

<b>Committee(s):</b> Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information	<b>Dated:</b> 14/11/2024
<b>Subject:</b> 2023–24 Private Fostering Annual Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>This proposal</b> a) provides statutory duties	
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Laura Demetriades, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

### Summary

The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service within the People’s Directorate oversees awareness raising in relation to Private Fostering arrangements. The Private Fostering Regulations apply when children or young people, aged under 16 years (18 if they have a disability) live with a person who is not a close relative for 28 days or more. It is a legal duty for parent(s), private foster carers, and professionals to notify the Local Authority where it is suspected or known that a child is residing in a private fostering arrangement. The report details how the City of London has complied with its duties and functions in relation to private fostering. The report also outlines the activities which have been undertaken to promote awareness of the notification requirements regarding children who are living in private fostering arrangements. There have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

### Background

1. The Private Fostering Regulations apply when children or young people, aged under 16 years (18 if they have a disability) live with a person who is not a close relative for 28 days or more. The term ‘close relative’ has a specific definition

within the legislation it includes grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) and stepparents. Children living with people who are not defined as a close relative, such as a cousin, great aunt or family friend need to be assessed and reviewed under the Private Fostering Regulations to ensure the arrangement is able to safeguard and promote their welfare.

2. Private Fostering regulations come into force as a direct action from the Victoria Climbié Inquiry, recognising that children who are not living within their family network can be vulnerable and there needs to be clear assessment and support provided to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and promoted.
3. Nationally Private Fostering arrangements are under reported and there needs to be consistent efforts made to raise awareness amongst the community and professionals and ensure children in Private Fostering arrangements are visible and supported.

### **Current Position**

4. During the last year we have had zero notifications in relation to Private Fostering arrangements in the City.
5. Private Fostering continues to be promoted by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) with the information App available on their website.
6. In person awareness raising has taken place with partnership colleagues across the City via the People's Service Induction and in person visits to all schools and several nurseries within the City. Internal awareness raising across DCCS has taken place via circulation of information in the Buzz.

### **Options**

7. Awareness raising work will continue inline with statutory expectations, progressing the priorities outlined in the Annual Report.

### **Proposals**

8. The above arrangements continue to be overseen by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service within the People's Directorate.

### **Key Data**

9. There have been 0 Private Fostering Notifications received in the City in the reporting period. There were 0 Private Fostering Arrangements receiving support in the City at the end of this reporting period.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

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

Financial implications - None

Resource implications - None

Legal implications - None

Risk implications - None

Equalities implications – None

Climate implications - None

Security implications - None

## **Conclusion**

11. There is low reporting of Private Fostering arrangements nationally and within the City. Action will be taken to prioritise the updating of promotional material and recirculating it to a wide range of partners. As will promotion of the CHSCP training in relation to Private Fostering. As an when notifications are received prompt action will be taken by the Service to ensure the welfare of any children in such an arrangement.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – 2023-24 Private Fostering Annual Report

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