

SUFFICIENCY AND COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS IN THE CITY OF LONDON

2021-2023

About this document

Title	Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care and Care Leavers in the City of London.
Purpose	The Sufficiency Strategy has been produced to set out how the City of London Corporation will meet its duty of sufficiency. This version of the document includes the mid-term review.
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Approved by	Director of Community and Children's Services
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The City of London Corporation's (City Corporation) Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care and Care Leavers draws together the findings from research into the needs of children and young people in care. It analyses need presenting to the City of London, helps us to assess future placement requirements, and sets out options and explains our approach. This strategy should be read alongside other key strategies. These include the City's *Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy*, the *Joint Mental Health Strategy*, the *Education Strategy*, the *Children and Young People Plan* as well the City of London Police's *Vulnerability Strategy*.
- 1.2 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough placements within their geographical area to meet the needs of looked after children. The City of London covers one square mile and there are no foster carers within this geographic area (March 2019). Due to the comparatively low number of children residing in the City of London it has not been considered feasible to provide an in-house fostering service.
- 1.3 The City Corporation has one generic children's team which provides a full range of services including permanence, early help, and support for children with disabilities, children in need, child protection, looked after children and care leavers. The number of City of London resident children who have become looked after is very low. Most children who are looked after by the City Corporation are Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). The size of the children's team, the low numbers of looked after children and the predominance of UASC determines the distinct approach to placements that we take in the City of London.
- 1.4 The City Corporation is committed to ensuring that children and young people can remain safely within their own families wherever this is consistent with maintaining and promoting their wellbeing. This is supported through a "Think Family" approach, whereby all services involved with the family work together to prevent children coming into care. Further details about "Think Family" can be found here: <https://chscp.org.uk/think-family2/>
- 1.5 We are also improving the range of support services available to children with disabilities and their families, to ensure that this group of children and young people remain within their families wherever possible. The City Corporation has published a Carers Strategy for 2019-23 which sets out support for carers of children and young people with disabilities in accessing targeted and early help services, in addition to "short breaks", as well as developing an updated action plan. Further details about support for carers of children and young people with disabilities can be found here: [SEN and Disabilities Local Offer | FYi Directory \(cityoflondon.gov.uk\)](#)
- 1.6 We ensure that only those children and young people for whom care is essential come into care while enabling all others to be supported to remain within their extended families. Where children and young people need to come into care for their own safety and protection, we will seek to ensure that they remain placed as close as possible to their home, community and school, when this is in accordance with their best interests.

- 1.7 For young children who are unable to safely return to their birth or extended families, we will seek permanency for them through adoption wherever possible. Adoption is associated with the best outcomes for children unable to remain within their own birth families, where this is not possible the City has sought to achieve permanency through a Special Guardianship Order.

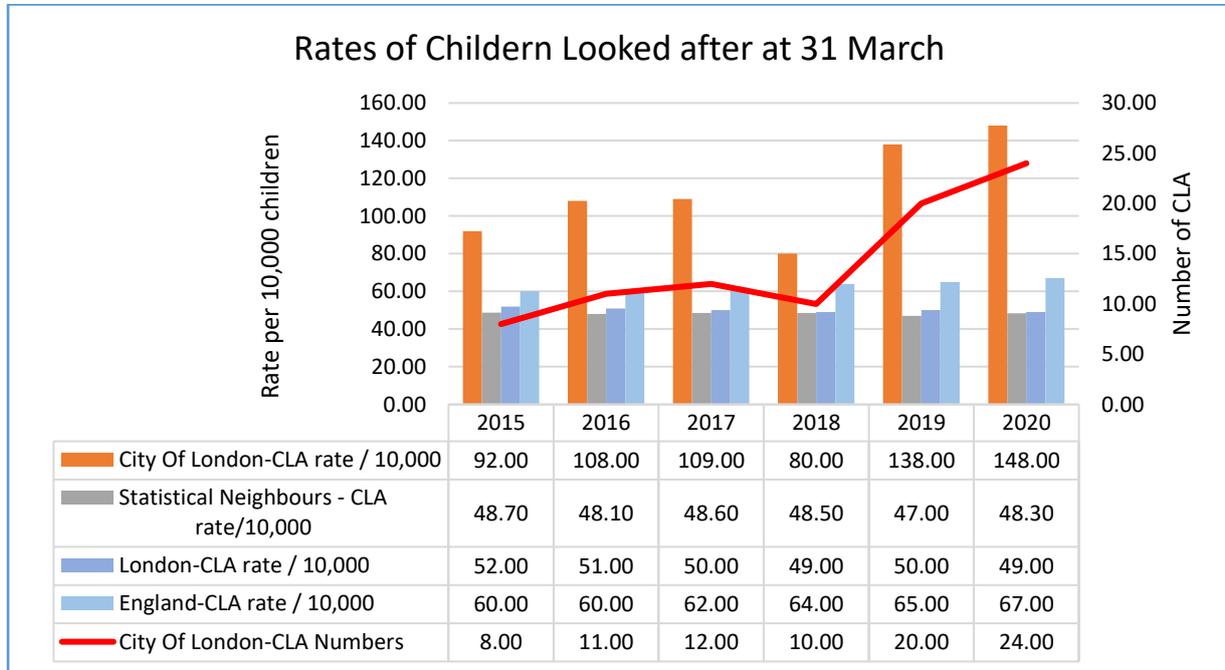
2 Vision

- 2.1 This strategy reflects and will support the delivery of the vision and priorities set out in our *Children and Young People's Plan 2018-21*. The City Corporation is currently reviewing the *Children and Young People's Plan* and will be publishing an updated version later in 2021.
- 2.2 The Vision is 'to be the best place possible for children and young people to grow up. We will work in partnership to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all our children and young people, regardless of background and circumstance, feel they belong. We will provide high quality services, world-class education and excellent opportunities that enable them to live healthily, develop resilience, access meaningful employment, achieve their potential and thrive'.
- 2.3 The five priorities are:
- **Safe** - Our children and young people are safe and feel safe.
 - **Potential** – Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well-prepared for adulthood.
 - **Independence, involvement and choice** - Our children and young people are co-producers of cultural and support services and they will have the resources to develop independence and the empowerment to play an active role in their communities and exercise choice over their services.
 - **Health and wellbeing** - Our children and young people enjoy good health and wellbeing.
 - **Community** - Our children and young people grow up with a sense of belonging as part of cohesive and resilient communities. They are able to create and participate in the cultural and creative opportunities available in the Square Mile.
- 2.4 Our Children and Young People's Plan supports the delivery of the aims set out in the City Corporation's *Corporate Plan 2018-23*, particularly to 'contribute to a flourishing society' where people are safe and feel safe, enjoy good health and wellbeing, have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential and live in communities that are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

3 Local Context

- 3.1 As can be seen from Figure 1 (below) the majority of the looked after children cared for by the City Corporation are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) hence why the City has explored options for semi-independent living, which is the preferred placement option of UASC's according to consultation with them. This contrasts with other local authorities, where the majority are residents in the local authority. This

brings its own unique challenges for the City Corporation in terms of finding suitable placements that meet the diverse cultural needs. In addition, while comparatively low, the number of looked after children doubled between 2018 and 2020, as did the number of care leavers, and we have needed to respond to the additional demand for placements.



	LAC Mar-18	LAC Mar-19	LAC Mar-20	LAC Dec-20	Care leaver Mar-19	Care leaver Mar-20	Care leaver Dec-20
No of open cases	10	20	24	23	21	32	42
No of UASC /former UASC	10	17	21	19	20	29	39

KEY FACTS

On 31 March 2020, the City Corporation was caring for 24 young people, of whom 21 were UASC.

This is a 20% increase in the number of cases on 31 March 2019 when there were 20 CLA, including 17 UASC. But it is a 140% increase on March 2018 when there were 10 children in care, all UASC.

At March 2020 the rate of children in care per 10,000 children under-18 in the City was 148, significantly higher than the London average of 49.

2 out of the 24 were female, 14 were black or black British, 2 were Asian, 1 was mixed ethnicity, 2 were white and 5 were from other ethnic groups. 19 were aged 16 or 17.

13 were in foster care placements out of borough, 9 were living in semi-independent residential accommodation with 24/7 support and two were placed for adoption with placement order

On 31 March 2020, 32 young people were engaged with the City Corporation's Care Leaver service of which 29 were former UASC. This is a 53.4% increase in the care leaver cohort compared to 21 care leavers in March 2019.

On 31 March 2020 3 care leavers were female, 18 were Black African, 5 were White (British or Albanian) and 9 were from other ethnic groups (most from Afghanistan).

21 were in semi-independent living accommodation; 6 in independent living accommodation and 4 were 'stayed put' with their former foster carers.

It is of note that by 31 December 2020 the care leaver cohort had increased a further 31% to 42 young people

- 3.2 Figures 2 and 3 show the ethnic diversity of the looked after children and care leaver population supported by the City Corporation. Our approach is to meet the diverse needs of our children and young people, ensuring that they have the support of foster carers who know and understand their needs and journey. We seek to secure the best match for the young person in their placement through reviewing and assessing a range of carers with similar backgrounds to the young people (see Section 4).
- 3.3 Due to the diverse nature of this population it is important that we have a range of carers from varied backgrounds, given the size and demography of the City of London it is difficult to meet these needs in the Square Mile.
- 3.4 Most accommodation used for those who are transitioning to leave care delivers some support to our young people and reflects their needs on transitioning to independence. The City Corporation anticipates that UASC will continue to be the significant majority of those for whom we provide care. As such our future need will continue to require a high proportion of semi-independent living accommodation that provide support.

Figure 2: Ethnic Diversity of Looked After Children Population 31 December 2020

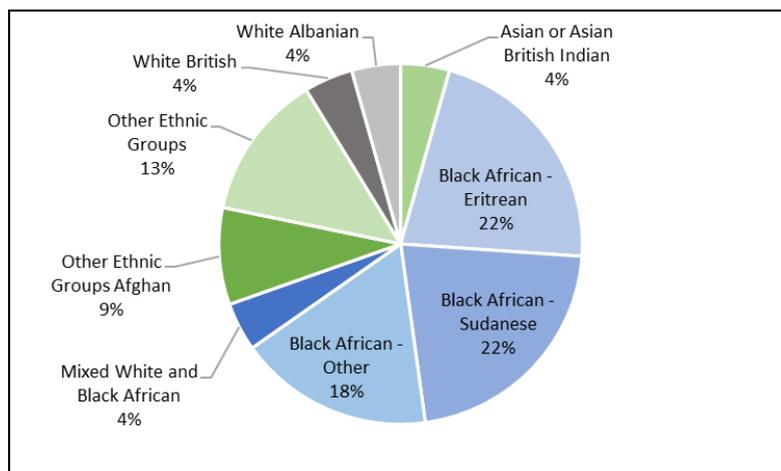
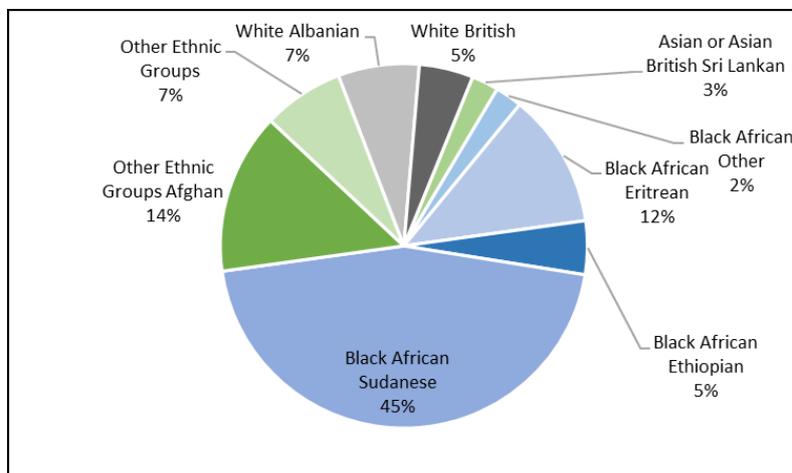


Figure 3: Ethnic Diversity of Care Leaves Population 31 December 2020



4 Commissioning Placements

- 4.1 Our approach to commissioning services for looked after children and care leavers is shaped by the evidence-base for what works, by best practice, market supply and by the voices of children and young people.
- 4.2 A sufficiency strategy for the City of London also needs to take account of the specific characteristics of our locality and our cohort of looked after children and care leavers.
- **Our size.** We have a comparatively small resident population (around 8,000) and much fewer children and young people in care and leaving care than other local authorities.
 - **Our looked after and care leaver population.** The children and young people in our care are mostly UASC. They tend to be older and are a highly diverse cohort who may have strong ethnic, cultural and religious identities. They prefer semi-independent living.
 - **Our assets.** For example, as a strategic housing authority we have accommodation both in the City of London and across six other London Boroughs.
 - **Our values.** A placement is only as good as the social work practice that supports it – for example, after three months in placement we offer a specialist mental health assessment. We are strongly committed to co-production: treating children and young people as partners; finding out about their individual needs, assets and aspirations, and involving them at a strategic level (e.g. through our Children in Care Council).

Some assumptions

- 4.3 Our placements commissioning strategy assumes that:
- Foster care placements will usually be best for looked after children who are under the age of 18 (except the youngest children, where adoption may be best).
 - Unregulated Support Accommodation will not be used for anyone under 16 years old.
 - The option of remaining in a successful foster care placement should be available for older children. We are committed to providing continuity for children beyond 18 wherever we can.
 - Semi-independent living may be suitable for older children in care, but for 16 to 18-year-olds (subject to assessment) this would include a range of provision as per individual need, some with 24/7 onsite staffing and access to specialist support.
 - Semi-independent living can be good alternative option to foster care for young people leaving care and Unaccompanied Single Children (UASC).
- 4.4 It also assumes that:
- A placement in or near the City of London may be best for children with a local connection.
 - A placement taking account of the individual's ethnic, cultural and/or religious identity is usually beneficial for UASC.

Options assessment

- 4.5 The City Corporation focussed on six key criteria in making our initial options assessment:
1. *Are placements available in the City of London?* This is beneficial for some children.
 2. *Are placements subject to regular and rigorous quality checking?*
 3. *Does our approach to placements provide us with enough capacity of the right sort to meet changing need?*
 4. *Does our approach meet the diverse needs of our children and young people?*
Recognising that this is not going to be possible within the City of London itself.
 5. *Does our approach provide stability, and minimise placement breakdown?* This is difficult to assess directly. For us, if we are meeting criteria 1-4, then placements will tend to be stable, so long as they are supported by good social work practice.
 6. *Do placements provide 'value for money'?* How do the costs compare with alternatives of similar or better quality and with those of other local authorities?
- 4.6 We also need an approach that enables us to work flexibly, so we are not exclusively reliant on one option, are managing risk and can meet the diverse needs of the children and young people looked after and leaving care (e.g., by having options in the City while also being able to cast the net wider to match children to placements appropriately).
- 4.7 A further options appraisal identified the most effective purchase model for the City to be the Commissioning Alliance, covering Foster Care, Supported Living, SEND and Residential Placements. The Commissioning Alliance¹, 'Care Place' Framework, has a set of Dynamic Purchasing Vehicles (DPV) which hold a panel of pre-qualified and experienced care providers which have been pre-approved and appointed via EU procurement procedures. This framework also provides a complete package of administrative tasks and monitoring functions and offers the best value for money.
- 4.8 Approved through City governance in early 2021, it is intended to procure the majority of Children's placements through the Commissioning Alliance for the next 3 years to 2024 with ongoing effectiveness reviews. Working through this partnership with other London Boroughs will increase the availability and specialism with pre-qualified and experienced care and support providers. It will also support the City with new and innovative placements for Looked After Children and Young People as set out below:

For Foster Care: We will work through the Commissioning Alliance, Dynamic Purchasing portal to secure Foster Placements. We will also provide free training for all foster carers who are involved in caring for City of London children and young people. In addition, we also seek to secure foster carers who are willing to enter into 'staying put' arrangements to provide stability for those leaving care and transitioning to adulthood.

¹ <https://www.commissioningalliance.co.uk/our-services>

For semi-independent living: Through the Commissioning Alliance, we will procure semi-independent living appropriate to individual needs as this is the preferred option of UASC's. We will work with providers and other LA's to implement any new regulatory requirements, including any introduced by Ofsted during 2021/22 and beyond. For UASC's in semi-independent accommodation, the City will pay accommodation, support and agreed subsistence costs as required by legislation and up to the point they have been given status to remain and become eligible for State Benefits. UASC's will be expected to fund their own costs up to their benefits level and/or income. If required any rent subsidies or top ups will be negotiated with the young person and Semi-independent providers on an individual basis.

For Residential Care: We will secure placements through the Commissioning Alliance portal, ensuring full adherence to current regulatory frameworks and any Ofsted requirements.

For SEND: We will arrange services to meet needs through the Commissioning alliance portal which may be part of a package of support to meet a range of needs.

While we are in the early stages of the Commissioning Alliance² implementation, we will review the effectiveness of the Dynamic Purchasing Portal outcomes in matching children and young people to placements, the quality of support and benchmark costs with other London Boroughs through the London Commissioning Alliance.

Adoption is generally the best option for younger children who cannot return to their birth or extended families. The City of London has a Memorandum of Understanding with five local authorities to form a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), led by the London Borough of Harrow.

4.9 In addition, the City's offer includes:

- Additional free training for foster carers who care for City looked after children
- A high level of support for all children and young people in placement from their social worker and independent review officer
- A specialist mental health assessment offered to all children and care leavers after three months, to ensure their needs are identified and responded to in a timely manner, recognising the higher risk of trauma among UASCs.

4.10 The City of London Corporation started a programme of reviewing the semi-independent (unregulated) provision provided for looked after children and care leavers. The purpose of this review is to establish the quality of the services being provided, effectiveness of support that progresses toward independence, personal income is maximised where appropriate and gain assurance that young people are not at risk in the local authority areas in which they were being placed.

² <https://www.commissioningalliance.co.uk/>

- 4.11 Quality and diligence checks continue to be made on the services being provided by the semi-independent provision in relation to the accommodation, quality of support being offered to young people in respect of life skills, health, cultural needs, education and accessibility to facilities, such as Mosques, Churches, shops and leisure facilities.
- 4.12 The locality of the semi-independent placements is also reviewed, looking at the level and types of crime occurring in the area, in comparison to other London Boroughs. The information from these assessments is shared with the Children and Families Team so they can make an informed decision on placing a young person in the area.

In line with the recent announcement from the Secretary of Education, www.gov.uk/government/news/unregulated-accommodation-banned-for-vulnerable-children-under-16

We will not place any Children under the age of 16 years in semi-independent (Unregulated) accommodation and will work to support any new or revised Ofsted regulations. We will also support any new national standards that relate to unregulated settings accommodating 16 and 17-year-old children in care and care leavers, to improve the quality of this provision and ensure that individual needs and progression toward independence are at the forefront of delivery and does not mean refusing independence to older teens who are ready for it. For example, in Semi Independent Living, it may be appropriate to have more freedom to come and go and any curfew/restrictions should be agreed by negotiation rather than instruction, the same as for any 16 and 17-year olds living at home with their parents.

- 4.13 The success of any placement depends on the quality of support provided. We ensure that a high level of in placement support is available both from the child's social worker and an independent reviewing officer, for care leavers in City accommodation our tenancy sustainment officers also have a key role to play.
- 4.14 The City of London also has a duty to appoint an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to every child in care. These are experienced social workers who oversee the care plan of the child and ensure that everyone who is involved in that child understands their responsibilities. IRO's visit placements prior to children being placed and during their stay, in order to assess suitability and the quality of support for each individual. This ongoing review process combined with the City's quality monitoring, ensures positive outcomes for individuals and prevents placement breakdowns, which are highly damaging to children.

5 Leaving Care and Moving On

- 5.1 The City of London has a statutory duty to provide accommodation and care for young people that are looked after up to 18 years, and to provide support to Care Leavers and UASC's up to 25 years.
- 5.2 All will have their own unique circumstances; independence and moving on preparation will vary according to each young person with different life experiences, individual needs and future aspirations. In the City, for example, we support young people who:

- Are in long-term, settled care placements
- Have experienced a series of short-term placements
- Are unaccompanied asylum-seeking Young People
- Are planning for university, Armed Forces or further education away from the City
- Are in custody / secure accommodation
- Are physically disabled, have learning difficulties or on the autistic spectrum
- Have only very recently become looked after
- Are young parents
- Are experiencing mental health difficulties
- Are in hospital for a long-term period of medical care

- 5.3 Whatever their current situation, we will ensure care leavers in the City are prepared for life after care. An individual pathway plan will be agreed to help prepare young people for independence in accordance with their needs.
- 5.4 The transition to adulthood for all young people, including care leavers, is about progression. For care leavers, this may be a series of small or larger steps, both preparing for independence, leaving care and beyond. Some young people may get their own independent accommodation at 18 years, which is recognised as a very young age to live alone. If this is the case, they will continue to need support as they develop their skills, learn from experience and react to their changing life circumstances. Realistically, most young people at 18, not only care leavers, may find it difficult to manage their own tenancy successfully even with support, and any experience of ‘failure’ can impact them practically and emotionally.
- 5.5 The emotional wellbeing of young people leaving care is a critical consideration. Alongside support in relation to managing their accommodation, we will continue to offer emotional and practical support up to the age of 25 years to ensure that our care leavers, often living on a tight budget and living alone, can manage in a tenancy and in engage positively with their community.
- 5.6 Young people also need timely and easy to understand information about what will happen when they leave care, the type of accommodation they should expect, where they might live and the pros and cons of various options. When young people are ready to leave care in the City, they will be provided with practical information about moving on and supported to secure their moving on accommodation.
- 5.7 Young people leaving care need a home that is safe and secure to ensure a positive transition into adulthood. Good quality, affordable housing combined with needs led support for emotional well-being and life skills is essential to enable success in other areas of life, such as employment. Availability of social housing is severely limited in the City, with single person accommodation social housing in high demand and in short supply. This can limit accommodation choices for most young people and those who wish to remain in the City area are likely to be offered a tenancy in Studio type accommodation but may wait a long time and remain in a high cost placement for longer than necessary.

5.8 An initial review of the options available going forward has identified that when accommodating Care Leavers and enabling move on, the City could deliver a better model which could have the potential to be more cost effective and improve individual outcomes.

5.9 In order to develop a new City model there are three main options in consideration:

1. Develop a purpose-built supported accommodation scheme in the City, for Young People. This would need to be developed with the City Housing Team and a possible partnership with a local Housing Association. The scheme would require onsite staffing and a clear onward route to independent housing. For this model, move on accommodation would need to be secured.

The benefits of this approach would be:

- A local setting in which to accommodate Care Leavers
 - Partnership approach to supporting Care Leavers
 - Ability to locally manage and plan vacancies
2. Develop a City based 'Core and Cluster' accommodation model for Young People. This model would secure self-contained studio flats within the City locality. These would be linked to a specialist outreach service to provide daily contact, with ongoing practical and wellbeing support to enable Care Leavers to sustain a tenancy and out of hours support built in.

The additional benefits of this approach are:

- a. There would be no need to build/remodel a property as the intention would be to use existing City housing stock.
 - b. Move on accommodation would not be required as the support would be to enable the Young Person to develop the accommodation as their long-term home and establish themselves in the local community. This would provide Young People a level of security and stability in a time when they may be experiencing many changes in their lives.
3. Increase the amount of move on accommodation by developing a Private Rented scheme (PRS) with accredited Landlords that could include the City paying for a deposit and a rent guarantor scheme. We will work with colleagues in housing to engage with existing and/or new private sector landlords. It is noted that for this approach, a Community based support offer may also be needed.

The additional benefits of this approach are:

- a. Increased move on accommodation in the City area, enabling young People to move when they are ready.
- b. Increased move on accommodation availability can reduce costs of Supported accommodation.

- 5.10 Initial scoping has started on these forward options. A fully costed options appraisal will be developed during 2021/22 that can determine the future accommodation offer for the City's Young People leaving care.

6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 6.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is set out in the Equality Act 2010 (s. 149) that requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- 6.2 The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status apply to the first part of the duty.
- 6.3 The City Corporation's Sufficiency Strategy will enable the Corporation to meet its statutory duties to ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate accommodation for looked after children. The strategy will have a positive impact on those within its remit; specifically looked after children, among whom males and BAME children are overrepresented.
- 6.4 The Strategy will advance equality of opportunity for looked after children with protected characteristics and foster good relations between looked after children with protected characteristics and those who do not.

7 Reviewing this Strategy

- 7.1 This strategy sets out our commissioning intentions to ensure that we have sufficient placements of the right kind and quality to meet the needs of children and young people in care within the City of London.
- 7.2 Central to this strategy is children and young people and the support they need to thrive, develop and reach their full potential. This means considering their health, education, connectedness and emotional wellbeing when reviewing how we meet their placement needs.
- 7.3 We are committed to ensuring that children and young people have their views taken into consideration; this will be achieved by consultation through and engagement with forums including the Children in Care Council and the Youth Forum.

- 7.4 To ensure that progress against the action plan is measured and receives full support, updates on the implementation of the Action Plan will be reported at the following regular Management Group meetings:
- Strategic Placements Group
 - Children’s Senior Management Team
 - Achieving Excellence Board
 - Safeguarding Sub Committee – reporting to City Members.
- 7.5 The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that our approach and commissioning intentions are effectively meeting the needs of children looked after in the City of London. Review will also take account of any complaints or complements regarding placements.
- 7.6 This updated strategy runs until 2023, and will be reviewed annually, with the next review in April 2022.

8 Concluding Remarks

- 8.1 The sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for children in care and Care Leavers sets out the City Corporation’s intentions in providing services for children looked after in the City, which meets their needs in relation to quality and diversity.
- 8.2 The uniqueness of the demography in the City of London is not currently conducive in meeting these needs and therefore the City Corporation will continue to commission independent fostering agencies through the Pan London agreement in the short term and for the longer term, is joining the Commissioning Alliance, a framework that uses a Direct Purchase portals with a broad range of pre-qualified providers across SEND, Fostering, LACs over 16, Care Leavers and UASC’s, with the aim to place them in City of London estates when appropriate.
- 8.3 The Children and Young People’s plan sets out our overarching vision, priorities and activities, which provide the context for this strategy. We will continue to provide preventative services through Early Help to prevent children and young people coming into care. This supports the City Corporation in maintaining low numbers of City of London children coming into care.
- 8.4 A significant proportion of the City Corporation’s looked after population are UASC. A key area of development has been to bring both City of London resident children and UASC together to ensure that they have a say in the development of services for children in care. This has been achieved through the Children in Care Council and opportunities for children in care and care leavers to be involved in the monitoring of commissioned services.

Children's Sufficiency Strategy Actions 2021/2023

	We will	Lead	Performance measure	Target
Children's Services	Build on any findings or improvement areas as identified in the CoL audit on Unregulated Children's Placements in March 2021.	Children's Social Care	That areas identified for improvement are actioned within timescales agreed with Audit.	November 2021
	Implement Unregulated Placements National Policy changes and new Ofsted requirements.	Children's Social Care Team	New Ofsted compliance regime is planned for 2021/22. Guidance will establish development needs for the City and relevant performance measures.	As per Ofsted announcements
	Review of Unregulated Placement and diligence and monitoring procedures.	DCCS Commissioning	Improved contract monitoring and diligence checks	July 2022
	Implement the Commissioning Alliance Direct Purchasing Portal and utilise to procure and monitor placements.	DCCS Commissioning	Number of successful placements, effective cost comparison with other LA's, reduced administration.	November 2021
	Review placements contracts annually or 6 monthly as required.	DCCS Commissioning	Col Contract review and feedback on the effectiveness of placements.	Programme of reviews for 2021/22 completed by March 2021.
	Review the implementation of the Commissioning Alliance Purchasing Portals.	DCCS Commissioning	Following the implementation of the new commissioning Alliance, a 6-month review to show the effectiveness of this model and efficiencies gained.	January 2022
	Review engagement and consultation options during and after Covid lockdown restrictions.	DCCS Commissioning	Aim is to ensure that Client and Carer feedback is incorporated into performance monitoring and service development.	March 2022
	Review leaving care guidance and information to ensure housing options are clear.	Children's Social Care Team	Ensure that information and guidance is up to date and includes realistic options for Care Leavers.	December 2021
	Develop proposals for a City based Supported Accommodation offer for Care Leavers with the view to develop a scheme in 2 – 3 years.	DCCS Commissioning	An options appraisal and business case to develop a Supported Accommodation scheme with plans and timescales to completion and launch.	August 2022
	Develop a Private Rented, Move on accommodation offer for Care Leavers.	DCCS Commissioning	Work with City housing Team and Private Sector Landlords to develop a long term move on offer with Rent Guarantees and Deposits pre-agreed.	August 2022

APPENDIX 1 – The Legal Context

1. Since the implementation of the Children Act 1989 local authorities have been required to take steps that secure, so far as is reasonable and practicable, sufficient accommodation for children looked after within their local authority area or ‘the sufficiency duty’ (s. 22G, Children Act 1989, as inserted into the Act by s. 9 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008).
2. The Statutory Guidance on *Securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children* (2010) sets out best practice, which includes the following:
 - That all children are placed in appropriate placements with access to the support services they require in their local authority area, except where this is not consistent with their welfare;
 - That the full range of universal, targeted and specialist services work together to meet children’s needs in an integrated way in the local area, including children who are already looked after, as well as those at risk of care or custody;
 - Where it is not reasonable or practical for a child to be placed within her/his local authority area, there are mechanisms in place to widen the range of provision in neighbouring areas, or a region which is still within an accessible distance, while still being able to provide the full range of services to meet identified needs;
 - That partners, including housing, work together to secure a range of provision to meet the needs of those who become looked after at the age of 16 and 17 years, and support the continuity of accommodation beyond the age of 18 years;
 - In addition to meeting relevant national minimum standards, services are of high quality to secure the specific outcomes identified in the care plans of children looked after.
3. The Statutory Guidance states that ‘Local authorities must be able to show that at a strategic level they are taking steps to meet the sufficiency duty, so far as is ‘reasonably practical’.’ It further explains what is meant by ‘reasonably practical’, and it includes the following:
 - that it is a general duty that applies to strategic arrangements, rather than to the provision of accommodation to an individual child;
 - it does not require local authorities to provide accommodation within their area for every child they look after;
 - there may be a significant minority of children for whom it is not ‘reasonably practical’ to provide a certain type of accommodation within the area;
 - in accordance with section 22C (5) of the 1989 Act, the overriding factor is that the placement must be the most appropriate placement available;
 - the local authority must give preference to a placement with a friend, relative or other person connected with the child and who is a local authority foster parent [section 22C (7) (a)].
4. The term ‘looked after children’ as defined in the 1989 Act refers to all children and young people being ‘looked after’ by the local authority. These may be subject to Care Orders or Interim Care Orders; placed or authorised to be placed, with prospective adopters; voluntarily accommodated including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), subject to court orders with residence requirements i.e. a secure order or remanded to local authority accommodation.
5. The term ‘care leavers’ as defined in The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 amends the Children Act 1989 to include the following definitions of ‘eligible’, ‘relevant’ and ‘former relevant’ children:

- Eligible children are those young people aged 16 and 17 who are still in care and have been 'looked after' for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14 and including their 16th birthday;
 - Relevant children are those young people aged 16 and 17 who have already left care, and who were 'looked after' for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14, and have been 'looked after' at some time while they were 16 or 17;
 - Former relevant children are those young people aged 18, 19 or 20 who have been eligible and/or relevant.
6. The *Children and Social Work Act 2017* introduced Corporate Parenting Principles to ensure all staff and departments in local authorities consider the impact of their work on those children and young people for whom the local authority is the corporate parent, as well as for care leavers up to the age of 25. There is a focus on encouraging children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings and taking these into account, ensuring they have stability and preparing them for adulthood and independent living. The Act also requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers.
7. *The National Transfer Scheme for Migrant Children* was set up by the Home office and Department for Education in 2016. It is a voluntary transfer arrangement between local authorities for the care of unaccompanied children who arrive in the UK to claim asylum. The scheme was set up to encourage all local authorities to volunteer to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) which a more even distribution of social care responsibilities across the country. Under the scheme a child arriving in one local authority area that is providing care at or near capacity for UASC may be transferred to another council with more capacity. This is a voluntary arrangement, and London local authorities continue to support higher numbers of UASC than local authorities outside London, which puts pressure on the resources of social care teams in London.

APPENDIX 2 - Responsible Procurement

1.1 The City Corporation's Responsible Procurement Strategy sets out how we will balance best value for money with good market stewardship in the procurement of goods, services and works. Our three pillars of responsible procurement are:

1. **Social Value:** Leveraging service and works contracts to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of local people and the local environment, providing skills and employment opportunities and promoting the local economy.
2. **Environmental sustainability:** Minimising environmental impacts, promoting animal welfare and improving efficiency throughout the supply chains of all goods, services and works procured by the City Corporation.
3. **Ethical Sourcing:** Ensuring that human rights and employment rights are protected throughout the City's supply chains and encouraging responsible business practices.

APPENDIX 3 – Fostering Monitoring Form



Fostering Monitoring Form

Fostering Provision.....**Date seen**.....

Present.....

Contract Review

Pan London/ Organisational contract in place.....Yes/No

Individual child contract in placeYes/No

Last Reviewed.....Date.....

Last Monitoring Meeting.....Date.....

Ofsted Inspection

Last Ofsted Inspection Outcome.....Date.....

Outstanding Actions Progress.....Date.....

Children Placed

Name.....Date Placed.....Foster Carers.....

Current Placement Costs/ Reviewed

Cost.....Reviewed.....

Cost.....Reviewed.....

Finance Review/Comment.....

Placement	Evidence	Checked By	Comment
Is there someone that the child can speak to if they are worried or concerned?			
How do foster carers promote the child identity and individual needs?			
What support and training do staff have in promoting positive behaviour and relationships?			
Safeguarding Children – Training, LADO procedures and reporting mechanisms.			
Does the agency have clear policy and procedures in place in relation to children missing from care/ are foster carers aware,			
How often are placements checked/reviewed in regard to Health and safety, what training is available for foster carers?			
Placement suitability in regard to leisure, contact and supporting educational needs.			
Feedback from children and young people on placement, provider and commissioned service.			
Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care- How is this supported.			
Recruiting, selection and assessing of foster carers.			
Information on agency decision maker and fostering panel.			
Fostering agencies statement of purpose and children's guide.			
Stability of work force, safer recruitment processes			
Learning and development of foster carers, sample of training opportunities available, and frequency.			
Supervision and support for foster carers. Out of normal working hours support.			
Handling of professional allegations and suspicions of harm. Policy and procedures.			
Notification of significant events LA's, Social Worker, Safeguarding Board.			

CSE / Radicalisation and Prevent agenda (obtained from LSCB/Police)

Intelligence on prevalence where children and young people placed;

CSE..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Radicalisation..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Foster Carers have had training on;

CSE..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Radicalisation..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Actions outstanding/ review date

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Copy of Form sent to agency...Yes/ No.....Date.....

Next Review Date.....

APPENDIX 4 – Semi-independent living Monitoring Form

Post 16 Supported Accommodation – New provider Quality Assurance

Provider name

Property address

Number of current placements

What other Local Authorities does the provider have placements with?

Reason for visit

New provider initial visit	
Annual review (planned)	
Exceptional visit (announced)	
Exceptional visit (unannounced)	
Other (state below)	

Visit undertaken by – Staff names, Job titles

Provider Representative(s)

Date

Young People's Files

CLA documentation / IPA / risk assessment / care pathway plan on file

Support for Young People

Staff roles

Proximity and Details of local amenities. GP, shops, leisure.

Transport links

Education options. Local colleges. Details of attendance at school/college / evidence of being EET and where not action plans to address/ progress at school/college

Preparation for work / assistance with CV's and applications – evidence of support for young people

Budgeting and finance / support / access to benefits

--

Sexual health / personal relationships - support
--

--

Substance misuse awareness / support

--

Exploitation, CSE and gang awareness / support
--

--

Radicalisation awareness / support

--

Evidence of engagement in interests, sports

Involvement in cultural activities where this is the choice of the young person

Support for young people for whom English is an additional language

Emotional wellbeing and mental health awareness, self-harm / support

Healthy eating / cooking

Evidence of bullying within the placement and how this is dealt with

--

What is the staff to young person ratio on the day / how does this differ at night and on weekends

--

Support to ensure accommodation is kept clean and tidy including own rooms

--

Support with immigration issues

--

Missing episodes

Procedure – when reported – how – to who - recording – evidence of regular police visits to property - **staff knowledge**

--

--

Accommodation

No rooms

Room size

Lockable doors – lock from outside and twist to open without key from inside

Suitable bed and bedding

Suitable wardrobe, storage and seating

Communal area with TV

Private space for social work visits away from the bedroom

Separate staff areas including separate bathroom for staff

--

Internet access

--

Equipped kitchen (all facilities including oven gloves)

--

Suitable bathroom facilities – how many – how many young people in the accommodation
--

--

Washing machine / ironing

--

Controllable heating and ventilation – gas safety certificates
--

--

General cleanliness – all areas / general state of repair – all areas / how quickly are repairs undertaken

Fire extinguishers / fire blankets / fire signage / smoke detectors/CO2 alarms (hardwired to electrical system) / adequate means of escape / inspection by fire service – are young people aware of the procedure for escape from all levels of the building / has there been a recent evacuation drill / are staff trained in fire safety

Fire doors with smoke seals

Emergency lighting

CCTV on external doors and hallways only

HMO certificate / insurance certificate / Health& Safety poster / Fire Safety notices and plans / complaints procedure displayed

Electrical safety checks (whole system check - NICEIC) and PAT testing annually

Are hazardous cleaning materials stored safely

Is there any evidence of drug / alcohol use in the accommodation – how is this managed

What is the process for young people leaving the accommodation / is there a deadline for return in the evening and for making visits to friends/relatives which involve overnight stays

Is there an accident reporting procedure and record book

--

Are staff first aid (inc paediatric) trained – check certification / are there adequate first aid kits

--

Security of front door / rear doors

--

Do staff know their designated safeguarding lead

--

Staff knowledge on following areas: warning signs / gang exploitation – warning signs / self-harm / sharing of information / process for recording a disclosure / process for reporting safeguarding concerns

--

Staff training in respect of safeguarding and associated areas such as gangs, self-harm / what level is s/g training at– it is refreshed at least every 3 years

--

Do staff know of the whistleblowing policy and who to report concerns to

--

Is safeguarding a standing agenda item in staff supervision

--

Do staff know the process in respect of storing information – electronically and paper based.

--

Safe recruitment process – check: references (one from previous employer) are written references followed up verbally / ID verification (2 forms) / DBS (**enhanced with checks on barred list for children and adults**) / robust application and recruitment process which is recorded / gaps in work history checked / staff have the right to work in the UK / staff qualifications are checked and copies held on file

--

--

Are there records of escalation of alerts to social care / EDT

--

What recording system is used / can all staff access YP details easily / is there a daily log and incident log – what is the quality of these and where safeguarding concerns are identified are these followed up with formal reports

--

Staff knowledge of confidentiality and data protection – systems in place re: secure email/leapfile/encryption

--

Staff files

Check staff regularly supervised and quality of sessions and recording

--

Are staff having an annual appraisal and any development issues taken up

--

Do staff have a contract of employment

Are there any outstanding disciplinary issues

Is there evidence of staff induction

Staff qualifications

Do staff have Health & Safety training

Policies

The following policies should be made available (emailed electronically if more appropriate to review in the office):

Insurance in place and up to date (buildings, employer, public and professional indemnity)

Vehicles used for transporting young people – insured (for business use), MOT, roadworthy and taxed – risk assessments conducted, Driving Licence checks.

Policy name	Checked by commissioning/social worker (enter name/date checked)	Has provider reviewed in last year (enter date reviewed)	Has provider updated in last 3 years (enter date updated)
Health and Safety policy and evidence of risk assessments/ fire safety assessment/gas and/or electrical safety			
Equality and Diversity policy			
Personal Support and progression to independence planning (incl. Income Maximisation)			
Safer recruitment policy			
Business continuity plan			
Supervision policy			
Safeguarding policy			
Missing policy			
Anti- radicalisation policy			
Event & Notification policy			
Whistleblowing			
Safe Internet use			
Visitor policy			
Medication policy			
Complaints/compliments policy			
Insurance certificates 1. Employers Liability 2. Public liability 3. Professional indemnity			
Restrictive practice policy (Incl. any Curfew arrangements)			

ACTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS FROM REVIEW

Action required	Responsible	Date due	Date complete

Signed.....Date.....