

Item No 6	Classification: Open	Date: September 10 2007	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Framework to Enhance Health and Education Outcomes for Children Looked After	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Children's Services	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Committee receives this report on the framework established by the Children's Services Department to facilitate partnership working to deliver health and education outcomes for Children Looked After (CLA).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Committee regularly receives reports on Performance Indicators (PIs) in respect of a range of outcomes for the CLA population. Many of these indicators relate to health or education outcomes and new PIs will be introduced on access to leisure activities, teenage pregnancy and mental health.
3. This report provides the Committee with an outline of the joint working arrangements that have been developed by the Children's Services Department to monitor and enhance these outcomes for CLA in Southwark.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Health and Education Steering Groups

4. Two steering groups have been established to agree and implement a range of objectives in respect of these two areas of the development and well-being of CLA. The work of Young Southwark has helped shape these working arrangements and has facilitated some innovative programmes for CLA.
5. The objectives, and detailed task work to ensure implementation, are contained in the workplans of the Children's Specialist Services Team and other relevant sections. These are regularly monitored and reviewed and local targets are established: these are, in some cases, more challenging than national targets and this explains why, in the PI report, indicators may be recorded at red or amber, even though national or London-wide targets have been met or exceeded. The steering groups receive their own performance reports and identify areas where improvements are needed. They also consider new ideas and proposals, identify and implement good practice from elsewhere.

Health Steering Group

6. The key objectives for this group are as follows:
 - CLA are healthy and receive prompt and appropriate health interventions;

- CLA are physically active;
 - Effective interventions concerning substance misuse are available to children and young people;
 - Comprehensive child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are delivered; and
 - An appropriate on-going strategy to reduce teenage pregnancy is delivered to CLA.
7. Within this framework, a consultant paediatrician undertakes an initial health assessment of all new children entering the care system. All CLA aged thirteen or over have access to Specialist Nurse advice about sexual health issues, fitness and diet. Nurse services also target CLA who have refused an annual health assessment or who are regarded as being vulnerable in respect of teenage pregnancy.
 8. A co-located team from CAMHS provides direct support and interventions to CLA and their carers. A research partnership will begin in September 2007 to assess the development of screening processes to identify future vulnerability to mental health problems.
 9. Carers receive the support of specialist nurses, who deliver training sessions for foster carers, on sexual health issues. All carers receive resource packs, when children reach ten years old, to support them in discussing sexual development issues and to answer questions.

Education Steering Group

10. The key objectives for this group are as follows:
 - Educational achievement and aspirations are supported - implementation plans are based upon what any good parent would do to promote their child's educational aspirations and support for their achievement;
 - Appropriate education is secured - when a child first comes into care there are clear protocols, procedures and identified staff to ensure continuity of education or prompt identification of appropriate education provision;
 - All CLA have an effective, high quality Personal Education Plan;
 - CLA are able to access additional support to maintain and promote educational attainment;
 - The educational achievements of young people leaving care are supported;
 - Effective information sharing is delivered through inter-agency and inter-authority co-operation; and
 - Schools are actively support and are aware of the needs of CLA.
11. There is an agreed protocol with Early Years services to ensure that carers can access pre-school places for CLA. Children in Southwark's residential care are placed in mainstream schools, wherever appropriate to their needs, and receive additional support in accessing this provision via homework clubs and designated teaching staff. Additional services are targeted at those children at primary to secondary transition periods and those in Years 10 and 11 (GCSE year groups). The steering group tracks children without an identified placement and those placed out-borough.
12. Every CLA at the age of sixteen has a review Pathway Plan, looking at educational progress or training and to prepare for higher education, training or

employment. As previously reported to the Committee, the Council's Apprenticeship Programme and other resources are being developed to improve access to training and full-time employment for young people in or leaving care.

13. An awards scheme is in place, for attendance, academic and other achievements, and an annual celebration event is held for CLA and their carers.

Community Impact Statement

14. The steering groups' workplans have been designed to support the wide range of health and educational needs of CLA. The regular reports on PIs received by this Committee provide Members with the opportunity to review the outcomes and impacts of the work implemented by officers.

Resource implications

15. The financial and staffing resources related to the implementation of this strategy are contained within the agreed budgets of the Department.

Consultation

16. No specific consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

17. No supplementary advice has been sought from other officers.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
CLA Health and Education Steering Group Workplans	Children's Services Department, 49 Grange Walk London, SE1 3DY	Laura McGinlay 020 7525 0404

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Assistant Director	
Report Author	Chris Saunders, Head of Children's Specialist Services	
Version	Final	
Dated	30 August 2007	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal and Democratic Services	No	No
Director of Finance	No	No
Executive Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional/Community Council/Scrutiny Team	31/08/07	