery skills such as 'Apple of my Eye'</li> <li>• Work with Barbara to provide 'financial management' advice and sessions for care leavers</li> <li>• Explore possibilities of driving tuition to support apprentices, college places and work opportunities</li> <li>• Support for university placements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online parenting courses offered – Triple P</li> <li>• Adult Education course for young parents</li> <li>• Cookery and healthy lifestyle sessions offered</li> <li>• Financial Management advice and sessions offered and well received</li> </ul>	Debby Rachel Barbara	£3,000	November 2022
5.3	Widening experience and developing resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan day and residential trips outside of London to suit cohort – explore offer from Christ's Hospital School</li> <li>• Activity holiday 'PGL' to develop resilience and provide physical and mental challenges, make memories and build relationships</li> <li>• Plan visit to university to see what is on offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people, involved in planning and enjoy and report positively on trips offered</li> <li>• Residential holiday planned and delivered successfully</li> <li>• Visit to Kings University</li> </ul>	Debby Chantelle	£1,500	June 2023
5.4	Celebrate the successes and achievements of all the children and young people in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance incentives and rewards for all identified cohorts of children</li> <li>• Celebration event booked and planned with certificates and prizes recognising achievements throughout 2022/2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives and rewards lead to increased attendance of identified cohorts</li> <li>• Celebration event well attended</li> <li>• Evaluation of event positive with points for growth next year</li> </ul>	Debby Chantelle Teresa	£5,000 Driving tuition £4,000 additional tuition to support	July 2023

Ongoing evaluation and impact

**Autumn**

- Contact made with various sports and arts organisations and projects being planned for Spring term
- Specific young people put in contact with organisations to support them, independent schools, tuition companies, Chance to Shine, apprenticeships
- Met with CICC and Chantelle, planning joint events including Christmas party, residential and performing arts project with The Freemans School
- Increased links with a number of universities and planned away day to Kings University for all interested 16-25 year olds, in February
- Offered online parenting courses to Care Leavers who are young parents
- Met with Master of the Guild of Educators to plan celebration session for Afghan project and to offer Corporate Parenting information to all in the guild
- Planning Summer celebration for children and young people to be held at City of London Boys School
- Plan for fair access to driving tuition for Care Leavers

**Spring**

- Funding confirmed by Education Strategy unit for £28,000 to fund a variety of projects with children and young people.
- Working with The Freeman’s School we will provide a residential project teaching English speaking through the medium of Drama and Performing Arts. A three-day residential for 10 Children in Care in The City of London to improve their oracy skills, confidence and future educational and chances.

**Summer**

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Action for Children Survey 2022	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	Outcome 1
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service	

## Summary

In August 2022, Action for Children carried out the 7th annual service user survey among children, young people, and their families, supported by the City of London’s Children’s Social Care team. The categories included Early Help, children in need, children who are looked after, and care leavers. As in previous years, participation was high with an overall response rate of 68.5%, which is slightly higher than last year. Generally, most people welcomed being contacted and consulted, commenting positively on the process. Most of the feedback contained in the survey was positive regarding the young people’s relationship with their social worker and the support they received.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

## Background

1. This is the 7th year that Action for Children have carried out an annual survey with children and families who are open to the Children’s Social Care team. The methodology for obtaining feedback for the survey has been through telephone contact, and this has proved to be the most effective method of obtaining information. This year the participation rate was 68.5% – the highest response rate so far – and this year saw the greatest number of interviews since surveys began in 2015. The questions are designed to be open-ended and flexible, to allow participants some control, so they can contribute at their pace. As in previous years, the report is designed to let young people/families

speaking for themselves, so interviews were transcribed and reflected in the quotes attached to the statistical information.

## **Current Position**

2. Overall, the responses were positive. Where concerns were raised, the feedback was constructive and helpful in understanding the journey of those involved with the Children's Social Care team. Some of the feedback and actions taken are identified below.
  - Families involved with Child in Need (CiN) services requested better inter-agency working with better accountability at CiN meetings, with more transparent decision-making. This has been picked up by the Children's Social Care team and work has been done around this area to improve multi-agency working, following consultation with the families involved with this service.
  - All the children who were spoken to who were looked after by the City of London felt positive about their care. Whether in foster care or in semi-independent accommodation, they said they liked where they are living and felt that the foster carers and staff looked after them well.
  - The survey identified that the young people who were looked after and care leavers in the City of London did not have any knowledge of the pledge. Since the completion of the survey there has been a workshop to review and update the pledge, which all the young people have had an opportunity to respond and contribute, in relation to what the City of London has promised.
  - As in previous years, care leavers were overwhelmingly positive about the frequency and quality of their communication with the Children's Social Care team, with 81% finding it very easy to communicate with their social workers.
  - Early Help Services received very positive feedback: families described a sense of feeling genuinely understood and listened to; there was a high level of trust that appeared to exist between many of the families using the service and the staff within that area.

## **Options**

3. N/A

## **Proposals**

4. N/A

## **Key Data**

5. N/A



## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

6. Financial implications – N/A
7. Resource implications – N/A
8. Legal implications – N/A
9. Risk implications – N/A
10. Equalities implications – N/A
11. Climate implications – N/A
12. Security implications – N/A

## **Conclusion**

13. The level of engagement with the Action for Children Survey has been positive. There has been a consistent increase in the number of children and families involved with the survey since it started in 2015.
14. Prior to the survey taking place, the questions were reviewed by the City of London and Action for Children, to ensure that they were still pertinent. Those questions remaining were reviewed to ensure that they elicited the impact of intervention from the Children's Social Care team, as this would support the development of services. This would give us a better understanding about what was helpful for families, and what needed to be reviewed.
15. The approach in using an independent organisation such as Action for Children to carry out the survey enables children and families to feel confident that their views will be listened to and remain anonymous.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Action for Children Survey August 2022

### **Pat Dixon**

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Participation Service – Children in Care Council (CiCC) updated Pledge	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	Outcome 1
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

## Summary

In November 2022 the Children in Care Council (CiCC) members were invited to a workshop to review and update the pledge, which was last updated in 2019. The workshop was also an opportunity for young people to meet with the new Virtual Headteacher, who helped facilitate the discussions around young people’s priorities. This report will identify how the young people have been consulted, and what they considered to be important to them regarding the pledge, with clarification as to how this will be taken forward in the future.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The first time the CiCC drafted their priorities for the pledge was in 2014. Since that time, the pledge has been reviewed once – in 2019. The pledge is based on what the young people see as being important to them, as a looked-after child and care leaver, cared for by the City of London. The pledge is what we make as the corporate parent in meeting their requests. Therefore, it was essential that the young people had an opportunity to discuss and raise issues that were significant to them: these were included within the pledge, alongside the response of the City of London to their request.

2. There have been considerable changes since the first pledge was drafted in 2014, both within the cohort of young people who are currently being cared for by the City of London and the wider community context in which the young people live. The young people have had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, and more recently the economic crisis, which has had an impact on them financially, especially as they try to navigate their way towards being independent. Therefore, it was important that every young person had an opportunity to contribute, and have their voice heard. So, rather than just reviewing the pledge, a workshop was arranged so that young people could have the opportunity to contribute their views on what they considered relevant to them at this time.

## **Current Position**

3. In November 2022, a workshop was held with the young people, (food and soft drinks were provided). Although there was initially a high response rate to attend, some young people were unable to come due to various reasons, so only four young people attended the workshop. The purpose of the pledge was explained, and discussions were generated about the issues that worried and concerned the young people. The workshop went well and those young people who did attend really engaged in the process and contributed in identifying some key areas that were important to them.
4. To ensure that all the young people had an opportunity to contribute, the information gathered was sent out to all the young people who were looked after or care leavers in the City of London, with the request for them to contribute if they wanted to add anything further. The Participation Officer offered support to those young people who needed assistance regarding interpreting and recording their views. This consultation took place over a two-week period. Once this had taken place and the feedback received, it was used to develop the pledge, with a “you asked” and “we promise” format.

## 5. **The CiCC Pledge**

**You asked** – “That if decisions are being made about me, you will let me know what they are and involve me.”

**We promise** – To let you know about decisions that involve you and keep you informed.

**You asked** – “Us to be there to support you in making decisions about your welfare.”

**We promise** – To be there to support and guide you in the decisions you make about your welfare.

**You asked** – “Take time to listen to me, write to me and reply to me.”

**We promise** – To listen to you and respond to you in whatever way you prefer.

**You asked** – “If you say you are going to do something, stick to it.”

**We promise** – That if we have agreed to do something for you, then we will make sure that we do what we say.

**You asked** – “Please don’t judge me without knowing me.”

**We promise** – Never to judge you; we will listen and help you without making any judgements about you, by respecting you, for who you are.

**You asked** – “To be supported as you moved towards independence, especially if you have problems getting furniture, appliances, or experience financial difficulties.”

**We promise** – To be there for you and give you the skills and support that you need to navigate through difficult and challenging times.

**You asked** – “For proper medical care and support in receiving appropriate dental care.”

**We promise** – To ensure that, when you come into our care, you will be registered with a doctor and dentist, so that your health and dental needs can be met.

**You asked** – “For us to gain permission from you when we shared information about you and let you know who has access to your information.”

**We promise** – To ask your consent before we share your information with other professionals, and inform you about who has access to your information.

**You asked** – “That we took time to find out what you’re interested in, giving opportunities to be involved in voluntary work and work experience.”

**We promise** – To explore with you the opportunities available in doing voluntary work and work experience as part of your journey towards independence.

**You asked** – “What kind of sport can I get involved with?”

**We promise** – To support you where possible in achieving your aims in any sporting activities that you may be interested in.

**You asked** – “Find me somewhere safe to live.”

**We promise** – To make sure that we find you a home where you will feel safe, by checking where you will be staying and listening to what you say.

**You asked** – “To have access to safe travel.”

**We promise** – To support you in accessing safe travel arrangements.

**You asked** – “That we support you in getting into good schools and colleges.”

**We promise** – To ensure that the schools and colleges that you attend will be able to offer you the best standard of education and care.

**You asked** – “To have the opportunity to do additional learning courses.”

**We promise** – That we will listen, advise, and support you with your learning needs.

**You asked** – “To have regular contact with the social workers, with a social worker attending the CiCC.”

**We promise** – To give you the opportunity to meet with a social worker at the CiCC meetings.

**You asked** – “That we be open and honest.”

**We promise** – That we will keep you informed about anything relating to your care, and be open and honest in how we talk to you.

6. The above draft of the pledge will be sent out to all the young people who are looked after or care leavers with the City of London by 12 January 2023, for their comments about the promises that have been made regarding our pledge. This consultation will take place over a two-week period, and any feedback received will be shared verbally with Members at the Safeguarding Sub-Committee.

### **Options**

7. N/A

### **Proposals**

8. N/A

### **Key Data**

9. N/A

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

10. Financial implications – N/A

11. Resource implications – N/A

12. Legal implications – N/A

13. Risk implications – N/A
14. Equalities implications – N/A
15. Climate implications – N/A
16. Security implications – N/A

## **Conclusion**

17. Once the pledge has been finalised, it will be formatted and translated into the various languages spoken by the young people. All the young people will receive a copy of the pledge, and any young person just coming into care will also receive a copy in their own language. The pledge will also be available on the City of London website.
18. The pledge will be reviewed annually by the CiCC, and through a consultation process with other young people who are looked after and care leavers. This consultation process will establish whether we are meeting our promise to the young people, and the impact that this has had on their care. It will also give the young people an opportunity to revise any areas, and change or add to the pledge so that it can remain current and pertinent to all the young people cared for by the City of London.

## **Appendices**

- None.

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<b>Committee:</b> Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information	<b>Dated:</b> 09/02/2023
<b>Subject: Care Leavers and their education, training and employment</b>	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	3, 10
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Claire Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Rachel Talmage, Head of Service, People Department, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

## Summary

This report sets out the current offer for Care Leavers, the support offered, and its impact. Our Local Offer for Care Leavers is published in accordance with Section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.<sup>1</sup>

Ofsted is introducing a new, separate judgement to the framework for Inspecting Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) in January 2023. Our ambition is to achieve an excellent outcome for every child.

The majority of care leavers are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Our children bring a wealth of personal experience, courage and determination. It is common that education has been disrupted prior to joining the City, that permanent immigration status is needed alongside the need to learn and develop English language skills prior to being ready for further education.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

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<sup>1</sup> [Resources and Information for Children in Care and Care Leavers - City of London](#)

## Main Report

### Background

#### *National*

1. Lots of children in care and care leavers go on to further education, and many care leavers go on to university, although for some young people this happens later in life.<sup>2</sup> However, care leavers are one of the most under-represented groups in higher education. In 2020/21, just 13% progressed to higher education by age 19 in England, compared to 45% of all other pupils.<sup>3</sup>
2. Ofsted is introducing a new, separate judgement to the framework for Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in January 2023.<sup>4</sup> The new judgement will focus on the things that matter most to care leavers' lives, including their learning and employment opportunities. Inspections will also consider whether local authorities are making good decisions for care leavers, and what they are doing to support them into adulthood.

#### *London*

3. Despite major improvements over the last decade, London's children in care can still face multiple obstacles, and many remain particularly vulnerable. This means that fewer care leavers go on to further training or university, and can face complex challenges as they transition into independent living.
4. Recent research published by The Children's Society demonstrates the need for a more consistent, pan-London offer for care leavers. The City of London already fulfils their recommendations for care leavers, except:  
A commitment that local authorities across London reserve a set number of their in-house apprenticeships for care leavers, ensuring that they are given guidance and support from the application process through to the end of their placement.
5. **London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) Programme: Care Leaver's compact**  
The London Care Leavers' Compact will provide a framework for a consistent and high-quality offer across the capital. The City of London is involved in the LIIA programme.
6. It is a duty under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 that England's local authorities must publish information about the services offered for care leavers. Each London borough therefore has a care leaver offer, but these are individual to each area and do not provide a consistent and shared offer for our care leavers. Care leavers do not always live in the borough responsible for them, which poses further challenges with the variation in offers. It is also important that the offer to care leavers reaches beyond services provided by

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<sup>2</sup> [Higher and further education - Become \(becomecharity.org.uk\)](https://www.becomecharity.org.uk)

<sup>3</sup> [Supporting care leavers and estranged students in higher education - HEPI](https://www.hepi.org.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [A new judgement for care leavers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

local authorities. Partners such as health, education and transport have important roles to play, as do the private and voluntary sectors.

## Areas to be explored as part of the guarantee – Our thematic working groups



### The City

- To help care leavers succeed in education and training, the City of London provides registration fees, course fees, exam fees, equipment, course books, travel costs, clothes and uniforms for study or work. This is published on our local offer. Driving lessons are provided where this is linked to a job role requirement, but this is not yet a core offer for all care leavers.

### Current Position

- Children's Social Care and Early Help aims for excellence across all its work for children and families. All our young people are offered to stay with their foster families, or to remain in their supported living accommodation. There is no 'cliff edge' for leaving care. All but three care leavers were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Support to our care leavers in respect of education/training and employment is a core part of the social worker's role with care leavers, and a primary part of their Pathway Plan. Social workers use the advice and guidance service Prospects, Connecting Communities, and the Virtual School Headteacher to ensure that our young people are on the right courses at the right time, and that young people are progressing. A new Expert Practitioner role started in January 2023 to boost oversight of those not yet in education/training or employment, by chairing their pathway plans and offering coaching to social

workers. A new part-time Deputy Virtual Headteacher will be working to strengthen the educational offer for care leavers and work with colleges across London to boost extracurricular enrichment work.

10. The Head of Service for Social Care and Early Help chairs a monthly tracker with the Virtual School Headteacher, Prospects and the deputy/team manager. This has ensured good management grip and that no care leaver is left behind or overlooked.

#### *Cost of living and effect on education*

11. Cost of living and effect on education, training and employment: The City of London has increased subsistence by 10% to match the cost-of-living increase from 1 December 2022 (to be reviewed in six months and again in one year), and have matched this with young people accessing universal credit. This was following staff feedback, and from listening to young people. For example, one young person is studying while she works with the NHS. She lives in a studio flat. The extra funds help her with laundry costs outside the home, and to help deal with mould in the flat.

#### *The Virtual School Headteacher*

12. The part-time Virtual School Headteacher has recruited an interim Deputy Head to support care leavers aged over 18 years. The Deputy Head will be scrutinising students' courses to ensure that they are relevant and impactful. He will be looking at the care leavers' individual trajectories to see what else could build around, for example, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes. The Deputy Head will undertake project work and report on impact. An example of an excellent outcome last term was the Virtual School Headteacher working to ensure that a care leaver could access a foundation level degree. This was a unique outcome, and enabled the student to reach university without A Levels or equivalent.
13. The Virtual School Headteacher has created a joint project with the City of London Boys School to provide one twilight session a week throughout spring and summer, so that care leavers get a chance to be taught science, engineering, drama, art and design. There will be a post-class game of football every week, trips to museums, and London-based activities to engage and inspire.
14. The Virtual School Headteacher has created an enrichment project called Beneath the Trees, linking care leavers aged 16 to 25 years with Epping Forest – part of the City of London outside London. The overall aim being to enrich education and provide a breadth of experience and opportunity.

#### *Socially responsible contracts: corporate centre*

15. The Head of Service for Social Care and Early Help worked with Education and Early Years and the corporate centre to ensure that our procurement requirements include contracts offering work/training to vulnerable people, including care leavers.

### *Connecting Communities*

16. Social care has referred young people to the Connecting Communities Project and worked closely last term to identify young people who could be helped into work/training. This project is limited by the contract with the European Social Fund to work with people in 12 boroughs across London and geographically in the City (not including those we are responsible for outside). As our care leavers largely live across greater London, most miss out on this offer.

### *Prospects*

17. In quarter 2, 2022/23 Prospects supported five care leavers, with three being secured into further education.

### *Education and Skills Team*

18. There is a new project for our children in care and care leavers with the Freeman's School, which offers a residential programme for 10 young people and includes oracy skills. Impact will be reported on as part of the service development plan.

### **Key Data**

19. There are currently 58 care leavers aged 18 plus in the City of London: six are not in education, training or employment; four of our young people are in university; 41 are in college (some work part-time around study); and five are working. One care leaver at university has an offer of full-time work with a global software company set up post-graduation.
20. Six young people aged between 18 and 25 years are not in education, training or employment. These are the reasons and support provided:
  - a. Due to immigration control, court hearing pending March 2023
  - b. Seeking voluntarily return to country of origin via Home Office
  - c. Due to emotional wellbeing (two young people). Mental health support, advocacy and independent visiting are offered and taken up.
  - d. Due to alcohol addiction. Joint support via Children's and Adult services, specialist support in place and currently working with Virtual School Headteacher to gain a college place.
  - e. Due to likely criminal exploitation; the person is under probation support and out of touch with services.
21. There are no ringfenced apprenticeship vacancies for care leavers at City of London.
22. There are no care leavers working as apprentices within City of London.<sup>5</sup>

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

#### ***Corporate plan***

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<sup>5</sup> [Care Leaver Local Offer :: Home / Local Authorities / City of London \(careleaveroffer.co.uk\)](https://www.careleaveroffer.co.uk)

23. Work supporting care leavers sits within a commitment to a flourishing society, ensuring equality of opportunity. We would like to see an equality of outcome for our young people: being able to access well-paying jobs and receive a good quality education. Our ambition for care leavers is equivalent to our hopes for our own children, and that they outperform us and achieve more than us.

#### *Financial implications*

24. If young people are in good jobs which pay well by the age of 25, they will be better able to manage when difficulties and changes arise.

#### *Resource implications*

25. Virtual School Headteacher funding for all children with a social worker is set by central government is not permanent and is subject to review. It is clear to see the impact of the role on young people, and it is hoped funding will continue.

#### *Legal implications*

26. One young person is unable to study/work for immigration law reasons, which is a waste of his talent and contribution to UK society. This also has an impact on his health and wellbeing.

#### *Risk implications*

27. Providing a full, creative, enrichment programme and ensuring that young people are provided with opportunity and courses that will stretch them offers an antidote to boredom/risk/unhealthy behaviours on an individual basis. The City of London will be subject to an Ofsted inspection in this area. There is a risk that, should the impact of the offer continue to innovate and grow, then the City of London would suffer reputational risk.

#### *Equalities implications*

28. Project work has adapted to focus on the unique needs of our young people, who largely have English as a second/third/fourth language, and who are hindered by immigration control and often lengthy journeys that disrupt formal education.

29. Our young people may be subject to structural and individual racism, as most are black or brown. They may also face prejudice as people who have migrated to the UK. Together with language and cultural barriers, this means it is harder for some of our young people to have an equality of outcome educationally and with accessing well paid, secure work.

30. Barriers exist with apprenticeships (as legal status and levels of English are required), and there are no pre-apprenticeships or designated apprenticeships for care leavers yet offered within the City of London Corporation as an employer itself. Rather, these apprenticeships are a feature of good procurement from our commissioned partners which have yet to have any impact.

#### *Climate implications*

31. None.

#### *Security implications*

32. None.

## **Conclusion**

33. The education employment and training offer open to care leavers is robust and creative. The next piece of work is to extend and expand the post-18 college offer, so that young people have a fuller curriculum. The collaborative focus on those who are not yet engaged in education and employment or training is keeping these numbers low and ensuring that every effort is made to bring about change.

## **Appendices - None**

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Children and Families Service Performance – Month 7 2022/23 (October 2022)	<b>Public</b>  <b>Appendix 1 (Non-public)</b>  <b>Appendix 2 (Public)</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1, 2 and 3
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	No
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Ellie Ward, Head of Strategy and Performance	

## Summary

This report updates Members on service performance across the Children and Families Service. It demonstrates where performance meets our statutory obligations and targets and identifies where action was taken for improvement in specific areas.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The Children and Families Service at the City of London Corporation provides a range of services including Early Help, Child Protection, and Supporting Care Leavers.
2. The service collects and monitors a range of performance information to ensure that statutory duties are being met, and that services are delivering the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families.

3. Appendix 1 presents the performance dashboard from 1 April to 31 October (month 7) 2022/23. It provides an overall summary of performance in each of the service areas and more detailed information in each area.
4. Appendix 2 provides a glossary of some of the terms used in the performance dashboard.

### **Current Position**

5. Overall, performance across the service is good, meeting a range of statutory requirements and local targets, and comparing well with regional or national benchmarks.
6. It should be noted that, due to small numbers in children's services cohorts in the City of London Corporation, there can sometimes be significant variance in out-turns. These are noted where this is an issue.

### **Headlines**

7. Demand continues to be high and is continuing to increase. During the first and second quarters (Q1 and Q2) of 2022/23, there were 376 contacts and, in October, 70 contacts, in keeping with the trend. At the end of the first six months in 2021/22, the total number of contacts was 256. It is predicted that the total number of contacts for 2022/23 will be higher than the previous year, in keeping with an annual trend.
8. The number of Children in Need also continued to increase from 18 at the end of the financial year 2021/22 to 22 at the end of Q2 in 2022/23. However, it has decreased to 18 at the end of October 2022.
9. The number of children looked after (CLA) by the City of London Corporation decreased over the quarters in 2021/22 (from 19 at the end of Q1 to 12 at the end of the financial year). Since then, numbers have been fairly constant and, at the end of October 2022, there were 11 CLA. Of these, 55% were Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).
10. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) recorded one contact in October 2022, with 1% of the 70 contacts received at the front door. For the year to date, 12 of the 446 contacts (3%) had passed through the MASH.
11. There were 39 Early Help referrals in quarters 1 and 2 of 2022/23. In October there were four referrals. June saw a particularly high rate of 24 referrals. Year to date there have been 43 Early Help referrals compared to 40 in 2021/22. Many of the referrals reflect the support provided to families as part of the Afghan Resettlement Programme.
12. Year to date, 91% of assessments were completed within 45 days. There has been variation across the months which can be a combination of factors, including the needs of the case, or awaiting information. In 2021/22 the year-end figure was 71%.

13. There were 57 care leavers at the end of October. This has been fairly constant since Q3 2021/22 but is an increase on the end of last year where, at the end of March 2021, there were 42 care leavers.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

14. Strategic implications – This report represents a picture of the Children and Families Service which includes both statutory requirements and early intervention and prevention work (known as Early Help). The work of the service helps meet Corporate Plan Priorities 1, 2 and 3 for families, children and young people.

15. Financial implications – N/A

16. Resource implications – N/A

17. Legal implications – N/A

18. Risk implications – N/A

19. Equalities implications – Monitoring intelligence on all of our social care processes and associated demographics allows us to assess and then investigate if there are any unintended impacts of any processes or practices.

20. Climate implications – N/A

21. Security implications – N/A

### **Conclusion**

22. This report provides a summary of performance data from the Children and Families Service from 1 April to 31 October 2022, comparing it to performance from the previous month, quarter or year, and other benchmarks where appropriate.

23. It demonstrates strong performance across the service, with some specific areas where some action was taken for improvement. These areas are all now back on a positive trajectory.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Children and Families Service Performance Dashboard October YTD 2022/23 (Non-Public)
- Appendix 2 – Glossary for Performance Dashboard (Public)

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# Glossary

## Children Social Care

CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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

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

**TAF** Team Around the Family (Early Help measure)

**UASC** Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child (up to 18<sup>th</sup> birthday)



<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2021 to 2022	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	Outcome 1
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service, Community and Children’s Services	

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) activity between April 2021 and March 2022, which has been incorporated in the LADO Annual Report. There have been 15 referrals during this reporting year, which is the same as the previous year. Of the 15 referrals received, only five required an Allegation Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) Meeting. Out of the 10 remaining referrals, three did not meet the threshold for LADO involvement, and seven required advice and support.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

### Background

1. The responsibility of the LADO is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018), and the London Child Protection Procedures 7th edition, which was updated in 2022. Chapter 7 of the Pan London Child Protection procedures relates to all allegations made against staff, including volunteers, that call into question their suitability to work with, or be in a position of trust with, children – whether made about events in their private or professional life – need to be formally reported to the LADO.

2. Chapter 7 has recently been amended to provide consistency in the response to low-level concerns and to include the wider definition of people in positions of trust (the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 has extended the definition of Position of Trust within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 22A to include anyone who coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs a child under 18, on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion).

### **Current Position**

3. There have been 15 referrals made to the LADO between April 2021 and March 2022, which is the same number of referrals that were received the previous year. When looking at the referral source, there has been an increase in referrals from employment agencies, from health, social care, and education, all based in the City of London. Often in these cases the concerns relate to an allegation that has occurred outside of the City of London, where the professionals have been working. The City of London is often notified to support and advise the agency in dealing with the allegation. The referring local authority would deal with the allegation in their area and advise the City of London of the outcome and recommendations.
4. Of the 15 referrals received, only five required an ASV Meeting. Of the 10 remaining referrals, three did not meet the threshold for LADO involvement, and seven required advice and support from the LADO in managing the concerns. Six of those referrals involved agency staff, whose agency was based in the City of London. In most of these cases, the allegation is dealt with by the LADO in the area where the incident occurred. However, in certain circumstances, where an individual has only been employed for a short period, the LADO responsibility could fall to the LADO where the agency is based. The categories for these referrals are: one was aligned to a professional's behaviour, six related to a sexual incident; and eight were under the category of 'physical'.

### **Options**

5. N/A

### **Proposals**

6. N/A

### **Key Data**

7. N/A

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

8. Financial implications – N/A
9. Resource implications – N/A

10. Legal implications – N/A
11. Risk implications – N/A
12. Equalities implications – N/A
13. Climate implications – N/A
14. Security implications – N/A

## **Conclusion**

15. In November 2022, the City of London received a focused visit from Ofsted in relation to children’s services. Part of this focused visit was on the work of the LADO. During this visit, current LADO cases were reviewed. The conclusion was: “The local authority designated officer provides a robust service, taking a forensic approach to analysing current and historical information, and making timely and effective decisions. The designated officer also provides skilled professional challenge to organisations when necessary.”

## **Appendices**

- LADO Annual Report 2021 to 2023.

### **Pat Dixon**

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## **City of London Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2021 to 2022**

### **1. Introduction**

This report identifies the Local Authorities Designated Officer activity that has taken place regarding referrals and professional allegations in the City of London between April 2021 through to March 2022. This report provides the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership with an overview of the work undertaken by the City of London's LADO. The report will review and analyse the referrals received throughout the year and the training and development opportunities that have been available for agencies in the City of London.

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

The responsibility of the LADO is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018), and the London Child Protection Procedures 7<sup>th</sup> edition (updated 2022), Chapter 7. All allegations made against staff, including volunteers, that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children, whether made about events in their private or professional life, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

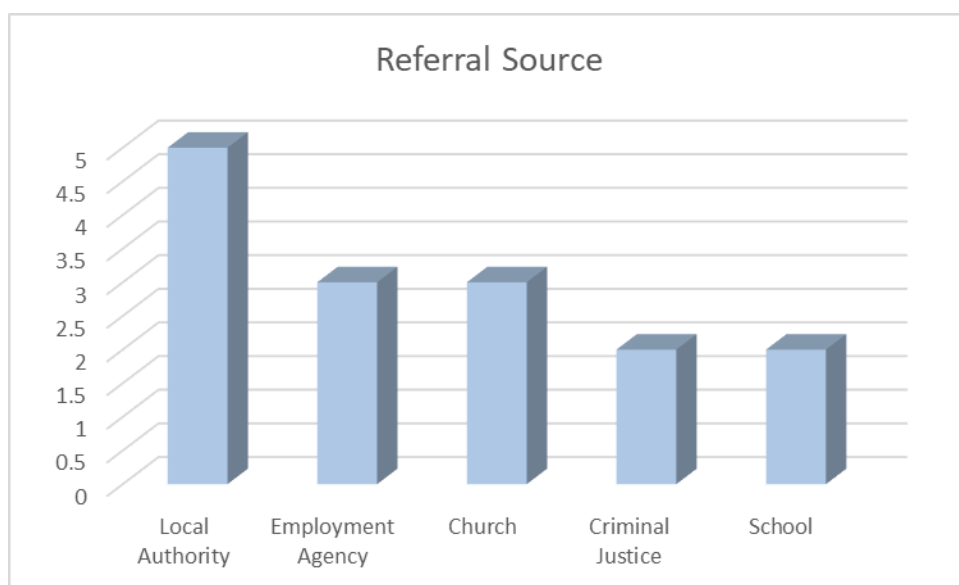
Chapter 7 has recently been amended to provide consistency in respect of the response to low level concerns and to include the wider definition of people in positions of trust (Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 has extended the definition of Position of Trust within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 22A to include anyone who coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs a child under 18, on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion

In the City of London, the LADO work is carried out by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance who reports directly to the Assistant Director of People's Services. Guidance and training on professional allegations are available through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership website and agencies have access to consult with the LADO in the City of London.

### 3. Referrals

There has been a total of 15 referrals made to the LADO during 2021/2022 period, which is the same number of referrals that were received in 2020/2021. As in the previous year this number reflects all the LADO activity that has taken place over the year. Fig 1 shows the source of the referrals has been varied, with a high proportion coming from other Local Authorities, often on the advice of their LADO. There has also been an increase in referrals from employment agencies, from health, social care, and education, who are based in the City of London. Often in these cases the concerns relate to an allegation that has occurred outside of the City of London, where the professionals have been working, the City of London is often notified to support and advise the agency in dealing with the allegation. The referring local authority would deal with the allegation in their area and advise the City of London of the outcome and recommendations.

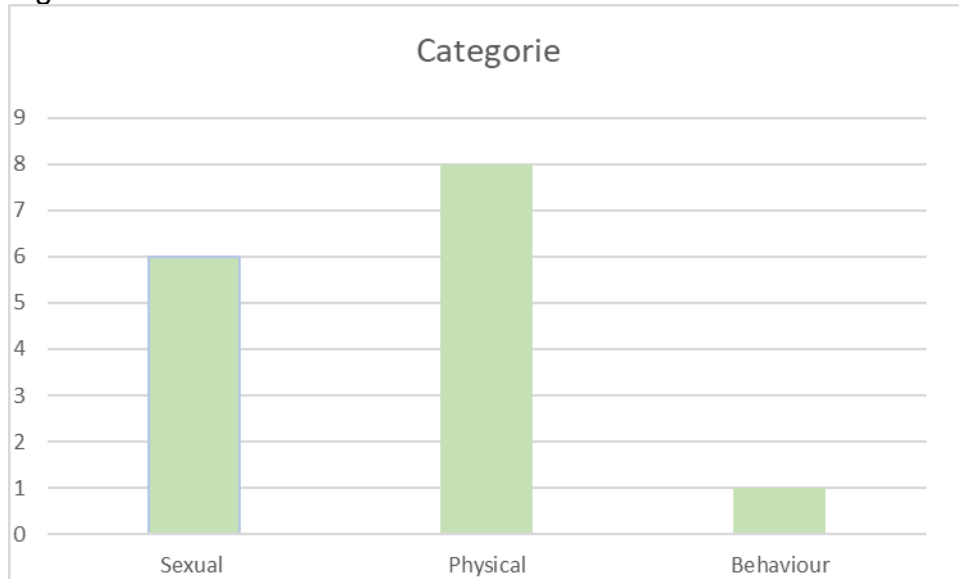
Fig 1



Of the 15 referrals received, only five referrals required an Allegation Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) Meeting. Of the 10 remaining referrals, three did not meet the threshold for LADO involvement, and seven required advice and support from the LADO in managing the concerns. Six of those referrals involved agency staff, whose agency was based in the City of London. In most of these cases the allegation is dealt with by the LADO in the area where the incident occurred. However, in certain circumstance, whereby an individual has only been employed for a short period the LADO responsibility could fall to the LADO where the agency is based. Fig2 show the categories of the referrals received, eight where related to incidents involving physical contact, six were sexual and one was due to the professional's behaviour.

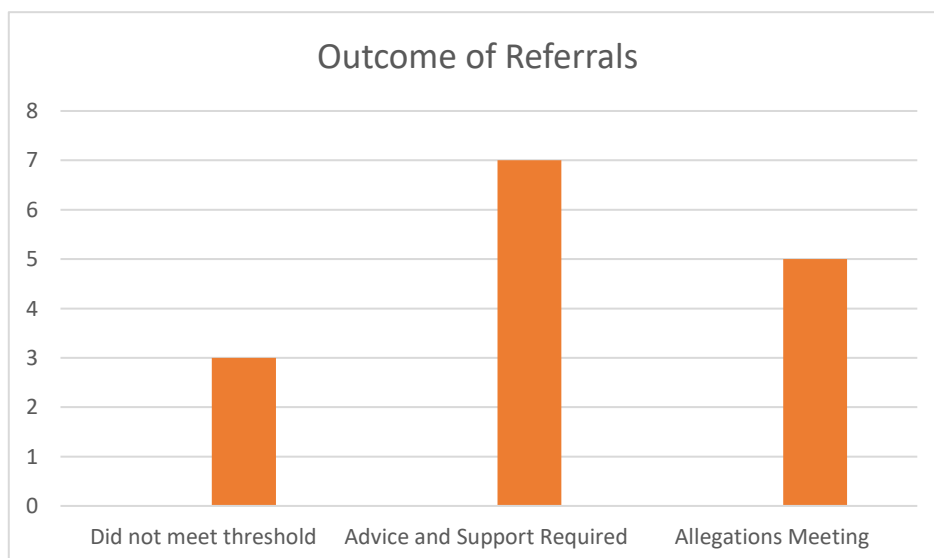
In total there were five cases that related to incidents in the professional's personal life, four of those case related to concerns that were sexual.

Fig 2



As can be seen by fig 3 nearly half of the referrals received required advice and support for the agency involved with the allegation. This can be especially difficult for those smaller agencies or charities who have minimal support from human resources. However, all the agencies that were supported in 2021 to 2022 fully understood the role of the LADO and managed the allegation appropriately within their agency. Sometimes it can be difficult for agencies based in the city to obtain information from the LADOs in another local authority, or from the Children's team involved. The support from the City of London LADO in obtaining this information assists in the management of risk and the disciplinary process' required.

Fig 3



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

Designated Safeguarding Leads can access training through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership, part of this training focuses on the role of the LADO. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership also produce “Things You Should Know” (TUSK) briefings, these are sent out via email to professionals and agencies. These briefings contain information on up-to-date guidance and information on safeguarding, plus the outcomes from child safeguarding practice reviews, formally known as serious case reviews. New staff who have joined the Peoples Directorate in the City of London meet with the LADO as part of their induction and going forward there will be face to face induction days for staff, where training on the role of the LADO will be covered.

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

The only area where there has been an increase in referrals has been in relation to employment agencies based in the City of London. In 2021 to 2022 there were six referrals received that involved agencies based in the city, these agencies provided staff for social care, education, and health settings. All the LADO referrals received in relation to these agencies were related to professionals who worked outside of the City of London, and the allegations were being managed by the LADO where the allegation occurred. The role of the City of London LADO was to support the agencies involved in managing risk, offering advice and support.

Also reviewed were the referrals that were dealt with by the City of London, these were checked in conjunction with data from the past five years, to establish whether there were any changes or trends regarding referrals. As there were concerns around the low number of referrals from School settings, as in 2021 to 2022 there had only been two referrals, whereas in 2020 to 2021 there had been seven referrals. Fig 4 shows a breakdown of the data around referrals over the past five years. As the table below shows, the number of referrals from City of London Schools was four in 2020 to 2021, as two of the referrals were in relation to an employment agency based in the City of London. When that data is seen over a five-year period the average number of referrals from Schools is three a year. What is significant is that there have been no referrals/ notifications from Police over the past five years.

The overall increase in referrals is due to the inclusion of referrals that were reviewed and deemed not to meet the threshold for the LADO, and the cases that required advice and support. As can be seen by the chart in fig 4 the increase has occurred since the inclusion of this data.



**Fig 4**

Data for Year	School	Nursery	Health	Police	Other Agency	Total Number Referrals
2021/2022	2	0	1	0	6 Agency 2 Criminal Justice 3 Church Setting 1 Leisure Centre	15
2020/2021	7 4 COL Schools 3 Agency based in City	2	2	0	2 Charity 1 Youth Services 1 Adult Services	15
2019/2020	3	1	3	0	1 Court	8
2018/20219	1	3	0	0	1 Agency 1 Housing	6
2017/2018	3	0	0	0	1 Charity	4

## 6. Multi-agency working

During the 2020/2021 the LADO has worked with a range of professionals, from other Local Authorities within the London region and nationally, the Police, Health, Nursery and Education settings, in managing the risks and concerns in relation to professional allegations. The LADO also reports into multi-agency forums, such as the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership, the City of London's Children's Partnership Board and Education Safeguarding Forum. The LADO also maintains close links with the Designated Safeguarding Leads in Schools and there is multi-agency safeguarding training available for partner agencies through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership although this has been limited due to the pandemic.

## 7. Links in London and nationally

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

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

Between April 2021 and March 2022 there have been no direct notifications from the City of London Police or the Metropolitan Police.

Pat Dixon  
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)  
Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

**ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN****Date: April 2021 -March 2022**

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

<b>3. Who made the Referral</b>	
	<b>Number</b>
<b>1.Social Care</b>	<b>5 other LA</b>
<b>2.Health-Hospital Staff</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>3.Health-Community</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>4.Education</b>	<b>2 Schools</b>
<b>5.Early Years-Childminder</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>6.Early Years-Nursery Staff</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>7.Foster Carer-IFA with City of London children</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>8.Police</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>9.Probation</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>10.CAFCASS</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>11.Voluntary Organisations</b> Include sports clubs, Scouts, Brownies, dance clubs and charitable organisations	<b>0</b>
<b>12.Immigration/Asylum Support services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>13.Transport</b> Transport provided to services through a contract	<b>0</b>
<b>14.Care Agency- Education Employment Agency</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>15.Other Dept's City of London</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>16. Other</b>	<b>3 Church settings, 2 Criminal Justice</b>
<b>17.Leisure Services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>18.Adult Services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>19.Housing Associations/Housing Providers.</b>	<b>0</b>

Number of referrals about an adult within specific employment/volunteer sector which reached a multi-agency strategy discussion and/or meeting and primary reason(s) for referral.						
Employer	Physical <i>state whether concern arose from authorised physical intervention restraint or arrest</i>		Emotional	Sexual	Neglect	Behaviour which called into question person's suitability
	Yes	No				
Social Care						
Health-hospital staff		1				
Health-community						
Education-teaching staff		1		1		
Education-nonteaching staff						
Early Years-childminders						
Early Years-nursery staff						
Foster Carers-IFA with City children						
Police						
Probation						
CAFCASS						
Voluntary Organisations						
Faith Groups				1		
Armed Forces						
Immigration/Asylum Support Services						
Care Agencies						
Transport						
Other (Officer Court)	1					
Leisure Services						
Adult Services						
Housing Associations/Provider						

<b>4. Number of referred cases that resulted in Allegation Against Staff or Volunteers Meeting referral: 5 (Please note there could be more than one outcome).</b>	
Being Substantiated	2
Being Unsubstantiated	3
Being Unfounded	n/a
CSM held	n/a
Met the threshold for LADO input but not for a Complex strategy meeting	n/a
Criminal investigation/joint work with CAIT	3
Criminal prosecution	0
Caution	0
Conviction	0
Acquittal	0
Initial inquires by employers	0
Disciplinary investigation	2
Disciplinary meeting/hearing	0
Suspension	1
Dismissal	0
Cessation of use	0
Deregistration	0
Training needs identified for member of staff or the agency.	0
Risk Assessment completed by Employer	3
Referral to DBS	0
Referral to regulatory body e.g. GMC /Ofsted etc...	0
<b>5. At the point of conclusion, the number of cases that were resolved within the following timeframes</b>	
1 month	4
3 months	
6 months	1

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Private Fostering Annual Report 2021 to 2022	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	Outcome 1
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service	

## Summary

There have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for 2021 to 2022. Therefore, this report will inform Members about how the City of London has met the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering by raising awareness. There have been some difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the limited opportunities to have face-to-face contact through conferences and training events. However, the City of London has been promoting private fostering through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) app and the distribution of leaflets to partner agencies, there have also been opportunities to raise awareness with partners through multi-agency meetings.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

## Background

### Definition of Private Fostering Arrangements

1. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is, without the involvement of the local authority), for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great-aunt, or they may be a friend of the family, or other non-relative, such as the parents of the

child's friend. A person who is a close relative of the child, as defined by the Children Act 1989 (a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt – whether by full- or half-blood or by marriage or civil partnership – or stepparent), is not a private foster carer.

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

## **Current Position**

5. As evidenced within this report, there have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City over the last 12 months. There have been concerted efforts to promote awareness around private fostering throughout the year. Schools in the City of London have information on private fostering displayed in parent areas. Libraries also have posters and leaflets displayed in public areas. The Strategic Communications Officer also ensures that information on private fostering is distributed within publications that go out to City residents.
6. The CHSCP has included information about private fostering arrangements within their safeguarding training for Designated Safeguarding Leads. Children's Social Care and Early Help staff are also informed about private fostering as part of their induction and, as we come out of the pandemic, there will be more opportunities to raise awareness through staff induction days, conferences, and resident events.



## **Options**

7. N/A

## **Proposals**

8. N/A

## **Key Data**

9. N/A

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

10. Financial implications – N/A

11. Resource implications – N/A

12. Legal implications – N/A

13. Risk implications – N/A

14. Equalities implications – N/A

15. Climate implications – N/A

16. Security implications – N/A

## **Conclusion**

17. As identified within this report, there have been no referrals regarding private fostering arrangements in the City of London from April 2021 through to end of March 2022. When reviewing this in the context of other London boroughs, it is evident that they are also experiencing a low number of referrals in relation to private fostering. Therefore, given our size and demographics, the absence of referrals may well be proportionate to what other local authorities are experiencing.

18. However, the City of London continues to raise awareness about private fostering and, in the recent Ofsted focused visit in November 2022, they reviewed the work in this area, identifying “The local authority and the safeguarding partnership are exploring innovative ways to raise awareness of private fostering in the area, given the very low number of referrals”.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Private Fostering Annual Report 2021 to 2022.

## **Background Papers**

- Statutory guidance – National minimum standards for private fostering.

Available at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-minimum-standards-for-private-fostering>

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## Annual Report Private Fostering Arrangements April 2021 to March 2022

### Context of City of London

The City of London has a relatively small resident population of just over 9000 people (2021 estimates), of which just over a 1000 are under the age of 19 (accounting for around 11% of the population in 2021 estimates). Both younger and older population numbers have increased since 2010. The younger population has risen from 9% of the population in 2010 and the older population (over 65's) has grown from 14% in 2010 to 19% in 2021.

The resident population of the Square Mile is predominantly white, though this is projected to decrease over the period to 2026. The Asian population (the largest minority ethnic group in the Square Mile) is projected to remain as a similar proportion of the population (around 13%) and groups which are relatively under-represented, including Black and other populations, are projected to increase.

### DEFINITION OF PRIVATE FOSTERING

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

Examples of private fostering arrangements include:

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

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

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

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

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

### **Meeting National Minimum Standards on Private Fostering,**

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

The City of London's 'Statement of Purpose' on private fostering was reviewed and updated in October 2022. Raising awareness around Private Fostering is reviewed within the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership and is a key priority within the City of London Corporate Plan 2018 -23, Priority 1 "People are Safe and Feel Safe" (d) safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk. The key objectives in achieving this has been to ensure.

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

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

As we have emerged from the pandemic there has been increased face to face activity in raising awareness around Private Fostering over the past year, Fig 1 shows some of the activity that has taken place to raise awareness around Private Fostering. There has also been information sent out about Private Fostering in resident publications and internal publications, promoting the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership App, which contains information on Private Fostering.

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

Event	Date	Resident or Professionals	Activity
Safeguarding Education Forum	October 2022	Professionals, Designated Safeguarding Lead's in Schools.	Verbal briefing on Private Fostering to the forum from Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Early Years Providers Forum	November 2022	Managers Early Years settings	Early Years Managers Forum due to attend Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance to raise awareness around Private Fostering and the CHSCP App.
Estate Resident Meetings	Various dates throughout 2021 to 2022	Residents	Leaflets and bookmarks containing information about Private Fostering have been distributed.
Staff Induction	Various dates throughout 2021 to 2022	Professionals	Head of Safeguarding & Quality Assurance meets with new staff to explain about Private Fostering.

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

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

There have been no referrals received by the City for 2021 to 2022; however, there are procedures in place to assess the placement and ascertain the views of the young person. Assessments completed would include and cover the expectations within the National Minimum Standards by:

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

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

The Children's Social Care and Early Help Service are aware that it is within their role to assist and advise all private foster carers with general parenting skills and provide advice on an on-going basis. There would also be assistance with practical issues for carers around benefits, housing and immigration status if required. The City would ensure that all carers have support in accessing education and health provision for the child or young person.

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

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

A leaflet designed for parents, carers and young people about private fostering arrangements is available and would be given to anyone entering into such an arrangement. There is also information available about services and activities in the

City of London which would be provided for parents, carers and young people from the Family and Young Peoples Information Service.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As part of the Quality Assurance Framework any private fostering arrangements would be subject to an auditing process and the qualitative and quantitative information obtained would be reported into the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership via the quality assurance subgroup.

## Summary

As evidenced within this report there have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City over the last 12 months, given the demographics of the City of London it is likely that there are private fostering arrangements taking place, but these arrangements haven't been reported. The City of London has endeavoured to raise awareness with professionals and residents over the past year, however, due to the confines of the pandemic this has been difficult. For this reason, there has been a concerted effort to engage in more face-to-face awareness sessions with partner agencies as we emerge from the pandemic.

Priorities going forward will be to link with communities through established links, to ensure that residents in the City of London are aware of what a Private Fostering arrangement is, and what they need to do should they be involved in such an arrangement. Through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) there will be continued raising awareness sessions with partners, and the promotion of the CHSCP app. The lead on Private Fostering in the City of London also attends the CHSCP sub groups and will report on the update of these raising awareness sessions.

Pat Dixon  
Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance  
City of London



<b>Committees:</b> Department of Community and Children’s Services Grand Committee – For Information Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information	<b>Dated:</b> 23/01/2023  09/02/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Ofsted Focus Visit Inspection of Children Social Care and Early Help	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1. People are safe and feel safe 2. People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Clare Chamberlain, Interim Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Chris Pelham , Assistant Director People	

## Summary

From 8 to 9 November 2022, Ofsted undertook a two-day Focus Visit of Children’s Social Care and Early Help services to look at services for children in need of help and protection via the ‘front door’ of the service. As part of the Ofsted inspection framework, a Focus Visit does not generate a judgement but instead identifies strengths and areas for improvement which are set out in a published letter. The letter was published on 12 December 2022.

The visit generated positive feedback across all areas that were inspected, with no areas for improvement identified. This report summarises the main findings with the published letter provided as Appendix 1.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

## Background

1. On 1 November 2022, Ofsted contacted the Director of Community and Children's Services to confirm that the organisation would be undertaking a two-day Focus Visit of the services for children in need of help and protection via the 'front door' for Children's Social Care and Early Help services. This took place on 8 and 9 November 2022.
2. The visit was undertaken as part of the Local Authority Children's Services Inspection Framework (see link at Appendix 2) and was the first visit under this framework since the full inspection in March 2020. The Inspection in March 2020 resulted in an overall judgement of 'Outstanding'.
3. The visit did not result in a graded judgement but instead generated a published letter that sets out the findings about strengths and any areas for improvement. This letter was published on 12 December 2022 – see Appendix 1.
4. The visit focused on the following areas:
  - Application of thresholds
  - Early Help pathway
  - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) arrangements
  - Contacts
  - Referrals
  - The effectiveness of supervision, quality assurance, performance management and management oversight.

## **Current Position**

5. The Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence via: review of case notes; meetings with Social Workers and Managers; audit reviews; meetings with partners; meetings with the Town Clerk and the Chair and Deputy Chair of Community and Children's Services.
6. Full details of their findings can be seen in the published letter at Appendix 1. The letter sets out the following overarching headlines:
  - Inspectors found high-quality practice that ensures that children benefit from effective and responsive 'front door' services. Children in need receive the right support at the right time, provided by highly skilled and committed practitioners.
  - Leaders are creating the right environment for social work to flourish. Social workers benefit from manageable case loads, leaders are visible and approachable, supervision is effective and supports staff to drive forward plans for children. Staff have a good range of learning and development opportunities. The City of London has a stable workforce, with very low turnover rates. This means that children are able to form and sustain meaningful, consistent and stable relationships with their workers.

- External quality assurance activity and oversight by the Achieving Excellence Board provide additional scrutiny and assurance, supporting effective practice and decision-making for children at the front door.

7. Additional points of feedback from Ofsted include:

- The City of London Corporation provides effective front door arrangements through a MASH. Thresholds are clearly understood by professionals. Partners have good access to social work consultation. This helps to ensure that children are referred for the appropriate level of service, and that intervention is timely.
- Children who require statutory services receive a timely assessment of need. Assessments are child-centred, of high quality and clearly identify and analyse risk, need and strengths. This supports effective care planning.
- Children at risk of harm are identified promptly. Strategy discussions are timely and are well attended by multi-agency professionals.
- Visits to children known to both Early Help and Children's Services are timely and purposeful. The recording of visits reflects the child's circumstances and lived experiences.
- Managers provide high-quality management oversight. Direction is consistently recorded at referral and allocation stages, and follows the completion of children's assessments. Supervision records are comprehensive, with evidence of reflection, hypothesising, and with a focus on reviewing previous actions and identifying next steps to ensure that children's plans progress and that their needs are met.
- Intelligence and data from partners is used well by leaders to inform a multi-agency response to risk of extra-familial harm.
- The local authority designated officer provides a robust service, taking a forensic approach to analysing current and historical information, and making timely and effective decisions.
- Social workers spoke very positively about working for the City of London. They described leaders and managers as being visible, approachable, and supportive.
- Leaders have addressed the two areas of practice identified at the last inspection as needing improvement. Robust systems and processes are now in place to ensure that families stepped down to Early Help receive support within a timescale that is right for them. Also, management decision-making is now being recorded at all stages of the child's journey.
- Good political and corporate support for children's services has helped children's leaders deliver a remarkable service to Afghan children and families through their resettlement programme.

8. While there were no recommendations for additional action set out by Ofsted , as a result of engaging in the process, learning regarding how audits are signed off and shared with social workers will be reviewed and feature as part of a review of the Quality Assurance Strategy.

**Resource implications:**

9. There are no resource implications linked to this report.

**Legal implications:**

10. There are no legal implications linked to this report.

**Risk implications:**

11. There were no risk implications linked directly to this report. There were no recommendations or a requirement to report back to Ofsted on an improvement plan. The service will continue to drive its improvement agenda forward via the use of the Service Development Plan, with support and oversight via the Achieving Excellence Board, the Safeguarding Sub-Committee and the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership.

**Equalities implications:**

12. No implications regarding equalities are linked to this report. During the two-day Focus Visit, Ofsted were presented with evidence of the work undertaken by the service in respect of anti-racist practice.

**Climate implications:**

13. There are no climate implications linked to this report.

**Security implications:**

14. There are no security implications linked to this report.

**Conclusion**

15. As noted, Ofsted carried out a two-day Focus Visit of the 'front door' of Children's Social Care and Early Help services. The findings of the visit were published in a letter which is appended to this report. The findings were extremely positive, recognising the City of London's ambition to deliver excellent Children's Social Care and Early Help services in partnership with other agencies, including the City of London Police, Education and Health.

16. Ofsted noted that leadership and management was strong, including the support and oversight from Lead Members.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Letter from Ofsted
- Appendix 2 – [Inspecting local authority children's services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Chris Pelham**

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13 December 2022

Clare Chamberlain  
Interim Executive Director of Community Services and Children's Services  
City of London Corporation  
Guildhall  
London  
EC2P 2EJ

Dear Clare

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

This letter summarises the findings of the focused visit to the City of London children's services on 8 and 9 November 2022. His Majesty's Inspectors for this visit were Nicki Shaw and Joy Howick.

Inspectors looked at the local authority's arrangements for the 'front door', the service that receives contacts and referrals, and at decision-making about child protection enquiries, decisions to step down to or step up from early help, and child in need assessments.

This visit was carried out in line with the inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) framework.

### **Headline findings**

At the last inspection, in March 2020, the overall effectiveness of services was judged to be outstanding. On this focus visit, inspectors found high-quality practice which ensures that children benefit from effective and responsive front door services. Children in need receive the right support at the right time, provided by highly skilled and committed practitioners.

Leaders are creating the right environment for social work to flourish. Social workers benefit from manageable caseloads, leaders are visible and approachable, and supervision is effective in a way that supports staff to drive forward plans for children. Staff have a good range of learning and development opportunities. The City of London has a stable workforce, with very low turnover rates. This means that children are able to form and sustain meaningful, consistent and stable relationships with their workers.

External quality assurance activity and oversight by the Achieving Excellence Board provide additional scrutiny and assurance, supporting effective practice and decision-making for children at the front door.

## **Main findings**

The City of London Corporation provides effective front door arrangements through a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Although professionals are not all physically co-located, the service ensures that children receive timely and responsive social work and early help services. Thresholds are clearly understood by professionals. Partners have good access to social work consultation. This helps to ensure that children are referred for the appropriate level of service, and that intervention is timely.

Decisions made by managers in MASH are proportionate to the level of need and risk, and are informed by previous history. Consent from parents is well understood at the front door and is consistently checked by staff and managers. Consent is appropriately overridden when necessary.

When decisions are made to step children's cases down to early help services, children receive high-quality assessments that identify their needs well. This leads to skilful early intervention that improves children's circumstances and prevents concerns escalating.

Children who require statutory services receive a timely assessment of need. Assessments are child-centred, of high quality and clearly identify and analyse risk, need and strengths. This supports effective care planning.

Intervention with children and parents is underpinned by effective use of direct work tools, helping them participate and engage in the assessment process. This helps to ensure that children's wishes and feelings are understood, and that they drive and influence their plans. Overall, assessments seen during the focused visit reflect relational, collaborative, sensitive, thoughtful and skilful social work practice.

Children at risk of harm are identified promptly. Strategy discussions are timely and are well attended by multi-agency professionals. This ensures that effective information is shared in order to inform risk assessments, so that prompt decisions and actions can be made to safeguard children. Records of strategy discussions are comprehensive and include clear rationale for the decisions made. Where protective measures have been used, intervention is appropriately authoritative, and is balanced with demonstrably supportive and humane practice.

Visits to children known to both early help and children's services are timely and purposeful. Practice is informed by a relational approach which supports trusting relationships and meaningful engagement, so that children and families can share information about their experiences. The recording of visits reflects the child's circumstances and lived experiences, really bringing the child to life. This will enable children who want to access their records in later life to benefit from a comprehensive understanding about their histories, and of how and why decisions were made about their care and futures.



An annual survey commissioned by the City of London to ascertain the views of parents indicates that families receiving help feel understood and listened to by practitioners.

Managers provide high-quality management oversight. Direction is consistently recorded at referral and allocation stages, and following the completion of children's assessments. Supervision records are comprehensive, with evidence of reflection and hypothesising, and with a focus on reviewing previous actions and identifying next steps to ensure that children's plans progress and that their needs are met.

Leaders use intelligence and data from partners well to inform a multi-agency response to risk of extra-familial harm. For example, the work in Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meetings is used effectively in order to track emerging themes that happen in the City of London. The co-chairing of this meeting by the police and children's services, with good attendance from other agencies, has allowed partners to develop creative ways of identifying and dealing with a range of issues, and to tackle complexity as early as possible in order to better protect the most vulnerable children. This includes responding to low-level gang activity in order to prevent concerns escalating and identifying children who are vulnerable to trafficking.

The local authority designated officer provides a robust service, taking a forensic approach to analysing current and historical information, and making timely and effective decisions. The designated officer also provides skilled professional challenge to organisations when necessary.

The local authority and the safeguarding partnership are exploring innovative ways to raise awareness of private fostering in the area, given the very low number of referrals. This work is ongoing and subject to monitoring and review through the partnership board.

The City of London commissions its out-of-hours emergency service from a neighbouring local authority. The service was not tested fully during the focused visit because there have been few out-of-hours referrals within the timeframe of the visit.

Social workers spoke very positively about working for the City of London. They described leaders and managers as being visible, approachable and supportive. Social workers have manageable caseloads. Staff have access to a wide range of learning and development opportunities, and they can take on lead roles to develop knowledge and skills in a specific area of practice.

Leaders have addressed the two areas of practice identified at the last inspection as needing improvement. Robust systems and processes are now in place to ensure that families stepped down to early help receive support within a timescale that is right for them, and management decision-making is now being recorded at all stages of the child's journey.

Good political and corporate support for children's services has helped children's leaders deliver a remarkable service to Afghan children and families through their

resettlement programme. The co-location of the early help lead, adviser for early years and social work managers supports timely and effective communication, and consultation between services. This strength of joint working underpins effective support being provided for the children and families. For example, leaders liaised extensively with partners to quickly coordinate and mobilise services, including deploying a dedicated early help practitioner to support the Afghan children.

The creative and innovative partnership also created a bespoke learning centre and a play centre for over 320 children within one week of the children arriving in London. The council and its partners worked collaboratively to secure education provision for all school-aged children, in time for them to start the new school term alongside their peers.

Ofsted will take the findings from this focused visit into account when planning the next inspection or visit.

Yours sincerely

Nicki Shaw  
His Majesty's Inspector

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