



Safeguarding & Special Educational Needs Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee

Date: MONDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2025

Time: 11.00 am

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

Members: Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP (Chairman) Sushil Saluja, Coleman Street
Deputy Anne Corbett Stuart Thompson
Deputy Ceri Wilkins (Deputy Chair) Steve Goodman OBE

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

NOTE: The Appendices to the reports in this Agenda can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on 1st July 2025.

For Decision
(Pages 7 - 20)

4. **INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) - ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023-2024**

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

Note: Appendix 1 is Non-Public and can be found at Agenda Item 18a.

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 21 - 24)

5. **CITY OF LONDON, DCCS, CITY OF LONDON 2025 ANNUAL SURVEY**

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

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 25 - 28)

6. **CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY 2025-2028**

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

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Decision
(Pages 29 - 32)

7. **CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

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

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 33 - 36)

8. **FAMILIES IN THE CITY UPDATE**

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

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 37 - 46)

9. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2025/26**

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

Note: Appendix 1 is Non-Public and can be found at Agenda Item 18b.

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 47 - 48)

10. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - Q1 2025/26**

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

Note: Appendix 1 is Non-Public and can be found at Agenda Item 18c.

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 49 - 52)

11. **DRAFT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE SELF-EVALUATION 2025**

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

Note: Appendix 1 is Non-Public and can be found at Agenda Item 18d.

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 53 - 56)

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

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

For Information
(Pages 57 - 62)

13. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025**

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

Note: Appendix 1 is Non-Public and can be found at Agenda Item 18e.

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 63 - 66)

14. **CHSCP ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25**

Report of The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (CHSCP).

The Appendices to this report can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied separately.

For Information
(Pages 67 - 68)

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

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

17. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

18. **NON PUBLIC APPENDICES**

The below Non-Public Appendices can be found in the Appendices Pack, supplied seperately.

- a) IRO Annual Report 2023-2024
Non-Public Appendix to be read in conjunction with Agenda Item 4.
- b) Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance Report Q1 2025/26
Non-Public Appendix to be read in conjunction with Agenda Item 9.
- c) Children and Families Service Performance - Q1 2025/26
Non-Public Appendix to be read in conjunction with Agenda Item 10.
- d) Draft Children and Families Service Self-Evaluation 2025
Non-Public Appendix to be read in conjunction with Agenda Item 11.
- e) Virtual School Annual Report 2024-2025
Non-Public Appendix to be read in conjunction with Agenda Item 13.

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

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

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SAFEGUARDING & SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 July 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding & Special Educational Needs Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 10.30 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
(Chairman)
Deputy Anne Corbett

Deputy Ceri Wilkins
Steve Goodman OBE

Officers:

Laura Demetriades	- Community & Children's Services Department
Hannah Dobbin	- Community & Children's Services Department
Kirstie Hilton	- Community & Children's Services Department
Ria Lane	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community & Children's Services Department
Gonzalo Reategui	- Community & Children's Services Department
Debby Rigby	- Community & Children's Services Department
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department
Rachel Talmage	- Community & Children's Services Department
Ian Tweedie	- Community & Children's Services Department
Ellie Ward	- Community & Children's Services Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Stuart Thompson and Sushil Saluja.

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

There were no declarations.

3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

In accordance with Standing Order 26, no Member prior to the meeting had expressed an interest to serve as Deputy Chairman, therefore the position was opened to the Sub-Committee, Deputy Ceri Wilkins expressed an interest and being the only Member indicating their willingness to serve was elected Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED – That, Deputy Ceri Wilkins be declared Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 14 November 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **SAFEGUARDING ADULTS WHO ARE ROUGH SLEEPING OR HOMELESS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning an overview from an Adult Social Care (ASC) perspective of the work being done in the City of London (CoL) to safeguard adults with care and support needs who are experiencing Rough Sleeping and Homelessness.

Officers presented the report, highlighting that safeguarding in this context includes both formal enquiries and broader preventative and support work. Key points included the high proportion of former rough sleepers in supported living (over 50%) and residential care placements (38%), which is likely due to both the high number of rough sleepers in the City and the City's strong response and investment in support services. A recent ministerial letter prompted a review of local arrangements, which confirmed that the City already had a mature system in place. The only change made was the inclusion of, Head of Rough Sleeping Services, as a standing member of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

A question was raised regarding the table on page 22 of the agenda pack, specifically about individuals declining assessments or being referred to other agencies. explained that consent is required for assessments, and some individuals either decline or are referred elsewhere if another service (e.g. substance misuse or mental health) is more appropriate. A Member also queried whether the City acts as a magnet for rough sleepers and what collaboration exists with other local authorities. Officers responded that while the City is attractive due to safety and a visible begging economy, it is not necessarily a magnet for services. The City has a high outreach presence, which may deter some individuals. They outlined collaborative arrangements with boroughs such as Southwark and Westminster, including shared responsibilities and multi-agency safeguarding responses.

Further contributions noted joint commissioning efforts across North East London, particularly for severe weather provision and psychotherapy services, which are funded centrally and delivered across boroughs. It was confirmed that no local authorities are encouraging rough sleepers to relocate to the City.

The Chair raised concerns about a decline in mental health capacity assessments and the independence of audits. acknowledged the drop in assessments and suggested possible reasons, including the transient nature of rough sleepers and changing demographics. They confirmed that external audits are conducted annually alongside internal audits by the Principal Social Worker. Outcomes can be incorporated into future reports for the committee's oversight.

A Member asked whether audits include safeguarding risks within the homeless community beyond adult social care, such as domestic abuse cases managed through MARAC. Officers confirmed these are handled separately by the

Community Safety Team, but agreed it was a valid point for further consideration. suggested commissioning a broader audit for assurance, which was welcomed by the Chair.

The Chair revisited the issue of mental health service sufficiency. Officers stated that while referral responses are timely, the main pressure lies in hospital discharge processes. The Chair noted the value of the mental health street triage service and suggested continued support, given its importance.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

6. HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning the Housing Assistance Policy.

Officers provided an overview of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), a local authority grant aimed at funding essential adaptations to make homes suitable for disabled residents. The grant is available to owner-occupiers, private tenants, landlords, and housing associations, with a national upper threshold of £30,000. The City receives an annual allocation of just over £40,000.

Due to underutilisation of DFG funds, the City introduced a Housing Assistance Policy to clarify access and processes for residents, staff, and landlords. While the DFG is means-tested, the City has agreed to provide up to £12,000 without means testing, covering common adaptations such as stairlifts and wet rooms. The policy includes a 12-month review clause, which may be brought forward depending on budgetary needs. Jenny emphasised that residents in financial need will not be left unsupported, as those on means-tested benefits automatically qualify for full funding.

Officers also noted that residents wishing to self-fund adaptations can access project management support through the Home Improvement Agency, with Adult Social Care providing assessments, recommendations, and assistance with quotes and design. In discussion, A Member thanked Officers and asked whether items such as key safes and emergency buttons for residents with breathing difficulties would be covered. Officers clarified that such items fall under Adult Social Care funding, not the DFG.

Officers also mentioned upcoming borough-wide events to raise awareness of the policy, including sessions at Guildhall, Golden Lane, and Portsoken. Members requested to be informed of event dates to share with residents.

Further questions were raised about hospital discharge procedures. Officers explained that discharges are assessed case-by-case, with coordination between hospital staff and the discharge hub. While some adaptations can be arranged post-discharge, essential equipment and minor adaptations (e.g. grab rails, Telecare) are typically installed beforehand. They confirmed that delays in discharge are rare and usually due to family preferences rather than lack of provision.

Finally, a Member highlighted the need to align this policy with the Aids and Adaptations Policy discussed at the Housing Sub-Committee. It was suggested that a single, comprehensive policy be developed to avoid confusion and promote joined-up working across departments. Officers agreed to liaise with housing colleagues to ensure consistency in future drafts.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

7. ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25 (Q1 – Q4)

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning updates on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service during the Year 2024/25 (Q1 – Q4).

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

8. FAMILIES IN THE CITY UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning the Families in the City programme and provides Members with an update on progress. Families in the City is the Department for Community and Children's Services (DCCS) and partners' response to national government reform of Children Social Care and changes in delivery of our services for 0–5-year-olds in the City of London.

Officers introduced the paper as the programme lead for Families in the City. The initiative, which began in March, integrates three key workstreams: the Families First reform programme responding to new children's social care reforms, the development of Start for Life services for children aged 0–5, and the development of a family hub. The programme aims to maximise equity and accessibility for all children in the City, regardless of background or protected characteristics. A Family Design Lab has been established to engage families meaningfully and avoid duplication in consultation efforts. Engagement is also underway with staff. Links have been made with the Shoreditch Trust's We Connect in the City programme, supported by the City of London's Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund, which is delivering family services at the Aldgate Centre on Fridays.

The Family Design Lab currently has 12 parents and carers signed up, with a welcome session scheduled later that day. Members raised concerns about the reach of communications and suggested direct outreach to families, including those in Portsoken, to improve awareness and participation. Officers confirmed that flyers have been distributed in collaboration with the Shoreditch Trust and that further outreach in Portsoken is planned.

Members emphasised the importance of including The Aldgate School in the programme, referencing a prior commitment made at CCS. Officers explained that while direct service delivery at the school is currently limited, engagement efforts continue and a three-week summer programme is planned at the school where the family hub and design lab can be promoted. Officers highlighted the governance structure, noting The Aldgate School's involvement through various

boards and subgroups, which ensures their voice is part of the decision-making process.

Officers confirmed that all actions listed in the summary action plan have been completed, although the document was submitted before updates were finalised. The lab has launched, and a welcome session is planned to develop a more detailed programme of activities. Outreach will continue to ensure underrepresented groups are included. A full suite of services will be available on the Family Information Service website from the first week of September, with in-person access across the City.

Members requested that a formal report be presented to CCS in September, not just as an information item but as a discussion paper, to reflect the strategic importance and public interest in the programme. Officers confirmed that updates will be provided to CCS and that communications will be circulated to members when the programme launches.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

9. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE – MONTH 12 2024/25 (MARCH 2025)**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning updates 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.

Officers presented the report, highlighting that it covered the full 2024–25 year. They noted that while contacts, referrals, and assessments had slightly decreased over the year, they remained proportionate to the population. A more balanced mix of contacts from partners was attributed to recent awareness-raising efforts. Early help services remained consistent, and there was a slight reduction in the number of children in need, children in care, and care leavers. These trends were seen as interconnected and partly the result of effective early intervention and prevention work.

On care leavers, Officers explained that some reductions were due to young people "ageing out" of the system. However, the service had introduced a light-touch ongoing support offer for care leavers who still required assistance beyond statutory thresholds.

A Member queried the general downward trend in figures and whether this warranted further discussion in the non-public section. Officers clarified that the apparent reduction in children in need was due to many of these children now being supported through the long-term disability offer via short breaks. This approach, aligned with the Council for Disabled Children's recommendations, avoids unnecessary reassessments and statutory processes. Families benefit from consistent support, including access to a qualified disability therapist through early help services.

Regarding care leavers, Officers noted that the national transfer scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children had improved placement speed, contributing to the decline in local care leaver numbers. The service's growth area was now focused on early help and short breaks.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

10. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND FAMILY HELP SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025–26

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning learning from children and their families, national research, views of practitioners, independent Ofsted findings, and external and internal audit.

Officers outlined the annual service development plan, which incorporates national research, feedback from children and families, staff input, and audit findings. This year's plan is more concise due to focused work with families in the City. Following a successful Ofsted inspection, two recommendations remain in the plan to ensure sustained progress. New elements include support for staff experiencing racism from service users, recognising the need for a trauma-informed approach while maintaining staff wellbeing. Officers also highlighted work on tenancy responsibilities for care leavers, including a light-touch post-25 support offer. The plan continues to strengthen services for children with disabilities and resident children, particularly through the family hub model.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

11. EDUCATION AND EARLY YEARS SERVICE SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning Education and Early Years Service Safeguarding Update.

Officers introduced the safeguarding update, which is a regular report detailing the work of the Education and Early Years Service to ensure the safety and welfare of children. This includes both City of London residents educated in and outside the City, as well as non-City children attending schools within the City. The report focused on five key areas: identifying and tracking children in need of support, implementing new statutory guidance on school attendance, monitoring children at risk of missing education, supporting electively home-educated children, and managing performance licences and work permits.

A Member raised a question about the number of children in the City, noting a discrepancy between the 331 school-aged children mentioned in the report and the 713 children referenced in the private fostering report. Officers clarified that the 331 figure is based on a manual annual exercise to identify City children attending schools outside the City and is separate from the private fostering data. From September, access to national school census data should improve the accuracy of these figures.

Further discussion explored the breakdown of children attending independent versus state schools. Officers confirmed that around 80 to 100 children attend independent schools, and members suggested this information be included in future reports. There was a call for a comprehensive dataset showing the total number of children by age group and education type, including those in primary, secondary, independent, City of London Academies (CoLA), and home education. Officers agreed to provide this data from the census and circulate it to the sub-committee.

Concerns were raised about the relatively low number of children receiving SEND support (44), which appears low compared to national figures. Officers explained that this data was obtained directly from schools and includes children on SEND registers and those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). She acknowledged that while the overall numbers are small, the number of EHCPs has doubled in the past six years, indicating a significant trend.

Members expressed a desire for future reports to be more outcome-focused and data-driven, to better assess the adequacy of provision and identify potential safeguarding gaps. Officers acknowledged this and agreed to consider a revised reporting approach.

A Member asked about support for children who avoid school. Officers described the proactive work undertaken by the Education Welfare Manager, who collaborates with early help, social care, and the virtual school. An Attendance Improvement Group reviews cases where attendance drops below 90%, and support is tailored to both the child and their family. The City has avoided issuing penalty notices, preferring supportive interventions. However, the dispersed nature of City children across 60 schools in 20 local authorities presents challenges, which the new data-sharing regulations are expected to help address.

The discussion also covered managed moves and elective home education. Officers explained that the team supports families considering elective home education and works with schools to resolve issues, often preventing unnecessary withdrawals. Managed moves are supported when families are known to services, particularly those with EHCPs.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

12. **CITY OF LONDON, QUALITY ASSURANCE OF CARE PROVIDERS, ANNUAL REPORT 2024–25**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service.

The Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance presented the key points of the report. They explained that in April 2024, the Departmental Leadership Team (DLT) approved a programme of senior leadership visits to independent

care providers. Over the past year, six such visits were conducted, covering 22 children and young people—representing 39% of the City’s children in care and care leavers. A particular focus was placed on children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), who are often placed at a distance from the City due to the specialist nature of their care.

The visits generally found positive outcomes, with staff demonstrating a strong understanding of the children’s needs. However, one provider was found to be offering less satisfactory services. Although the provider responded constructively to feedback, the City decided to cease using their services and arranged a planned move for the affected young person. The visits generated a range of recommendations, both individual and service-wide, which are tracked through monthly quality assurance and commissioning review meetings. Officers emphasised that this dual approach ensures robust oversight and a clear understanding of the lived experiences of children in care.

In response to questions, Officers confirmed that while most children are placed within Greater London, those requiring specialist residential services may be placed further afield, such as in Norfolk. Transition planning for children with SEND begins at age 14, and while some may return to the City if appropriate resources are available, others may remain elsewhere depending on their long-term needs and preferences. The City works closely with families and adult social care partners to determine the best outcomes.

A further question was raised regarding a property issue mentioned on page 90 of the report. Laura noted that the issue, concerning a fence at a large country estate, was in the process of being resolved at the time of the last commissioning review. Officers committed to following up to confirm its resolution.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

13. CITY OF LONDON VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children’s Services concerning information about the developmental work taking place for children and young people through the City of London Virtual School.

Officers highlighted the school’s ongoing efforts to support children and young people in accessing and remaining in education, enabling them to achieve their full potential and progress into their chosen careers. The Officer also announced the upcoming Shining Stars ceremony at Guildhall on 14 July, where two young people from each local authority, including two from the City of London, would be celebrated for their educational achievements in music technology and engineering. Additionally, a celebration event for all City children and young people would be held on 6 October in the Livery Hall, and Members were warmly invited to attend. The sub-committee was informed that the school’s annual report, including attendance, attainment, and destination data, along with the academic plan for 2025–26, would be presented in the autumn.

In response to a Member's query regarding fluctuating figures in the report, Officers explained that the number of children supported by the Virtual School varied due to the dynamic nature of care arrangements. This included children entering and leaving care, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and those on child protection or child in need plans. They noted that while the numbers changed monthly, the average remained around 90 children.

A further question was raised about the continuity of support for young people who moved out of the City's estates. Officers confirmed that support continued until the age of 25, regardless of location, and emphasised the importance of collaboration with other local authorities to ensure access to relevant educational opportunities.

Members expressed their appreciation for the work of the Virtual School and encouraged colleagues to attend the October celebration event, noting the inspiring achievements of the young people involved.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

14. **CITY OF LONDON SAFEGUARDING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE, 2024–25 PARTICIPATION ANNUAL REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning City of London Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, 2024–25 Participation Annual Report.

It was noted that the participation offer remains open to all individuals currently or previously in care with the City of London who are still receiving support. Efforts to promote engagement include a WhatsApp group, email communications, social worker outreach, notifications to care and accommodation providers, and a dedicated website. Activities are also promoted through commissioning reviews and quality assurance visits.

Given the small number of children in care and the geographical spread, participation is mainly from care leavers, many of whom are unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. To support inclusion, especially for those with English as a second language, additional preparation time is provided. An apprentice from the virtual school has helped translate materials and create explanatory videos in Arabic, the most common language among the cohort. The group also serves as a space for practising English in a supportive environment.

Monthly engagement opportunities have been prioritised, including online sessions and a supper club. An annual residential trip and holiday activities are also organised, though attendance during holidays is more challenging due to work and varied academic schedules. The cohort is becoming more independent, prompting a review of engagement strategies. This year's residential trip is scheduled for the end of the month in Ashford, Kent, at a PGL site.

In the past year, there were 123 attendances at Children in Care Council events, a strong turnout given the average cohort size of 55. Feedback has been consistently positive. Looking ahead, there will be a review of the role's remit and consideration of integrating external service commissioning. Participation may also be expanded through the Families in the City programme and its hub model.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

15. CITY OF LONDON, DCCS, 2024–2025 LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning The City of London, DCCS, 2024–2025 LADO Annual Report.

There were 122 LADO contacts in 2024–25, marking a 65% increase from the previous year. This rise aligns with broader trends across London and may be partly due to improved recording practices. The highest number of contacts came from other local authorities, reflecting jurisdictional complexities and the presence of employment agency head offices in the City. These agencies are often responsible for staff employed elsewhere, leading to City-based LADO involvement.

Contacts also came from members of the public, parents, and employees, though public referrals must go through employers. Education providers accounted for a significant portion of contacts, which is viewed positively as it indicates strong relationships and proactive safeguarding.

The most common concerns related to personal life issues, followed by sexual concerns (both recent and historic), and professional conduct. Personal life concerns included domestic abuse, mental health, substance use, and online exploitation. Three cases met the threshold for formal allegations: two involved agency teaching assistants (one substantiated, one not), and one involved a substantiated physical incident in a professional's personal life.

Ongoing LADO training is delivered through the safeguarding partnership, with positive feedback and future sessions scheduled. Emphasis has been placed on employers' legal duty to refer substantiated cases to the DBS. Guidance developed with London DBS coordinators is now available on the safeguarding partnership website.

Concerns were raised about ensuring substantiated allegations are communicated to future employers. While unsubstantiated concerns cannot be disclosed in references, employers are advised to inform individuals of their duty to disclose such matters. Agencies are encouraged to participate in LADO training, and efforts are ongoing to build relationships and share best practices across the London LADO network.

Social media was noted as a growing area of concern, both in terms of inappropriate professional conduct and its impact on mental health. Schools

generally have clear policies, and safeguarding forums are used to share emerging themes and good practice. The Education and Safeguarding Forum receives regular updates, and operational best practices are being strengthened across schools.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

16. **CITY OF LONDON, CHILDREN'S SERVICES PRACTICE AND IMPACT REVIEW SUMMARY, AIDHOUR SCRUTINY SEPTEMBER 2024 – FEBRUARY 2025**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning City of London, Children's Services Practice and Impact Review Summary, Aidhour Scrutiny September 2024 – February 2025.

It was noted that as part of the ongoing quality assurance framework, ten practice reviews were completed during this six-month period. The reviews consistently rated the quality of social work practice as outstanding in 80% of cases and good in the remaining 20%, reflecting a high standard of provision.

Outcomes for children and young people were rated as outstanding in 60% of cases, good in 20%, and requiring improvement in 20%. It was noted that while social workers are making their best efforts, outcomes can vary due to external factors affecting the lives and needs of the children and young people.

The review process involved an initial examination of casework on the electronic recording system, followed by triangulation with feedback from children, young people, families, allocated workers, and line managers. Practitioners and managers were found to be constructively engaged in reflecting on and improving their practice. Feedback from service users was particularly valuable in understanding their day-to-day experiences.

A consistent moderation process has strengthened the review framework, enabling senior leaders to maintain a clear and transparent view of operational service delivery. This also supports meaningful dialogue with reviewers—both internal and external—about what constitutes good and outstanding practice. The process encourages continuous improvement and creative thinking, especially in cases where outcomes remain suboptimal despite strong social work input.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

17. **CITY OF LONDON, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, 2024–25 PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning The City of London, Department of Community and Children's Services, 2024–25 Private Fostering Annual Report.

It was noted that notifications of private fostering remain low, reflecting a national trend. The department continues to promote awareness through tools

and resources for professionals, parents, and carers, and regularly engages partners via internal communications, corporate and people induction events, and an annual Private Fostering Day. Efforts are ongoing to refresh website and leaflet materials, with plans to distribute updated information to partners. The department is confident that partners understand how to identify and respond to private fostering arrangements and will continue proactive efforts to ensure such arrangements are recognised within the City.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was two items of AOB:

Update on the Casey Review The Baroness Casey Review was published two weeks ago, focusing on contextual safeguarding and child sexual exploitation.

- A key recommendation is the establishment of a central team, overseen by the National Crime Agency (NCA), to investigate legacy and ongoing group-based sexual offending.
- The City of London Police has received assurance from the NCA and NPCC that the design process and demand analysis are underway.
- No legacy or live group-based sexual offending investigations have been identified in the City of London over the past five years.
- A deep dive analysis has been completed on threat, harm, and risk related to group-based and child sexual exploitation in the Square Mile.
- Intelligence gaps have been identified and will be addressed in partnership with City and Hackney Children's Services.
- No community tensions have arisen from the report, and a full communications strategy is in place.
- The City of London Police will continue to work with national teams to implement recommendations.

Update on Child Q Disciplinary Proceedings

- Disciplinary proceedings related to the Child Q incident in Hackney have concluded, with findings of gross misconduct against the involved Metropolitan Police officers.
- A letter from Jim Gamble, Independent Commissioner for Safeguarding Children Partnership, was circulated to all partners.
- The City of London Directorate reaffirmed its commitment to anti-racism and EDI:
 - Senior leaders completed cultural competency training last year.
 - Anti-racism training for all DCCS staff will begin in the autumn.
 - The department has joined the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards Programme.

- An internal EDI group is active, co-chaired by senior and team-level staff.
- Safeguarding practices in custody, especially for juveniles, are in place and predate the Child Q review.
- The City of London Police has low disproportionality figures in stop and search, as noted in the recent HMIC PEEL review (public release expected week of 24 July).
- The force's EDI strategy aims to make it one of the most inclusive in England and Wales.

20. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The public were not excluded.

21. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

22. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDICES**

RESOLVED – That, the non-public appendices be noted.

22.1 **Non-Public Appendix to be received in conjunction with item 7**

22.2 **Non-Public Appendix to be received in conjunction with item 9**

23. **INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO), ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023–2024**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services in relation to the Independent Reviewing service in the City of London covered in the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report for 2024-2025.

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

There were no non-public questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Blair Stringman
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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), Annual Report for 2023–2024	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides statutory duties 	Statutory duties of 1989 Children's Act and IRO handbook
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
Report author:	Ria Lane, Independent Reviewing Officer, Safeguarding team

Summary

This report gives Members an overview of the Independent Reviewing service in the City of London covered in the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report for 2024–2025 (see Appendix 1-non public). It summarises the statutory requirements of the IRO service and how the City of London has performed in this regard. There is an overview of the IRO role and the officer's performance in ensuring that children's key needs are met. Strengths of last year's practice and areas of development for 2024–2025 are identified.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

- The IRO service follows the framework of the updated IRO Handbook, which is linked to the revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance that were introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO has progressed over time

from the management of the review process to a wider overview of the case, including regular monitoring and follow-up between reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for children in care, and for challenging milestone drift and delay. Specifically, the statutory duties of the IRO are to:

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

Current Position

3. A permanent IRO has been in post since September 2017.
4. The achievements identified in the Annual Report 2024–2025 are:
- Consistent participation of children in their review meetings
 - Consistent IRO visits and communication with children
 - Active monitoring of children's care plans and needs between review periods. This helps to prevent actions stalling, meaning that children in care continue to have their needs met and feel supported
 - Review minutes, contacts and alerts recorded on children's files within the online record system workflow
 - Consolidation of the Pathway and Care Plan process, leading to an increase in care plans being completed within timescale
 - Launch of the Caring Life portal.
5. In addition to direct work with children and the local authority, the IRO takes part in the London IRO Practitioner Network and serves as a practitioner representative to the London IRO Managers' Group. Engagement in these pan-London groups facilitates the IRO's access to information, knowledge and the experience of colleagues from larger authorities. It also ensures that the experience and needs of the City's children in care are represented in forums that have the potential to influence practice and statutory guidance on the services and support they receive.
6. The IRO service has been alerted to safeguarding issues for children in care and aims to build safety and stability according to the needs of each child. The

service will continue to monitor care plans closely to include actions that address the known risks of all forms of exploitation.

Options

7. The IRO service should review recommendations from reporting and planning work required for continued service improvement. There is no cost commitment required.

Proposals

8. The IRO identifies the following areas for improvement. An action plan has been put in place to address them.

Objective	Actions
Embed the modify Care Plan template in practice and ensure that the changes are impactful for children in care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is in progress with a completion date set for reporting year 2025/26.
Continue to develop the review process to make it inclusive for children and ensure that anti-racism policies are embedded within the service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review systemic model and how this can be developed in the review process. Ensure that all children in care are aware of their rights. Ensure that service providers operate a consistent anti-racist policy.
Continue to monitor and flag health assessment timescales, so that children's health needs are assessed in a timely way and intervention is taken to improve health outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly meetings to be held with Health managers to ensure that children's health assessments are being completed within timescales.
Consideration for new ways to communicate and share information with children as part of their review process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a video for new arrivals into care, explaining the national transfer scheme (when relevant), their rights as a child in care, and the process for reviewing care plans.
Annual Survey and Annual IRO report to be aligned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correlate the reporting period so the annual survey of children reflects the same time period and can be reported on in IRO Annual Report.

Key Data

9. The key data directly related to this report include:

- There were seven children in care on 1 April 2024, which continues the downward trend of children in care numbers since 2022 (11 children in care on 1 April 2022, nine children in care on 1 April 2023). After the growth of children in care numbers during 2017–2021, a large majority have now turned 18 years and are being supported as Care Leavers.
- The National Transfer Scheme¹ has been effective in the last year. This means that, within a few weeks of being accommodated, most new unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who are initially accommodated by the City of London are now moved to a local authority outside of London.
- Five children were in care as of 31 March 2025.
- 15 children came into care during 2024–2025.
- In total, throughout the reporting year, there were 22 children in care.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. There are no strategic implications directly related to this report.

- Financial implications – N/A
- Resource implications – N/A
- Legal implications – N/A
- Risk implications – N/A
- Equalities implications – N/A
- Climate implications – N/A
- Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

11. The IRO service has made significant contributions to quality assuring and improving services for children in care throughout 2023–2024. Initial and subsequent reviews, midway monitoring and care arrangement stability continue to be embedded and maintained at a high level.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City of London Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2024–2025 (non public)

Ria Lane

Independent Reviewing Officer, Safeguarding team

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¹ [National Transfer Scheme \(NTS\) Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children \(UASC\)](#)

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: City of London, DCCS, City of London 2025 Annual Survey	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Providing Excellent Services
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
Report author:	Laura Demetriades, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

Summary

For the past 10 years an independent agency has been commissioned to complete the City of London Annual Survey. This involves individually contacting all children, parents and carers, children in care, and care leavers who have received services from Children's Social Care and Early Help. A tailored survey of questions is asked to each person, dependant on the type of service they have accessed. This enables the service to receive anonymous feedback, which is independently collated and analysed, which demonstrates service performance, direct service user experiences, and informs service development. In March 2025, this exercise was undertaken, and the attached report shows the responses and feedback received (see Appendix 1).

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Receiving honest, independent, and constructive feedback is of fundamental benefit to ensuring that services can adapt, improve, and respond to the ever-changing needs of our children, parents and carers, children in care and care leavers. Our service users regularly provide feedback directly to workers, managers, the Independent Reviewing Officer, and others. However, an independent anonymous space can be useful for reflecting on more broad experiences across the year. It also provides a rich repository of information that can be used to triangulate the current performance of our services. This information can determine where things are working well and need to be maintained, and the areas for improvements and developments.
2. The exercise helps to collate an impartial view of service user experience. It demonstrates to children, parents and carers, children in care, and care leavers that their experiences matter, and that services can and will adapt in response to their feedback.

Current Position

3. This year there was a 51.2% completion rate, which equates to 37 individual children responding to the survey. There was no response to 26 calls, and a further 10 individuals declined to respond to the survey. In all cases, five calls were made to all potential respondents on different days and times to try and catch them at a convenient time.
4. Although all agreed that the questions are relevant, attempts have been made this year to streamline the survey questions, especially for care leavers. An option was given to complete a shorter survey, and this was taken up by 11 young people, demonstrating that it is a successful method of gaining feedback.
5. Feedback received about the work of Early Help and Children's Social Care services was consistently positive. Although, it was noted by a small number of families that they would welcome more support around housing and managing or supporting the additional needs of their children.
6. All children in care responded to the survey. All are happy with where they are living and gave positive feedback about support and accessibility of social workers. All children felt that they had safe people in their lives to speak to.
7. There is more work to do to promote the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer and Virtual School with children in care, and to tackle any discrimination felt about their care experience status.
8. Given that most care leavers are former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, it is not surprising that themes of loss and isolation continue to prevail within this cohort. This year, callers were able to refer young people to a range of support services.

9. Where young people said they were unhappy with their home, this was mainly due to wanting a permanent tenancy. There was some variance in the feelings around support provided to care leavers, but this often related to tenancy matters or keywork support. There were strong positive feelings towards social work support. One young person said they did not have a social worker, which the service assured was not the case.
10. Several care leavers felt that they had barriers to accessing education, training, and employment, stemming from having limited English or English as a second language. Care leavers are aspirational for their future but have concerns about the cost of living, stability of immigration status, and securing housing.
11. Overall, young people felt confident in accessing health services and were able to meet their health needs. All young people thought that they had someone they could talk to if they felt they were harmed or bullied in any way.
12. There were many positive points of feedback in the survey. Where issues were raised, these are being acted on, as outlined in a 'You Said, We Did' feedback response (see Appendix 2).

Options

13. The City of London Annual Survey consistently provides rich and varied feedback which informs ongoing service development. We will continue to use an independent anonymous survey style approach, while considering how survey questions, approaches and experiences can be improved.

Proposals

14. The above arrangements continue through commissioned arrangements which are overseen by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance within the People's Directorate.

Key Data

15. Key data is contained within the Survey Report.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. There are no strategic implications directly related to this report.
 - Financial implications – N/A
 - Resource implications – N/A
 - Legal implications – N/A
 - Risk implications – N/A
 - Equalities implications – N/A
 - Climate implications – N/A
 - Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

17. The needs of children, parents and carers, children in care, and care leavers is constantly evolving and changing dependent on individual needs, societal expectations, and local and national pressures. Ensuring that our services are flexible, accessible, timely and targeted, is key to children and families getting the right support at the right time. Unconstrained feedback from service users is instrumental in measuring and understanding our performance and making sure that we make the right changes and adaptations to deliver outstanding services to all. A continuous feedback loop between our service and our users demonstrates the City of London's commitment to being a learning organisation, centred around those who use our services.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City of London Annual Survey 2025
- Appendix 2 – 2025 Annual Survey, You Said, We Did

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee – For Decision/Endorsement Community and Children’s Services Committee – For Decision	Dated: 13/10/2025 28/11/2015
Subject: Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028	Public report: For Decision/Endorsement
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes: Diverse Engaged Communities, Providing Excellent Services • provides statutory duties under the Children Act 1989 and Children and Social Work Act 2017
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
Report author:	Zoe Dhami, Strategy and Project Officer

Summary

The City of London Corporation has statutory duties to act as a corporate parent for children in care and care leavers. The draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025–2028 outlines our refreshed vision, values, strategic priorities, and approach to embedding corporate parenting responsibilities across all departments and services.

This draft strategy has been shaped by feedback from care-experienced young people, performance data, Ofsted inspection learning, and internal governance processes. It has been reviewed by senior leadership and shared with a City of London Corporation care leaver for further consultation. A young person-friendly version has also been developed to support accessibility.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Endorse the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028 for sign off at the Community and Children's Services Committee.

Main Report

Background

1. The Corporate Parenting Principles (Children and Social Work Act 2017) require local authorities to promote the best possible outcomes for children in care and care leavers. These duties apply not only to Children's Social Care but to the entire local authority. The City of London Corporation's current strategy expires this year.

Current Position

2. The new strategy aligns with the Corporate Plan 2024–29 and reflects:
 - Feedback from the Coram Voice Annual Survey 2025
 - Ofsted Inspection recommendations (2024)
 - Practice reviews and audit findings
 - Input from senior officers, Members, and care-experienced young people
3. The draft strategy has undergone several stages of internal review and development. The draft strategy has been reviewed by the Achieving Excellence Board, the Children's Senior Management Team and the Departmental Leadership Team.
4. Following CSMT's suggestion, the strategy and young-person friendly version have been shared with a City of London Corporation care leaver. The feedback was positive, commenting that the strategy 'feels personal and caring' as well as including that it shows 'our voices have impact'. The care leaver noted that the real success of the strategy will be through its implementation.
5. Engagement feedback and staff insights have shaped each priority and action area, with additional work underway between Housing and Children's Services to strengthen tenancy support for care leavers.
6. The draft strategy establishes five strategic priorities:
 - I. Home Stability – ensuring safe, secure accommodation
 - II. Health and Wellbeing – trauma-informed, culturally responsive support.
 - III. Education, Employment, and Training – removing barriers to achievement.
 - IV. Voice of Children and Young People – meaningful participation and influence.
 - V. Transition to Independence – preparation and ongoing support into adulthood.

7. Each priority includes specific actions, performance measures, and lead responsibilities across departments. Ongoing oversight will be supported through quarterly monitoring reports to this Sub-Committee. A delivery plan and performance framework are being developed, with officer leads proposed for each indicator.

Key Data

8. Performance and engagement data from the Coram Voice Annual Survey 2025 has been central to the development of this strategy. The survey included responses from 21 care leavers and 5 children in care, with questions covering relationships, housing, health, education, identity, and preparation for adulthood.
9. Headline results include:
 - 100% of children in care were happy with their accommodation type and location.
 - 81% of care leavers felt they received all the help they needed from their social worker.
 - 76% of care leavers felt safe in their lives.
10. Importantly, the strategy also responds to areas where young people shared concerns — for example, barriers to education and training, feelings of social isolation, and challenges with accommodation stability. These insights have been used in a "you said, we did" approach to directly inform the five strategic priorities and associated actions. Feedback from the City of London Corporation care leaver also noted the importance of strengthening these areas.
11. The included Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2024 – 2025 provides an overview of developments and achievements that the draft strategy will build on.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – This strategy directly delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes for Diverse Engaged Communities by ensuring care-experienced young people feel they belong and can participate in co-creating services and Providing Excellent Services by supporting young people to live healthy, independent lives and achieve their ambitions.

Financial implications – The strategy will be delivered within existing budgets. Any specific initiatives requiring additional resources will be subject to separate business case approval.

Resource implications – Implementation will require coordinated effort across departments, supported by training and clear guidance on corporate parenting responsibilities.

Legal implications – The strategy ensures compliance with statutory duties under the Children Act 1989, Children and Social Work Act 2017, and related guidance.

Risk implications – Robust performance monitoring and quality assurance arrangements mitigate risks to service quality and outcomes for young people.

Equalities implications – The strategy promotes inclusivity and addresses barriers faced by care-experienced young people, with particular attention to unaccompanied asylum-

seeking children and those with disabilities. Anti-racist practice is embedded in quality assurance processes.

Climate implications - None

Security implications - None

Conclusion

12. The draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028 provides a comprehensive framework for the Corporation to fulfil its statutory duties while building on recognised strengths in supporting children in care and care leavers. The strategy is firmly grounded in the voices and experiences of young people and establishes clear expectations for corporate parenting across all services and departments.

13. Following Sub-Committee endorsement, the strategy will be finalised for approval by the Community and Children's Services Committee, enabling implementation for the remaining 2025 – 2026 financial year, with quarterly monitoring through established governance arrangements.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028
- Appendix 2 – Young People's Version Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028
- Appendix 3 – Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2024/25

Zoe Dhami

Strategy and Project Officer

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Safeguarding & SEND Sub Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024/25	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Providing Excellent Services
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:	Claire Solley, Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board
Report author:	Shohel Ahmed, City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board Manager

Summary

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (the Board) is a statutory board required under s43 of the Care Act 2014. One of the statutory duties of the Board is to complete an annual report outlining what it has achieved in respect of adult safeguarding in the previous year. This report outlines the key achievements of the Board as well as what the Board will prioritise in the forthcoming year. An overview of the safeguarding data for the City of London Corporation is also included for reference.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

- The City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (the Board) is a statutory board required under s43 of the Care Act 2014. The Board has three statutory functions:
 - Develop and publish a strategic plan outlining how the Board will meet its objectives

- Publish an annual report detailing the safeguarding achievements for that financial year
 - Commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria
2. This report outlines the annual report for 2024/25. It focuses on the principles underpinning the strategy, its strategic priorities, key achievements and data for 2024/25.
 3. Some of the key achievements for the Board in 2024/25 include:
 - 3.1 The Board commissions a package of training for frontline line staff working across the City and Hackney on a yearly basis. This year the Board commissioned 8 safeguarding courses delivered quarterly throughout the year. Courses on offer included the following:
 - Safeguarding awareness training (webinar).
 - Trauma informed approaches to safeguarding (in person).
 - Safeguarding, Self-neglect & Hoarding (webinar).
 - Safeguarding Adults Workshop for Manager & Safeguarding Leads (webinar).
 - SAMs – Exploring the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of Safeguarding Adult Managers (webinar).
 - SAE – Undertaking S42 Safeguarding Enquiries (webinar).
 - Safeguarding, mental health and social isolation (webinar)

In total, over 150 people attended the various different training sessions on offer
 4. The Board organised a series of events throughout the whole month of November, in recognition of Safeguarding Adults Week. These included events on intergenerational domestic abuse, modern slavery and organised immigration crime as well as a session with the Department for Work and Pensions around the move to Universal Credit and supporting vulnerable residents throughout this transition.
 5. Board partners undertook a self assessment using the Safeguarding Adult Partnership Assessment Tool in Feb 2025, which was analysed by the Board Manager and used as evidence to help guide discussions during the Boards Development Day in April 2025.
 6. The Chair of the Board hosted a Patient Panel on Safeguarding in the City of London which was open to residents and explained what safeguarding means, how to raise concerns, and what role the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board plays. This event empowered community members to protect vulnerable adults and clearly communicated important contact points and procedures.
 7. In 2024/25, the Board published two discretionary Safeguarding Adults Reviews:
 - JL: The discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) into the death of JL was commissioned by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) in June 2023 to complement a local learning review by Adult Social Care services in Hackney. The review recommended strengthening input from

housing partners within the Board as well as reviewing the Board's Escalation Policy.

- Steve: The discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) into the death of 'Steve' was commissioned by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) in November 2023. A practitioners event for the 'Steve' SAR was held in July 2024, providing practitioners an opportunity to provide insight and contribute to the review, as well as draw out learning to help inform the recommendations. A further learning event was held in November 2024 for the 'Steve' SAR, where attendees were able to hear a synopsis of the review, understand the challenges that occurred in supporting 'Steve' and focus on research findings relating to the recommendations that were made; namely palliative care and mental capacity for people that are homeless.

Current Position

8. The Board has set itself the following strategic priorities for 2025/26:
 - Develop and Implement a Community Engagement Strategy
 - Establish a Multi-Agency Dashboard and Conduct regular multi-agency audits
 - Ensure Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Other Reviews are complete in a timely manner and learning is shared.
 - Implement the updated London Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Pan-London Adult Safeguarding Policies and Procedure.
 - Improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness by preventing abuse and neglect and strengthening safeguarding responses.
 - Minimise the risk of self-neglect and strengthen our multi-agency response.
 - Minimise the risk of and strengthen our multi-agency response to financial abuse.

Key Data

9. Key data was collected in relation to safeguarding for the City of London:
 - 49 safeguarding concerns were raised.
 - 30 of those concerns led to a Section 42 Enquiry.
 - A Section 42 Enquiry relates to the duty of the Local Authority to make enquiries, or have others do so, if an adult may be at risk of abuse or neglect. This happens whether or not the authority is providing any care and support services to that adult. It aims to decide what, if any, action is needed to help and protect the adult.
 - The trend over the last five years shows, concerns have decreased from 57 in 2020/21 to 49 in 2023/24 and have stayed the same in 2024/25.
 - The most prevalent risk noted this year in safeguarding enquiries was Neglect and Acts of Omission, accounting for 32% of all cases. This was closely followed by Self-Neglect, which constituted 29% of the risks. Financial or Material Abuse represented 18% of the total risks identified.
 - In line with the national and London average, the data shows 79% of client's risk comes from someone known to the individual. This is an increase from the previous year 2023-24 of 64%.
 - The majority of safeguarding enquiries related to alleged abuse that happened within the person's own home.

Corporate & Strategic Implications – [Please state ‘none’ if not applicable instead of deleting any of the sub-headings below]

[Sub-headings]

Strategic implications - The City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB) plays a vital role in supporting the corporate priority of delivering excellent services by ensuring that adults with care and support needs are safe, empowered, and able to live healthy, independent lives.

Financial implications - none

Resource implications - none

Legal implications - none

Risk implications - none

Equalities implications – The work of the Board aims to improve outcomes for adults with care and support needs, many of whom fall within one or more protected characteristics, particularly in relation to age, disability, and mental health. As such, the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is expected to have a positive impact by promoting equality of access to support services, protecting individuals from harm, and enabling people to live independently and safely.

Climate implications - none

Security implications - none

Conclusion

10. The Annual Report will be published on the appropriate pages online.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024/25

Shohel Ahmed

City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board Manager

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committees: Community and Children's Services – For Discussion Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee – For Information	Dated: 17/09/2025 13/10/2025
Subject: Families in the City Update	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties 	Diverse engaged communities Providing excellent services
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
Report author:	Rachel Talmage – Head of Children's Social Care and Early Help – Families in the City Programme Lead Hannah Dobbin – Families in the City Programme Manager

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the Families in the City programme. Families in the City is the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) and partners' response to national government reform around family help and Best Start Family Hubs for children and young people aged 0-19 years or up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The programme will run in its current form until the end of March 2026.

Progress since the last update at the CCS Committee on 19 June includes delivery of Phase 1 of the development of the City of London Best Start Family Hub, which includes changes to services for 0-5-year-olds. A Department for Education (DfE) Development Grant is expected in October 2025, which focuses on the early years within the Best Start Family Hub.

Developments in the Families First Partnership workstream include workforce analysis to assess readiness for potential reform changes, and the review of related threshold and referral documents. Multi-agency working groups have been set up to

focus on particular areas of the reforms. The approach to engaging residents and professionals across the Families in the City programme continues to evolve.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

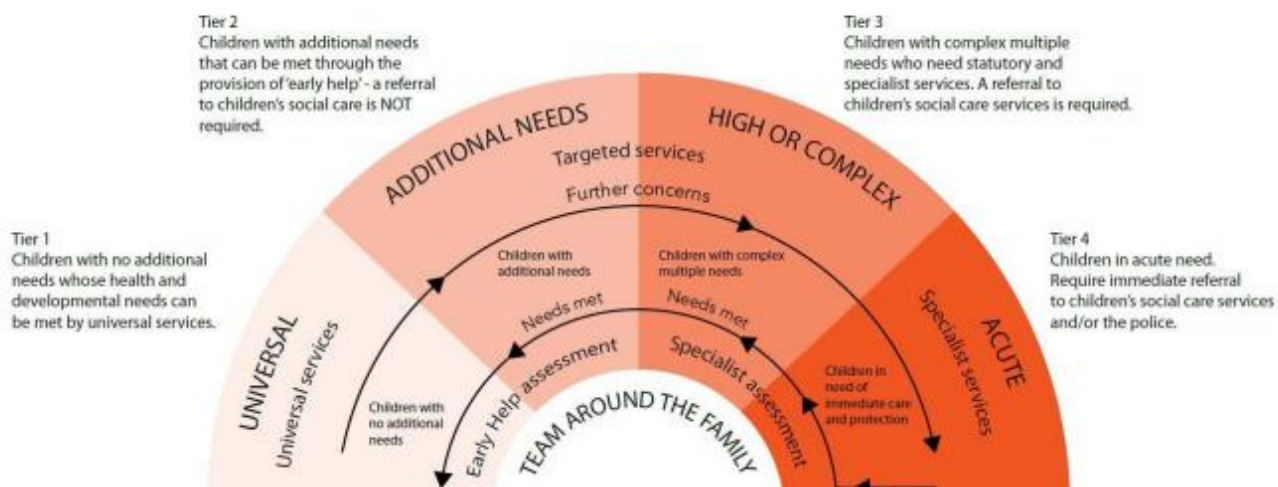
- Note the report.

Main Report

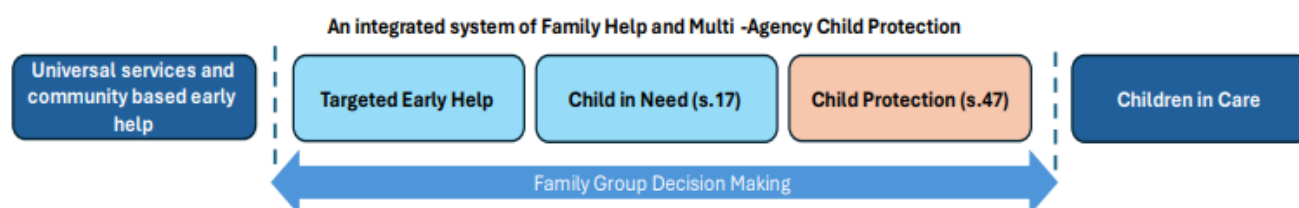
Background

1. National government reforms are driving transformational change in service delivery for children, young people and families. In July 2025, the DfE published its [‘Giving every child the best start in life’ strategy](#) which outlines how the Government will improve child development and ensure that all children have the chance to achieve and thrive. This aligns with the Government’s [10 Year Health Plan for England](#).
2. The strategy builds on previous national reform around family hubs and includes an action to develop a network of what this government is calling Best Start Family Hubs. Best Start Family Hubs focus on improving family services and support for young people aged 0-19, or 25 for young people with SEND, and aims to bring together professionals, including those from health and education, and “be open to all but based in areas where families need them most”. Best Start Family Hubs will also have a Children and Family Services professional specifically trained in working to support parents of children with additional needs. There will be a national Best Start in Life campaign in autumn.
3. Prior to this new strategy and the Best Start Family Hubs initiative, some local areas received funding from the DfE to develop Family Hubs. The City of London Corporation (City Corporation) was not one of those to receive funding.
4. The DfE’s Families First Partnership (FFP) programme requires local authorities to create an integrated system to “support more children to stay safely with their families and see better outcomes”. This involves the review and design of a Family Help system that merges Early Help and Children in Need systems.

5. The current continuum of need reflects four tier levels:



6. DfE sets out its vision for a reformed system as an integrated system, shown in the graphic below:



7. The reforms are an opportunity to build on our outstanding Children's Social Care and Early Help services. A focus on the best possible outcomes for children and families will be retained throughout the implementation of the Families in the City programme.

Current Position

8. The City Corporation continues to consider and develop our response to the national reform programme within the unique context of the City of London. A phased approach is being taken around the development of a City of London Best Start Family Hub to reflect the local context and continued publication of DfE guidance which is driving change at pace.
9. Phase 1 of the City of London Best Start Family Hub was implemented on 1 September 2025, to include:
- a virtual information and advice offer on our Family Information Service website. There are dedicated [Best Start Family Hub webpages](#) providing information on activities and services for children, young people and their families

- a pilot in-person support offer to help families navigate the Best Start Family Hub offer which is available from the Guildhall every Monday during September to December 2025. A telephone translator offer is available if needed to support families
 - services continue to be delivered in-person at various sites – including our libraries and community centres - across the City of London.
10. The Best Start Family Hub brings services under one banner for 0-19 or 25 with SEND and their families. This includes information on and signposting to a range of support including those directly provided by the City Corporation's Children's Social Care and Early Help and Education and Early Years services, as well as commissioned providers, health and public health services. DfE requires a set of services to be included within a Best Start Family Hub including but not limited to:
- health visiting
 - midwifery services
 - breastfeeding support
 - early language development and Home Learning Environment
 - nutrition and weight management for 5-19-year-olds
 - oral health improvement
 - mental health services and support
 - parenting support
 - universal early help support
 - targeted family support
 - SEND services and activities, including the SEND Local Offer
 - youth services
11. Relationships continue to be developed with the voluntary and community sector to ensure that the Best Start Family Hub promotes a wide range of activities and support for families in the City of London. This includes the Shoreditch Trust's We Connect in the City programme which provides a range of support for families at the Aldgate Centre every Friday.
12. Residents and professionals have been informed of developments through various channels including:
- information cascaded to professionals through Families in the City Board members – including representation from health, public health, education and libraries
 - content on the Family Information Service website, which includes a translation function, and via social media channels
 - content in City Corporation resident newsletters and partner communications – including Healthwatch City of London and the City Parent Carer Forum
 - information shared directly with families in contact with our Education and Early Years, and Children's Social Care and Early Help services
13. The City Corporation website has been updated so families can find information about the Best Start Family Hub via the 'children and families' page. A link is provided to direct families to the Best Start Family Hub webpages.

14. The main practical change to services that will be experienced by families from 1 September is the relocation of services for 0-5-year-olds from The Aldgate School to other community settings in the City of London. The Education and Early Years service has worked closely with The Aldgate School to ensure that staff are aware of the changes and able to redirect families. Professionals who deliver services for 0-5s, including the health visitor and infant feeding lead, have communicated the change of venues to families who access their services.
15. A poster about the changes was produced and emailed or directly delivered to community and early years settings across the City of London including The Aldgate School, libraries, estate offices and nurseries. The poster has also been shared on all Family Information Service social media channels. A timetable of activities continues to be published on the Best Start Family Hub website, as well as printed and distributed at sites across the City of London, so families can check where and when services are running. The poster and timetable are provided in Appendix 1.
16. The DfE is due to publish guidance on Best Start Family Hubs branding so additional marketing assets will be produced when this has been received. Appropriately branded posters and leaflets promoting the Best Start Family Hub will be translated into Arabic, Bengali, Spanish, Ukrainian and Russian, and distributed at community settings across the City of London, as well as directly to families by professionals.
17. Phase 2 of the Best Start Family Hub development will be driven by national guidance and funding. The City Corporation has submitted a declaration of intent to receive a DfE Development Grant for newly-funded local authorities in October 2025. This covers October 2025 to March 2026 and is a non-ring fenced Section 31 Grant for revenue funding only (no capital). The Grant Determination Letter and single payment is expected in October 2025, subject to HM Treasury approval. The Development Grant has three key objectives to:
- identify at least one Best Start Family Hub site by January 2026 from which to deliver parenting and home learning environment interventions
 - prepare to deliver parenting and home learning environment programmes from April 2026
 - develop ambitious Best Start in Life plans
18. Partners from the Education and Early Years, Children's Social Care and Early Help, and Public Health services are developing an implementation plan for the Development Grant and thinking about sustainability post March 2026.
19. Phase 2 of the development of the Best Start Family Hub will also include and reflect:
- review and development of the online offer
 - review of the Monday in-person navigation support offer pilot from the Guildhall in December 2025
 - changes to commissioned services, such as youth services

- insight from an officer-led community space analysis (linked to the Health and Wellbeing Board) to identify potential opportunities around physical location/s for the Best Start Family Hub. However, this is set against the expectation that there will be no additional DfE capital funding
- involvement activity with young people and families through the Family Design Lab and existing groups
- further DfE guidance
- alignment with FFP reform

20. The FFP development workstream continues to develop in response to national government reform. A top-line timeline has been agreed at the Families in the City Board:

- Year 1 – March 2025 to March 2026
 - Assess readiness for reform including workforce analysis and data/performance reporting.
 - Update thresholds documents and multi-agency referral form.
 - Run FFP co-design working groups for professionals including on: Family Help, Multi-agency Child Protection Teams and Family Group Decision Making.
 - Involvement of families through the Family Design Lab.
 - Options paper to the Families in the City Board by the end of 2025.
- Year 2 – April 2026 to March 2027
 - Phased approach to implementation, including changes to practice and workforce.
 - Implementation would need to involve appropriate HR, communications and marketing activities.
 - Evaluation of implemented reforms.
- Year 3 – April 2027 to March 2028
 - Full implementation.

21. The City Corporation has been compliant with DfE reporting requirements including the submission of a delivery plan in June 2025 and a DfE stakeholder meeting in July 2025. Consideration is being given to potential DfE data and performance monitoring changes but there will be further DfE guidance on this in November 2025.

22. Family engagement continues to be a focus for Families in the City. Existing insight and feedback have been collated to inform developments. A Family Design Lab was set up in June 2025 to provide a co-ordinated approach to involvement specifically for Families in the City. The design lab aims to bring the point of engagement forward in the development process so that, as the programme moves at pace, ideas can be tested with an engaged group of young people, parents and carers.

23. Young people, parents and carers who live in the City of London or access services for 0–25-year-olds and their families are invited to join the design lab and give consent to be contacted about involvement opportunities as they emerge throughout the programme. The design lab has been promoted in City of London community settings, City Corporation and partner newsletters and via the

Family Information Service social media channels. The design lab was also promoted at the Artizan Library community event in August.

24. Twelve adults have joined the design lab. There was low attendance at the initial welcome sessions for this group. New sessions will be planned and the use of WhatsApp will continue to be trialled as this is a method that residents have supported in other engagement activity.
25. Children and families have been involved in the design of a dragon image which features on the Best Start Family Hub webpage. Children at a creative session at Shoe Lane Library coloured in dragons and families attending the Artizan Library community event voted on their favourite colour palette.
26. We will continue to promote the design lab. As Families in the City continues, more focused areas for engagement will emerge from the reform implementation. This should enable us to offer more topic-based sessions. We can also explore targeted sessions with existing groups, such as the City Parent Carer Forum. We will seek to maximise opportunities around existing community events and groups to reach and engage residents across the City of London.
27. Involvement opportunities will also be explored for families who are not members of the design lab to ensure that wider engagement is offered, and feedback and ideas are captured.
28. Families in the City continues to report to elected Members through the CCS and Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committees. Content has also been shared in the Director of Community and Children's Services' Members update.

Options

29. There are no options for the CCS Committee to consider.

Proposals

30. There are no proposals for the CCS Committee to consider.

Key Data

31. There is no key data for the CCS Committee to consider.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

32. The following strategic implications are relevant to this report.
 - **Strategic implications** – Families in the City aligns with objectives within the Corporate Plan 2024–2029 to deliver excellent services and a diverse, engaged community. It will align with the vision of the Children and Young People's Plan. The Early Help Strategy is due to be revised in 2026, and this will take into account Families in the City developments.

- **Financial implications** – Families in the City is using a DfE grant to fund the Programme Manager until the end of March 2026. The DfE Development Grant will focus on required deliverables from October 2025 to March 2026. Financial implications will remain monitored, and additional funding will need to be sought if necessary.
- **Resource implications** – these are still being assessed.
- **Legal implications** – developments will need to ensure that the City Corporation continues to deliver all statutory functions and requirements.
- **Risk implications** – a risk and issues log has been set up for the programme and will be reviewed at Families in the City Board meetings.
- **Equalities implications** – Equality Impact Assessments are being developed and will remain as live documents for the duration of the programme.
- **Climate implications** – none.
- **Security implications** – none.

Conclusion

33. Families in the City is progressing at pace, driven by national government reform. Partnership working remains crucial to implementation and the Families in the City Board will continue to facilitate already strong joined-up working. The Families in the City Board reports into the Children's Partnership Board which is chaired by the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and brings together senior leaders, including those from the City of London Police, Health and Public Health, to retain strategic oversight of the programme delivery plan and risk and issues log. How we involve children, young people and their families will remain under review to ensure that we provide accessible engagement opportunities to inform developments.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – poster and timetable.

Background Papers

- 19 June 2025 - public paper updating Members on Families in the City.
- 5 May 2023 - public paper asking Members to note that an independent City of London Children's Centre Services Review would take place.
- 13 December 2023 - non-public paper on the City of London Children's Centre Services and Family Hub Development.
- 11 March 2024 - non-public paper on the City of London Children's Centre Services Review.
- 11 November 2024 - non-public paper providing an update on the City of London Children's Centre Services.

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Safeguarding and SEND Sub Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance Report Q1 2025/26	Public For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • Provides statutory duties 	Providing excellent services
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
Report author:	Gonzalo Reategui, Performance Analyst

Summary

This report updates Members on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service during Q1 of Year 2025/26.

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 Q1 2025/26. It provides a range of detailed information in different areas of safeguarding, accompanied by narrative to help contextualise the data.

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 outcome 5 “Providing Excellent Services” 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 Q1 2025/26, 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 Q1 2025/26 (Non-public)

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Safeguarding and SEND Sub Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: Children and Families Service Performance – Q1 2025/26	Public Report : For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties 	Providing excellent services
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
Report author:	Gonzalo Reategui, Performance Analyst

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 1st April 2025 to 30th June 2025 (Q1). 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.

Key Data

7. Demand remains high but shows a gradual year-on-year decline. In the first three months of 2025/26, there were 166 contacts. If this trend continues, the total for the year is projected to be around 664 contacts. This is lower than last year's figure of 709, which was itself a decrease from 807 in 2023/24.
8. Overall, the number of Children in Need has increased over the three months from 6 in April 2025 to 14 at the end of June 2025.
9. The number of Children in Care by the City of London Corporation has increased during the quarter from 4 in April 2025 to 6 at the end of June 2025.
10. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) recorded 1 contact in the first 3 months of 2025/26 (1% of referrals). It is estimated that the total number of MASH contacts in 2025/26 will be lower to the number in 2024/25 which was 16.
11. There were 2 Early Help referrals in the first quarter of 2025/26. It is estimated that the total number of referrals will be lower than the previous years (24 in 2024/25 and 16 in 2023/24).
12. In the first quarter of 2025/26, 100% of assessments were completed within 45 days. This marks a significant improvement compared to 63% in 2024/25 and 83% in 2023/24.
13. As of the end of June 2025, 48 care leavers were being supported. This represents a gradual decrease from 55 in March 2024 and 49 in March 2025.

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 outcome 5 "Providing Excellent Services" of the Corporate Plan.
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 1st April 2025 to 30th June 2025, 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 Q1 2025/26 (Non-Public)
- Appendix 2 – Glossary for Performance Dashboard (Public)

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committees: Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: Draft Children and Families Service Self-Evaluation 2025	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes. 	Providing Excellent Services Diverse, Engaged Communities
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
Report author:	Hannah Dobbin, Strategy and Projects Officer, Department of Community and Children's Services

Summary

This report presents to Members the draft City of London Corporation (City Corporation) Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Families in the City self-evaluation (SEF) 2025. This was previously called the Children and Families Service SEF.

The SEF sets out the DCCS's assessment of the quality and impact of Children and Families services, actions in response to Ofsted recommendations, and areas for development over the next year. Areas for development include delivering the Families in the City programme in response to national government children's social care reform, completing a multi-agency audit on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and disproportionality, and strengthening our offer for care leavers and children in care. The SEF also reflects on progress against areas for development in the Children and Families Service SEF 2024.

Overall, the SEF demonstrates the City Corporation's commitment to constantly improving and providing excellent services. Strong relationships and partnership working, a commitment to equality, equity, diversity and inclusion, as well as a willingness to learn and listen to families, continue to underpin high-quality services and positive outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Families in the City SEF is completed annually. The most recent draft version is dated September 2025. A draft non-public version of the SEF is provided for Members in Appendix 1.
2. The SEF sets out achievements across Children's Social Care and Early Help services, linking to SEND, the Virtual School and Adult Social Care. It also identifies areas for development over the coming year.
3. The SEF reflects the DCCS's Families in the City programme which was established in response to national government reform around developing family help and Best Start Family Hubs for children and young people aged 0–19 years, or up to 25 years for young people with SEND.

Current Position

4. Our vision for children and young people is that the City of London is a place where they feel safe, have good mental health and wellbeing, fulfil their potential and are ready for adulthood, while growing up with a sense of belonging.
5. The City Corporation is ambitious for the children and young people and strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for them. An Ofsted inspection of the Children and Families service in September 2024 found services to be outstanding.
6. Teams effectively work together across DCCS, as well as with external partners such as the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership which continues to effectively co-ordinate how local partners co-operate to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people locally.
7. An experienced, generic Children's Social Care and Early Help team supports children, young people and their families using a systemic relationship-based practice model with a focus on early intervention.

8. At the end of July 2025, Children's Social Care supported 17 active Early Help cases, 16 short breaks, 14 children in need, one child subject to a Child Protection Plan, four children in care and 47 care leavers. Two children in care had an Education, Health and Care Plan.
9. Children and young people are supported throughout their journeys which start with effective screening through the 'front door'. A strong Early Help offer is driven by a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach. There is a strong record of intervening when necessary, with appropriate child protection processes in place.
10. Activities for children and young people during the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays, funded in part by the holiday activities and food (HAF) programme were well-received by families. Children and young people, including those with SEND and from global majority communities, enjoyed a range of activities and experiences in a safe, structured environment.
11. The City Corporation is a proud corporate parent. Children in care receive a bespoke offer according to their needs, and a robust Care Leaver Offer is in place. A diverse enrichment programme and apprenticeship opportunities provide young people with a wide range of experiences to support them through their transition to adulthood.
12. The Virtual School has responded to changing demands on its remit and an agreed new structure will be implemented as soon as Ambition 25 (a City Corporation-wide HR project) is completed.
13. Clear governance structures are in place which support, strengthen and scrutinise services for children and young people. The Safeguarding Sub-Committee acts as the corporate parenting board.
14. Evidence in the SEF, including from child and family practice reviews, highlights a wide range of services and support that helps children, young people and their families achieve positive outcomes. A range of workforce development opportunities support staff to continue to develop. Positive feedback was received from two student social workers who successfully completed their final year placements within DCCS.
15. The SEF updates on progress against areas of development for 2024–2025 which were initially set out in the September 2024 SEF. Positive progress has been made against all 10 identified areas for development. This includes increasing the visibility of Early Help in the community through promotional work and successful holiday activities, and further developing the Children in Care Council which now has an established core group of approximately 10 members and improved consistency in meeting and events attendance. The Care Leaver Offer has been strengthened through termly sessions with young people on housing and support for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Outcomes included a care leaver making excellent progress on a City-funded Virtual School apprenticeship and university taster days resulting in three young people working towards a university education.

16. The SEF identifies areas for development over the coming year, including: delivering the Families in the City programme; implementing the Children's Social Care and Early Help service delivery plan; completing a multi-agency audit on SEND and disproportionality; and strengthening our care leavers and children in care offers in response to children and young people's feedback as part of an annual survey.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. **Strategic implications** – the Families in the City SEF aligns with the Corporate Plan 2024–2029 outcomes of providing excellent services and ensuring that there are diverse, engaged communities. DCCS strategic objectives include: people of all ages and all backgrounds are prepared to flourish; people of all ages and all backgrounds can live independently, play a role in their communities and exercise choice over their services; people of all ages enjoy good mental and physical wellbeing; people of all ages and all backgrounds feel part of, engaged with and able to shape their community. The SEF also aligns with the statutory framework for Children's Social Care.
17. **Financial implications** – none.
18. **Resource implications** – none.
19. **Legal implications** – none.
20. **Risk implications** – none.
21. **Equalities implications** – Equalities implications are considered within the SEF. Where any new services are developed or services change, an Equality Impact Assessment would be carried out.
22. **Climate implications** – none.
23. **Security implications** – none.

Conclusion

24. Overall, the City Corporation remains ambitious for children and young people and is committed to delivering excellence through continuous improvement. Strong relationships provide a bedrock for joined-up working and successfully supporting children, young people and families to experience positive outcomes. The SEF enables teams to reflect, monitor and assess progress against areas for development against the context of national government reform which is driving change at pace. A six-month review against the identified areas for development 2025–2026 will be completed.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft Families in the City Self-evaluation 2025 (Non-Public).

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committees: Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) – Update Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties • provides business enabling functions 	Providing Excellent Services Engaged Communities
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	The Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Yes
Report of:	Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services
Report author:	Kirstie Hilton, Head of Education and Early Years Service

Summary

The Safeguarding and SEND Sub-Committee receives regular updates on the City of London Corporation’s efforts to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in achieving positive life outcomes. This report outlines progress in preparing for the Ofsted and CQC Area SEND Inspection and highlights key achievements from the past year, which endeavour to enhance the day-to-day experiences of families of children with SEND living in the City of London.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with SEND are contained in the Children and Families Act 2014. The Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.
2. The SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2025–2029, developed by the Local Area Partnership, including City of London children, young people and families, sets out five key priorities:
 - a. Children and young people with SEND and their families get the right help, at the right time
 - b. Children and young people with SEND and parent carers are supported during transitions, including preparation for adulthood
 - c. Children and young people with SEND and their families are supported and enabled by a skilled, valued workforce
 - d. Children and young people with SEND and their families feel recognised, valued and part of their local community
 - e. Children and young people experience high-quality, appropriate alternative provision when needed.
3. Under the oversight and governance of the SEND Programme Board, the SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2025–2029 Action Plan is being actively monitored, with progress tracked through regular updates from delivery partners. While the strategy is still in its early stages, there is already clear commitment from partners to achieving its intended outcomes. A progress report will be presented to this committee in the new year, following the first year of implementation.

Current Position

Inspection Overview

4. The SEND Inspection Project Team, led by the Head of Education and Early Years Service – also the Local Authority Nominated Officer (LANO) – has been working steadily over recent months to ensure full preparedness for the upcoming inspection. A key priority has been the preparation of Annex A (a form used by Ofsted and CQC to request specific information from a local area as part of an Area SEND inspection), ensuring that it is comprehensive and fully aligned with the revised inspection framework.
5. Since the Area SEND Inspection Framework was revised in June 2025, the project team has worked diligently to update Annex A to reflect the recent changes. All sections have been thoroughly reviewed and aligned with the updated inspection framework through a series of focused weekly meetings held throughout July and August. Progress has been tracked using a structured project management approach to ensure consistency and accountability.
6. Other documentation, including a logistics plan, self-evaluation framework and presentation and briefings, have been finalised and will be regularly updated

throughout the academic year to maintain compliance and ensure quality assurance.

7. Periodic review meetings have taken place over the last year and will continue to be held and attended by all key individuals involved in the upcoming inspection, including directors, strategic leads and heads of service from education, health and social care. The meetings provide valuable challenge and rigour from the senior leadership team, helping to ensure that the project team's work is thorough and robust.

Improving the Quality of Service Delivery

8. Alongside this, the foundation of a successful inspection lies in the strength of our day-to-day practice. Over the last 12 months, the Education and Early Years Service has focused on embedding robust systems that place the lived experiences of children and young people at the centre of delivery, with a clear and ongoing commitment to securing the best possible outcomes.
9. These improvements have a direct contribution to increasing the likelihood of a positive inspection outcome. These are the key highlights:
 - a. Redesigning the Educational Psychology Service following the retirement of both Principal Educational Psychologists, with a focus on enhancing sustainability and unlocking new opportunities – particularly in supporting children with increasingly complex needs. Partnering with Hackney local authority will foster essential valued relationships, including improved access to local school placements.
 - b. Increased co-production by enhancing the visibility and involvement of the City Parent Carer Forum in service reviews to ensure that their voices are central to shaping provision. Our new Educational Psychology Service will be reviewed termly during its inaugural year and will include a member of the City Parent Care Forum.
 - c. Prioritising embedding the Quality Assurance Framework to drive consistency and continuous improvement across service. This includes leading on internal learning reviews and actively participating in multi-agency case audits, co-ordinated by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Partnership to strengthen multi-agency collaboration and accountability.
 - d. Strengthening the SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Panel process by integrating the SEND Ranges (the City of London Corporation's graduated approach) to assessments and establishing robust monitoring of children in alternative provision, enabling better planning for transitions back into mainstream education.
 - e. Gaining a deeper understanding of our SEN Support cohort by identifying pupils who attend schools outside the local area, and developing a clearer

picture of their individual needs, including their levels of attainment and overall progress.

- f. Implementing monthly reviews of health data at the SEND and AP Panel to identify children and young people awaiting health assessments. Oversight at a multi-agency panel ensures timely escalation where needed and makes sure that appropriate interim support is in place while families wait.
- g. Productivity and SEND reporting within MOSAIC have been enhanced through the implementation of a more streamlined workflow system. This formalised approach will support accurate and efficient reporting on SEND data to the DfE as well as contribute to the development of the new SEND Data Dashboard and Scorecard being led by the Performance and Strategy Team.
- h. Securing an agreement with the company Asset to provide school attendance data for all children with Education, Health and Care Plans. This will enhance understanding of attendance patterns during term time, particularly where concerns arise, and support timely interventions.
- i. Positive outcomes for our young people moving on to post 16 courses and higher education. Over the last two years we have seen our young people move into employment, university and accessing local courses organised by our Adults Skills team. Our partnership with the Shaw Trust also supports early conversations about potential options and supports our young people to realise their potential.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

- 10. **Strategic implications** – Corporate outcome: **Providing Excellent Services** – Supporting people to live healthy, independent lives, and achieve their ambitions, is dependent on excellent services. Vital to that continued pursuit is enabling access to effective adult and children's social care, outstanding education, lifelong learning, and quality housing, and combatting homelessness. **Diverse Engaged Communities:** Across our residents, workers, businesses, and visitors, everyone should feel that they belong. Connecting people of all ages and backgrounds will help build diverse, engaged communities that are involved in co-creating great services and outcomes.
- 11. **Financial implications** – the SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
- 12. **Resource implications** – the SEND functions are resourced through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.
- 13. **Legal implications** – the duties on local areas regarding provision for children and young people with SEND are covered in the Children and Families Act 2014. This legislation sits in the context of the Equality Act 2010. The Ofsted/CQC

Inspection Framework sets out the legal basis and the principles of inspection.

14. **Risk implications** – if children's SEND issues are not identified early, assessed and supported, this will impact on young people's educational attainment, progress and wider lifetime chances.
15. **Equalities implications** – Children in UK schools are protected by the **Equality Act 2010**, which ensures that they are not discriminated against based on characteristics such as **disability, race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation**. Schools must: **treat all pupils fairly** and equally; make **reasonable adjustments** for disabled children; provide **inclusive education** for those with special needs; ensure **equal access** to learning and activities; and promote **diversity and positive relationships** between different groups. They also have a **legal duty** to remove barriers, advance equality, and foster inclusion in all aspects of school life.
16. **Climate implications** – n/a
17. **Security implications** – n/a

Conclusion

18. Over the past year, our efforts have centred on improving the everyday experiences of children and young people with SEND, and their families, while also preparing for inspection. As we enter the new academic year, we remain committed to embedding our SEND and AP strategy as the core framework for tracking progress and driving service improvements for our children, young people and families.

Appendices

- None

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Safeguarding and SEND Sub Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: Virtual School Annual Report 2024-2025	Public report: For information
This Proposal: Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Diverse Engaged Communities Leading Sustainable Environment Providing Excellent Services
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
Report author:	Debby Rigby Headteacher of Virtual School for Children with a Social Worker

Summary

This report presents an overview of the activities and impact of The City of London Virtual School for the academic year 2024/2025.

The School Annual Report, attached as Appendix 1, provides detailed information about the role of the Virtual School, governance and organisation, cohort characteristics, attainment and progress, outcomes, progression, attendance, exclusions, personal education plans, budgets, pupil premium, training, celebration and partnership.

The report contains examples of outstanding endeavour and achievement, impact and areas for future development.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report and the Virtual School Annual Report 2024-2025, attached as Appendix 1.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Virtual School promotes and supports the education of all children in care, those who have been previously looked after and those living in kinship care arrangements. As part of its extended duties, the school also supports children who have a social worker or who have had a social worker in the past – known as Children with a Social Worker Ever 6, this includes Care Leavers until they are 25.

Current Position

2. Highlights 2024/2025

- The City of London Virtual School continued to maintain the high standards of previous years.
- Learners were well supported, and the vast majority made good progress against prior attainment.
- There were some examples of outstanding endeavour and exceptional educational progress.
- Overall engagement with education was very good.
- Outstanding Ofsted judgement in Autumn 2024.
- Outstanding enrichment provision for ESOL learners, offered.
- Four apprentices supported, one a City of London care experienced young person.
- Attendance of Children in Care Reception to Year 11 in July 2025 was 95%.
- No children in care, aged 0-18 years, were permanently excluded.
- The impact of enrichment projects was excellent, according to pupil voice and outcomes.
- Training for Aldgate School staff in trauma informed learning was well received.
- All Personal Education Plans were quality assured as good or outstanding and were completed on time, within ten days of arrival and then termly until the end of Key Stage 5.
- Effective joint working with colleagues in the SEND team to ensure effective support is in place for children and young people with SEND.
- All children in care, aged 3-18 years, attended good or outstanding schools and colleges.
- Excellent partnership work across London, culminated in a third Shining Stars Celebration, that recognised the work of Virtual Schools, and rewarded the exceptional

achievements of care experienced young people across London. Enrichment and Forest School projects opened to Pan London.

- Twenty per cent of care leavers obtained stadium security qualifications.
 - Virtual School Headteacher elected as joint chair of London's Virtual School Heads for 2025/2026.
 - Excellent education support available on arrival, for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking young people.
 - Virtual School staff attended 100% of Personal Education Meetings known as PEPs.
3. Various Virtual School projects took place throughout the year. The report describes these and considers their impact for children and young people.
4. The report highlights examples of outstanding endeavour and achievement, by pupils and services.
5. The report presents areas for future development and priorities for the academic year 2025/2026.

Options

6. The City of London Virtual School is currently a school term time only service, with continuity of service during holiday periods, provided using overtime arrangements. A restructure of the service has been agreed and will be implemented following the completion of Ambition 25.

Proposals

7. The Virtual School will continue to promote the educational achievement and attainment of all its children and young people. An independent school improvement partner will continue to meet with Virtual School staff six times a year to quality assure the work taking place and provide support and challenge.

Key Data

8. All data is held within the Annual Report in Appendix 1.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

9. There are no strategic implications directly related to this report.
- Financial implications – N/A
 - Resource implications – N/A
 - Legal implications – N/A
 - Risk implications – N/A
 - Equalities implication – N/A
 - Climate implications – N/A
 - Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

10. The Annual Report provides detailed information about cohorts, school attendance, academic progress, courses completed, and qualifications achieved.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Virtual School Annual Report 2024-2025 (Non-Public)

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Safeguarding & SEND Sub Committee	Dated: 13/10/2025
Subject: CHSCP Annual Report 2024-25	Public report: For information.
This proposal: Delivers on the corporate plan outcome: 'Providing Excellent Services' enabling access to effective children's social care.	Outlines CHSCP work for period 2024-25 for the board to note.
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:	The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (CHSCP)
Report author:	Rory McCallum - Senior Professional Advisor to the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Board

Summary

The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) Annual Report for 2024/25 provides an overview of the partnership's activities, progress, challenges, and future priorities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney. The report highlights the CHSCP's structure, key roles and relationships, and its commitment to an "active anti-racist" approach. It details the progress of various agencies, including local councils, police, NHS trusts, and other organisations, and their efforts in areas such as workforce stability, data management, and service delivery.

The document also outlines lessons learned from case reviews and audits, emphasising the importance of a "Safeguarding First" approach, professional curiosity, and information sharing. It concludes by setting out the priorities and pledges for the coming year, which include addressing strategic vulnerabilities like child sexual abuse and exploitation and maintaining a focus on continuous learning and improvement.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

See attached report.

Appendices

Appendix 1

- [City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024/25](#)

Rory McCallum

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