



Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee

Date: MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Ruby Sayed (Chairman)
Helen Fentimen (Deputy
Mary Durcan
Chairman)
Anne Corbett

Ceri Wilkins
Joanna Tufuo Abeyie
Benjamin Murphy

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Ian Thomas CBE
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 of the meeting held on 9th February 2023.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 12)

4. **CARE LEAVER COMPACT**

Executive Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 26)

5. **UNREGULATED PLACEMENT COMMISSIONING AND OVERSIGHT ARRANGEMENTS**

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

For Information
(Pages 27 - 34)

6. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q4 2022/23**

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

For Information
(Pages 35 - 36)

7. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 12 2022/23 (MARCH 2023)**

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

For Information
(Pages 37 - 44)

8. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION FRAMEWORK - CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC)**

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

For Information
(Pages 45 - 48)

9. **EARLY HELP STRATEGY**
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.
For Decision
(Pages 49 - 56)
10. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY HELP SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-23**
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 57 - 72)
11. **PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2022 TO 2023**
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 73 - 82)
12. **LOCAL AUTHORITIES DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) ANNUAL REPORT 2022 TO 2023**
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 83 - 96)
13. **QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK - UPDATED MARCH 2023**
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 97 - 132)
14. **CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 AND CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY UPDATE**
Report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 133 - 160)
15. **QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

17. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

18. **ADULT PERFORMANCE REPORT - NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX** (Pages 161 - 170)
19. **CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE REPORT - NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX** (Pages 171 - 190)
20. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
21. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB-COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE **Thursday, 9 February 2023**

Minutes of the meeting at Guildhall at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Ruby Sayed (Chairman)
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chairman)
Mary Durcan
Anne Corbett
Deputy John Fletcher

Officers:

Chris Pelham	- Assistant Director, People, Community and Children's Services
Debby Rigby	- Community and Children's Services
Pat Dixon	- Community and Children's Services
Rachel Talmage	- Community and Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services

In attendance:

Rory McCallum - Senior Professional Advisor – City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ben Murphy, Ceri Wilkins and Joanne Abeyie

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

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2022 be approved

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

The Sub Committee received the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) Annual Report for 2021/22, which included examples of the impact, evidence, assurance and learning arising from safeguarding arrangements in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney.

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

1. The Partnership is moving to more pro-active reporting; ie - the introduction of separate strategic risk assessments for the City and Hackney, which should bring a clearer perspective.

2. The Child-C Case Review in 2019 had highlighted the connections between exclusions, gang culture and exploitation. In Hackney, this had coincided with a larger piece of work on exclusions.
3. Adulthood was a key finding from the the Child-Q Case Review in 2021 and had been the subject of an enhanced 18-month training programme, which reached 400 practitioners. Governor training is commissioned through the Family and Schools Team, in the Education Unit. Support for schools is also available through the work of the Safeguarding Education Forum Whilst the Safeguarding Forum do not have statutory enforcement powers, there is good partnership working and all Schools submitted self-assessments in terms of the Child-Q recommendations.
4. The Chair advised that the rising number of exclusions had been discussed at the City Corporation's Education Board, noting that it falls within the remit of the City of London Academies Trust (COLAT). Members were reminded that, as City Corporation Members, and specifically in their role as Safeguarding Sub Committee Members, they can access COLAT's reports.
5. Whilst the City of London Police are not members of the City Safeguarding Board, they are keen to be as active as possible in the partnership.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which advised Members of the performance of the City Corporation as a Corporate Parent, and the outcomes achieved for children in its care from April 2021 to March 2022. The report also advised that the Corporate Parenting Strategy had been reviewed and updated.

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

1. Widening the offer of travel cards for use during the School holidays.
2. Dentistry is available for under-18's via 'Healthy Smiles', noting that some of our young people might not have not had access to dental care for a considerable time. Funding has also been provided for post-18's, when there is a medical need. There is also a possibility that the City Dentist, who made provision for our Afghan guests, could provide spaces for care leavers. Alternatively, spot purchase dental check-ups can be provided when young people attend CiCC meetings.

3. The 'Cherry Blossom Ball' will celebrate care leavers achievements, noting that our young people would very much like to attend a formal black tie event!

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services which updated Members on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Sub Committee received a report of the Virtual School Headteacher, which provided Members with information about the City of London Corporation's Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker. The report provided a background to the School, its purpose and role in supporting children and young people with their education, and described the work undertaken during the last academic year.

Members noted that the City has very few care leavers not in employment or training (NEETS). Some are applying for university places, accessing English as additional language courses, or seeking vocational training in engineering, catering etc. The officer advised Members of an Open Day at Kings College this month, noting that Kings particularly recognise young people's potential outside of traditional qualifications. All of our care leavers are invited to the City's Annual Career Festival and officers are working with providers of construction apprenticeships.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted.

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

The Sub Committee received a report of the Virtual School Headteacher, which provided the Virtual School Development Plan for the next twelve months. Members noted that 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 Virtual Headteacher, who retired in July 2022, and includes his ideas for the development of the Virtual School, as well as the ideas of the newly appointed Virtual Headteacher.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **ACTION FOR CHILDREN SURVEY 2022**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the 7th Annual Service User Survey carried out in August 2022. 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.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. PARTICIPATION SERVICE - CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC) UPDATED PLEDGE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which identified how young people have been consulted, and what they considered to be important in the pledge, with clarification as to how it would be taken forward.

Members noted that all young people coming into care get a copy of the Pledge, and the Independent Reviewing Officer goes through this with each young person. An officer from the Children's Social Care Team attends the CiCC meetings and the draft Service Development Plan is reviewed with the CiCC to ensure it meet their needs.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. CARE LEAVERS AND THEIR EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which set out the current offer for Care Leavers, the support offered and its impact.

Members noted that this report intersects with other items on the agenda in respect of the CiCC and Virtual Head Teacher. The officer advised that there are very few immigration lawyers that offer legal aid. The Chair agreed to discuss this after the meeting, together with the possibility of ringfencing apprenticeships for care leavers.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 7 2022/23 (OCTOBER 2022)

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on service performance across the Children and Families Service. It demonstrated where performance meets statutory obligations and targets and identifies where action was taken for improvement in specific areas.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

13. LOCAL AUTHORITIES DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) ANNUAL REPORT 2021 TO 2022

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which advised Members of the Local

Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) activity between April 2021 and March 2022, which has been incorporated in the LADO Annual Report.

Members noted that a number of referrals over the past year had come from agencies in the City, which supply professionals for education, health and social care positions. Whilst a referral might have come from an incident in another local authority, the LADO is still notified in terms of managing the risk associated with an allegation. There were no referrals from the Police and the LADO has arranged a meeting to explore closer working and the provision of training, where required. The Assistant Director, People, advised that there is a wider issue in terms of engagement between the Police and the LADO process but the City and Hackney's commitment to addressing this has been noted by the Safeguarding Partnership Board.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2021 TO 2022

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, noting that there were no private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for 2021 to 2022.

Members noted that the City of London Corporation had met the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering by raising awareness. There were difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the limited opportunities to have face-to-face contact. 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.

The LADO advised that she works closely with lead officers in Tower Hamlets, noting that a lot of residents use the local Mosque. The Chair commended this initiative, as some terminology might be unfamiliar to minority communities and religious/community leaders are well placed to provide reassurance in terms of where support can be offered.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

15. OFSTED FOCUS VISIT INSPECTION OF CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY HELP

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of Ofsted's two-day Focus Visit of Children's Social Care and Early Help services in November 2022. The purpose of the visit was 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 identifies strengths and areas for improvement. These were set out in the published letter, appended to the report.

Members noted that the visit had generated positive feedback across all inspected areas, with no areas for improvement identified. The Sub Committee congratulated the team on this excellent achievement.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted

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

There were no questions

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

There were no items.

18. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

Item	Paragraph
19-25	1 & 2

19. **COMPLEX NEEDS NATIONAL REVIEW**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the Complex Needs National Review. Members noted that local authorities were directed, by the National Child Safeguarding Review Panel, to carry out quality reviews of all placements of children with disabilities and complex health needs, in registered settings which provide care and education. The Assistant Director advised that no significant concerns had been found.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 5

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

The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 6

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

The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 7

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

The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 8

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

In response to a question, the Sub Committee noted that the Bridging Hotel would be closing at the end of February 2023, and most of the City Corporation's Afghan guests had either permanent accommodation or been moved, temporarily, to another bridging hotel. Members were assured that this process had been managed sensitively with other local authorities and agencies.

25. 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 ended at 2.45 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Committee: Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information	Dated: 19/06/2023
Subject: Care Leaver Compact	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Rachel Talmage, Head of Service, People Department, Department of Community and Children's Services	

Summary

The Pan London Care Leavers Compact provides a framework for developing consistency, breadth and quality in the support offered to London's Care Leavers.¹ The compact was established in early 2022 to deliver a consistent and high-quality offer for care leavers across the capital.

This paper sets out our current progress against the Compact and areas for development in 2023–24. Our ambition is to achieve an excellent outcome for every child.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

National

1. London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) Programme: Care Leaver's compact

The Pan 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.

2. 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

¹ [Care Leavers Compact – LIIA](#)

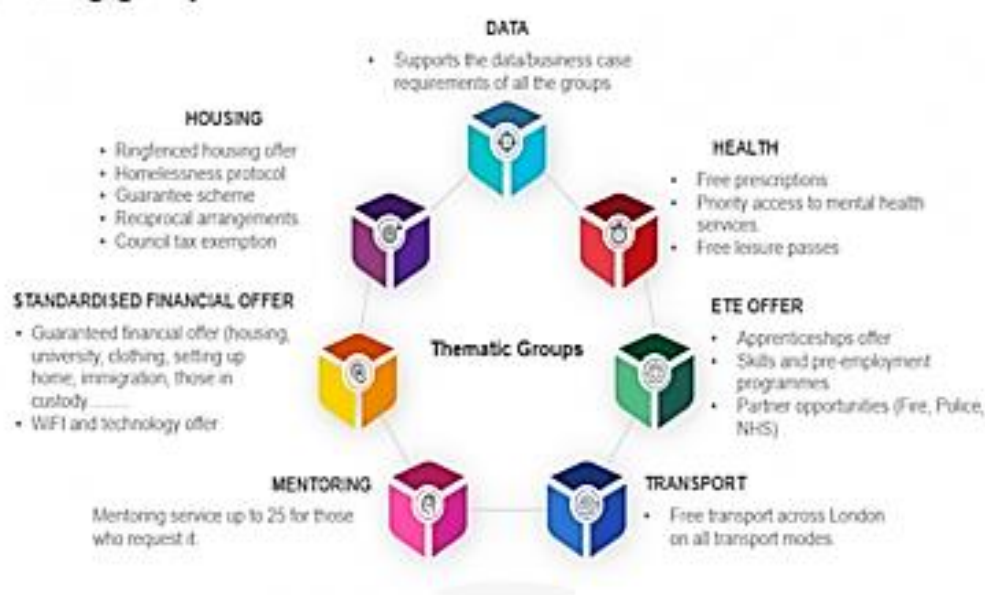
leavers. Each London borough therefore has a care leaver offer, but these are individual to each area and do not provide a consistent and shared offer for our care leavers. Care leavers do not always live in the borough responsible for them, which poses further challenges with the variation in offers. It is also important that the offer to care leavers reaches beyond services provided by local authorities. Partners such as health, education and transport have important roles to play, as do the private and voluntary sectors.

3. Ofsted has introduced a new, separate judgement to the framework for Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS). Our current care leaver local offer is published on the City of London website, and is in easy read printed format appended to this report (see Appendix 1).

Current Position

4. The Service Development Plan 2023–24 sets out plans to meet every aspect of the covenant for our care leavers. Our care leaver offer is midway through revision and will be published in the summer 2023.
5. The current areas for commitment across the covenant are shown in the graphic below.

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



Key Data

6. The covenant ambitions are set out below, including the current position underneath each sub-heading.
7. **Council tax scheme for care leavers**
 - a. We have a council tax scheme for care leavers.
 - b. Care leavers aged up to 25 who reside in the City are exempt at source; the corporation does not bill these young people.

- c. Care leavers aged up to 25 who reside outside the City, and who are eligible to pay council tax, ensure that they have applied for any discounts from their local council; their council tax is paid direct from the corporation to their local authority.

Note: No care leaver supported by the City has to pay council tax to age 25.

- d. At present we do not offer council tax exemption at source for care leavers supported by other local authorities who live in the City.

Note: At present we are unaware of any care leavers residing within the City of London boundary. Any amendment to this offer would likely have minimal impact on the budget.

8. Housing policy exempting care leavers from becoming intentionally homeless

- a. Our housing policy ensures that care leavers are offered accommodation/are supported to access private renting, and are not ever in a position to be found intentionally homeless.

Note: No care leaver supported by the City has ever been found intentionally homeless.

- b. We have a rent deposit scheme for care leavers aged 18-25 for whom private rented accommodation is assessed as a suitable option.

Note: This option has been taken up by two care leavers in 2022–23, as these young people did not want to take up permanent accommodation within the City of London estates.

9. All care leavers up to the age of 25 are to be found as being in ‘priority need’ under homelessness legislation

- a. Our care leavers are at the top band (band F) for bidding for City of London accommodation.

10. A joint protocol between Housing and Children’s Services for Care Leavers

- a. There is a joint protocol between our two services, and the services sit in the same department. This protocol is in line with good practice advice, including tenancy support and banding. The protocol will be revised again in 2023–24 as set out in the Service Development Plan.
- b. The housing lead sits on the Child in Care and Care Leavers Strategic Development Group, and regular housing/social care meetings are held.

Note: The Housing department has created a video for care leavers about realistic expectations of their new studio flats. The Housing team ensures that every care leaver has an allocated tenancy support officer. No care leaver has ever been evicted from their home.

11. Signatory to the Care Leaver Covenant in terms of its role as a large employer.

- a. The Corporation is signed up to the covenant. The covenant is both separate and connected to the compact.² The covenant is a national improvement programme, following governmental commitment to care leavers. The Compact was established in early 2022, supported by the LIIA to deliver a consistent and high-quality offer for care leavers across London. The compact asks local authorities to sign up to the care leaver covenant.³

12. Ring-fenced opportunities for care leavers within the local authority

- a. This is an area for improvement, and needs buy-in across all departments of the Corporation. Employment, internships, work experience, and apprenticeships are not yet ring-fenced for our own care leavers, and this will be an ongoing area of development.

13. Bespoke care leaver pre-employment and employment programmes

- a. Adult education does not offer bespoke care leaver pre-employment and employment programmes.
- b. Care leavers have the support of Prospects, Information Advice and Guidance. Social workers and the Virtual School Head are creative in using voluntary sector opportunities.

Note: No young person has completed an adult education programme in 2022–23.

14. Social value contracting approach that benefits care leavers (whether around ETE or other areas)

- a. The Corporation does use a social value approach, and this work was taken forward in 2022 by central strategy, the Head of Social Care and Early Help and Education, and Early Years.

Note: Potential developments that might assist could include central monitoring of impact along with contract monitoring; this will be explored as part of ongoing development work.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Corporate plan

- 15. Work supporting care leavers sits within a commitment to a flourishing society, ensuring equality of opportunity. We would like to see equal outcomes 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

² [Home - Care Leaver Covenant \(mycovenant.org.uk\)](https://mycovenant.org.uk)

³ [Care Leavers Compact – LIIA](#)

16. Creation of bespoke educational/employment programmes would affect the Adult Education and Skills budget. Meeting the free travel for care leavers impacts on the budget for Children's Social Care and Early Help service.

Resource implications

17. If central procurement reported on social value contracting, this would be minimal in terms of resources.

Legal implications – none

Risk implications

18. 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 which can lead to 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, the City of London would suffer reputational risk.

Equalities implications

19. It is hoped that care leavers will be adopted as a protected characteristic by the City of London, and that our care leavers will be considered in every Equalities Impact Assessment, and therefore corporate parenting outside the Department of Community and Children's Services will be visible and impactful.

Climate implications – none

Security implications – None

Conclusion

20. The Pan London Care Leavers Compact sets out a comprehensive ambitious offer for all London local authorities to sign up to. The City of London is well positioned in this regard, having adopted many of the provisions already, following national research and findings.
21. There are several key areas which would make a huge difference to our care leavers: notably being supported via a protected characteristic; employment/education offers; and procurement being accountable as to whether social value contracting is impacting our young people.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City of London Care Leaver Offer

Rachel Talmage

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Department of Community and Children's Services

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Leaving Care Local Offer

April 2019

Appendix 1- Local Offer

What are Care Leavers supported by the CoLC entitled to?

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

Social worker (SW) Support	Comments
<p>Offer of SW support to all care leavers towards whom the local authority had duties under section 23C of the Children Act 1989, up to age 25 - irrespective of whether they are engaged in education or training. *subject to a human rights assessment where a young person has all rights exhausted.</p>	<p>This includes care leavers who return to the local authority at any point after the age of 21 up to age 25 and request SW support. When a care leaver is approaching 21 their social worker will discuss with them whether they want SW support to continue.</p> <p>The SW ensures that the young person is provided with the practical and emotional support they need to make a successful transition to adulthood, either directly or through helping the young person to build a positive social network around them.</p>
<p>Each care leaver will have a pathway plan which will be reviewed at minimum on a 6 monthly basis</p>	<p>For care leavers aged 21 or over, the duties in the Children Act 1989 introduced through the Children & Social Work Act – to assess care leavers' needs, and develop and keep under review a pathway plan – apply only where the young person requests support. The pathway plan may be partially completed after the age of 21 to reflect only the area in which the young person requires ongoing support unless the person is experiencing numerous or complex difficulties.</p>
<p>Frequency of visits</p>	<p>This will vary dependant on need. The frequency of social work visits for a young person aged 16-17 who has moved into a foster placement or into independent or semi-independent accommodation is that they are visited within one week on first moving in and then every week, for the first four weeks and subsequently every four weeks (six with agreement of Team Manager). If more frequent visits are required or less frequent visits this can be</p>

	<p>agreed by the young person, social worker and team manager to no less than one visit every three months.</p> <p>For care leavers aged 18 and over, the frequency of visits should be determined based on the care leavers wishes and feelings, alongside their needs and offering visits every six to eight weeks in line with the Pledge. Methods and frequency of keeping in touch should have some flexibility.</p>
Keeping in touch	The CoLC will proactively keep in touch with all care leavers until they reach age 21 and, where contact has been lost, to take reasonable steps to re-establish contact until age 25.
Offering local authority support to every care leaver on an annual basis	The CoLC will make care leavers aware that they can continue to request SW support when the person turns 21; and on at least an annual basis thereafter to age 26.
Former UASC (Unaccompanied asylum seeking children)	If a former UASC care leaver has not been recognised as a refugee or been granted any other valid form of leave to remain and becomes "appeal rights exhausted" (ARE) the Home Office ceases to provide leaving care funding to the local authority within three months. The CoLC will provide support to age 25, including accommodation and subsistence.

Accommodation	Payment	Comments
Accommodation	Dependent on need and recourse to public funding: Options are foster care (under 18/staying put), semi-independent accommodation,	Young people must apply for universal credit including the housing component if eligible with the support of City of London. Young people will be assisted to apply for CoLC housing tenancy if eligible. If young people request private rented accommodation this will be explored as part of

	private rented or CoLC housing tenancy	their pathway plan.
Setting up home grant (furnishings, equipment) for independent accommodation	Up to £3,000 (depending on condition of the property)	The young person does not get this in a lump sum. It can be agreed with the social worker how this will be allocated. It must be spent on the accommodation.
TV	Up to £250	This comes from the setting up home grant but can be allocated in semi-independent accommodation.
Winter Heating Allowance For first winter of independent living only.	£10 per month from October-March	This will be paid directly to the young person who will need to budget.
Clothing	Young people get an allowance through their foster carer if in care. Care leavers may get one £150 payment per year depending on means.	Needs assessed as part of the pathway plan.
Removal expenses	Up to full	One-off payment of removal expenses and associated expenses. Contribution towards removal expenses for subsequent or additional removals may be made with the agreement of the budget-holding service manager.
TV Licence	First year paid in full	Young people will then be encouraged to pay in instalments towards following years licence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Education	Payment	Comments
Part or full-time further / higher education course	Only in exceptional	Care leavers are expected to claim from

fees	circumstances	loans and grants to cover their tuition fees, accommodation and maintenance. If they are unable to claim grants and loans young people will be advised to contact Buttle UK Advice to be sought from the Virtual School Head.
University Payment	£2000 per year of course (paid in instalments termly)	The higher education grant will continue to be paid for four weeks after the completion of higher education course in order to assist the young people to make a transition.
Registration, examination and other miscellaneous fees (if required to meet curriculum)	Up to full	
Activities (e.g. school trips) and equipment required to meet curriculum (e.g. specified specialist clothing and essential textbooks/stationery) and computer	Per academic year the following will be needs assessed: Stationery Grant Educational trips grant Books and equipment Up to £300 computer grant – One off between age 16 and 21/25	Activities required to meet curriculum (e.g. outings) are to be paid directly to the education provision. Computer grant to be paid directly to shop.
Education-related travel (public transport to and from education provision)	All students up to the age of 19 are entitled to travel free. We will cover education travel costs for students over 18.	Must apply for subsidised travel card if appropriate.
Graduation	Up to £100 for robes,	

	tickets and photographs	
Employment	Payment	Comments
Specified clothing / uniform required	Needs assessed	
Specified equipment required	Needs assessed	This is usually a one-off payment; although consideration should be given for the purchase of consumables.
Travel costs (for interviews and first month in employment)	Up to full	Young person should plan for costs of travel from their salary or wages after the first month in employment.
Leisure and Wellbeing	Payment	Comments
Leisure, religious and cultural activities	Social Care will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their leisure, cultural and religious needs where appropriate.	Leisure, religious and cultural activities should be identified in the pathway plan.
Eye and dental treatment, including glasses	Social Care will assist young people to access services to meet their needs. They will be assisted to complete HC1 form if applicable which enables young people to get free or reduced cost dental, optician and prescription services.	In exceptional circumstances dependent on an assessment of need Social Care may provide funds to secure health services.
Counselling and Therapeutic Needs	Social Care will assist young people to access counselling and/or therapeutic services via universal health services.	
Baby grant	One off £200 just prior/subsequent to birth of baby	Assistance to apply for maternity grant if eligible. Items for baby to be agreed between social

	If a young person is not eligible for the maternity grant we will also match the maternity grant (currently £500) and give the additional £200	worker and young person.
Driving	No support provided apart from exceptional circumstances i.e. when required for identification, employment or training.	
Personal Allowances	Payment	Comments
Celebration allowances (birthday and festivals)	£50 to be paid yearly around the young person's birthday	
Laptop	<p>Up to £300 for children in care so young people leaving care should have received one.</p> <p>If a young person has not received a laptop they will be given one as a care leaver.</p> <p>Maintenance/replacement costs will be considered on an exceptional basis.</p>	
Essential travel to maintain contact with family or significant others	At the discretion of team manager	
Wedding Gift	£100	One-off payment
Emergency Payment	At the discretion of team manager	Payment made when young person requests emergency payment due to budgeting difficulties for food or essentials i.e.

		energy payments. The social worker will pay for these directly if possible.
Birth Certificate	Payment for one birth certificate	
Passport	Payment for one passport in full	This will include check and send.
Citizenship	Up to £400 towards costs	This is a discretionary payment.

Committee: Safeguarding Sub-Committee	Dated: 19/06/2023
Subject: Unregulated Placement Commissioning and Oversight Arrangements	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2 and 3
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Sacha Lewis, Commissioning Manager, Commissioning and Partnerships Greg Knight, Head of Commissioning, Commissioning and Partnerships	

Summary

This report provides an update on the Corporation's current placements activity within Semi-Independent Supported Accommodation (SISA) settings. SISA supports children to build the necessary skills to live independently as they transition into adulthood and represents the majority of the Corporation's Children's placement brokerage activity. It is provided as accommodation-based support setting or via a standalone property with floating support provided.

The report outlines the current and proposed programme of contract management and monitoring for 16- and 17-year-olds, in preparation with Ofsted's regulatory framework and for the overall programme for young people placed up to the age of 25.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of the report.

Main Report

Background

1. At present, providers of SISA are not regulated by any professional body. This is set to change with the introduction of National Standards in 2024, which will see Ofsted regulate provision for 16- and 17-year-olds.

2. There are many providers of SISA and this is an area that has grown considerably to meet the level of need from local authorities.
3. As part of the independence and leaving care transitioning pathway for children in care, 16- and 17-year-old young people assessed as being suitable, are placed within SISA settings. Initially, this will be within accommodation-based schemes, which are usually properties consisting of three to four rooms with shared facilities and with 24-hour support staff. Weekly levels of individual support are tailored in accordance with the young person's care plan and averages at approximately 10 hours per week. Support at this stage often centres on meeting further educational and vocational needs.
4. As young people reach the age of 18 and have developed the skills towards becoming fully independent, the accommodation pathway strategy progresses on to standalone properties, such as bedsits or studio flats. Floating support is delivered by key worker support staff, averaging at five hours per week. Young people often request property locations within the vicinity of their college or support networks. As with those young people placed within accommodation-based support settings, key worker support continues to focus on further or higher educational needs, with a greater emphasis on tenancy sustainment and daily living management of finances as the young person gears towards becoming fully independent.
5. SISA services are delivered to the young person as a wraparound package – that is, accommodation with support by one provider. The provider often sources properties via commercial tenancy agreements with Lettings Management agencies or directly with independent property landlords and sublets the property to the Corporation via an Independent Placement Agreement. The provider's own staff delivers the support to the young person.

Current Position

6. The Corporation currently purchases individual children's placements via the Commissioning Alliance Careplace System framework. In addition to SISA service provision, via a set of Dynamic Purchasing Vehicles (DPV), this framework provides Children's Residential Home placements and Independent Fostering Agencies.
7. From the framework's entry point and throughout the agreement, providers are required to fulfil the standard selection criteria mechanisms of the DPV. They must outline their service experience and suitability, policy and procedural framework, and their methodology to meet the key deliverables and outcomes and provide continual assurance for all placement activity conducted by the City.
8. In addition to the first layer of quality assurance (QA), the internal monitoring approaches in SISA placements include:

- **Monitoring meetings with SISA providers:** Contract monitoring meetings review the overall quality and standards of delivery, costs, and execution of support plans in line with the Early Intervention and Prevention Services Outcomes and Indicative Indicators:
 - Young people's involvement
 - Safeguarding
 - Staffing, subcontractors and volunteers
 - Policies, procedures, service developments
 - Service timescales
 - Service signposting
 - Safety, health and wellbeing
 - Potential, independence, involvement and choice
 - Educational/vocational support
 - Tenancy sustainment and management of finances
 - Community access

Meetings take a risk-based approach. Risk criteria includes placement volume per provider, placement cost and complexity, and reputational risk. Provider meetings will occur quarterly, half-yearly or annually. Monitoring criteria focuses on a generic and overarching company-wide review of the provider's staffing and service operational capabilities and accommodation/housing management.

- **Scheme visits:** Scheme visits are aligned to the criteria outlined above. These visits concentrate on the provider's staffing and service operational capabilities and accommodation/housing management at local scheme level.
 - **Senior Management Team review programme:** Senior managers undertake up to two visits to schemes per year.
 - **Young Inspectors programme:** A pilot for care leavers to visit SISA providers was carried out in January 2023. This took place with Pathfinders.
9. To date, the Corporation currently has 47 care leavers residing within unregulated SISA. The majority (92%) of this cohort are aged 18 years or over. The age breakdown is as follows:

Age	Amount
16	1
17	3
18	5
19	12
20	11
21	12
22	0
23	2
24	1

10. The SISA service provision is delivered by 14 providers:

Provider	No of placements
MyLife	23
GrowHaus	6
Pathfinders	5
Jordan Xavier	3
Abiding Ltd	1
Dilligent Care Services	1
Eleven Ds Ltd	1
Leaving Care Solutions	1
Netpex	1
Own Life	1
Phase II Care	1
Silver Birch Care	1
Step Ahead	1
SP Homes	1

11. Of the 47 placements, six are based outside London, and 41 are delivered across nine geographical areas within London:

Geographical area	Number of properties	Number of providers
Central	1	1
North	2	2
North-East	3	2
North-West	16	4
East	5	4
South	4	4
South-East	8	3
South-West	1	1
West	1	1

Options

12. As part of a more cohesive monitoring approach, recommendations developed by the recent QA audit of Semi-independent providers have been incorporated within Commissioning's overarching Children's Placement Monitoring programme and are set out below. This programme will also ensure that it incorporates and mirrors Ofsted's implementation of a regulatory system and inspection framework for 16- and 17-year-olds within supported

accommodation to ensure a standardised approach across the full age range of care leavers.

Proposals

13. The monitoring processes set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 above are to be further enhanced, developed and implemented as follows:

- Continuation of the use of the Careplace Provider Monitoring, QA and contact management functions as the initial and overarching QA level. This includes the use of the newly developed Commissioning Alliance Quality Assurance Portal, collating and analysing quarterly key performance indicator (KPI) information from providers.
- Continuation of the internal monitoring and QA process. Provider and scheme visit meetings will continue to be scheduled in line with their respective risk rating. Wherever possible, Commissioning will aim to coordinate scheme visits with social worker placement reviews.
- Ensure that the internal monitoring programme integrates with the development of Ofsted's regulatory framework for 16- and 17-year-olds within SISA, incorporating requirements into the monitoring process.
- Strengthen the feedback loop between the provider meetings, the Commissioning and QA monitoring programme and individual social worker placement reviews into the Children's Social Care Placements Home Panel and the Children's Strategic Placement and Sufficiency Group to ensure that key individual placement issues are addressed. This approach will also strengthen the connection with the wider QA, Senior Leaders and Young Inspectors programmes.
- Commissioning will liaise with the Commissioning Alliance Lead Commissioning Organisation, member authorities, and host borough authorities where the Corporation's young people are currently placed. Commissioning will identify authorities currently commissioning the 14 SISA providers to develop a sharing arrangement for information and monitoring.
- Scope the possibility of establishing a City of London SISA provider network forum to promote and enable the sharing of provider best practice, further understanding of commissioning requirements and provider market abilities, and mechanisms to incorporate the views, experiences and feedback of young care leavers.

Key Data

14. No key data to present.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Financial implications

15. There are no financial implications to the monitoring programme. However, as part of the standing agenda within the Commissioning monitoring programme with providers, Commissioning will log and track any related cost implications that providers may cite relating to the Ofsted inspection framework and impacts on future placement provision.

Resource implications

16. The Commissioning and QA monitoring programme will be managed within existing resources.

Legal implications

17. The Commissioning monitoring programme will incorporate the development and implementation of the Ofsted regulatory system and inspection framework requirements for 16- and 17-year-olds within supported accommodation.

Risk implications

18. Not applicable

Equalities implications

19. Not applicable

Climate implications

20. Not applicable

Security implications

21. Not applicable

Conclusion

22. The SISA monitoring programme outlined above will continue to build on the existing monitoring arrangements to further enable a standardised monitoring approach across the service provision. This will ensure that young people receive the best levels of quality and service provision to support them as they transition into fully independent adults.

23. The proposed additional elements will provide a mechanism to evolve and enable the Corporation, other local authorities, providers and care leavers to work more collaboratively.

Appendices

- None

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Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	19/06/2023
Subject: Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance Report Q4 2022/23	Public Appendix 1 (Non-public)
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2 and 3
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Ellie Ward, Head of Strategy and Performance	

Summary

This report updates Members on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service during 202/23.

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 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 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 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 Q4 2022/23 (Non-public)

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Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	19/06/2023
Subject: Children and Families Service Performance – Month 12 2022/23 (March 2023)	Public Appendix 1 (Non-public) Appendix 2 (Public)
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2 and 3
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: 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 March (month 12) 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 2022/23, there were 707 contacts – higher than the total number for 2021/22. This is in keeping with an annual trend but shows a significant increase.
8. Overall, the number of Children in Need has reduced over the year from 24 in April 2022 to 19 at the end of March 2023. Over the year, there were 22 different children who were a child in need. This is consistent with the previous 2 years.
9. The number of children looked after (CLA) by the City of London Corporation decreased over the year from 13 in April 2022 to 9 in March 2023. However, over the year, there were a total of 21 different CLA. This follows a trend in recent years of decreasing numbers of CLA.
10. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) recorded 17 contacts in 2022/23 - 2% of the 707 contacts received at the front door – a lower rate than the previous two years (4% and 7%)
11. There were 53 Early Help referrals during 2022/23. June saw a particularly high rate of 24 referrals. The last two years (2021/22 and 2022/23) saw a particularly high number of referrals reflecting the support provided to families as part of the Afghan Resettlement Programme.
12. Overall, during the year, an average 90% of assessments were completed within 45 days. This is vast improvement on previous years.
13. There were 59 care leavers at the end of March 2023. This has been increasing over the year and is an increase on 54 at the end of 2021/22 and 41 in 2020/21.

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 2022 to 31 October 2023, 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 2022/23 (Non-Public)
- Appendix 2 – Glossary for Performance Dashboard (Public)

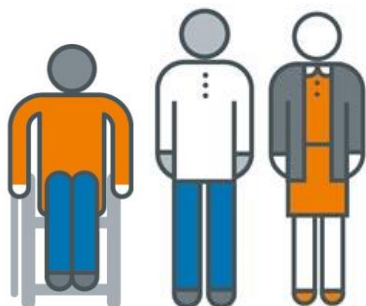
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Glossary

Children Social Care



CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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

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

TAF Team Around the Family (Early Help measure)

UASC Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child (up to 18th birthday)

Committees: Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information Department of Community and Children’s Services Grand Committee – For Information Health and Wellbeing Board – For Information	Dated: 19/06/2023 15/06/2023 29/06/2023
Subject: Adult Social Care Inspection Framework – Care Quality Commission (CQC)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	Better Care Fund
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Emma Masters, Transformation Programme Manager, Adult Social Care	

Summary

The [Health and Care Act 2022](#) gives new powers to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide a meaningful and independent assessment of care at a local authority and integrated care system level, starting in April 2023.

In response to the requirement, Adult Social Care is undertaking a self-evaluation against the [Assessment framework for local authority assurance](#) and its four quality themes.

Below, we outline the CQC’s launch plan, and an update on our progress and ongoing approach to local authority and integrated care system assessments.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Health and Care Act received Royal Assent in April 2022 and introduced significant reforms to the organisation and delivery of health and care services in England, including the return of CQC assessment of local authority Adult Social Care services.
2. From 1 April 2023, the CQC will have new powers to assess local authorities in England and will be looking at how we meet our duties under the Care Act (2014). The CQC has

published an implementation plan, with a view to start full inspection activity from September 2023.

3. From 1 April 2023 through to September 2023, the CQC will start to review data and published documentary evidence across all local authorities. The data and evidence from this activity will be published at an overall national level as a collection of evidence, for example, in the CQC's annual statutory State of Care report to Parliament. This national review will be the first element towards full assessment of two quality statements. It will constitute the CQC's first steps in developing judgements for individual authorities. It will also provide valuable context and an opportunity to benchmark national data.
4. During the same period, the CQC will commence pilot assessment activity for up to five local authorities, on a voluntarily basis. Publication of the findings from these pilots are subject to further determination between the CQC and the local authorities involved. City of London Adult Social Care have not requested to participate at this time.
5. From September to December 2023, the CQC will start the roll-out of formal inspection activity for all local authorities, with an aim to conduct up to 20 assessments during this period. City of London may be chosen as one of the local authorities in this tranche. We would have around four weeks' notice to plan and start activity.
6. From early 2024 onwards, the CQC will continue to conduct further formal assessments and report on their findings. The Government has requested that the CQC publish individual ratings of local authorities following the pilots and assessments. The CQC plan to work with local authorities and Department of Health and Social Care during this time to inform how findings are published and rated.

Current Position

7. We are finalising our self-assessment against the four quality themes and collating the required supporting data and evidence. Our aim is to have a final draft completed by early June 2023.
8. On 13 and 14 June 2023, a peer review will be conducted via the Local Government Association to provide additional input into and scrutiny of our Adult Social Care self-assessment and inspection readiness. This activity is expected to provide further opportunity for insight and reflection to enhance our final self-assessment, and strengthen our improvement plans to ensure compliance.
9. Alongside the self-assessment, we have a draft Adult Social Care Improvement Plan, which is required as supporting evidence. Our aim is to know ourselves and know ourselves well, ensuring that any identified plans for improvement are well documented, governed and have delivery plans. The Adult Social Care Transformation Programme is currently documenting and providing the governance for this.
10. The initial data requirement to accompany the self-assessment is the Client Level Data (CLD) return. From April 2023, the Government has introduced person-level data collection to provide better insights into care journeys and outcomes to show which interventions work best and how we can improve how people move between health and social care. This is new nationally, and a significant piece of work, with the first return

due in July 2023. We currently have this project in delivery and will assess outputs in May 2023.

11. On completion of the peer review activity, we will share the outcomes. The findings, expected to be both positive and self-reflecting, will inform the production of our final Self-Assessment document.
12. In addition to the completion of documentation and evidence, we are producing a practical plan, similar to our Ofsted inspection approach, which outlines clear responsibilities, roles and resources required to manage the inspection activity.
13. This is the start of how things will change for Adult Social Care with a continuous rolling plan.
14. **Financial implications:** The cost of the peer review is £5,000.00 plus expenses and is met via Adult Social Care grant funding.

We anticipate that additional resources may be required to support improvement delivery. Adult Social Care grant funding has been identified to meet the current pressures.
15. **Resource implications:** The extent that the Adult Social Care statutory inspections will impact on Adult Social Care resources will be determined by the ongoing pressures of inspection activity. While we are seeking synergies across Children's and special educational needs and disability (SEND) inspections, the additional governance and resourcing requirement are expected to have impact in the longer term.
16. **Legal implications:** This is a legislative change for Adult Social Care service delivery. The City of London will need to ensure that there is legislative compliance.
17. **Risk implications:** The CQC's assessment of local authority Adult Social Care services represents a reputational risk on a par with the Ofsted assessment of Children's Services.
18. **Equalities implications:** The Government has conducted Equalities Impact Assessments on all reform initiatives.
19. **Climate implications:** N/A
20. **Security implications:** N/A

Conclusion

21. The implementation of the new Adult Social Care Inspection Framework carries with it a level of reputational, legal, and financial risk over the next few years. The City of London has put in place a programme structure to effectively plan for and deliver the requirements of inspection outlined in the CQC's launch plans. There remains a level of uncertainty across the Adult Social Care sector regarding the future funding of this additional responsibility.

Background Papers

- [Health and Care Act \(2022\)](#)
- [Assessment framework for local authority assurance](#)

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Committee: Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information	Dated: 19/06/2023
Subject: Early Help Strategy	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Claire Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Keisha Nurse, Early Help Lead, Department of Community and Children's Services	

Summary

The City of London Corporation has a new Early Help Strategy 2023–2026. Children, families staff and stakeholders were invited to contribute to the consultation. The strategy will help to see the vision for the Early Help Service realised, which is that all City of London children, young people and families who access the Early Help Service are supported to address their concerns and are provided with practical assistance to help them to live full and happy lives.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

Engagement process

1. The strategy was devised following an engagement process and a 10-week public consultation. As part of the consultation, a series of questions were asked about various aspects of the current plan, and whether respondents agreed with the identified outcomes and priorities, and what they felt needed to be amended and updated. To identify the outcomes and focus areas of the new plan, key service professionals, both internal and external to the City Corporation, were consulted.
2. Engagement was carried out with professionals from the following service areas:
 - o Early Help & Children's Social Care

- o Education and Early Years
 - o The City Child and Families Centre at the Aldgate School
 - o City Advice
 - o Youth Services
 - o Young Hackney
 - o St Paul's Cathedral
 - o Health Visiting
 - o Mental Health Services
 - o Adult Education
3. Published information from the Action for Children survey completed in 2022 was also used to help inform the updated Early Help Strategy as children/young people and families supported by the City of London were consulted to obtain their feedback about the service received. The engagement questions put to service professionals were framed in a way to seek how the service can improve to better meet the needs of children, young people and families.

Public consultation

4. Following the development of the updated strategy, a 10-week public consultation period was undertaken to gather feedback from children and young people, parents, Members, City of London residents and service professionals on the design of the Plan and the identified outcomes and priorities.
5. The consultation was hosted on the City of London website and was open for a period of 10 weeks (19 December 2022 – 24 February 2023).

Early Help Strategy 2023–2026 consultation response

6. The consultation was promoted to various groups to provide the widest range of multi-disciplinary feedback. These included:
- a. Achieving Excellence Board
 - b. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Programme Board
 - c. Early Help Multi-Agency Practitioners Forum
 - d. Children's Senior Management Team
 - e. Early Help Sub-group
 - f. City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP)
 - g. Safeguarding Sub Committee
 - h. Children's Partnership Board
 - i. Emotional Health and Wellbeing Partnership
7. As well as promoting the consultation to individual groups, the survey was promoted by the CHSCP and sent by individuals to families they work with in the City.

Current Position

8. The strategy covers children and young people aged 0–18 and their families. The strategy has a focus on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and the need for specialist provision for this cohort. The priorities identified in the strategy will have a positive effect on advancing equality of opportunity for young people with disabilities, and support for their families. The strategy strongly considers inequality of services for children, young people and their families due to race, and also aims to identify inequalities in services.
9. The strategy is now published on the City of London website¹.

The Early Help Strategy

10. The Early Help Strategy sets out how services will respond to identified need at the right time, in the right place to maximise positive outcomes before needs escalate. The accompanying action plan addresses this across 6 overarching outcomes;
 - a. All children and young people feel safe in all aspects of their lives.
 - b. Children, young people and families feel their needs are identified, understood, and are responded to quickly.
 - c. Families feel supported to address their needs.
 - d. Inequalities experienced by children, young people and families in the City of London are addressed.
 - e. Children, young people, and their families feel their needs are a priority by all services that work with them.
 - f. Children, young people and families feel service development takes their needs into account.

Key Data

11. There were 14 responses to the consultation from range of sources across City early help partnership.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Corporate plan

12. This strategy contributes to a flourishing society, by promoting safety for children, their health and wellbeing and providing opportunity to have full lives and to reach their potential.

Financial implications

13. N/A

Resource implications

14. N/A

Legal implications

¹ <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Services-DCCS/early-help-strategy-2023-26.pdf>

15. N/A

Risk implications

16. N/A

Equalities implications

17. An Equalities Test of Relevance has been conducted and concluded that the Early Help Strategy aims to improve social mobility by illustrating our priority to work with families from all socio-economic backgrounds and address any issues of inequality of services that are identified so that all children, young people and their families can flourish and reach their full potential. By ensuring that inequalities are highlighted and challenged by all partner agencies, the strategy should reduce inequality between those with protected characteristics and those without.

Climate implications

18. N/A

Security implications

19. N/A

Conclusion

The Early Help Strategy is designed to be simple and accessible, clearly setting out how to achieve the vision of Early Help. It will be reviewed by 2026.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – The Early Help Strategy 2023–2026

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CITY OF LONDON EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2023-26

THE EARLY HELP VISION

All children, young people and families who access the Early Help Service in the City of London are supported to address their concerns and are provided with practical assistance to help them to live full and happy lives.



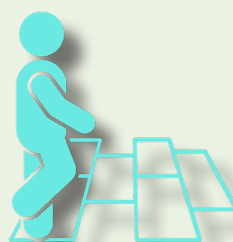
Zero cases were stepped up to Social Care

Our Challenges

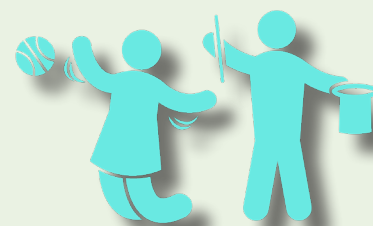
- Identifying young carers in the City of London and ensuring they are supported
- Managing an increase in referrals to the service
- Meeting the needs of children and young people whose wellbeing is impacted by low income/overcrowded households

Our Strengths

- Joint work with the Home Office provided temporary housing, health services and schooling to 571 Afghan guests in August 2021.
- Working with partner agencies, we develop good working relationships with families.
- Strong links with Children's Social Care means that children and families are provided with enough support to prevent them needing social care.
- We consider the whole family, how they are impacted by the systems around them and seek to encourage system change to help them.
- Families feel very well supported by us because we are responsive to their needs, quick to address issues, empathetic and genuinely caring.



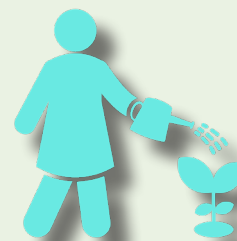
Four cases stepped down from social care to Early Help and zero were re-referred



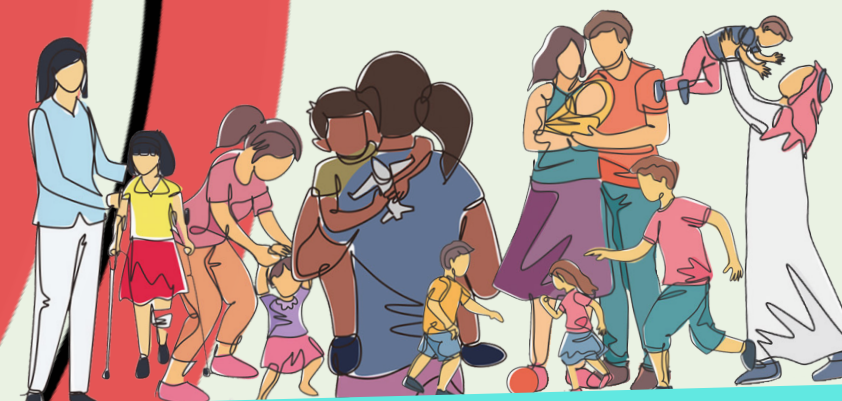
We work with children who identify with all genders and none



All of the 59 families supported by our early help service in 2022 had their needs effectively identified and met



95.6% of families report a high level of trust for Early Help and feel genuinely understood and listened to



WHAT IS EARLY HELP?

Early Help works with partners to provide support to children, young people and families with emerging problems or other needs including:

- serious housing needs,
- mental or emotional ill health,
- help and guidance for young people (0-18 years)
- support for children with SEND and health needs.

YOU SAID, WE DID

Young people and their families have made it clear to us that they would like to see what action has been taken as result of what they have told us. We will continue to produce a 'you said, we did' update to show what has been done based on the feedback that children, young people, and their families have given us.

THE VOICE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

We want children, young people and their families to work with us to help make the City of London a better place for them.

Children, young people and their families can have their say and be involved in the service they receive.

This includes the following:



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES TO GET INVOLVED

- Action for Children Survey
- City of London Youth Forum
- City of London Children in Care Council and activities
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Short Breaks
- City of London Talks and Listens Enthusiastically (COLTALE) programme
- City of London Member and Deputy Member of Youth Parliament (MYP)
- City Parent Carers Forum
- City of London Corporation Focus Groups

WHAT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE TOLD US

- They would like to see the process around short breaks payments simplified
- Better assessments and support for siblings/young carers
- More activities for young adults/16+
- Easier access to counselling and mentoring support
- More staff training around the needs of deaf children and parents

WHERE THE PLAN SITS

Page 54

City of London Corporate Plan
2018-23

Children and Young People's Plan
2022-25

Early Help Strategy 2023-26

Corporate Parenting Strategy

Early Years Strategy

Sufficiency Strategy

Thresholds of Need

SEND Strategy

Our outcomes for children, young people and their families...

Considered

Children, young people and families feel service development takes their needs into account.

Supported

Families feel supported to address their needs.

Safe

All children and young people feel safe in all aspects of their lives.

Treated Equally

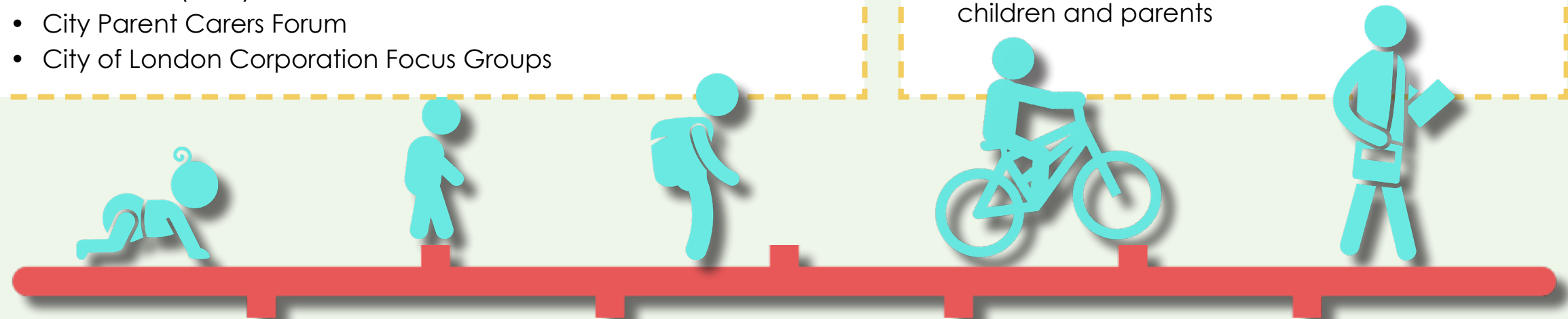
Inequalities experienced by children, young people and families in the City are addressed.

Listened to

Children, young people and families feel their needs are identified, understood, and are responded to quickly.

Prioritised

Children, young people, and their families feel their needs are a priority by all services that work with them.



The Impact of Our Universal Offer



The aim of the Early Help Strategy is to build on our excellent universal partnership work.

Our universal services continue to ensure that the needs of children and families are met in a timely and impactful manner helping to prevent escalation into the Early Help Service for most of the population.

OUR IMPACT	OUR FOCUS IS	HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS	HOW WE WILL MEASURE THIS
All children and young people feel safe in all aspects of their lives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To assess the needs of children quickly, to optimise their chances and improve their health and wellbeing. To make sense of the child, young person and family's world through relationships, focusing on the whole family system rather than individuals. To ensure resources are used efficiently and effectively to ensure high quality outcomes for the family. To help parents build resilience and strength to ensure their children feel safe and can thrive without social service's support. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We will complete Early Help Assessments within 20 working days of receiving consent from parents/carers. We will assess the needs of children and families and agree goals which will inform the intervention required for the family. We will assess the needs of children and families and agree goals which will inform the intervention required for the family. Team Around the Family (TAF) Meetings will take place every 8-12 weeks to ensure that the agreed plan is being adhered to by all services involved and goals are being met. Cases will remain open to Early Help until the agreed upon plan has been completed and the interventions put in place have been embedded into the family and are working well. 	<p>In 2022, 46 early help assessments were completed.</p> <p>Of these, 89% were completed within 20 days.</p> <p>We will continue to monitor the number of Early Help assessments completed month by month and aim to increase our percentage to 95%.</p>
Children, young people and families feel their needs are identified, understood, and are responded to quickly.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To have a robust Social Care duty and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub service. Our Early Help practitioners always seek to empower children, young people and families to make the changes they need to improve their circumstances. We work with children, young people and families to build social emotional intelligence, increase their capacity and support networks to encourage growth. Work alongside our colleagues with child protection expertise to ensure those children and young people who are on the boundary of statutory social care are provided with early intervention services that meet the family's to avoid a step up into social care. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We will work closely with our colleagues in social care to ensure open communication upon receiving a referral to ensure we are providing the right service at the right time. Our assessments will be thorough with close management oversight throughout the assessment period. During the assessment period, any areas of concern that can be immediately addressed will be, and children and families will be provided with support and assistance from services who will remain working with the family throughout the intervention. Children and families will be signposted to additional services following the assessment and be provided with a copy of their assessment to understand how the recommendations were formed. Complex cases will be discussed with social care and senior management to ensure the needs of the family are being met and to enquire if we can do more within the early help service before stepping up into social care. 	<p>In 2022, contact was made within one day of receiving all referrals into Early Help.</p> <p>We will continue to monitor the timeliness from contact to referral and remain 100% efficient in our initial contact with families.</p>
Families feel supported to address their needs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We offer targeted and tailored parenting support. We work alongside families and go on a journey with them throughout the assessment and intervention. We use a strengths-based approach, utilising a families' strengths in the decision-making process. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure to be fair in our assessments and be clear with families regarding the needs identified and allow the voice of the child to be at the centre of the assessment and intervention process. We will act as advocates for children and families throughout the intervention and liaise with our partner agencies to ensure needs are being met. We will draw on our resources and use the skills and expertise of our Early Help Team to provide one-to-one parenting support to families where required. The Early Help Team will use the tools they have at their disposal to identify neglect and use a strengths-based approach to provide families with support to address the areas of need identified. 	<p>Consent is sought from families prior to assessments being completed to ensure we are able to liaise with all involved services and speak on their behalf.</p> <p>Feedback is sought from parents and children prior to closing a case to ascertain their views and feelings on the intervention provided.</p>

OUR IMPACT	OUR FOCUS IS TO	HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS	HOW WE WILL MEASURE THIS
Inequalities experienced by children, young people and families in the City of London are addressed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We ensure the voice of parents in The City are heard concerning accessibility issues around physical and emotional health. 2. We want to ensure the next generation has a stake in the delivery of services and benefits from The City's success. 3. We want to ensure our services are accessible to all that meet the threshold. 4. We intervene at the earliest stage to reduce the number of referrals that reach the need for statutory intervention. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Early Help Lead will attend City of London Parent and Carer Forum meetings and feedback concerns to the team and senior managers. 2. We will work alongside our partners in participation to help engage our service users to ensure their voices are heard and they have input in strategic thinking and service improvement. 3. We will work alongside partner agencies such as primary care and mental health services to address accessibility issues. 4. We will work alongside our partners in Education and Early Years to address SALT accessibility issues. 5. We will highlight any inequalities identified during the assessment process to ensure they are addressed, and services are provided to children and families. 6. We will offer an Early Help assessment to all children and families who meet threshold and if consent is not provided, we will signpost based on the information we have at the time to ensure some form of intervention may be offered to the family. 	<p>We will log all incidents and observations of racism and discrimination in order to continue the discussion and development of an anti-racist practice approach across safeguarding partnerships.</p> <p>When an individual or family tells us they have experienced racism and/or discrimination we acknowledge and accept their experience. We will then arrange for a case audit to be undertaken to review current practice and develop further learning.</p>
Children, young people, and their families feel their needs are a priority by all services that work with them.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The referral process for Early Help support is accessible to all services who work with children and young people 0-18. 2. Effective communication between Early Help support and outside agencies who work with children and young people 0-18. 3. Increase our awareness of SEND support. 4. Provide a holistic approach to service delivery to ensure we are working with partner agencies to offer an integrated early help offer. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will ensure to have a resource library in the service; therefore, all social care staff are aware of what is available to children, young people and families in the City and Hackney. 2. We will hold multi-agency meetings quarterly to discuss cases and ensure we are providing a coordinated approach and are also aware of changing policies and provisions within the City. 3. We will work alongside our partners in commissioning to ensure we are aware of new SEND support services available. 4. We will contribute to discussions of what is required for children and families to help ensure services commissioned meet the needs of the children and families we serve. 5. We will ensure we are aware of all changes to commissioned services that will affect our children and families. 	<p>Action for Children will seek feedback from service users yearly to ascertain their views on the service received from Early Help.</p>
Children, young people and families feel service development takes their needs into account.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We consent to service audits regularly to ensure we are providing the best service possible. 2. We remain accountable to our stakeholders, partner agencies, families, children and young people in the City of London. 3. We work alongside commissioning to ensure cost effective and efficient resources which will make the biggest impact on outcomes are sought. 4. We make sure our workforce has consistent personal and professional development opportunities that will not only benefit them but also the children, young people and families that access to the service. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will implement feedback received from service users and peers as part of the service audits. 2. We will work in partnership with other local authorities and clearly define the scope of early help work across London. 3. We will share and hear good practice and help improve our Early Help service. 4. We will work collaboratively with our partners in Education and Early Years to work toward building a centre in the City of London that offers integrated early intervention services in line with Hackney's offer of a Family Hub. 5. We will work collaboratively with our partners in Hackney and engage in training offered that is in line with their early help service offer. 6. We will engage in training that will continue to upskill our Early Help Team to ensure we are providing the best service possible to the children and families we serve. 7. We will remain accountable to the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) and implement service changes required to meet the needs of the children, young people and families we serve. 	<p>Early Help will work collaboratively with the Commissioning Team to gather service user feedback regarding changes and new services provided.</p>

Committee: Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information	Dated: 19/06/2023
Subject: Children’s Social Care and Early Help Service Development Plan 2022–23	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Contribute to a flourishing society 1. People are safe and feel safe. 2. People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Claire Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Rachel Talmage, Head of Service, People Department, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

Summary

The Service Development Plan has been fully refreshed for 2023–24 and sets out the overarching programme of work for the Children’s Social Care and Early Help Service. Key pieces of work include achieving every commitment from the Care Leaver Covenant and the Care Leaver Compact. Our care leaver offer will be revised and published accordingly.

The purpose of the report is to enable Members to see the array of work supporting resident children in need of help and protection in the City of London.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Service Development Plan 2023–24 (see Appendix 1) sets out objectives that aim to improve outcomes for children and their families. Objectives are drawn from listening to children and families, from staff, audit, the Achieving Excellence Board, Serious Case Reviews, Ofsted and work from the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA). Ofsted has a new separate judgement for care leavers and our ambition is excellence for all care leavers. The Plan sets out how we will achieve excellent outcomes for every child and young person.
2. In their *Inspection of children's social care services 2 March 2020 to 6 March 2020*, Ofsted made two recommendations in their judgement on our practice¹ (published April 2020). These recommendations remain in the plan to ensure due focus and attention.

Current Position

3. A new 2022–23 plan has been created following the completion of actions from the 2021–22 plan. Key achievements include:
 - Running a Race Equality Foundation parenting programme, training staff to be able to provide a shorter online version, to increase the flexibility of the offer to parents.
 - Supporting Afghan families well and preparing them to move on from the Bridging Hotels in the City; families were less anxious moving, and the preparation was detailed between our outgoing local authority and their new local authority.
 - Consistently including fathers, and creatively engaging them in supporting and safeguarding their children.
 - Having all staff in post as part of the Target Operating Model, meaning stability for children and families.
 - Completion of the Immigration Interview Project, the impact being quicker leave to remain in the UK.
 - Extending the virtual family therapy clinic, and significant improvement in children's lives where families are going through separation.
 - The Threshold of Need document was fully refreshed, including Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI), following a national rise in deaths of children aged under one year nationally during COVID-19 (note, no child died in the City).

Key Data

4. Performance data for the service is being considered separately within the Safeguarding Sub Committee. Data is used to drive the actions in the plan and to evaluate progress for children.

¹ <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50149902> accessed 28 April 2022

Corporate & Implications

5. Across every department, the Corporation is a parent to our children in care and care leavers.
6. More can be done in respect of work experience and job opportunities as set out in the Compact, and our plan is to make every recommendation an offer in the City.

Strategic Risk Implications

7. Child safeguarding involves assessment and mitigation of risk. The service aims to protect and support the most vulnerable children in our society. The Achieving Excellence Board is in place to further scrutinise and extend our work for these children.

Equalities implications

8. The 'social graces' are used in individual and group supervision, looking at the similarities and differences in every piece of casework. Equalities implications are core in every interaction. The 'social graces' include gender, geography, race, religion, age, ability, appearance, class, culture, ethnicity, education, employment, sexuality, sexual orientation and spirituality. Systemic relationship-based practice is central to our work, and the social GRACES (eg Gender, Race, Religion, Ethnicity, Employment, Class, etc.) offer us a framework for considering disproportionality and inequity.
9. The Plan sets out a path seeking to recognise 'care leaving' as a protected characteristic, and all implications extending to equalities will be explored and evaluated.
10. In Early Help we have noticed that incoming children who are white tend to have services set up for them, diagnoses and special educational needs (SEN) support/ and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), where relevant. We are noticing that black and brown children who are referred have some needs identified, but not all, and services are not in place. We are undertaking case reviews to identify what could have been done earlier and what the impact would have been for the child. We are advocating for more timely services and noticing in supervision, in assessment, in case discussion where it seems that these children's needs are not as visible.

Financial implications

11. Children's social care is a statutory service. If, for example, children arrive in the City with additional needs, such as the Afghan arrivals, and/or further children with disabilities arrive, then a service must be provided. If risks escalate, then court action might be required. These unexpected needs will have financial implications.

Resource implications

12. A recommendation in the Compact is for every care leaver to have an annual travel pass. The London Child in Care Council/Partnership for Young London are working with Transport for London (TfL) to make this happen- which is unlikely to be confirmed until 2024. In the interim, a report will be presented to CCS Committee seeking approval for additional funds to meet the cost of annual bus passes for all CoL care leavers for an initial 12 months until the TfL plan is approved.

Legal implications

13. N/A

Climate implications

14. N/A

Security implications

15. N/A

Conclusion

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

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Service Development Plan 2023–24

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Appendix 1: Service Development Plan 2023-4

Children's Social Care & Early Help

Author: Rachel Talmage

Date of Plan: April 2023

Date of review: quarterly

The Self Evaluation is underway due for completion

July 2023

Audit findings and recommendations due in May
will be added once received

Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
Early Help & Short Breaks							
On parent/carer forum request	EH lead	Identifies all the different uses for short breaks money and creates an ideas sheet for parents.	30-Jun-23	The idea sheet, with impact for children of each idea, will be uploaded to our website.	Children will be able to access leisure activities - ones they might not have tried before.		work underway, and will be published on the Family Information Service website and shared with the parent/carer forum
On parent/carer forum request	HoS/EH lead	Meets with parents/carers to identify names of children who would want holiday club provision in the City, and those who would like football coaching in the City, and those who would like to use an Islington Activity Centre. Brings a paper to DLT for extra funding	31-Aug-23	provision will be in place for the right number of children	children will be able to access leisure activities close to home. Transport difficulty will not be a barrier to taking up sport.		Paper taken to DLT following meeting with parent/carers. It has been difficult to get specific numbers from parents. Follow up with parents needed. (note DFE funding applications for this rejected in 2022 and in 2023)
Developing our response and understanding of neglect.	HoS/EH lead	Writes a paper setting out using the revised GCP2 as a neglect tool, as a pilot for 6 months in the City. June - December 2023 To run GCP2 training across MAPF partners and children's social workers/early help worker	01-Dec-23	Training to have taken place. Update to CSMT with numbers at training, and then in December to update numbers of GCP2 assessments undertaken & impact for children.	Children experiencing neglect will have intervention that helps them and their family sooner.		GCP2 has a newer version coming out in June. Training for MAPF partners/children's social care is booked in for late June.
Social Care review	HOS	Reviews the social care review and the suggested merge of early help/child in need work and what that might look like in the City	01-Oct-23	Note: HoS has reviewed where we are with the social care review and timetabled reporting into members (April 2023). Decisions to be made on what works in the City, following a review of the Pilot LAs who are early adopters of the review.	The aim of our 1 early help team and 1 social care service is that relationship based practice where children and families don't have to retell their stories. The planned impact on children of the review is consistency of relationship and timely skilled intervention.		It is not clear yet whether moving to a CIN/EH team with a LAC/CL team would be purposeful or workable.

The Self Evaluation is underway due for completion

July 2023

Audit findings and recommendations due in May
will be added once received

Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
Appoint permanent EH Lead & SC lead	HOS	Advertises role of SC lead first (note permanent EH lead is acting up in this role).	31-May-23	SC lead in permanent role	Consistent good quality children		
Need identified by parents, recommending the programme to other parents.	EH Lead	Runs Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities Programme. Online or in person.	Dec-23	One page report on the running of either the virtual or the in person programme to CSMT	Children experience their parents responding kindly, more consistently and clearly.		Workers have been trained to facilitate a shorter, online version of the programme.
Staff have observed that white children coming to the early help children have had support services in place at school, whereas black or brown children are coming to early help with emerging need identified.	EH lead	1. Writes up the case examples. 2. Hosts a session on delay for black or brown children with the Mult Agency Forum. 3. Hosts a session with children's social care and early help.	31-Aug-23	MAPF and CSMT will have minutes sharing the case examples.	Black and brown children will have the right help at the right time. There will be a reduction in children being perceived as difficult/with poor behaviour due to any additional needs being identified early.		
Ofsted recommendations from judgment in February 2020	CSC & EH Management Team	Reviews EH step downs at weekly management meeting.	Weekly.	Management Meeting notes evidence overview. Data shows step down is timely. Data shows speed of first visit from transfer into/out of Early Help.	Children don't need to re-tell their experiences, likes and dislikes because of thorough transfer, and they don't have to wait to see their new Early Help or Social Worker. To reduce anxiety.		complete - (kept in to retain oversight)
Cost of living crisis - the crisis continues to impact children and families	EH lead	Ensures families can access the household support fund. Ensures families are referred to City Advice. Ensures families know about the Green Doctor Service Thinks about cost of living crisis for each family open to EH and any mitigation/support needed	01-Mar-24	The financial record held by Tenancy Support evidences spend on families open to Early Help. The number of families referred to City Advice continues to be good - data checking in place every 3 months. Audits will show evidence of cost of living work with families	They will be warm and fed.		This work is ongoing since the crisis has been ongoing. Good referral rate to City Advice. Good use of household support fund. Work is attuned to financial need.
Service development. Sharing knowledge and skill together.	EH worker	Is lead for listening to children.	01-Mar-24	Lead will have presented to AEB on their work. Colleagues will have extra resources/skills to listen to children.	children will be heard, however they communicate and at whatever age.		EH worker appointed Listening to Children lead in May 2023.

Children's Social Care

The Self Evaluation is underway due for completion

July 2023

Audit findings and recommendations due in May
will be added once received

Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
The social care review made recommendations for changes within social care, after listening to children, families and those involved with services.	HOS	Reviews recommendations and creates a plan for responding	01-May-23	Review of where we are is submitted to the AEB	Children will have the best possible care. More options of better homes. Care leavers/LAC will have a protected characteristic to be at the front of every queue in the City of London Corporation		May: a review of the social care recommendations has been completed. A plan for review of each area devised. We are waiting for the outcome of pilot implementation LAs for a number of areas. Note: this area of work has it's own action plan as it is a very large piece of work. It is appended to this plan.
Service development. Sharing knowledge and skill together.	SWS	Social work leads in place covering these areas: 1. Children with Disabilities 2. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children 3. Systemic Practice 4. Voice of child 5. Voices of parents and families 6. Neglect 7. Modern Day Slavery 8. Social care review	01-May-23	Each worker has presented a one page report on their work to AEB	They will have expert support, children with disabilities will have the right support, opportunities and holiday activities. Children will not be enslaved. Children will secure permanent stay in the UK		UASC/CWD/MDS/systemic roles are well established. MDS will be presenting next at AEB to evidence learning, sharing learning and impact for children. The last AEB heard from the UASC lead - impact of work is that all immigration interviews happened and most YP got permanent stay in the UK
<u>Children in Need & those in need of protection</u>							
There has been insufficient demand for parenting programmes via group work. 121 parenting work is undertaken directly by Early Help worker and by one worker in social care. Child in need work would be more effective if workers were more skilled in doing direct work with parents to improve parenting.	<u>TM to decide</u>	1 social worker to train via the Race Equality Foundation parenting programme.	01-Mar-24	Audit Parental feedback Child feedback Update to CSMT	Children will have more confident parents meaning their day to day lives are better.		Note: 1 SW uses the race equality foundation handbook for 121 sessions with families. This work could be strengthened across the service.
The NSPCC has further developed it's identification of neglect tool - called GCP2. A new version comes out in June.	HOS	Writes paper setting out Neglect pilot in the City. GCP2 training mandatory for social workers and managers	end June 2023	Training has happened. Tool used.	Children will be able to play outside, eat regularly, be clean, have trusted adults. Neglect will be swiftly identified and daily life better		Training is set up for staff.

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July 2023

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Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
Cost of living crisis: feedback from City Advice (at PSMT) shows that social care are not referring families for advice/support	Head of Service	Reminders to managers/workers to refer to City Advice. Remind staff that City Advice has access to vouchers and can also help with bills/Household Support Fund	01-Jul-23	City Advice will have evidence that families/young people have referred. Update to CSMT in July 2023 on take up of help.	Children have food and warmth.		Reminders sent out. Reminder at management meeting to consider referrals in 121s with staff. 3 monthly checks with City Advice diarised.
London Threshold of Need Matrix published Feb 2023 (we contributed to the Pan London Review).	HOS	Takes new matrix to Safeguarding Partnership for approval for use. Inote our ToN document was refreshed last year with SUDI advice - this London wide document is comprehensive and strong)	Jul-23	The new matrix will be published on our website	Children receive the right level of intervention at the right time.		Have requested matrix is approved for use. Threshold Document: Continuum of Help and Support (londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk)
Develop CIN/CP work to be outstanding in terms of impact and outcomes.	Managers	Minutes are shared within 5 days of any family meeting. Team support assist with minute taking. Minutes go to GPs, Health Visitors & School nursing in every case. Expert Practitioner supports staff where manager/staff requests.	Dec-23	Audits show positive progress. Parental feedback on CIN good in August annual survey.	Parents will be confident on the actions to take to improve daily life of child. Child will be safer and healthier.		Minutes routinely done by team support and sent out. Need to develop an automated system re: sending minutes out. Audits for CIN awaited by end May.
Ofsted recommendation 2020: The recording of management decision making at all stages of a child's journey. Retained to keep	Assistant Director & Service Manager	Build management capacity. Draft review in place, need to take forward.	complete	Revised structure chart published. Staff in place.	Children and families experience an exceptional service, with access to speak with managers.		Jan 2022: TOM complete. DTM position is now permanent and postholder in the role permanently.
	Head of Service	Extend Deputy Team Manager Pilot, to retain capacity whilst CV-19 has put service review on hold.	complete	DTM postholder is in place throughout CV-19 and to end of service review	as above		complete
	CSC & EH Management Team	Has recording as a standing item on management meeting agenda. Team to remind each other on recording reasons as well as decisions on case files.	complete	Management meeting notes show discussion.	Children and families experience consistent and timely decision making.		UPDATE:Ofsted focus visit evidences good oversight in CIN/Front door. We have created our first automated CL report. Using that rather than spreadsheets has shown gaps in recording for CL. Work plan in place.
	CSC & EH Management Team	121s with each level of managers includes a section on recording, with spot checking.	complete	121s evidence spot checking and discussion.	Children and families experience consistent and timely decision making, if staff are on leave or absent.		UPDATE: New evidence of gaps in CL work, with new automated report - we are tweaking the report and now tracking.

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Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
	Head of Service	Facilitates action Learning Sets on supervision and recording.	April-June	Session notes available. Managers to share supervisions they are proud of monthly to build practice.	as above		1 Action learning set on recording in April. 1 coaching session for DTM on recording.
	Head of Service	Offers further management training to DTM.	complete	Place is booked on course.	as above		course complete
Audit from October 22 shows views of extended family/absent parents are not consistently in family assessments. Also there is a piece of work across the CHSCP (City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership) entitled 'invisible men' to boost inclusion.	MANAGERS	QUESTIONS BEING ASKED IN 121. WORKERS TO THINK ABOUT THE WHOLE FAMILY IN EXTENDED SYSTEM. HOS part of 'invisible men' workstream with CHSCP, raising inclusion ideas for men across Partnership	complete	Supervision notes evidence this. Audit findings show it. 'Invisible Men' workstream plan, once complete, shared with staff. 2 x Action Learning Sets on including men held.	Children know that all their family are seen, and all considered as part of safety planning, whether they be risks/resources. Children are understood in their context.		UPDATE: MACA audit shows men involved in 1 in 3 cases sampled. But contact tracer used for one case and one father is fighting in Ukraine war. Note: we are now offering online triple P parenting programme work to fathers (and mothers), to fit around work schedules.
Case Review Summary of findings 30 May 2022 (Audit on children in need and child protection report) The areas needing attention:	HoS & Management team	Social workers shared that they felt supported by their managers, however this was not evident on files where supervision records had not been uploaded for some time. As in the previous reviews the application of systemic thinking and practice is variable in supervision notes. Visits continue to take place at appropriate and at expected intervals. Visit write ups would be strengthened by including the plan for direct work. Including the purpose of visits, direct work, and the outcomes/impact of intervention in supervision recordings would evidence application of systemic practice which has been clear and evident when speaking to social workers as part of this review.	01/12/2023	DTM to have systemic supervision training in Summer 2022, for supporting with thinking and evidencing thinking. Weekly tracking of DTM supervision notes until uploads are consistently timely.	Children will receive an attuned service, with learning from their stories and experience reflected and acted upon.		UPDATE: audit October showed improvement as did focus visit. An automated supervision tracker is nearing completion following testing
			01/12/2023	The visit template to be updated with 'purpose of visit' heading at the start of the write up to make clear.	children understand what the social worker is visiting for.		Visit template updated. Will need to audit and test ourselves on impact.

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		Plans would be strengthened by ensuring that outcomes are specific to the child and not a service, by being specific about who is responsible for delivering actions in the plan and particularly where a parent is required to complete an action, so they are clear about the local authority's expectations.	01/12/2022	CIN tracker to look in detail at quality of plans for a three month period. Afghan Project lead to support CIN plan formation and CIN review meeting so parents clear on actions and outcomes.	Children receive clear support that makes their daily life better.		UPDATE: Project lead completed CIN review and provided workers and managers' feedback from each CIN meeting. Will add minutes shared to our CIN tracker meeting & hold a session on SMART planning at management meetings in January 2023.
	Management Team	Notable improvement in this review in discussion betwas the thinking through exit strategies and great insight into how families could become reliant or dependent on services provided. These discussions are unfortunately not evidenced consistently in supervision records.	01/12/2023	Dip sampling of supervision records. Reminders at Management Hub meetings.	Children will experience social work input for the right amount of time.		Update: Focus visit found good mangement footprint. CIN work has improved with tracking. Temporary focus on care leaver management notes as noticed slip when doing pathway plan tracking - some 121s late in writing up. Work plan in place.
MASH Health Annual data report 21-22 shows health did not consistently receive strategy meeting minutes.	Mangement Team & Team Support Officer	Shares minutes with attendees within 24 hours of strategy meeting taking place & casenote on file to evidence.	30/04/2023	Dip sampling & the MASH Health annual data report will evidence 100% compliance	Children will have the right level of support at the right time.		UPDATE: MaSH partners positive and focus visit positive. Will put in a duty review of communication every Friday from 13 Dec.
Children in Care and Care Leavers							
To publish refreshed care leaver offer given many improvements have been made since the last version & given adopting the compact, the covenant and the social care review & the national review for CWD.	HOS	Creates a care leaver booklet with the new offers included.	01/10/2023	The offer will be published on the internet. Young people will have links to it via WhatsApp	Young people will know their full range of rights and the support available. Young people having friends/community/relationships/leisure/education/travel		The previous offer, the compact, covenant & social care review offers are now collated. They now need to be made easy to understand and with graphics.
National Review of residential settings for children with complex needs	Management team & CWD lead.	Contributes to the Quality Assurance	mid Nov 2022	Report will go in to safeguarding children's partnership.	Children with complex needs are safe and well cared for in residential settings.		Update: Report completed and sent to national review. Our YP safe and well cared for. Recommendations followed.

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Care leaver Compact & covenant	HOS	Seeks to Add Care Leavers to the protected equality characteristics locally.	01/12/2023	It will have been added to the care leaver offer online	Children gain housing/employment/services faster.	Yellow	This will need to go to the Court of Common Council
	HOS	To consider care leavers supported by other LAs to have exemption to council tax in the City, if their host LA does not cover the cost. Take as proposal to CSMT with costing.	01/08/2023	as above	as above		
	HOS	Reviews and updates links to covenant and compact for our housing policy.	01/08/2023	as above	as above		
	HOS	Works with procurement and commissioning to test the impact of our Social Value requirement for all our contracts on care leavers	01/12/2023	as above. We have at least 1 young person accessing employment via the Social Value scheme at the corporation.	children gain employment/internships via CoL and our contractors.		
	HOS	Works with VSH & Adult Education Service & prospects to set up bespoke pre employment and employment programmes - to consider teaming up with another LA to creat this offer.	01/10/2023	Plan to be seen at CSMT. We have at least 1 person accessing the bespoke programme in the autumn term.	Children are ready for employment		
	HOS	Seeks funding for 1 year from DLT to provide annual bus passes for all carers.	01/05/2023	paper taken to DLT	children have more freedom to travel for all reasons, without having to ask for funding each time - particularly for college holiday times	Green	DLT approved 1 year bus passes for all 16-25 year old care leavers, TFL are reviewing whether they can run this offer across London. Work is underway individually with each young person to register for a bus pass and pay.
New Ofsted Care Leaver Judgment - want want our service to be outstanding for every child	HOS	Uses the care leaver judgment headings for the care leaver offer so we've covered each point well	01/10/2023	Care leaver offer published	Young people will know their full range of rights and the support available. Young people having friends/community/relationships/leisure/education/travel	Blue	
cost of living crisis	HoS	Runs workshop on cost of living crisis & promotes MyBNK to help budgeting. Reviews finances for care leavers. Uses household support fund where allowed to add more	01/12/2023	Allowances sheet refreshed and circulated. HSF usage shows care leavers have extra funds.	They will have money for food and heating.	Green	Update: 10% uplift in weekly subsistence approved by Chief Officer, and 10% on top of universal credit for care leavers - in line with inflation.

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Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
Increase in number of care leavers becoming parents	Hos	Creates Job Description and Person Specification for new Expert Practitioner role to support care leavers who are NEET, care leavers who are parents and to run support for these categories of vulnerable care leavers.	01/12/2023	Person in post	Care leavers will have skills to be able to parent safely.		Update: post recruited to has been in post since January 2023. Will provide report on impact in October 2023
Young People said in March 2022 at their CV and Interview workshop that they would like more opportunities to practice and more help to get the job they want.	HoS	Works with participation service to run CV/interview sessions regularly throughout the year. Invites Prospects to run at least 4 sessions per year, and to offer 121 sessions.	01/08/2023	Sessions will have run. Young people will say that they have had support via the CiCC and in their pathway plans. 1 case study on how a young person has used their CV/interview practice to get a job or work experience.	Children will feel more prepared to get a job. Young people will have a job.		March 22 - 1 x job and CV session held. Connection with prospects & Connecting Communities service following summer holiday programme - leading to employment.
Our data shows young people not wanting to have any vaccine, not just covid. Important as vaccine histories are unknown and there is a risk of for example measles/polio etc which are unavoidable.	Lead SW for UASC	Arranges workshop for looked after children and care leavers in Summer 2022 (rearranged from Spring) with LAC nurse.	Aug-23	Attendance list and session notes. At least 20% of attendees have vaccines.	Children will have correct information on vaccines. Children will be vaccinated and safe from preventable harm.		Update: LAC named nurse has undertaken drop in, next one in early January. Session completed. Review session will be held, LAC now have a named nurse, who visits 8 weekly to the Guildhall for drop in sessions and info around immunisation.
Increase in mental ill health in care leavers observed, with two under section of MHA in hospital since January 2022, a big change.	HoS	Reviews two young people's cases. Encourages use of early wellbeing support amongst staff. Identifies more culturally matched mental health support via community sector - for Sudanese young people.	01-Dec-23	Paper to CSMT. Sudanese specific mental health support identified and offered.	Children will be able to access support that they will understand and connect with. Children won't need to go into hospital for mental health reasons.		Update: priority action for January. Mental health support is being offered. Needs work. The Sudanese charity we are linked with does not offer mental health support - beyond good health promotion via groups.
Culturally attuned practice	HOS/TS	Ensures welcome bags for looked after children include culturally appropriate hair and skin care products	01-May-23	Products in bags.	They have hair and skin care products that work for them immediately		

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Mental health of local children and families is supported.	Head of Service	Extend CoL trainee systemic family therapy clinic programme to 2023-24 and look at long term contract arrangements. Joint project with Kings College London.	01-Aug-23	Contract in Place Care leavers and children in care are shown to have attended the clinic in their quarterly data. One qualitative example of impact of the clinic for a child in care/care leaver presented to CSMT.	Children and parents are able to emotionally manage day to day life better, with therapy being offered in their homes. Excellence in Practice.		Update: the new term has started with a new SW lead being part of it. Contract extended for a further year. Note: lead clinician will continue with the clinic alongside new role as AD in B'gham.
2022/23 Self Assessment to be completed	HoS	To write SEF	31/08/2023	SEF in place	Full accountable review of overall service to children and their families. Excellence in Practice		SEF updates have taken place monthly in preparation for this new year
Findings from Annual Survey October 2022		Retained the findings that need continued grip/oversight. Next Annual Survey in the planning					
Early Help							
Feedback from Survey	EH worker	Learns British Sign Language	end March 2023	Early help worker completes level one British sign language.	Deaf children and deaf parents ill be able to communicate directly with the early help service for straightforward conversations.		Update: programme put back a term. Early Help worker is enrolled on 1/2 day per week programme. Note BSL translators and written communication is used alongside.
CIN/CP							
Parent requested staff use BSL (note interpreters used)	CWD lead social worker	Learns introductory level british sign language	Mar-23	Completion of programme	Deaf children and deaf parents ill be able to communicate directly with the social care service for straightforward conversations.		Update: programme put back a term. Social worker continues on the programme 1/2 day a week.
A parent asked for better chairing of CIN meetings and for chair to ask for feedback.	Expert practitioner	Supports social workers with complex cases at CIN reviews, building on intensive work in autumn term	01/12/2023	Files will evidence input of the expert practitioner. Family feedback will not show frustration with the chairing of CIN meetings	If children are in the meeting, they will experience confident adults. Children's views are gathered well in and for the meeting. Parents will respond to recommendations in the CIN meeting and their children's experience at home will improve.		This work is continuing from the Afghan project lead's work in this area.

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	social workers	Direct work should be shared with parents so they have a clear idea of what discussions are taking place with their children and what you are actually doing, parents become anxious when they don't know what is happening behind closed doors especially when speaking to children alone. Pre Plan visits so that you know why you are there as does the family	Sep-23 Sep-23	Feedback to Project lead by families. Each visit write up begins 'purpose of visit' as a heading.	children will have confidence in the adults working together. Children will be not be torn between adults.		Kept in for oversight by HOS
cost of living	hos	encourages staff to use MyBNK	Dec-23	report on number of young people attending quarterly	confident in managing money		keeping on for continued monitoring of youth

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Child Q serious case review shows systemic racism causing harm to children. Black children need seeing as children, with safeguarding considered first.	Head of Service	Treats racism as a health and safety issue for black staff. Runs Support Sessions for staff. Culture where staff discuss racism on a daily basis. White staff use the reading group and film club to 'look in the mirror' as well as out of the window on our own racism. Ensures staff attend adultification training by CHSCP. Runs a MACE session on Child Q with CHSCP. Raises profile of drug support for children, and support for children whose parents use substances.	01-Aug-22	MACE session minutes evidence work. Team and Senior Management Meeting minutes evidence health and safety approach. Attendance records show 80% staff have attended adultification training in 2022.	Children will receive safeguarding first support. Children will not experience harm from teachers or police or harm from the absence of action by adults.		Update: Child Q work reviewed with management team. MACE work undertaken. Staff support sessions happened. Reconition that to talk about racism is painful, and to not talk about racism is painful. To provide support and love and care to black staff and children and families.
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Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
To include children and families in co producing all our strategies. To include children and parents in all our board meetings.	Head of Service	Reviews co production work across Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection, and across our board work to identify gaps and provide a plan.	Dec-23	Children and parents voices will be directly heard at the Achieving Excellence Board, in the Early Help Strategy and Short Breaks strategy and a plan will go to Children's Senior Management Team.	Children will be included, and have no service for them without them.		Retained for continuity: this needs more focussed work. Strategies are using national voices, to avoid over surveying our young people. At the moment we use videos of children and national research, we can improve.
Staff development	HOS	Ensures black managers join London networks, join the Leadership in Colour Conference, use the BALI network and access stretching leadership training.	ongoing	Appraisals show stretching training & networking across London.	Children will benefit from having managers who are able to be authentically themselves, and black children will see people who look like them at all levels in the City		
OFSTED FINDINGS 2020 (retained in 2022-23 plan to keep attention)							
The management overview of families stepped down to early help to ensure that families receive help with in a timescale that is right for them	Early Help Co-Ordinator & Mosaic Lead	Make Early Help Assessment work step & TAF meeting process live on Mosaic	complete	EH worker will have tested the work steps.	Children are helped quickly.		complete
	Early Help Co-Ordinator	Runs a weekly report on referral into early help and timescale of completing an EH assessment.	complete	Report is produced	Children are seen and supported quickly. 100% of families said communication from EH was good.		complete
Learning from within our service	HOS	Now CIN tracker is working well, add in a focus on SMART tartgets to support the managers in the tracker section.	Mar-23	Casenotes and tracker evidences it.	They will understand their plan, and understand how the adults are working together to make their lives easier and better.		Update: newly added
	HOS	Improving writing skills, grammar and analysis so it is consistent across team members.	Jun-23	Managers will report less rewriting/sending back of visits/reports.	They will be able to understand clearly what is written if they come to see their files.		Update: social work practice week writing event attended by all staff, writing well training commissioned and attended. Follow up to be considered

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Why?	Who?	Does what?	By when?	How will we know it has been done?	What will be the experience of children?	RAG rated progress	Comments on progress
	HOS	Improving our anti racist practice in our assessments, noticing where black and brown children have not had their needs seen.	Aug-23	EH lead and EH worker to share their good practice with social care - using assessments. EH lead to create case examples - short - to then share and use with our and other services	black and brown children will be 'seen' - workers are curious about the services/assessments that are and are not in place. Children will have less detention/exclusion		

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	19/06/2023
Subject: Private Fostering Annual Report 2022 to 2023	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Outcome 1
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service	

Summary

There have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for 2022 to 2023. 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 are some outstanding actions from 2021 to 2022 – these have been incorporated into the recommendations in the Annual Report 2022 to 2023. 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. There have been concerted efforts to promote awareness around private fostering throughout the year. Private fostering has been raised within the Safeguarding Education Forum, and City of London Schools have information displayed in areas where parents and carers congregate. Libraries also have posters and leaflets on private fostering displayed in public areas. The Strategic Communications Officer also ensures that information on private fostering is included with publications that are distributed 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 in this report, there have been no referrals regarding private fostering arrangements in the City of London from April 2022 through to the end of March 2023. A recommendation from the 2021 to 2022 private fostering report was to meet with faith leaders on the borders of the City of London. This recommendation has yet to be actioned and will be progressed in 2023. Further to this, information about Private Fostering for parents, carers and young people will be available on the Family and Young Peoples Information website.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Private Fostering Annual Report 2022 to 2023.

Background Papers

- Statutory guidance – National minimum standards for private fostering:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-minimum-standards-for-private-fostering

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Annual Report Private Fostering Arrangements April 2022 to March 2023

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.

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 07/03/2023	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.
Training Event	March 2023	Designated Safeguarding leads	Training event with Schools and Early Years Providers facilitated by City of London- Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service.
Estate Resident Meetings	Various dates throughout 2022to 2023	Residents	Leaflets and bookmarks containing information about Private Fostering have been distributed.
Staff Induction	Various dates throughout 2022 to 2023	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.

In November 2022 the City of London had a Focused visit from Ofsted, their report identified the following.

“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.”

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 2022 to 2023; 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, recommendation from the 2021 to 2022 private fostering report identified the need for contact to be made with faith leaders. This has yet to be actioned, and this is a priority going forward for 2023. Private fostering information will also be made available on the Family and Young Peoples Information website and will be available in other languages.

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 subgroups and will report on the update of these raising awareness sessions.

Recommendations

1. Outstanding action from previous report 2021 to 2022, was to raise awareness around private fostering with faith leaders. This would require cross borough working with neighbouring local authorities.
2. Information on Private Fostering will be available on the Family and Young Peoples Information website.

Pat Dixon
Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
City of London

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	19/06/2023
Subject: Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2022 to 2023	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Outcome 1
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) activity between April 2022 and March 2023, which has been incorporated in the LADO Annual Report. There were 13 referrals during this reporting year, which is slightly lower than the previous two years. Of the 13 referrals received, only one required an Allegation Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) Meeting. Out of the 12 remaining referrals, two did not meet the threshold for LADO involvement, and 10 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 (see Background Papers below) 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. Allegations, whether made about events in a person's private or professional life, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

Current Position

2. There were 13 referrals made to the LADO between April 2022 and March 2023, which is slightly lower than the two previous years. The threshold for an ASV meeting has been raised, and therefore lower-level LADO referrals requiring advice and support can be dealt with, without an ASV or strategy meeting. The referrals received by the LADO in 2022/23 came from a variety of sources, but the highest proportion came from other local authorities. Often in these cases the concerns relate to an allegation that has occurred outside of the City of London, and the role of the LADO is to support and advise agencies and organisations in managing potential risks.
3. In 2022 to 2023 the LADO met with City of London Police to discuss the role and responsibilities in relation to the LADO role and the thresholds for referral. This meeting proved helpful as it clarified the LADO process and how this supported the management of risk, such as when cases did not meet the threshold for criminal prosecution. This year the LADO received three referrals from the Police – two from the City of London Police and one from the Metropolitan Police.
4. In March 2023 the City of London and Hackney LADO delivered face-to-face training on the role of the LADO in the City of London. This training was aimed at professionals from an educational background and was delivered through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP). Although the training had been advertised on the CHSCP website, the take-up of this training was disappointing, but this might have been due to the training not being available online.

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. The LADO Annual Report shows all the activity that has taken place within LADO procedures between 2022 and 2023. The number of referrals is slightly lower than in previous years, and the number of ASV meetings has also decreased. However, this has been identified as being due to most of the allegations occurring outside of the City of London. This means that the ASV meetings would have taken place where the allegation occurred, and the role of the City of London LADO would be to offer support and advice to the agency or organisation involved in managing the risk, in relation to the individual involved, as they are based in the City of London.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – LADO Annual Report 2022 to 2023.

Background Papers

- London Safeguarding Children Procedures:
www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/responding_concerns.html

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City of London Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2022 to 2023

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 2022 through to March 2023. 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 7th 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.

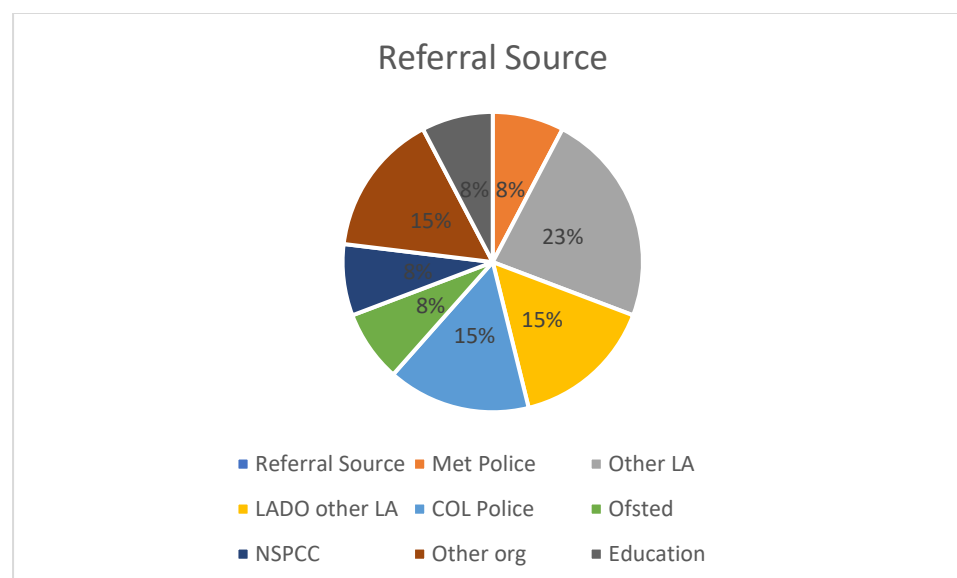
In November 2022 the City of London had their Ofsted Focused visit, the LADO arrangements were reviewed as part of this visit, and their findings were as follows.

“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.”

3. Referrals

There has been a total of 13 referrals made to the LADO during 2022/2023 period, which is slightly lower than the number of referrals that were received in 2021/2022. 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, and evenly spread across a variety of agencies. 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. 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 that supplies the professional in dealing with the allegation. However, 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



Referral Source

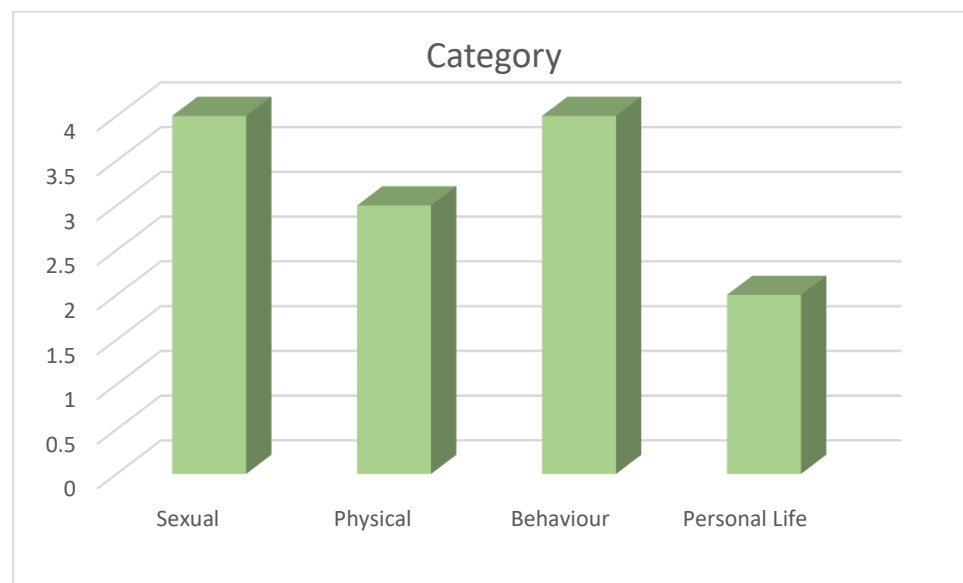
Met Police	1
Other LA	3
LADO other LA	2
COL Police	2
Ofsted	1
NSPCC	1

Other org	2
Education	1

Of the 13 referrals received, only one referral required an Allegation Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV). Of the 12 remaining referrals, two did not meet the threshold for LADO involvement, and the remaining 10 required advice and support from the LADO in managing the concerns. In most of these cases the allegation is dealt with by the LADO in the area where the incident occurred. However, if the agency of the professional is based in the City of London, then the LADO would support that agency in managing the potential risks regarding the individual and advise on any safer recruitment concerns.

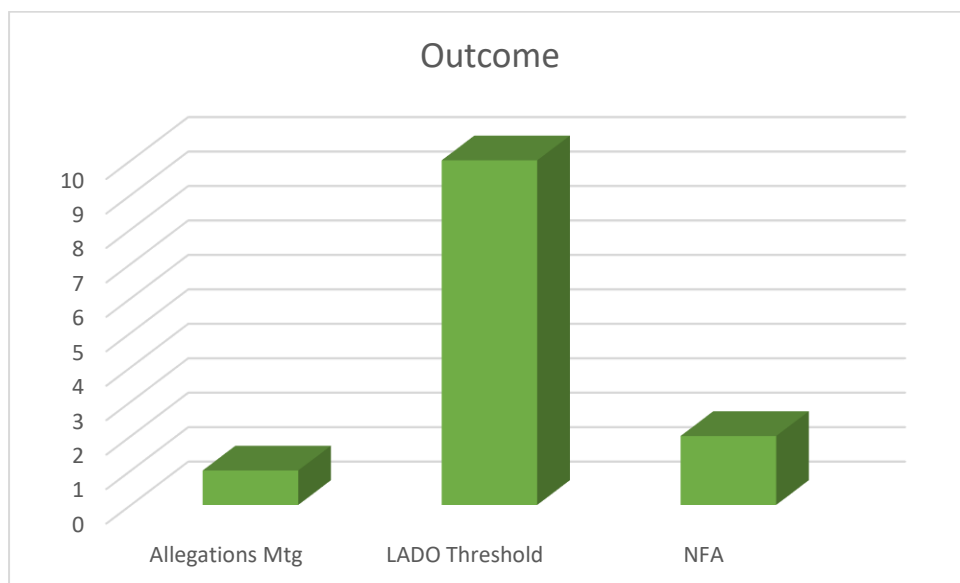
Fig2 shows the categories of the referrals received during 2022 to 2023, four fell under the category of sexual, three were physical, four related to the individual's behaviour and two involved concerns in relation to the individual's personal life.

Fig 2



As can be seen by fig 3 most of the referrals received required advice and support for the agency or organisation 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 2022 to 2023 fully understood the role of the LADO and managed the allegation appropriately within their agency. The role of the City of London LADO often involves supporting agencies in getting information about the allegations, as it can be difficult getting hold of individuals working in other Local Authorities or Police Forces. 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 (CHSCP) 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.

Training on the LADO role was offered in March 2023, by the City of London and Hackney LADO, via the CHSCP, take up of this training was limited from both City and Hackney, this may have been due to the training being face to face. New staff in the City of London from the Peoples Directorate meet with the LADO as part of their induction process, 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 referrals that have been received by the LADO over 2022 to 2023 have come from various sources, the majority were appropriately referred by the agencies involved. There were no significant trends, however concerns raised in the 2021 to 2022 LADO report regarding the lack of referrals from the Police led to a review of the referrals process between the Police and LADO. This assisted in clarifying the role and responsibilities between the LADO and Police, as to when the LADO should be notified. In 2022 to 2023 the LADO received two referrals from the City of London Police and one referral from the Metropolitan Police.

6. Multi-agency working

During the 2022/2023 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.

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 2022 and March 2023 there has been one notification from the City of London Police and one from 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 2022 -March 2023**

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

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

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

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

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Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	19/06/2023
Subject: Quality Assurance Framework – updated March 2023	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Outcome 1
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service	

Summary

In March 2023 the Quality Assurance Framework was reviewed and updated to reflect the quality assurance work taking place across children’s services. As part of the review, managers were consulted from Children’s Social Care, Early Help, Education and Early Years, and the Virtual School. The purpose of this review was to ascertain the level of quality assurance activity taking place across children’s services, and how this was contributing to the continuous cycle of improvement in relation to impact and engagement of children and families.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The current Quality Assurance (QA) Framework was written in January 2019, with the aspiration of creating a learning organisation that focused on the outcomes for children and young people rather than just the process to achieve this. To realise this, the QA Framework needed to look beyond compliance with statutory requirements alone, by taking on a whole-system approach, encompassing the wider activity taking place across children’s services. Although compliance with statutory requirements is essential, it is far from being the end of the process in a system committed to continuous improvement.

2. The QA Framework has been designed to be accessible for staff across services in understanding their role and responsibility in relation to QA and how this has a direct correlation to the outcomes for children, young people, and their families. The framework also demonstrates how this interlinks with other QA systems and governance arrangements within the City of London Corporation and Department of Community and Children's Services.

Current Position

3. The updated QA Framework shows the level of activity that is taking place over the next year. It provides evidence for how information is shared between services in a joined-up way to improve the experience for children and families when accessing services. It also shows the level of oversight that takes place through the various governance arrangements. Documents relating to these arrangements have been embedded within the framework to support staff in understanding the purpose of meetings, and their role and involvement in the process. A key element of the framework is the involvement of children and young people. Therefore, the activity that takes place with the Children in Care Council (CiCC), and their involvement through the young inspector's programme has been incorporated within the QA activity.
4. The principles of the QA Framework are to align it with the journey of children and their families through the services they receive, the experience they have, and the outcomes that are achieved. This is accomplished through a collaborative approach, working with, and supporting staff in having the skills and confidence to work with families. Therefore, an important element of the QA activity is staff learning and development, which has a direct link to frontline practice.

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. Quality assurance is a constantly evolving area that supports the continued journey of improvement in services being provided for children and their families. This is achieved through working collaboratively across children's services, so that children and families have a seamless service that is joined up to support their needs. The QA activity that is currently taking place in the City of London demonstrates this approach and the commitment the City has to improving outcomes for children and young people.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Quality Assurance Framework March 2023

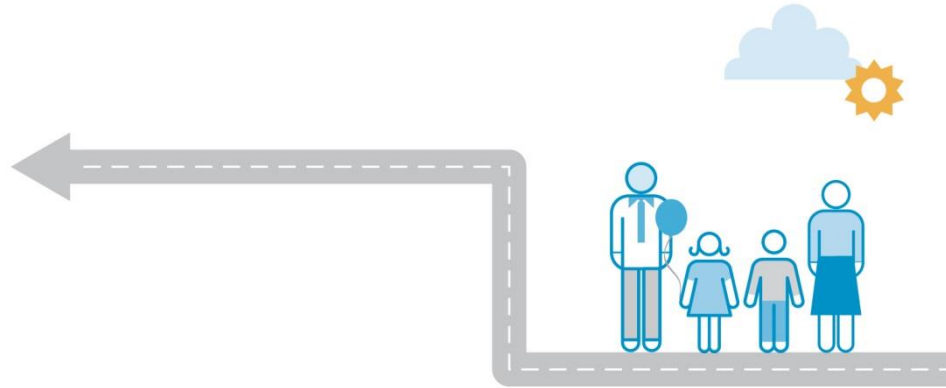
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Quality Assurance Framework

Promoting and supporting excellence in practice

March 2023

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Introduction

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

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

Principles and Purpose of Quality Assurance

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

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

Key Sources of Information

Quantitative:

"How much?"

"How many?"

"How often?"

Performance Indicators and key metrics.

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

Finance and resource data.

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

Qualitative:

"How did we do?"

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

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

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

Section 11 audits.

Learning reviews.

Practice observations.

Management oversight.

Feedback from staff and other professionals.

Feedback from service users.

Complaints and compliments.

Evaluation of training (single and multi-agency)

Serious case reviews

Impact/Outcome:

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

"Is anyone better off?"

"How can we improve?"

Outcome performance measures.

Voice of the child/practitioner.

Self-evaluations

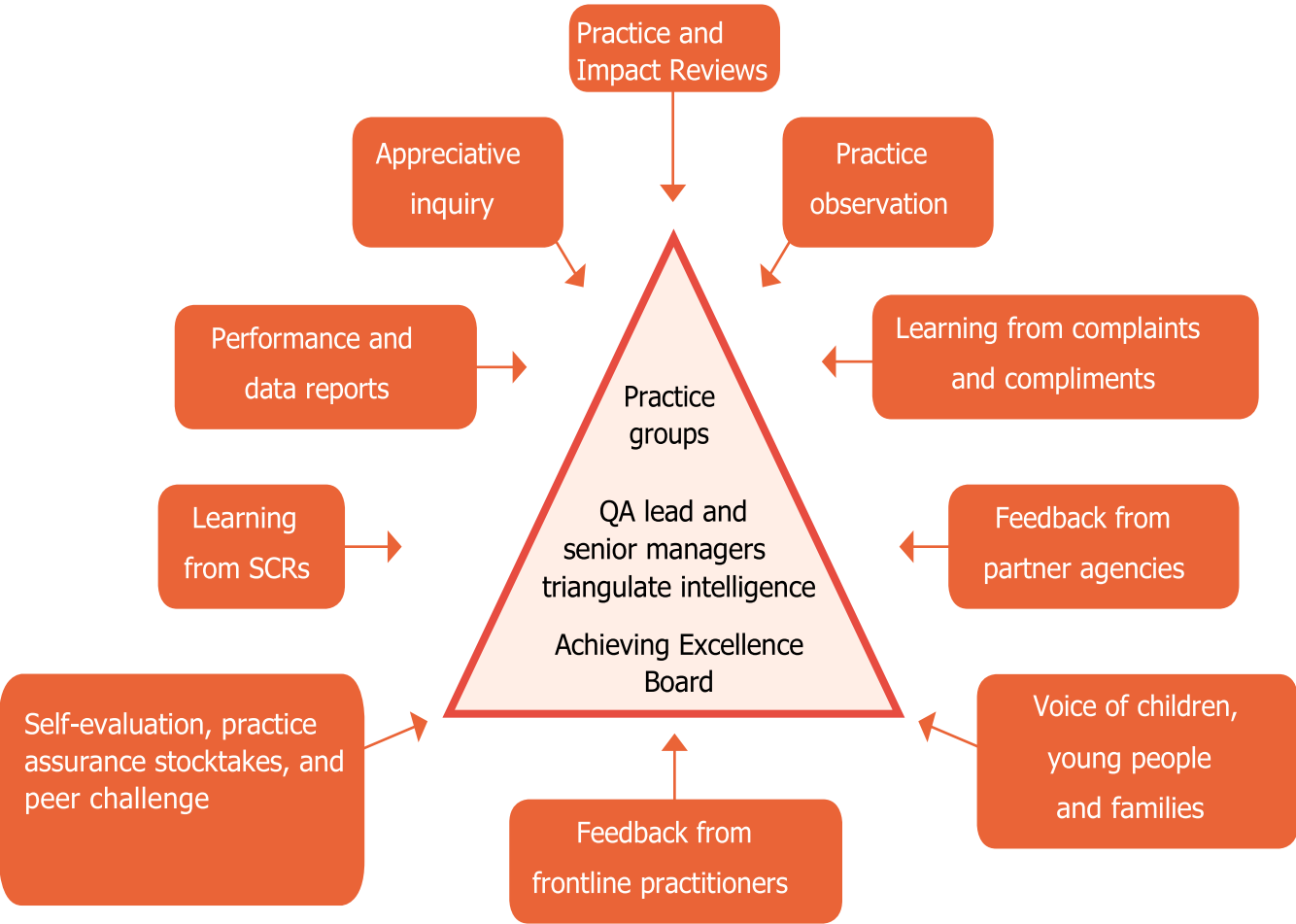
Direction of travel tools.

Annual reports.

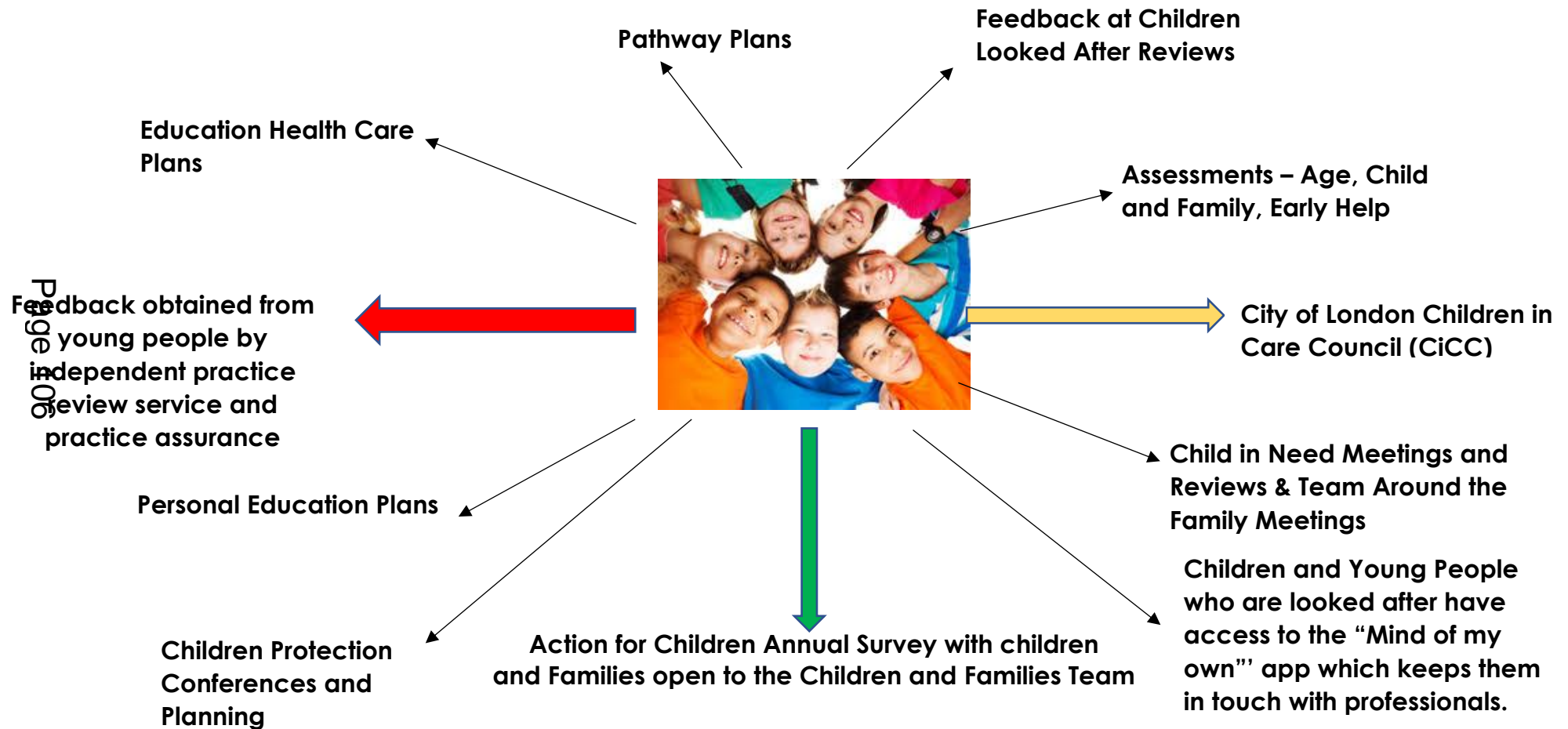
Development days, Deep Dives and Challenge events.

Evaluations and inspections.

Framework for a whole-system approach to Quality Assurance Management



Mechanisms for feedback from children and families



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

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

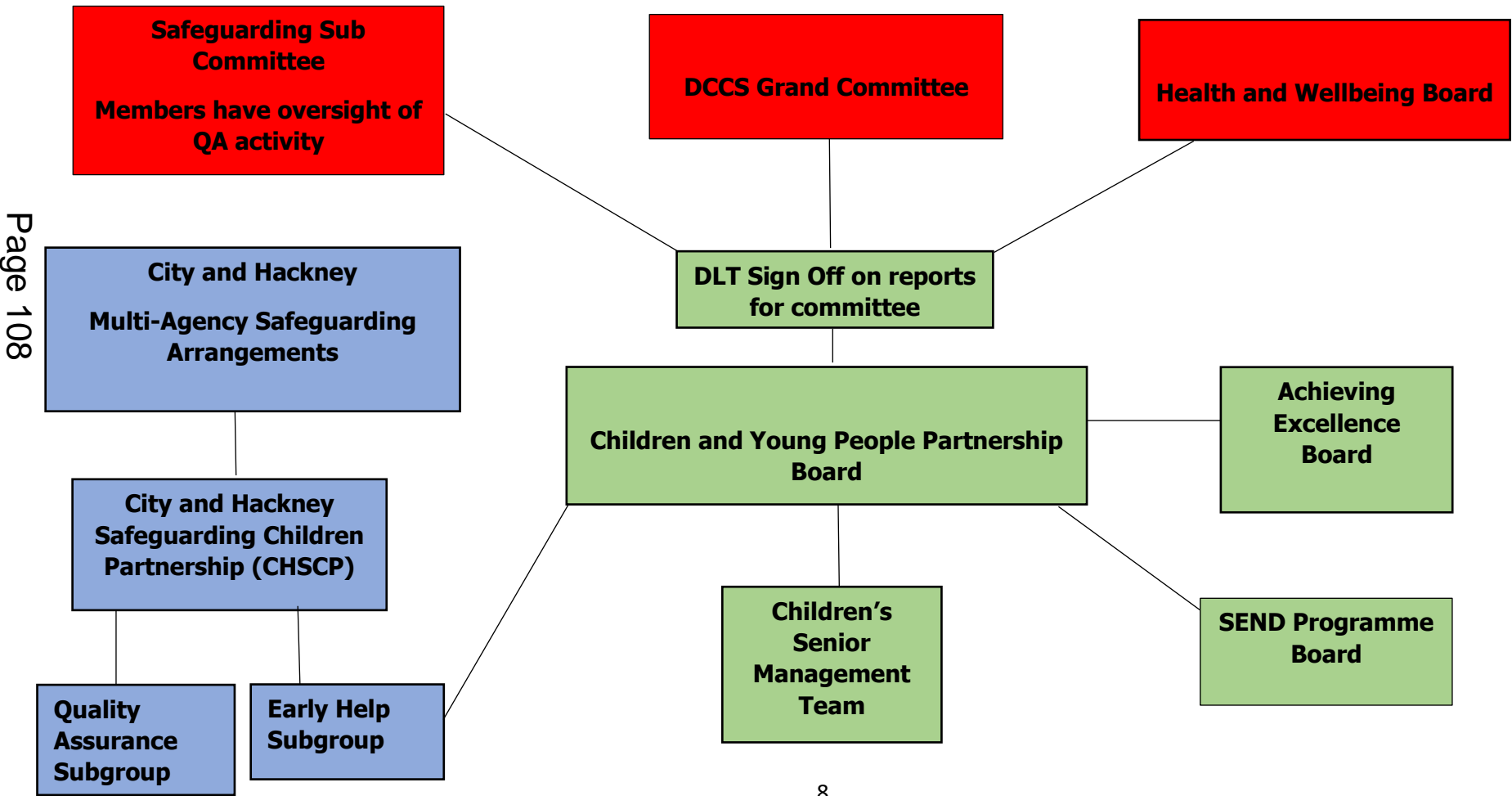
Children and young people can speak with a wide range of professionals who will ask them about their opinions and feelings. However, these views are not always captured or shared, and after time they become lost. By ensuring that we are consistently hearing and recording the child and young person's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

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

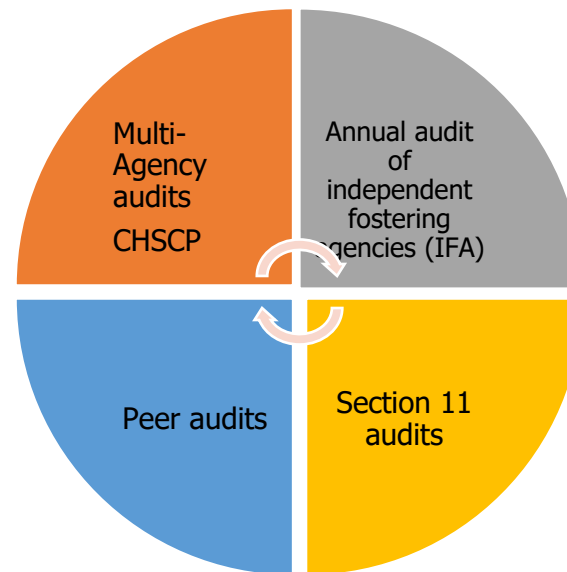
- Using different methods to collect children and young people's views, such as audio tapes, videos and/or Apps, which the young people can use with the support from their social workers or on their own. These will give the child or young person the opportunity to record their journey, aspirations, and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

Governance

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



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



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

**Practice and
Impact
Reviewing
Cycle Children**

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

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

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

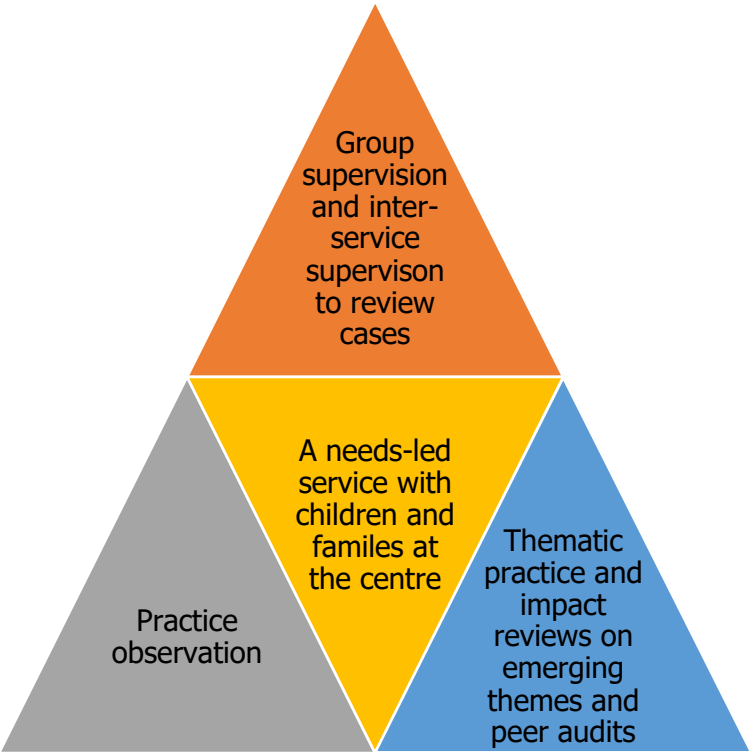
December /January: evidence of recommendations being progressed from case file practice and impact reviews. Reviewed and signed off in "Achieving Excellence" meeting chaired by AD People

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

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

Practice Quality Assurance

Qualitative Information



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

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

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

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

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

The role of the Expert Practitioner – An experienced Social Worker Practitioner who works alongside Social Workers to develop practice skills, offering oversight on planning for complex Child in Need Cases and Pathway Plans for Care Leavers.

Group supervision, using systemic practice and thinking, individual supervision, and appraisal framework. Practice week – with a focus on social work practice through observation, learning and Development.

Monitoring through Reviews and Panels:

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

Virtual School Head

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

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

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

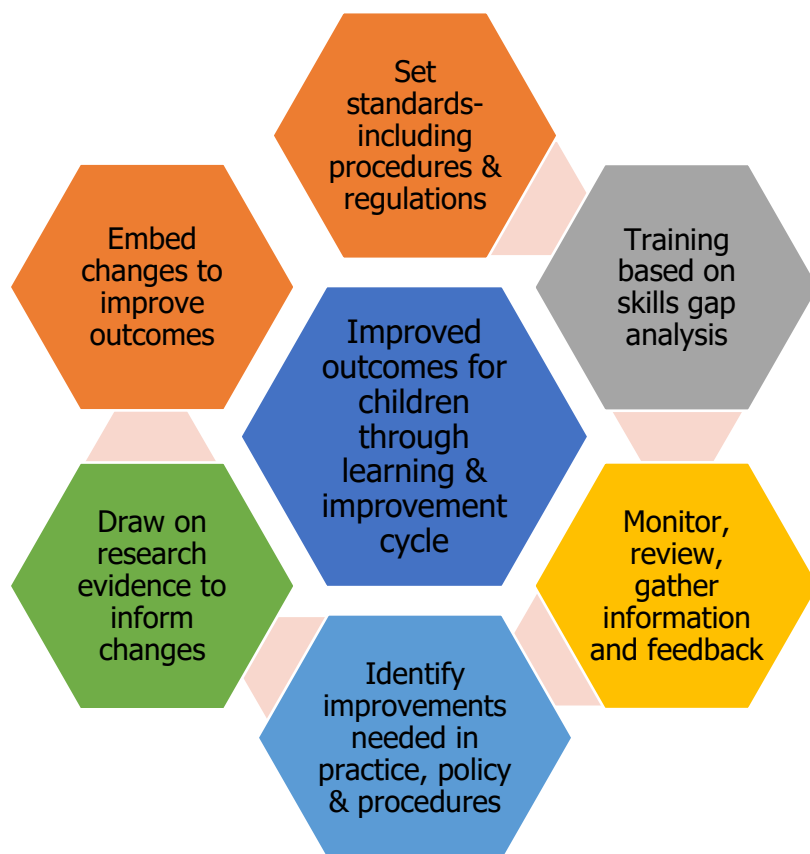
SENCO network, which reviews and promotes good practice through peer support.

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

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

Continuous Improvements Through Learning

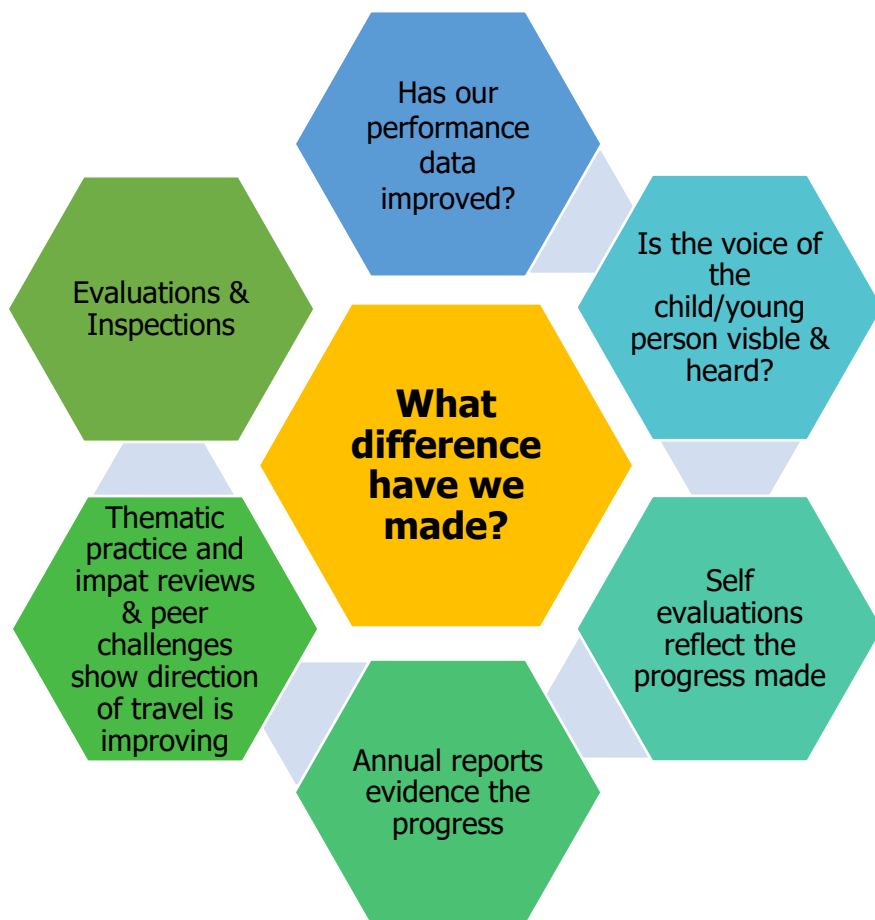
Quality assurance is a continuous improvement cycle using a range of interdependent methods to measure prevalence, monitor practice, listen to people's experiences, identify areas of improvement, and enact change as a result. An effective model will identify both "what is working well and why" and "what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



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

Measuring Impact and Outcomes

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



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

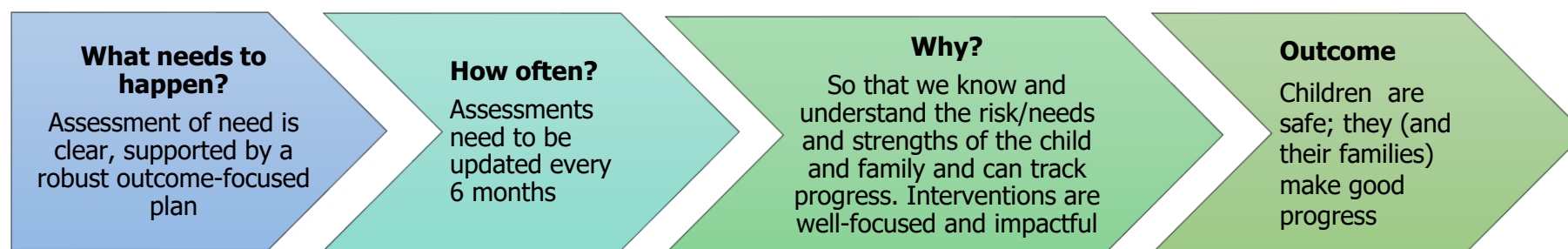
Local Authorities also need:

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

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

Outcomes

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



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

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

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

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

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

References

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

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

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

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

Workforce Development Strategy – Peoples Directorate [Peoples Directorate - Workforce Development Strategy 2022- 2024 Version 3](#)

Timeline of QA activity

January

- Update of Service Development Plan. (Quarterly basis)
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.



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- SEND Panel.
- CHSCB Multi-Agency Audits (Completed bi-annually).
- Report on Electively Home Educated Children go to the Head of Education and Early Years, AD Peoples Services and DCCS on a termly basis.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Performance reports and Service Updates for Members of the Safeguarding Sub Committee.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

February

- Practice Standards updated (although urgent updates will be completed on an ad hoc basis).
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.

- Preparation for bi-annual audits with independent auditors.
- Children in Care Council (CiCC) - Consult with young people and obtain feedback on how the COL is meeting the pledge, give young people an opportunity to meet with senior leaders to express their views. Identify what areas the young people would like to focus on as part of the young inspector's role.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.
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March

- Virtual School Head Attends Children and Families Team Meeting to update staff on Education matters and discuss quality of PEP's and Pathway Plans.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- End of Year Appraisals.
- SEND Panel.
- Quarterly updates for the CHSCP on quality assurance activity and outcomes in the City of London.
- Achieving Excellence Board; reviewing progress made on recommendations from independent practice and impact review audits.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

April

- Update Service Development Plan (quarterly basis).

- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Appraisal and objectives for coming year.
- SEND Panel.
- Audit setting cycle for year on Semi-independent providers – additional to young inspector's audits.
- Setting up for Action for Children Survey completed with all young people open to the Children and Families Team.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Children in Care Council (CiCC) - Consult with young people and obtain feedback on how the COL is meeting the pledge, give young people an opportunity to meet with senior leaders to express their views. Identify what areas the young people would like to focus on as part of the young inspector's role.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

May

- Independent practice and impact review audits completed on 15 cases open to Children and Families Team, May/June



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- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.

- Appraisal setting for the year, with identified learning objectives for the next appraisal year.
- SEND Panel.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Performance reports and Service Updates for Members of the Safeguarding Sub Committee.
- Report on Electively Home Educated Children go to the Head of Education and Early Years, AD Peoples Services and DCCS on a termly basis.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

June

- Completion and review of independent audits, as identified within Practice Assurance Process.
- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Virtual Head produces an annual and interim report on the work that has been covered.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Children in Care Council (CiCC) - Consult with young people and obtain feedback on how the COL is meeting the pledge, give young people an opportunity to meet with senior leaders to express their views.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
- Audits completed in Early Years settings.
- Achieving Excellence Board.
- Practice Week – This will include practice observations carried by all the tiers from social workers through to senior managers and directors, training for social workers on direct work with children, role play on dealing with difficult conversations and a reflective practice session for social workers with a systemic practitioner. (Pilot- content and format will be evaluated in regard to impact)
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Audits on Independent Fostering Agencies and Semi-Independent accommodation completed.

- Achieving Excellence Meetings; reviewing progress made on recommendations from independent practice and impact review audits.
- Action for Children will complete the annual survey with children, young people and their families open to the Children's Social Care Team.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

July

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Update Service Development Plan (quarterly basis).
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- SEND Panel.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Young Inspectors will review a provision that provides services to children and young people, recommendations from these audits will be reviewed within the current governance arrangements for quality assurance.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Children in Care Council (CiCC) - Consult with young people and obtain feedback on how the COL is meeting the pledge, give young people an opportunity to meet with Chair of Safeguarding Subgroup and Town Clerk to express their views.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

August

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.

- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer produces an annual report on Children Looked After in the City of London, which covers performance and QA of the work carried out with young people.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Feedback from young people on residential holiday.
- SEND Panel.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

September

- Practice Standards updated (although urgent updates will be completed on an ad hoc basis).
- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- All PEPs are updated within term time and overseen by Virtual Head.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Appraisal mid-way review.
- SEND Panel.
- Report on Electively Home Educated Children go to the Head of Education and Early Years, AD Peoples Services and DCCS on a termly basis.
- CHSCB Multi-Agency Audits. (Completed bi-annually).

- Achieving Excellence Board; reviewing progress made on recommendations from independent practice and impact review audits.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

October

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Update Service Development Plan (quarterly basis).
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Independent practice and impact review audits completed on 15 cases open to Children and Families Team, Oct/Nov
- SEND Panel.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Annual Ofsted Meeting and Self-Assessment update.
- Children in Care Council (CiCC) - Consult with young people and obtain feedback on how the COL is meeting the pledge and review and consult as to whether pledge is still relevant and represents their priorities.
- Performance reports and Service Updates for Members of the Safeguarding Sub Committee.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

November

- Independent practice and impact review audits completed on 15 cases open to Children and Families Team, review of recommendations and outcomes.
- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.

- Monthly reflective supervision.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- SEND Panel.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

December

- Group Supervision for Children and Families Team.
- Monthly reflective supervision.
- SEND Panel.
- Performance reports reviewed CSMT.
- Achieving Excellence Meetings; reviewing progress made on recommendations from independent practice and impact reviews.
- Home Panel- to review planned placement moves, and potential placement breakdowns.
- Monthly performance meetings with Performance Team, IRO, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help, CSC Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, EH Manager and Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- Strategic Placement Group, to review quality and value of placements attended by Commissioning, Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help Service, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service and Finance. Group is chaired by AD Peoples Service.
- Monthly Vulnerable Children's Group, which meets to discuss children open to Children's Social Care, Early Help, Education and Virtual School, this group has representatives from each service area.

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

Appendix 1

Knowledge and Skills Statement for Child and Family Practitioners

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

1) Relationships and effective direct work

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

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

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

2) Communication

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

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

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

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

3) Child development

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5) Abuse and neglect of children

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

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

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

6) Child and family assessment

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

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

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

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

7) Analysis, decision-making, planning and review

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

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

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

8) The law and the family and youth justice systems

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

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

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

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

9) The role of supervision

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

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

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

10) Organisational context

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

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

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

Appendix 2

Preparing for observation

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

Observer

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

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

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Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information	19/06/2023
Subject: Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022/23 and Corporate Parenting Strategy Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3,4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Hannah Dobbin, Strategy and Projects Officer, Community and Children's Services	

Summary

This report informs the Committee of the performance of the City of London Corporation as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in its care from April 2022 to March 2023. It also informs the Committee that the Corporate Parenting Strategy has been reviewed and no significant changes were made.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation (the 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 Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. Children in care (CiC) can include unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), children with multiple disabilities, and those who have suffered abuse and/or neglect. As such, CiC are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.

2. The 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 on front door services.
3. The Corporate Parenting Strategy is reviewed every year, most recently in May 2023.
4. The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 require local authorities to provide an annual report on the outcomes for CiC. This report fulfils that requirement and provides a profile of the Corporation's activities for CiC and care leavers for the year 2022/23.

Current Position

Corporate Parenting Strategy Update

5. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out how the 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 May 2023. No changes were made to the strategy due to no changes in guidance and legislation in relation to CiC since the previous strategy update.
7. However, the Strategy highlights that the Corporation is analysing the Government's children's social care and special educational needs and disability (SEND) reform proposals to assess against its current performance and potential impact. The reform programme may result in legislation if parliamentary time allows.
8. A copy of the updated Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

Annual Report

9. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2022/23 covers areas including, but not limited to, health and wellbeing, safeguarding, education, employment, accommodation and the activities of the Children in Care Council.
10. 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 Corporation as of 31 March 2023, 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.

11. As a corporate parent, the Corporation will continue to deliver high-quality support so that 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 2022/23.
12. A copy of the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022/23 can be found in Appendix 2.

Implications

Strategic implications

13. The Corporate Parenting Strategy and Annual Report are both statutory requirements as set out by the relevant legislation.
14. Reporting on the progress of the Corporation as a corporate parent, with a regularly updated strategy, contributes to the Corporation's Corporate Plan objectives 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

15. The Department of Community and Children's Services strives to improve outcomes for our children and young people who often experience several areas of inequality. Most looked-after children 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

16. N/A

Resource implications

17. N/A

Legal implications

18. N/A

Risk implications

19. N/A

Climate implications

20. N/A

Security implications

21. N/A

Conclusion

22. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report provides oversight of the work undertaken by the service during 2022/23, and the priorities for the year ahead, which are reflected in the strategic aims set out in the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy (May 2023).

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Strategy (Updated May 2023)
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022/23

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City of London Corporation

Corporate Parenting Strategy

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Approved by: Director – Department of Community and
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Review date: Annually

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The City of London Corporation (the Corporation) 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. We will 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 are starting their independent adult life. As a corporate parent, the Corporation 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. It places corporate parenting as a responsibility that sits across all the Corporation's elected Members, departments and officers and our partner agencies.

2 Context

- 2.1 Outcomes for children in care (CiC) can often be worse than those of their peers. Children in our care will have 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 CiC 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 Corporation 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 of how local authorities should look after CiC. These include acting in the best interests of CiC, promoting their physical and mental health and wellbeing; encouraging expression of their wishes and taking account of those wishes; and helping children gain access to and best utilise local authority services. The Act also introduced a duty on local authorities to provide Personal Adviser support to all care leavers up to age 25, if they want one.
- 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 successful transition to adulthood of children and young people. The Corporation has a lead Member for children's services to provide the political leadership, and a Director of Children's Services to provide professional leadership. This ensures that we focus on and deliver positive change. It also provides a clear line of accountability for delivery.
- 2.6 This leadership operates in an authority that is unique. Given our size, we can develop a very close relationship with, and in-depth knowledge of, our children and young people. Every CiC or care leaver who contacts the Corporation will be known to a professional in the team. This creates personal relationships with our children and young people, and offers stability and security.
- 2.7 We are reviewing the Government's proposed children's social care and SEND reform plans to assess implications for the Corporation and the children and young people we support. We will also review the impact of policy and practice change resulting from additional consultations including on the children's social care national framework and dashboard, and Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- 2.8 We are implementing the Pan-London Care Leavers' Compact, which aims to deliver a consistent and high-quality offer for care leavers. As part of this, we are exploring the idea of adopting experience of care as a protected characteristic. Some councils have taken this step following a campaign during the children's social care review consultation.
- 2.9 We are also implementing the Care Leaver Covenant, which is a national inclusion programme to support care leavers aged 16-25 to live independently. For example, we will cover care leavers and CiC's cost of an annual bus pass without them asking. This has been reviewed in line with the work the pan-London Children in Care Council is doing with Transport for London and the Children's Commissioner for England's recommendation.
- 2.10 Ofsted recognises the quality of the service we provide. In 2020, our Children's Services were rated overall as 'Outstanding'. An Ofsted focused visit in 2022 to inspect the Corporation's arrangements for the 'front door' found 'high-quality practice which ensures that children benefit from effective and responsive front

door services.'

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 We support our CiC and care leavers through our generic children's social work team within the Corporation's Children and Families services. This support is enhanced by a stable workforce and allows for the development of trusting relationships. It is an approach that is supported by an Early Years offer that provides universal services for children at all levels of need.
- 2.13 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.
- 2.14 As corporate parents, the 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 informed about immunisations. The Corporation's performance in achieving health and dental assessments and immunisations has exceeded national performance.
- 2.15 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 Corporation as a corporate parent

- 3.1 Everyone who works for the Corporation 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 Corporation, 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 Corporation 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 CiC 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. So, all our children are signed up to have an advocate and independent visitor, and can opt out if they wish to (in line with the Government's social care reform plans).

3.5 To support us to deliver our responsibilities as a corporate parent, the Corporation 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 Corporation'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 Corporation's Children in Care Council is central to our work as it enables us to positively engage with our children, such as listening to them, coproducing strategies and informing service design. It also provides a structure in which children can hold the Corporation to account.

3.7 The CiCC is a place to foster relationships and share experiences. It provides children will the opportunity to meet Members collectively rather than 1:1 and Members can hear from children in a group environment. We also run practical group sessions on

topics including independent living and finance management. The Corporation's CiCC is linked into the pan-London CiCC providing more opportunities for our children.

- 3.8 The Corporation'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 CiC and care leavers are paramount.

4 The Children in Care Council (CiCC) Pledge

- 4.1 The Corporation has a 'Pledge' for its CiC and care leavers. The Corporation also made promises when signing up to the Government's 'charter for care leavers'.
- 4.2 CiC and care leavers were consulted as part of the review of the Corporation's CiCC Pledge in 2023. The Pledge sets out promises the Corporation has made in response to asks from CiC and care leavers.
- 4.3 The Corporation promises that it will:
- Let you [CiC and care leavers] know about decisions that involve you and keep you informed.
 - Be there to support and guide you in the decisions you make about your welfare.
 - Listen to you and respond to you in whatever way you prefer.
 - If we have agreed to do something for you, then we will make sure that we do what we say.
 - Never judge you; we will listen and help you without making any judgements about you, by respecting you for who you are.
 - Be there for you and give you the skills and support that you need to navigate through difficult and challenging times.
 - 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.
 - Ask your consent before we share your information with other professionals and inform you about who has access to your information.
 - Explore with you the opportunities available in doing voluntary work and work experience as part of your journey towards independence.
 - Support you where possible in achieving your aims in any sporting activities that you may be interested in.
 - 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.
 - Support you in accessing safe travel arrangements.
 - Ensure that the schools and colleges that you attend will be able to offer you the best standards of education and care.

- Listen, advise and support you with your learning needs.
- Give you the opportunity to meet with a social worker at the CiCC meetings.
- Keep you informed about anything relating to your care and be open and honest in how we talk to you.

4.4 The Pledge will be publicly launched later in 2023 and will be made available in several of the languages our young people speak.

5 Delivering for our children and young people

5.1 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. We have set out below some of the ways in which the Corporation 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.

6 Healthy and safe

6.1 We want our children to be healthy and safe. 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 or have enough information on immunisation to make their own decisions about vaccination.
- 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 considered.

- 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.

7 Learning, achieving and enjoying

7.1 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. 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 who supports care leavers and looked after children.
- 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.

- Provide greater opportunities for internships, work experience and pre-apprenticeships by strengthening our partnership with adult education and learning. And use contract reviews and procurement to ensure such schemes are open to our care leavers.

8 Listening and contributing

8.1 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. 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 CiCC.
- 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.

9 Independence and working

9.1 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. 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 and internship opportunities with the Corporation.
- 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 be assertive to help our children and young people 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 steppingstone 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.

10 Individual and community

10.1 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. 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.
- Consider 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 Corporation and each other through events, outings, residential trips and the CiCC.
- Support engagement and participation in cultural, religious and community activities.

11 Taking the strategy forward

- 11.1 The progress against this strategy will be reported to and monitored by the Safeguarding Sub Committee, the Children's Partnership Board and our CiCC.
- 11.2 The strategy will be refreshed annually to ensure that it continues to drive improvements and meet the changing needs of CiC and care leavers.

Corporate Parenting in the City of London

Annual Report – 2022/23

1 Introduction and context

- 1.1 This annual report updates on the City of London Corporation's (the Corporation) role as a Corporate Parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in our care during April 2022 to March 2023.
- 1.2 The Corporation is a Corporate Parent to the children in its care. These looked after children are those aged 0 to the eve of their 18th birthday who cannot safely remain with their family, or those for whom the Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. Children in Care (CiC) can include Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), children with multiple disabilities and those who have suffered abuse and/or neglect. As such, looked after children and young people are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.
- 1.3 The Corporation's legal and financial responsibility to the children and young people for whom it is a corporate parent extends into their lives as care leavers and as they transition to independence.
- 1.4 The Corporation's Children's Services received a focus visit to inspect the Corporation's arrangements for the 'front door' in November 2022. This found 'high-quality practice which ensures that children benefit from effective and responsive front door services'. This builds on Ofsted's full visit in 2020 which found the service to be overall 'Outstanding', finding that the Corporation's corporate parenting is 'very strong, and there is a high commitment throughout the service to ensuring a personalised response to individual need'.
- 1.5 This report highlights how the Corporation has supported our CiC and care leavers over the past year.

2 The children in our care

- 2.1 At the end of the reporting period in March 2023 the Corporation had a total of 9 children and young people under the age of 18 who were being looked after by the local authority, including 6 UASC (67%). Ten children came into care during the year.
- 2.2 In total 11 children and young people ceased to be CiC and of these 3 had also come into care during 2022-23.
- 2.3 One young person was transferred to the services of other local authorities via the National Transfer Scheme. Due to the work of the social care team, this young person experienced no change of home, meaning they experienced a continuity of care minimising the potential negative impact to the young person.
- 2.4 The Corporation's CiC are predominately male; 77% (7 of 9) of CiC up to 31 March 2023.

- 2.5 The majority of the Corporation's CiC are Black African: 44% of all those in care (4 of 9).
- 2.6 The Corporation has one CiC and one care leaver who are subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- 2.7 No Final Adoption orders were granted during this year.

3 Corporate Parenting Board (Safeguarding Sub-Committee)

- 3.1 Within the Corporation, the function of the Corporate Parenting Board is undertaken by the Safeguarding Sub-Committee. This reports to the Community and Children's Services Committee.
- 3.2 The Safeguarding Sub-Committee, which includes the Chairman of Community and Children's Services Committee, meets four times each year and, in its capacity as the Corporate Parenting Board, is responsible for:
- Achieving improved outcomes for CiC and care leavers.
 - Developing and overseeing implementation of the Corporation's Corporate Parenting Strategy to drive improved outcomes.
 - Providing challenge to ensure that the Corporation's duties as Corporate Parent are carried out effectively and consistently.
- 3.3 Over the past year the Sub-Committee has considered reports on topics including:
- Participation Service – Children in Care Council (CiCC), updated CiCC Pledge and summer activities.
 - Pan-London Children in Care Council.
 - Youth Offending Service Inspection Report and Action Plan.
 - Corporate Safeguarding Policy.
 - Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report.
 - Children's Social Care Self Evaluation and Service Development Plan.
 - Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20 and Corporate Parenting Strategy Update.
 - Virtual School Headteacher Annual Report 2021/22 and Virtual School Development Plan 2022/23.
 - Action for Children Survey 2022.
 - Care leavers and their education, training and employment.
 - Ofsted Focus Visit Inspection of Children's Social Care and Early Help.
- 3.4 The Sub-Committee also formally received the Annual Report of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report.

4 Corporate Parenting Strategy and Service Development Plan

- 4.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out the Corporation's commitment to ensuring that CiC and care leavers have the support, care and encouragement they need to reach their full potential. The strategy is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is up to date with relevant legislation and service priorities.
- 4.2 The Service Development Plan for 2022-23 included objectives for CiC and care leavers.
- 4.3 To achieve this, and deliver the Corporation's roles and responsibilities as a corporate parent the plan for 2022-23 resulted in the following key achievements:
- Reviewed subsistence in line with cost of living which has meant, for example, that one child could afford to have their laundry washed and dried outside of their flat. It has also helped young people eat sufficiently and see their friends.
 - Matched and went above the extra cost of living payments given by the Government for those on Universal Credit in response to the cost of living crisis.
 - Paid to get young people immigration support through extra legal advice in response to the shortage in legal help (formerly known as legal aid). This has meant, for example, that two young people have had their applications to remain go through court and successfully got permanent leave to remain instead of being deported.
 - Provided all of our young people with an independent visitor and an advocate, or a referral to this support with the option to opt out.
 - Provided video sessions for young people on preparing for tenancies.
 - Involved the Virtual School Head in providing Education, Health and Care Plan for a disabled CiC placed out of borough which has helped support a good transition from nursery to reception.
 - Correctly issued proceedings in an emergency scenario and responded to high risk quickly.
 - Any care leaver with a child can now access the early years provision or children's centre in the City.

5 The Children in Care Council

- 5.1 The Corporation's Children in Care Council (CiCC) was established in November 2014. The CiCC usually meets six times a year during each holiday and half term.
- 5.2 A range of activities and sessions were made available to CiC and care leavers during 2022-23. A focus has been on skills development and responding to needs and aspirations. Topics covered and activities included:
- Women in construction event with ISG Construction.
 - Taster day at Raddison Blu hotel chain where young people heard about the types of jobs available.
 - Curriculum planning day in partnership with the Barbican where six CiC went to a session to discuss how to make the Barbican's apprenticeship programme better.

- Speaking Out! Oracy Project The Freeman’s School to support young people’s confidence in public speaking and having a voice.
 - Summer activity programme included trips for 5-7 young people to Thorpe Park, bowling, Madame Tussauds and the Tower of London.
 - Trips to Kings College London, Tower Bridge, West Ham and Arsenal football stadiums.
- 5.3 The activities helped the young people come together and build their confidence. They also helped combat isolation, particularly for UASC CiC, and supported young people to develop skills and the English language for those for whom English isn’t their first language. The taster day at Radisson Blu resulted in two young people applying for jobs at the hotel chain. They are awaiting the outcome at the time of writing this report.
- 5.4 The CiCC Pledge was reviewed in 2023 following consultation with CiC and care leavers. It now sets out promises the Corporation has made in response to asks from CiC and care leavers, and sits within the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

6 Health and wellbeing

- 6.1 As a corporate parent, the 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 immunised or have enough information on immunisation to make their own decisions about vaccinations. The Corporation’s performance in achieving health and dental both initial and overall assessments and immunisations exceeds national performance.
- 6.2 During 2022/23, the CiC Health team carried out statutory initial health assessments (IHA) on 100% of new children in care who remained with us for at least 20 days, and annual health assessments (RHA) on 86% of those in care for at least 12 months.
- 6.3 All children who had been in care at least 12 months on 31 March 2023 had up-to-date immunisations or were in the process of undertaking the UASC Booster programme at year end.
- 6.4 78% of children and young people who had been in care at least 12 months received their annual dental checks. The Corporation used the Healthy Smiles referral route (set up in response to the shortage of dentists taking public work) to get our children dental care. The Corporation also paid for private treatment where dental need related to a mental health need.
- 6.5 No CiC for at least a year was identified as having a substance misuse issue.
- 6.6 All CiC received their health histories in 2022-23. All children 18-25 have their health histories contain a summary of a young person’s overall health and is provided just before their 18th birthday.
- 6.7 All children in our care for at least one year on 31 March and aged between four and 16 years-old are subject of a statutory Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). These are completed by/with the child’s carer and are used to assess the child’s

emotional and behavioural health. A low score (under-14) is good, 14 – 16 is classified borderline, and a score of 17+ gives cause for concern. Of those eligible for inclusion in the Corporation's reported SDQ cohort at March 2023, the average score was 12.3. The published national average score for March 2022 was 14, and the Inner London rate was 13.5. The Corporation's small eligible cohort must be noted as impacting our performance.

7 Safeguarding our children

- 7.1 All our CiC and care leavers are allocated a fully-qualified social worker. Social workers offer support in areas such as identity, health, leisure, education and friendship.
- 7.2 Delivery has benefitted – and the service learnt – from better triangulation of data across services areas to identify vulnerable children across Education, Early Years, Early Help and Children Social Care. This has helped the department to retain line of sight on the most vulnerable children in the City, including CiC and care leavers. There is also a strategic line between the Head of Children's Services, the Virtual School Head and health colleagues across City and Hackney looking at CiC and care leavers out of borough who have an EHCP (2 including a care leaver). This helps strengthen the system.
- 7.3 By Quarter 4 of 2022/23 there were no CiC missing from their placements.
- 7.4 Children who go missing can be at risk of serious harm. There are concerns about the vulnerability of missing or runaway children to sexual exploitation or other exploitative harm such as violence, crime, gang exploitation or drug and alcohol misuse. CiC who go missing from placements are at particular risk and vulnerable to sexual and other exploitation. Therefore, if a child in the Corporation's care goes missing, they are considered vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and are reviewed by the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Group. This results in vulnerability factors being addressed in case planning and multi-agency meetings.

8 Education and employment

- 8.1 The Virtual School Head (VSH) reports on the education and employment of our CiC and care leavers on an annual basis following the educational year.
- 8.2 The Virtual School team works with colleagues in health, social care and education providing advice and support and promote the importance of education in decision making for children and young people. The Virtual School also works with Prospects to ensure young people get informative careers advice and support to get into further and higher education, apprenticeships and work.
- 8.3 For the period April 2022 – March 2023, there were a total of 121 young people on the Virtual School systems; 42 were school-aged children of which 6 were CiC, 32 were post -16 of which 28 were CiC and 47 were 19+ of which 46 were CiC. The significant decrease in numbers on the previous year is a result of the dispersal of Afghan Resettlement guests, who were previously placed in the virtual school whilst school placements were sourced.

- 8.4 The overwhelming majority of CiC and care leavers have good attendance at all education enrichment placements, and engagement with learning is high. This is reflected in the Autumn Term 2022 attendance being 87.9% and the Spring Term 2023 being 85.3%.
- 8.5 The Corporation ensures that CiC and care leavers have opportunities to explore the arts, culture, sport and nature as part of the wider school offer:
- Young people can attend the Flying High project which is an extended enrichment programme in partnership with the City of London Boys School.
 - There are several projects linked with the Aldgate School, Open Spaces and Kids Activity Bootcamps (KABS) providing opportunities to get out into nature, walking in the forests, shelter building and planting trees for the future.
 - The Climb project (also Aldgate School) was set up to re-engage children in education following the pandemic, increase resilience and improve mental health and well-being so that children were more able to attend and learn.
 - The Beneath the Trees project in Epping Forest begins in May 2023, providing outdoor activities for children and young people to help develop resilience and good mental health. Following this, young people will be going to The Freeman's School which will provide a residential project teaching English speaking through the medium of Drama and Performing Arts.
- 8.6 Staff are now able to implement the ongoing training received via the early intervention project. This will ensure they can better understand the impacts of trauma, including its impact on sleep, diet, health and mental health, making staff more sensitive particularly to the needs of UASC children and young people.
- 8.7 Electronic Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are now fully established and can now be exported and uploaded onto Mosaic ensuring centralisation of essential documents. This has resulted in a more integrated process where professionals can access shared information more effectively and efficiently. It has also enabled professionals to identify and respond to need quicker.

9 Assessments, case planning and permanency planning

- 9.1 The Corporation's internal audits have shown that assessments during 2022/23 are thorough and reflect the complex situations that families (including those with CiC) may live in.
- 9.2 Permanency planning meetings during 2022-23 were chaired by the Assistant Director for People Services. Public Law Outline and care proceedings were tracked as part of these meetings.
- 9.3 100% of CiC Pathway Plans are completed. 88% of care leavers have up to date Pathway Plans at the end of 2022/23.

10 Independent Reviewing Officer service

- 10.1 The Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) statutory task is to ensure that the care plan for the child fully reflects the child's needs and that the actions set out in the plan are consistent with the local authority's legal responsibilities towards the child. There is one full-time IRO who is responsible for carrying out the functions of the role to all children in the care of the Corporation.
- 10.2 The IRO sits away from the Children's Social Care Team and is not involved in the preparation of the child's care plan, management of the child's case, or the control over resources to ensure their independence.
- 10.3 The Children's Social Care Team notifies the IRO of all children received into care within 72 hours. The IRO conducted looked after child review meetings for all newly accommodated children within 20 working days of them being accommodated.
- 10.4 The IRO service has made significant contributions to the quality assuring and improving of services for children. Pathway planning process and completion and placement stability have significantly increased in 2022/23:
- Consistent participation of children in their review meetings.
 - Implementation of new pathway plan process, leading to increased completion in statutory timescales.
 - Increase in completion of statutory care plans.
 - Increase in extra tuition services for CiC.
 - Decrease in placement disruptions.
 - IRO contacts are now being conducted by text message, phone or face-to-face to increase their uptake and success.

11 Accommodation

- 11.1 Stability is key to a successful placement. It provides the child or young people with a more stable foundation on which to build relationships and feel safe and secure. We support this by holding placement stability meetings in advance of a placement, being aware of the number of moves children have previously had, and managing the expectations of children and young people around the placement before they go so that they know what to expect, this is particularly important with UASC.
- 11.2 Foster placements for the Corporation's CiC are carefully commissioned on an individual basis, to ensure the needs of each child and young person are met. Arrangements are systematically monitored to ensure they are providing a suitable, supportive and stable environment that promotes physical, social and emotional wellbeing.
- 11.3 Foster care is always considered as the starting position for the Corporation's CiC, however semi-independent accommodation will also be considered based on the young person's needs, wishes and any risk identified.

- 11.4 The Corporation has a Quality Assurance Framework which, along with an effective Placement Panel chaired by the Assistant Director for People, assesses and prioritises the suitability and quality of accommodations and placements.
- 11.5 The Corporation's Sufficiency Strategy was reviewed in September 2021 and is under review at the time of writing this report (May 2023).
- 11.6 44% of children were accommodated in fostering placements and 33% were placed in semi-independent accommodation. 15% of children were in their placement for between six and 12 months, with 54% having been with their placement for over one year.
- 11.7 The Corporation places all CiC outside of borough boundaries as we don't have any foster care placements or semi-independent units in the City. Therefore, CiC are placed as close to the City as possible. At the end of March 2023, one CiC was placed over 20 miles from the City, due to placement in a residential school setting.
- 11.8 Wherever it is appropriate to do so, siblings that are looked after are placed together. However, the Corporation did not have any sibling groups within its care cohort during 2022/23.
- 11.9 Eight UASC became care leavers upon reaching the age of 18 during this reporting year and are being supported by the Corporation accordingly.
- 11.10 Of the nine children in care at the end of the reporting year, four were in foster placements, four were in a semi-independent provision, and one was in a children's home annexed to a specialist school.
- 11.11 The Corporation is a member of the West London Commissioning Alliance, a system developed for purchasing social care placements. This created a broader marketplace and has built-in quality assurance functions, and so the Corporation is better able to meet the needs of our young people.
- 11.12 The Social Work team has continued to work with a main placement provider to work around race and racism and how to support young people with issues around this. It was commented by the provider that they had not received this amount of engagement or level of care from other local authority partners.

12 Areas of development and priorities for the year ahead

- 12.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy and Annual Report will support the outcomes of the Children and Young People's Plan. These include that our children and young people are safe and feel safe, are happy, healthy and enjoy good mental health and wellbeing, have the tools to fulfil their potential and are prepared for success in adulthood, and grow up with a sense of belonging.
- 12.2 The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out the Corporation's commitment to ensuring the children in and leaving its care meet their full potential and have lives in which they thrive. We will drive the achievement of this in 2023/24 through continuing and enhanced services, and the delivery of targeted actions. These include:
 - Continuing to support children and families through experiences of racism and continue to be an actively anti-racist service. This has, for example, enabled

young people to talk about race and racism with their social worker and bring it up in assessments.

- Increasing awareness of the CiCC Pledge and ensure that all our young people are confident in our promises.
- Supporting access to culturally appropriate early wellbeing support so that young people can understand and connect to their own cultures. This means that children are less lonely and can celebrate their culture soon upon arrival.
- Continuing to support the mental health of USAC and support trauma reduction through earlier intervention to prevent mental health crisis.
- Continuing to support the mental health of local children and families through earlier intervention and preventing reaching crisis point.
- Tackling loneliness and ensure that all young people have at least one trusted adult.
- Supporting young people to access good quality and permanent housing so that they have a safe roof over their head, which has a positive impact on their education and wellbeing.
- Supporting our young people with culturally appropriate immigration support so that they know where they're going to be living and can plan and think about how to bring family members to this country if relevant.
- Running a rolling preparation for independence training programme to support young people to understand their tenancies and not breach them, thereby preventing homelessness.
- Strengthening the transitions pathway between adult and children's social care and education so that there is no wait for support between the ages of 17 and 18 years old and young people have a better sense of what is going to happen in the future.
- Developing a pre-apprenticeship scheme for young people to support them to access training and good-quality employment opportunities.
- Helping care experienced parents to support better outcomes for their children. For example, by providing a social worker who offers additional support in the absence of family members.
- Continuing to offer any care leaver with a child access to the early years provision or children's centre in the City.

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