

## Corporate Parenting Committee

Wednesday 16 February 2011

7.00 pm

Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

### Membership

Councillor Catherine McDonald (Chair)  
Councillor Lisa Rajan (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Patrick Diamond  
Councillor Claire Hickson  
Councillor Eliza Mann  
Councillor Althea Smith  
Barbara Hills  
Chris Sanford

### Reserves

Councillor James Barber  
Councillor Helen Hayes  
Councillor Darren Merrill

---

### INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

---

#### Access to information

You have the right to request to inspect copies of minutes and reports on this agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

#### Babysitting/Carers allowances

If you are a resident of the borough and have paid someone to look after your children, an elderly dependant or a dependant with disabilities so that you could attend this meeting, you may claim an allowance from the council. Please collect a claim form at the meeting.

#### Access

The council is committed to making its meetings accessible. Further details on building access, translation, provision of signers etc for this meeting are on the council's web site: [www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk) or please contact the person below.

#### Contact

Bola Roberts on 020 7525 7232 or Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395  
or email: [bola.roberts@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:bola.roberts@southwark.gov.uk); [paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk)  
Webpage: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk>

---

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

**Annie Shepperd**

Chief Executive

Date: 8 February 2011



# Corporate Parenting Committee

Wednesday 16 February 2011  
7.00 pm  
Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

## Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
	<b>MOBILE PHONES</b>	
	Mobile phones should be turned off or put on silent during the course of the meeting.	
	<b>PART A - OPEN BUSINESS</b>	
	<b>STAY SAFE THEME</b>	
1.	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
	To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	<b>CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
	A representative of each political group will confirm the voting members of the committee.	
3.	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT</b>	
	In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear days of the meeting.	
4.	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</b>	
	Members to declare any personal interests and dispensation in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.	
5.	<b>MINUTES</b>	1 - 5
	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the open section of the meeting held on the 10 November 2010.	

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICERS ANNUAL REPORT</b>  7.00pm – 7.20pm	6 - 19
<b>7.</b>	<b>CHILDREN IN CARE AND YOUTH OFFENDING</b>  7.20pm – 7.40pm	20 - 41
<b>8.</b>	<b>PLACEMENT STABILITY</b>  7.40pm – 8.10pm	42 - 52
<b>9.</b>	<b>LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND INTERIM CARE ORDERS</b>  8.10pm – 8.15pm	53 - 60
<b>10.</b>	<b>CARE PROCEEDINGS ACTIVITY - LEGAL SERVICES</b>  8.15pm – 8.20pm	61 - 65
<b>11.</b>	<b>STAY SAFE PERFORMANCE UPDATE - LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN</b>  8.20pm – 8.25pm	66 - 68
<b>12.</b>	<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE - WORK PLAN 2010/2011</b>  8.25pm - 8.30pm	69 - 71

**ANY OTHER OPEN BUSINESS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT.**

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following motion should be moved, seconded and approved if the sub-committee wishes to exclude the press and public to deal with reports revealing exempt information:

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, Access to Information Procedure rules of the Constitution.”

**Item No.**

**Title**

**Page No.**

**CLOSED BUSINESS**

**13. CHILDREN IN CARE AND YOUTH OFFENDING**

**ANY OTHER CLOSED BUSINESS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF  
THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT**

Date: 8 February 2011



## Corporate Parenting Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Wednesday 10 November 2010 at 7.00 pm at Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

---

**PRESENT:** Councillor Catherine McDonald (Chair)  
Councillor Claire Hickson  
Councillor Eliza Mann  
Councillor Althea Smith  
Barbara Hills

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Rory Patterson (assistant director of specialist services & safeguarding), Chris Saunders (head of children looked after service), Alastair Wilson, (interim virtual school headteacher), Darren Coghlan (14-19 partnership), Bola Roberts (constitutional officer) and Paula Thornton (constitutional officer).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Patrick Diamond and Lisa Rajan.

### 2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members present were confirmed as the voting members.

### 3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

### 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

## 5. MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

That the open minutes of the meeting of 22 September 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

## 6. PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN 2009/2010 ACADEMIC YEAR AND THE DEVELOPMENTS LINKED TO THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

### RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the virtual head incorporate further detail in his annual report to the corporate parenting committee relating to the expected and actual educational achievement of children in care.

## 7. CHILDREN IN CARE ACCESSING LEISURE, INCLUDING FUSION PARTNERSHIP

### RESOLVED:

1. That the framework for supporting leisure for looked after children as part of the be healthy agenda, and the initiatives to promote hobbies and leisure activities to develop a healthy lifestyle and build confidence as part of enjoy and achieve agenda be noted.
2. That the council's procurement team and cabinet member for culture, leisure, sport and the Olympics be requested to review and extend Fusion's partnership for a further three year period from April 2011:

The review to include:

- a. raising the age by one year to aged 20
  - b. improving data recording and tracking arrangements
  - c. maintaining level of 150 top memberships
  - d. streamlining registration processes for looked after children
  - e. raising access to the minimum age of 14
3. To acknowledge the importance of councillors attending the social leisure event and the need to support such events on an ongoing basis in their role as 'corporate parents'.

## 8. INTERIM REPORT NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEETS)

### RESOLVED:

1. That the interim progress report concerning not in education and employment training (NEET) strategy for children in care (CiC) be noted. A full report will be presented at

“achieve economic wellbeing” corporate parenting committee meeting scheduled for 26 April 2011.

2. That the new children looked after (CLA), not in education and employment training (NEET) strategy and action plan introduced in April 2010 be noted.
3. That the cabinet member for children’s services makes a written enquiry to the strategic director of children’s services to ask how the current review of early years provision will ensure looked after children and care leavers who are parents are supported in ensuring education or employment, and to share the response with the committee.
4. That the cabinet member for children’s services be requested to write to the 14-19 partnership to ask them to set out how the current strategy to support Southwark College will specifically meet the needs of older children in care and care leavers and to share the response with the committee.
5. That the principal of Southwark College be invited to attend the April meeting of the corporate parenting committee in order to ensure that the needs of looked after children are met and that measures are in place to monitor progress.
6. That the cabinet member for children’s services write to the council’s economic development division to ensure that some jobs are targeted at looked after children and that providers are made aware that some of Southwark’s looked after children may live outside the borough.

## **9. EFFECTIVENESS OF PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS**

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the children’s services approach to delivering effective personal education plans (PEP’s) for every school aged looked after child be noted.
2. That Southwark children’s services write to all designated teachers, outlining: a) the role of the virtual head and the importance of the personal education plans; and b) asking designated teachers to set out their aspirations for children looked after (CLA) and their role in improving performance.

## **10. CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER WITH 3 OR MORE PLACEMENTS**

### **RESOLVED:**

1. The report set out in appendix 1 on children in care with 3 or more placements be noted.
2. Following the theme of undertaking a more detailed look at specific issues identified by the committee, officers be requested to report back to the corporate parenting committee on families that are subject to multiple care proceedings and outline preventative and supportive measures in place.

## 11. CHILDREN IN CARE PLACEMENTS COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

### RESOLVED:

1. That the outline commissioning strategy for children in care and proposed priorities as set out in paragraphs 8, 9, and 10 of the report be agreed.
2. That it be noted that 'in principle' savings cannot put children at risk.

## 12. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

### RESOLVED:

1. That the corporate parenting committee work plan for 2010-11 be noted.
2. That officers timetable 'to be allocated' items and update work plan accordingly.

### OTHER ISSUES

#### Speakerbox

Councillor Catherine McDonald provided feedback from the Speakerbox event in October 2010.

1. Mission statement. Speakerbox would like corporate parenting committee to approve this statement once finalised. To be submitted to the February 2010 meeting.
2. Golden Rules. Speakerbox would like corporate parenting committee to sign the finished document. These rules (current version read out by Councillor Catherine McDonald) were noted in anticipation of the final document which would be emailed to members of the committee for signature.
3. That the need to slightly amend the word 'respect' on the golden rules to demonstrate mutual respect be noted.
4. That members to be given reasonable notice to attend speakerbox events.

#### Financial – savings and loans

An issue was raised relating to children when leaving care and setting up their own home and the problems that can arise if tempted by loan sharks with associated high interest rates in the absence of savings. It was confirmed that this would be addressed as part of the economic well being report due for consideration by the committee in April 2011.



The meeting ended at 8:55pm

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

# Agenda Item 6

<b>Item No.</b> 6.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Independent Review Officers Annual Report	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Children's Services	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The corporate parenting committee note and approve the report Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual report at appendix 1 to be submitted to the Department for Education (DfE).
2. The corporate parenting committee request that an action plan is developed from the report by the Head of the Quality Assurance Unit and is integrated into the children's specialist services business/service planning process for 2011/12.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. An Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service for Looked After Children is required in guidance arising from The Adoption and Children Act 2002 to be presented to the Director of Children's Services, Lead member for Children and the Corporate Parenting Panel. This report contains a summary of work completed by Southwark IRO Service for the period 2009-2010.
4. Section 118 of the Adoption And Children Act 2002 introduced the statutory role of the IRO with a duty to monitor the local authority functions in relation to a child's Review of Care Plan and to refer a case to the Children's and Families Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) if any dispute could not be resolved within the Local Authority . The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 expanded the role of the IRO from reviewing the child's Care Plan to monitoring the child's case on an ongoing basis. New regulations (Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010) have been issued and these are accompanied by 4 sets of statutory guidance including, The IRO Handbook, due to come into force in April 2011. All children in care including those on Adoption Plans or receiving short breaks are covered by these regulations.
5. The role of the IRO is presently under review by the government. The Munro Review and the Family Justice Review will be reporting in Spring 2011. Options being considered include:
  - Leaving the role as is
  - Streamlining the role reducing duties
  - Outsourcing the role to an organisation outside of the Local Authority to increase independence and effectiveness
  - Amalgamating the role with that of the Children's Guardian during Care Proceedings as there is an overlap in these roles.
- 6 The report summarises the performance of the service and progress made in the period 2009/10. Members should note that the service remains well staffed, and has been able to provide a consistent reviewing officer for children in care. The IROs have ensured that children and young people have participated in their reviews, and that plans are progressed within the required timescales.

**KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

7. Key issues are contained in the IRO Annual Report at Appendix 1.

**Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance**

8. Not applicable.

**Community impact statement**

9. Any relevant considerations will be set out in Independent Review Officers report.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
IRO Annual reports	160 Tooley Street SE1	Chris Saunders tel: 020 7525 1039

**LIST OF APPENDICES**

No.	Title
Appendix 1	IRO Annual Report 2009-10

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Rory Patterson Deputy Director, Children's Specialist Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Monika Ciurej	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	3 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Officer</b>	3 February 2011	

## Appendix 1

### IRO Annual Report 2009-2010

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 An Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service for Looked After Children is required in guidance arising from The Adoption and Children Act 2002 to be presented to the Director of Children's Services, Lead member for Children and the Corporate Parenting Panel. This report contains a summary of work completed by Southwark IRO Service for the period 2009-2010.

#### 2 Legal Context

- 2.1 Section 118 of the Adoption And Children Act 2002 introduced the statutory role of the IRO with a duty to monitor the Local authorities functions in relation to a child's Review of Care Plan and to refer a case to the Children's and Families Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) if any dispute could not be resolved within the Local Authority . The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 expanded the role of the IRO from reviewing the child's Care Plan to monitoring the child's case on an ongoing basis. New regulations (Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010) have been issued and these are accompanied by 4 sets of statutory guidance including, The IRO Handbook, due to come into force in April 2011. All children in care including those on Adoption Plans or receiving short breaks are covered by these regulations.
- 2.3 The expectation is that each child will have a named IRO who will have effective independent oversight of the child's case by
- Determining and representing the child's wishes and feelings
  - Ensuring their rights and interests are protected
  - Assessing whether the Local Authorities Care Plan for the child meets the assessed needs of the child within the timescale of the child
  - Negotiating with the social work team and managers on any identified issues arising from the Care Plan or implementation of the Care Plan and where necessary escalating unresolved concerns to an appropriate level in the Local Authority's management structure, and /or if necessary to CAFCASS. ( no cases in Southwark have needed to be escalated beyond Deputy Director level)
- 2.4 The main forum through which the IRO carries out their monitoring role is the Statutory Review. These take place regularly at the following times
- First Review within the first 28days
  - Second Review within 90 days
  - Subsequent Reviews at 180 day intervals
  - When a child or IRO asks for one
  - When significant events occur

- 2.5 The review should wherever possible take place at the child's placement. Parents, carers and their support workers, social worker and the IRO are the expected attendees. Reports from other professionals such as Health, Education and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are also received. For some cases, it may be necessary to hold a series of meetings to facilitate all professionals and views to be heard and where a child does not want to meet with some persons including their parents.
- 2.6 The role of the IRO is presently under review by the Government. The Munro Review and the Family Justice Review will be reporting in Spring 2011. Options being considered include
- Leaving the role as is
  - Streamlining the role reducing duties
  - Outsourcing the role to an organisation outside of the Local Authority to increase independence and effectiveness
  - Amalgamating the role with that of the Children's Guardian during Care Proceedings as there is an overlap in these roles.

### 3. The Southwark Context

- 3.1 In mid 2009, Southwark was estimated to have a population of 285,600. There is a high proportion of young people, with 61,400 children and young people aged between 0–19 years (21.5%). There are around 24,200 children under 5 years (8.5 %). This is higher than the National proportion of under 5's (6.1 per cent).
- 3.2 Southwark is a diverse borough with over 181 languages spoken in its schools (January 2008). The largest ethnic minority group is black African (mainly Nigerian and West African) which accounts for around 15.6% of the whole population. In 2007 it was estimated that 62.1% of the population was white.
- (See 'Population in Southwark Jan 2009' on Southwark council website)
- 3.3 Southwark has relatively high numbers of looked after children compared to other London boroughs. On 24/12/10 there were 527 Children looked After in Southwark down from 557 at end of March 2010. The period 2009-2010 saw an increase of looked after children likely to be in response to media coverage of 'Baby P' and also as a consequence to the Southwark Judgement which required Local authorities to bring homeless 16 and 17 year olds into care.
- 3.4 The make up of Southwark Looked After children population was as follows on 24/12/10:

<b>CLA by Age &amp; Gender</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>0-4</b>	46	55	<b>91</b>
<b>5-9</b>	34	47	<b>81</b>
<b>10-14</b>	51	90	<b>141</b>
<b>15-17</b>	85	119	<b>204</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>527</b>

<b>CLA Specialist group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children</b>	7	14	<b>21</b>
<b>Children with Disabilities</b>	10	14	<b>24</b>

Ethnicity breakdown was as follows:

<b>CLA by Gender &amp; Ethnicity</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Asian - Bangladeshi</b>	3	1	<b>4</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Asian - Other</b>	2	18	<b>20</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
<b>Asian - Pakistani</b>	2	2	<b>4</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Black African</b>	48	55	<b>103</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
<b>Black Caribbean</b>	24	42	<b>66</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
<b>Black Other</b>	25	32	<b>57</b>	<b>10.8%</b>
<b>Information not yet obtained</b>	1	1	<b>2</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Other</b>	5	13	<b>18</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Other Mixed</b>	7	21	<b>28</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>White &amp; Asian</b>	1	1	<b>2</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>White &amp; Black African</b>	4	3	<b>7</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
<b>White &amp; Black Caribbean</b>	24	20	<b>44</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
<b>White British</b>	60	88	<b>148</b>	<b>28.1%</b>
<b>White Irish</b>	2	3	<b>5</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
<b>White - Other</b>	8	11	<b>19</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>100</b>

It will be noted that Southwark has an over-representation of black and dual heritage children in care. On 24/12/10 only 32.6% of the care population were described as white. This reflects a similar position to most other London boroughs.

Meeting the identity needs of such a diverse population of looked after children in terms of race, culture, religion, language and special needs is an ongoing challenge for services.

### 3.5 Key Challenges for Southwark Looked after Children Services

Key challenges for Southwark Looked after Children Services reflect many of the challenges faced by other Local Authorities and inner city areas.

- Fluctuating care population due to response to media coverage ( e.g. Baby P); 16 and 17 year old young people seeking accommodation under the Southwark Judgement; increased use of care by courts and police and families as a means to protecting young people involved in gangs and crime. The latter two categories of young people requiring care now vie for scarce resources including placements from younger children and families raising the question as to whether the care system is the most appropriate response to their situation and needs.
- Supporting young people in care who have gang associations. Finding solutions to divert or protect looked after young people from dangerous activities.
- There have been difficulties recruiting and retaining experienced social workers which in the past has resulted in frequent changes of worker for children and delays in care planning actions being completed. However, Southwark's workforce is generally stable and turnover rates have reduced. Decreased budgets will mean that the service will have to organise itself so that it can reduce bureaucracy and free up social work time.
- Complex electronic systems with strict requirements for recording and data inputting resulting in added bureaucracy for workers and less time for face to face work. These matters are being addressed in the Munro review of social work.
- Slow court systems and understaffed Guardian workforce delaying permanence planning for children
- Identifying sufficient placements appropriate for the diverse needs of children and young people in a competitive market place and within a decreasing budget.
- Research and updated guidance stresses the benefits of continued foster care and support post 18 for many looked after children to improve their outcomes in adult life e.g. those in education or very vulnerable young people who do not quite meet criteria for adult mental health or disability services and struggle with independence. The Government has not provided any additional funding. This places greater pressure on an already limited pool of foster placements and other resources.
- Restructuring of Departments and the way we work may be needed following budget reductions and recommendations from the Munro and Family Justice Review in 2011. Managing such major changes and workers morale will be challenging.

## 4 Southwark IRO Service

- 4.1 The Southwark IRO Service is situated within the Quality Assurance and Improving Social Work Business Unit. The Business Unit Manager reports directly to the Deputy Director making IROs independent of children's cases operational management

structure where allocation of resources lies. The team is based at Council's Head Office at 160 Tooley Street.

- 4.2 In addition to the core function of monitoring a child's care plan, the IRO Service is also involved in a number of other meetings on individual cases, in wider consultations and planning forums where policy and procedures are developed e.g. Health, Education, Participation and Professional Standards groups, audit work, training and liaison with Teams and other services e.g. , complaints and commissioning . IROs regularly feed into or undertake development of policies and procedures e.g. participation of parents, allegations against carers. They also highlight good practice as well as feeding back evidence of poor practice, poor standards of placements or safeguarding issues.
- 4.3 The IRO service consists of 8 full time equivalent IROs and a manager. Administrative support is provided by two full time administrative staff managed by the QAU Admin Manager. A ninth post of IRO was previously funded to review Unaccompanied asylum seeking children , as necessitated by the Hillingdon Judgement, but this funding and post is already deleted as the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people have decreased considerably.
- 4.4 Actual staffing in 2009-2010 consisted of
- 4 directly employed permanent staff making up 3 full time posts
  - 10 freelance self employed sessional workers making up 5 full time equivalent posts. These have varying caseloads between 15-70 children who are looked after.
  - Of the 14 workers 2 are male, 12 female; 2 are black and 12 are white.
- 4.5 The team make up is the same as for 2008-2009 indicating good retention of staff but more importantly consistency for children. 11 of our IROs have been working for Southwark for between 3 and 9 years. Children often have different social workers as they move through the care system from referral to 0-12 teams to 13 + teams or as a result of social workers moving. IROS therefore may be the worker to provide the continuity, being able to inform new workers or carers of the child's history, let them know what has worked well in the past and what hasn't. They can talk to the child about their parents and family they may no longer see or about placements they used to live in.
- 4.6 A review of the IRO staffing was undertaken in 2009-2010 and concluded that a mixed economy of permanent and freelance staff provide the most effective and independent service. Until such time as the future of the IRO service will be known in 2011 there will be no further recruitment of permanent staff outside of the present Southwark workforce. Any staff leaving will be replaced with freelance workers.

## 5 Performance

- 5.1 the IRO team provides an efficient service, always within budget. During 2009-2010 it chaired and completed reports for 1571 reviews of children looked after as well as making representations and undertaking other tasks, giving a cost of approximately



£350 per review including professional, administrative, and management costs. These reports once signed off by the Team Managers are the child's Care Plan. Since fully taking over the review function from teams during the year 2005- 2006 the service has increased performance for the timeliness of reviews and the participation of looked after children and young people and improved the overall quality and independence of the review process.

- 5.2 The IRO service therefore makes an important contribution to good performance against key performance indicators in the National Indicator Set: C63 (Participation at Reviews) and N166 (timeliness of Reviews). They also contribute to many other Performance Indicators through quality assurance and collection of data or raising issues on cases at appropriate levels to minimise poor outcome e.g. drift in care planning, placement stability, educational achievements etc.

### 5.3

Year	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2009-2009	2009-2010
Number of Reviews *	1699	1768	1579	1599	1571
NI66 Reviews in timescales	88.7%	94.3%	95.7%	94.1%	92.8%
C63 Participation at Reviews	80.1%	90.8%	94.7%	95.7%	94%
No of LAC at March		633	576	533	557

The number of reviews reflects not only the core number of Looked After Population, but also different needs of cases as some will require more than others e.g. following placement breakdowns or children who spend short periods of time in care (under a year) as newly looked children after require more frequent reviewing . These include remands to Local Authority care from criminal courts; short term support for families in crisis; and teenagers looked after under the Southwark judgement. There were 278 newly looked after children in 2009-2010 most of whom returned home.

- 5.4 The extension of the role of the IRO to undertake ongoing monitoring and not just the review of Care Plans will increase the workload for IROs. At present in Southwark we work to an average caseload of 60 per full time equivalent, maximum of 70 which is in line with the guidance. The Government has not provided any additional funding to support the increase in requirements. Monitoring cases will be more time consuming and there is concern nationwide as to whether this is practical. As such streamlining the role is one of the options being considered. For example this may mean in practice IROs fully reviewing all newly looked after children up to the 3rd review and thereafter annually with a more restricted review taking place at the six monthly point.
- 5.6 The 7.2% of reviews not held within timescales in 2009-10 represents 35 out of 1571 reviews as the Performance Indicator represents numbers of children who have had all their reviews in timescales. Of the 35 reviews that were late 16 were due to late

referral to the IRO service or late entry onto the Care First electronic database; the remaining were due to capacity in covering IRO sickness ;late by just a few days as IROs had miscalculated the number of days; difficulties in making arrangements due to attendees priorities.

- 5.7 The Performance Indicator for Participation is based on number of children who had not contributed to one of their reviews in a year. So although a child may participate in 2 out of 3 reviews in a year this will not fulfil the criteria for participation. 29 children did not contribute to one of their reviews. These were due to the young person either refusing to participate or not available to participate e.g. if missing or out of the country, due to illness or other priorities to meet or communicate with the IRO within the timescales. The IRO will agree a plan with the social worker or carer to ensure the young person's views are available for the next review if they do not attend.
- 5.8 IROs spend time with children and young people prior to a review to determine their wishes and feelings, identify if they have any concerns and how they would like to participate in the meeting. If necessary or requested the IRO will ensure an advocate is provided to support the child or young person during the meeting. IROs will frequently arrange to meet children and young people at different times, ring or text them to try and gain their views when they have not attended a review meeting. Children or young people who have English as a second language will have an interpreter available. Children with Disabilities or with communication difficulties will be supported to express their views with help of their carers or a specialist worker or an advocate.
- 5.9 Distribution of reviews is not a Performance Indicator. However statutory guidance indicates reports should be circulated within 14 days. This will change in April 2011 to provision of decisions within 5 working days / 7 days and full report within 15 working days / 21 days .While there has been much progress in timeliness of reports by IROs and distribution by team there is still considerable room for further improvement.
- 5.10 Volume of work within tight timescales is the main reason for delays. The difficulties posed by the electronic case recording system also contribute. Writing reports takes more time and the difficulty in accessing the system can also cause delay.

## 6 **Representations - What difference do IROs make?**

- 6.1 IROs seek to ensure daily life for children and young people is not just good enough. They positively promote the child's self esteem, resilience and overall development through their quality assurance role. This will include: checking diets are healthy and culturally appropriate; medicals take place; foster carers attend parents evenings or read bedtime stories; and check contacts with siblings take place. IROs often identify the small things which make a big difference to a child if they get overlooked often due to time and priorities. This would include: ensuring sleepovers or school trips take place; passports are obtained so holidays are not missed with foster families; ensuring cultural and faith needs met such as a prayer mat for young people of the Muslim faith; all faith special dates are celebrated; and check carers take them on outings to the libraries or theatre and that they have regular positive extra curriculum activities .They do this often through suggestions at reviews , encouraging carers and

workers rather than formal escalation processes and so this cannot always be visibly evident or easily quantified.

- 6.2 More serious concerns relating to care planning or implementation of the Care Plan, resources or poor practice, IROs will liaise with the team, seeking to resolve informally. A record of this should be on the child's record though this was often done via email or discussion with the team and so was not very visible on the file. However an ICS record format for IROs was introduced which has assisted with tracking IRO interventions though an audit of these has not yet been undertaken.
- 6.3 When a problem cannot be resolved informally each Local Authority must have a formal 'dispute resolution' process through which an IRO can escalate their concern to the appropriate management level. In Southwark there is an Escalation Procedure. Over a period of 3 years only 20 formal escalations were raised as IROs preferred to use emails etc as Teams could be defensive about receiving these .A review of the Escalation Procedure was therefore initiated in 2009-2010 and concluded in 2010-2011 due to this underuse of the procedure. A more simplified format renamed IRO Representation is ready for implementation in April 2011 with the introduction of the IRO Handbook. IRO's will be liaising with Teams to ensure there is a common understanding of the process and its purpose.
- 6.4 In the meantime IRO's have collated a list of cases about which they have concerns of delay in Care Planning or where they have concerns about serious identified needs not being met. This list was shared with Team Managers and IROs will continue to monitor progress with the Teams.
- 6.5 Examples of IRO interventions include
- 11 year child did not want to move from her foster placement and carer wanted to keep her. Team had already put Final Care Plan into court without IRO consultation. IRO made contact with the Council's Legal Department, the Guardian and child's solicitor and had the IRO and child's views represented in Court . The decision to remove her was reversed and the child remains happy and stable with her foster carer.
  - IRO concerns about returning a baby with parents to community was escalated to the Deputy Director. Extra safeguards were put in place for supervision at home. The baby eventually returned to local authority care and is now placed for adoption.
  - IRO intervened to change Care Plan to ensure siblings stayed together and were not separated.
  - IRO intervention to ensure standard of keywork support and accommodation was raised and young person referred to Children's Rights Officer.
  - IRO intervention to return siblings to family as case drifting due to staff illness.
  - IRO continued involvement post 18 to ensure vulnerable young person is adequately supported in independent living
- 6.6 It has been difficult to obtain feedback from young people about their views on reviews and the IRO role. Previously a questionnaire was sent out at reviews but only 5 were returned by young people. For many children and young people they may not even know that the meeting they attend is called a review or the person they meet is

an IRO. They may just know them by their name – ‘the woman / man who comes to see how I am every few months’. Nor will they always know or understand the work IROs may do outside of Reviews in trying to resolve issues and get their views listened to.

- 6.7 Speaker Box, the Children in Care Council, is revising the Review consultation form to include a section to encourage young people to feedback how reviews and IROs could be more friendly and useful. The Office of the Children’s Rights Director is undertaking a study to identify young people’s views on Reviews and the role of the IRO to feed into the Munro Review and Family Justice Review.
- 6.8 Speaker Box have asked several young people however what they think of IROs and the following quotes were received
- ‘Yeah, my reviewing officer is good, he remembers things and asks questions. I meet with him to talk about my foster carer. I have known him a long time ‘ 13 year old girl
  - ‘they ask for your view; that sounds simple but means a lot’
  - ‘yeah , it’s good to see social workers have to give reasons for their actions at the meetings, it makes me feel I am somebody , and things are not just done to me’ 17 yr old girl
  - ‘Why has no-one listened to me, it’s only when I have been at that meeting, you get what I mean. I can’t handle it at home and no-one listened when I was homeless. I know they will tell them I’ve done good at the carers and I am happy. They listen when it is official’ 16 yr old boy
  - ‘Yeah thanks to them I got my school changed. It was really hell at my last school but no-one would listen’
  - ‘At least they are on your side and make sure you get treated good’
  - ‘I don’t remember their name but they have a good memory about stuff’ 14 yr old boy
  - ‘the meetings are boring but they check up on stuff’ 16 yr old boy
  - ‘they got me to stay in my placement longer’
  - ‘they give you information like Speaker Box and check on your rights and complaints , some stuff is a bit long’
  - ‘they are always there but my social worker always changes’

## 7. Audits

- 7.1 There have been two detailed audits of IRO activity during 2009/10. The first looked in general at the IRO’s review records and the second looked specifically at the review records for those children who were subject of Child protection plans and also looked after.
- 7.2 The audit of review records considered the overall integrity and consistency of the reports including the content and quality of recording. It was found that major issues of Care Planning including Permanency Planning were being reviewed satisfactorily and no children were identified who appeared to be ‘drifting’ unnecessarily in the care. In general, contingency plans were in place and plans were modified appropriately in the light of changed circumstances. While the majority of reports

were considered to be satisfactory or good, there was some variation in the quality of a few records and specific areas were identified as needing practice development.

- 7.3 The audit report drew up a number of recommendations following the audit – this included the author feeding back both to individual IRO's and to the IRO group as a whole.
- 7.4 The second audit focused on risk issues for looked after children. The audit was looking at how far the two processes of CP planning and LAC reviews were integrated. The overall finding was that the LAC Reviewing and Child Protection Conference processes tend to run more in parallel to each other rather than being integrated. Again the findings were fed back to individual IRO's and teams. A new procedure was drawn up for children subject to dual processes – which will hopefully ensure more integrated practice.
- 7.5 In addition, as a result of the audit findings, the CLA review form has now been amended to include a separate consideration of risk issues. It is hoped that this will assist IRO's to integrate these issues in more detail at future meetings.
- 7.6 IRO's have also directly participated in a number of audits undertaken by the CLA service.

## **8. Key successes and Priorities for the Future**

### 8.1 Our Key successes have been

- Maintaining an experienced, committed and trained team of IROs providing consistency for children and young people.
- Achieving a high level of participation of children and young people in their reviews with IROs frequently making separate arrangements to ensure this. Also achieving a high level of reviews held within timescales.
- The standard of Review Reports is widely considered to have improved significantly since the introduction of IROs. An audit of reports reflected this and made recommendations for further improvement of report standards.  
Review reports provide a pen picture of the child, synopsis of family history and a good 6 monthly summary of the case, including assessed needs and action plan .They are the Care Plan.
- Positive feedback from partner agencies such as Health, Education and CAMHS states they value having an independent professional to liaise with, giving their views weight and integrating them into Care Plans.
- Many Children's Guardians value having the IRO, an independent professional within the Local Authority to consult with.
- Advocates and complaints section often find IROs can help negotiate resolution in a quicker and smoother manner.
- IROs have given feedback to teams, commissioning and fostering service when placements are not of a satisfactory standard. They have also advocated for more placement support when necessary.
- Working with operational services to reduce delay in permanency planning and achieve better outcomes for Southwark Children Looked After. IROs will highlight

concerns identified at reviews and seek resolution mostly through informal negotiation but also using the formal escalation process when necessary.

- IROs bring to the attention of management drift or serious concerns where workers are ill or where there is poor practice

## 8.2 Our Key Priorities for the IRO Service are

- To ensure that all reviews take place within statutory timescales
- Improve the quality of reviews and care planning
- Improve the long-term stability of children's placements
- Work more closely with social workers and their managers to support improvements in the quality of reviews and care planning.
- Ensuring IROs and operational teams are fully up to date with the requirements of the new Regulations and guidance which are to be implemented in April 2011. Much is already good practice in Southwark. However extending the role to monitoring a child's Care Plan in between reviews is a challenge within existing resources.
- Improving timeliness of reports and distribution of reports as timescales for distribution of review decisions are decreased in the new guidance .The ICS report format is more time consuming than a word document and the frequent problems with access to ICS contributes often to delay in completion of reports within timescales.
- Working with operational teams to improve performance in alerting IROs to significant events and seeking their endorsement of any change to Care Plans not agreed at a review. This is particularly pertinent for Court Care Plans
- Improving IROs access to court documents through a more formal liaison with Legal Section.
- Improving use of IRO representations to management to resolve issues of concerns ensuring transparency of work undertaken through IRO records on ICS.
- Improving the rate of progress of Permanency plans for Adoption or Special Guardianships and Long Term Fostering to ensure our children are in their permanent family at as early an age as possible through closer working with operational teams and Adoption and Fostering .
- Ensuring adequate administrative support for team to avoid more costly professional and management time on these tasks.
- Working with Speaker Box to obtain more information from children and young people on how the review process and IRO role can be more useful for them

## 9. Summary

The IRO Service has continued to provide an efficient and effective provision for reviewing and monitoring the Care Plans for Looked After Children. It contributes to improved outcomes for Looked After Children through increasing participation of children and young people in the decision making about their care as well as making independent representations to social workers and Management on planning and practice issues. Communication and relationships with teams are positive with the independent scrutiny valued by social workers and management.

A review of the IRO role is being undertaken in 2010-2011 through the Munro Review and the Family Justice Review which will shape the way the service develops in the future.

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2011

<b>Item No.</b> 7.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Children in Care and Youth Offending	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Assistant Director Children's Specialist Services	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The corporate parenting committee note the revised procedure and guidance of the Youth Offending Protocol implemented in 2010.
2. The corporate parenting committee considers writing to the lead officer and chair of the Safer Southwark Partnership to request a briefing on the key issues affecting children on the cusp of care and how the role of the Section 20 resource panel could be promoted.
3. The corporate parenting committee notes the low rates of criminal activity concerning Southwark children in care compared with London Authorities and England.
4. The corporate parenting committee considers recommending to the strategic director of children's services that the children in care drop-in service is included as part of the review of youth services to ensure continued support for looked after young people is provided in future.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. The Youth Justice Board inspection of Southwark's youth offending service in February 2008 and the JAR inspection in April 2008 both recommended that there needed to be improved working arrangements between Youth Offending Services and teams responsible for looked after children.
6. The main identified concerns focused upon the following areas:
  - Information tracking for children remanded into care
  - More effective involvement and care planning activity by front door teams during the 1<sup>st</sup> four weeks of care (including family assessments, initial health assessment and personal education plans)
  - Improved discharge planning for children in care who are subject to a custodial sentence.
7. As at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 there were 538 children in care to the London Borough of Southwark. Out of these 7 were in care as a result of criminal courts remanding them into care.
8. Magistrates courts will elect to remand a child into care prior to trial or sentencing if they feel a young person has a chaotic or inappropriate home environment which might lead to a young person not being sufficiently cared for in the community.



9. Over 95% of remands into care last for 5 days or less, being concluded once the young person returns to court for resolution and youth offending services have been able to provide a greater picture of the child's immediate family circumstances.
10. Each year Southwark is required to report to the Department of Education relating to youth offending patterns of looked after children who have been in care for twelve months or more.
11. Appendix 1 outlines Southwark's performance against this key indicator for the last five years compared with London and England averages.
12. In August 2010 the Youth Offending Service was subject to a significant restructuring.
13. In April 2010 Southwark Front Door Service had its unannounced Ofsted inspection. This inspection provided an intensive review of assessment activity provided by Southwark's referral and assessment team to all children who may be considered in need.
14. This unannounced inspection included the initial response provided for remands into care through the criminal justice system and how safeguarding issues are integrated into all assessment activity.
15. Additionally the unannounced inspection criteria also considers the effectiveness of how any children remaining in care for 4 weeks or longer are appropriately and professionally transferred to the looked after service.
16. The result of the unannounced Ofsted inspection was extremely favorable identifying Southwark's referral and assessment services as "good"

#### **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

17. Over the last three years a number of initiatives have been undertaken to transform the partnership working arrangements between the Youth Offending Services, Front Door Teams and CLA Service.
18. A comprehensive review of the working protocols between Children's Services was undertaken and a new protocol launched in January 2009.
19. This was further revised and implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010.

20. The Youth Offending Protocol (Appendix 2) outlined the following strategies for Southwark's children:

- Youth Crime prevention
- Work with children aged 13-18 years
- Young people aged 14-17 at risk of offending or anti social behaviour
- Pre court services for young offenders age 10-17
- Young people appearing in court are made subject to court ordered interventions
- Joint procedures relating to young offenders sentenced to custody
- Protocols for looked after children
- Management of Southwark looked after children placed outside the borough.

21. In addition to the agreed protocol there are a number of targeted partnerships between CLA Services and Youth Offending Services to provide a range of preventative and intervention services for children in Southwark's care. These being:

- Risk Management Panel

Southwark's youth offending service has a risk management panel attended by all Southwark's services involved with young people including the police. This panel identifies the most prolific youth offenders in Southwark or those presenting the most concern. The CLA Service is fully represented on the panel to ensure a fully integrated care planning approach where a looked after child might meet the panel's thresholds. This enables additional resources to be targeted in a coordinated way to identify looked after children to break the cycle of offending behavior and assist their reengagement with core services.

- Resource Panel

Introduced in July 2010 a newly established resource panel has been developed in Children's Specialist Services to manage the threshold for children entering the care system. The resource panel is chaired by the Head of Assessment and Safeguarding Service who has additional budgets and partnerships to target considerable family support resources where a child is at risk of entering the care system. The preliminary findings (6 months) of the resource panel is that for a significant proportion of teenagers entering the care system, youth offending is the primary issue. Accordingly it has now been agreed that the youth offending service cannot recommend a remand into care through the court unless they have first sought the agreement (and additional prevention resources) from Southwark Resource Panel.

- Research

Southwark is one of four authorities in England selected to undertake research relating to offending patterns and looked after children (partnership with University of East Anglia). This project began in September 2010 and is expected to report in September 2011. It is hoped this will identify relevant practice learning for both the CLA and Youth Offending services.

- Data Systems and Information Exchange

In July 2010 an exercise was undertaken to review the effectiveness of the Youth Offending Services Data System (Careworks) to deliver necessary tracking and government reporting requirements. This review included the potential advantages of bringing the data management arrangements under single management with Carefirst (Children's Specialist Services data and record recording system) and to consider whether ultimately Youth Offending Service staff should start using Carefirst so that all work is inputted onto a single record. This review has now concluded and a report is now being submitted to the Strategic head of Children's Service to reconfigure the recording and data provision needs of Youth Offending Services. If agreed this will enable youth offending workers to immediately access and input into records of children in care whilst also enabling allocated social workers for children in care to access all information relating to young offending, and potential gang activity.

- Discharge from Youth Offending Institutions

Since the introduction of the new protocol the CLA service has not had a single occasion where a YOI Governor has had to express any concern relating to a discharge plan. The CLA service provided briefings for its Adolescent and Aftercare Service to ensure a greater understanding of statutory requirements and the need to deliver a discharge plan (including accommodation, support, education, finance and supervision) in a timely way.

- Offending Rates for Looked After Children in long term care

Appendix 1 outlines the last five years performance with regards to looked after children (in care for twelve months or more) who commit an offence are cautioned or warned. Southwark's performance for children in care over this period has remained in line and compares favorably with statistical neighbors and the London average.

- Drop In Service

In January 2010 the Adolescent and Aftercare Service introduced a "drop in service" at Bradenham. The drop in service has been previously reported to the Corporate Parenting Committee as a key initiative to maintain contact with the most difficult to engage children from age of 16-18 and care leavers aged 18-21. Whilst the drop in addresses issues relating to young people not in employment education and training, it also fulfils a key safeguarding issue. There is a link between looked after children (aged 16-18) who are not in employment, education and training and raised vulnerability to becoming involved in offending behavior and gang related activity. Whilst attending young people can access advice from specialist nurses, employment advice, substance misuse teams, connexions and other support services (i.e. dental sessions). This initiative has been very successful with regards to attendance (as demonstrated through 3 significant young offenders forming part of the choir during the October 2010 celebration event). The drop in service is well supported by youth work services (TYS) who provide 15 hours senior youth work support a week.

The drop in was reviewed through young people being interviewed in July 2010 and is now being reviewed one year after its implementation. Appendix No 3 is the drop in review undertaken by a Southwark care leaver.

- Specialist Fostering Arrangements

In partnership with Southwark's commissioning service the CLA Service have commissioned specialist foster placements from the private and voluntary sector who would be able to support and manage children in care with significant offending behaviors. In partnership with the Youth Offending Service a targeted carer specification was identified as part of the tender documentation. In January 2011, six independent fostering providers were approved to provide this service which will come into place on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2011. This will enable the CLA service to consider placing children in care with offending behaviours in a family setting rather than in residential care. Whilst this is considered a more appropriate environment for young people, it is also a more financially effective way of providing service.

22. While there is not a causal link between children in care and offending, there is no question that children who are in unstable placements are more at risk of falling into a pattern of criminal behaviour in later life. Considerable support is put into residential and fostering placements to prevent breakdown including fostering support and help with education, mentoring and independent visitors.
23. All looked after children have regular reviews of their arrangements and their care plan is updated regularly which includes identifying any measure which can help young people stay out of trouble, including a referral to their local youth offending service for advice and support where warranted.
24. Southwark's strategy for substance misuse has commissioned "Insight" to target interventions for the most vulnerable groups. Children in care have been identified as a key group (youth offending service users are also a key group). This new contract arrangement began in September 2010 with CLA Services being able to make direct referrals to Insight. In response, Insight have agreed that they will place one of their team each week at the drop in to improve early referral and intervention arrangements (linkage between youth crime and substance misuse).
25. There are a number of young people being remanded into the care system due to gang related activity who cannot return home as their families are unable to cope (or afraid) or the young person needs to come into care for their own protection. The looked after care service is not designed as a public protection system and is finding itself ill equipped to manage children coming into care with significant gang related behavioral issues who either do not wish to be in care or are literally in fear for their lives. The impact of gang related activity is a council wide challenge under the leadership of the Safer Southwark Partnership. It is evident however that the children looked after service is being asked to provide care planning and placement arrangements for increasingly numbers of 14-18 year olds who are drawn in to this destructive lifestyle.

26. Partnership working between the CLA service and Youth Offending Service has significantly improved over the last three years whereby Managers from either service can convene a strategy meeting if they are concerned about the planning or crime prevention arrangements for any child in care. This arrangement enables early recognition and intervention plans to be set in motion to avoid subsequent escalation and involvement of the risk management board. Given that over 60% of Southwark's looked after population are not living in Southwark, leadership for drawing in local youth offending teams rests with the Children Looked After Service. However Southwark's youth offending service are available to intervene should the CLA Service not be able to access appropriate engagement and support from local youth offending services.

### **Policy implications**

27. There are no policy implications as this report relates to Children's Specialist Services delivering appropriate and targeted interventions for children on the cusp of care and looked after children.

### **Resource implications**

28. The Children Looked After and Youth Offending Services are statutory agencies which are supported through core and central government grants. It is recognised that during the 2010/11 financial year grant funded provision for the Youth Offending Service has been significantly reduced.

29. The planned budgetary reductions for 2011/12 both the CLA and Youth Offending services will involve service reduction and reconfiguration.

### **Community impact statement**

30. Southwark's CLA services works to promote the five outcomes for children in care as outlined in Every Child Matters. It is recognised that placement stability, engagement in education, access to leisure activities and healthy lifestyles all help to build resilience in young people to avoid offending behaviour

31. The Youth Offending Service and Looked After Service recognise that offending is a significant concern for the community and is subject to intense scrutiny especially around gun and knife crime. The leadership for addressing youth crime issues in Southwark is lead by the Safer Southwark partnership who deliver a range of specialist services and staff to provide targeted interventions for named children (team around the child approach).

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Previous corporate parenting committee agenda papers and key statistics for LAC	160 Tooley Street, SE1	Strategy, Planning and Performance Team, Children's Services

**APPENDICES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Southwark's performance – key indicator for last five years
Appendix 2	Youth Offending Protocol
Appendix 3	Drop In Service – closed document (client confidentiality)

**AUDIT TRAIL**

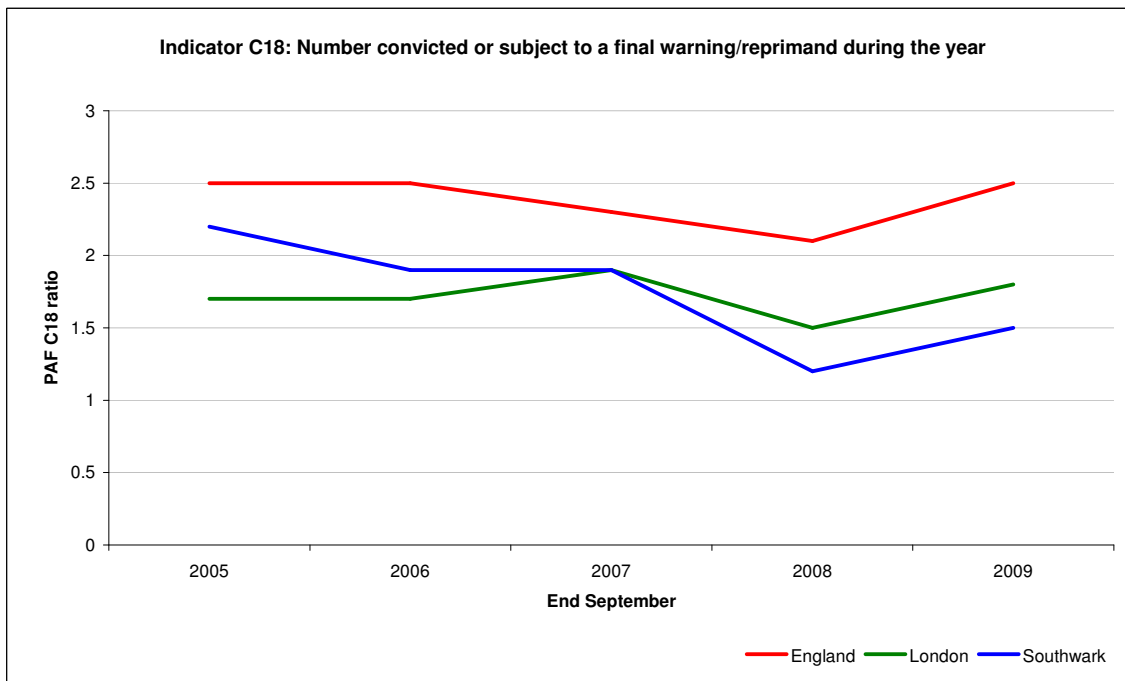
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Rory Patterson Deputy Director Children's Specialist Services & Safeguarding	
<b>Report Author</b>	Chris Saunders Head of Services for Children in Care/ Head of Youth Offending Services	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	3 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
<b>Cabinet</b>	Yes	
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		3 February 2011

## Appendix 1

## Appendix 1

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
England	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.5
London	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.5	1.8
Southwark	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.2	1.5

Source: DfE, OC2 return based on end September cohort



2 The proportion of children (aged 10 or over) who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, who were convicted or given a final warning/reprimand during the year for an offence committed whilst they were looked after, expressed as a ratio of the proportion of all children and young people convicted or given a final warning/reprimand for an offence in the police force area.

FINAL DRAFT

---

**A Protocol Between  
Southwark Children's Social Care Services  
and  
Southwark Youth Offending Team**

**1. Introduction**

The following protocol clarifies roles and responsibilities where the activities of Children's Social care and the Youth Offending Team interface. It covers:

- ◆ Early intervention to prevent offending behaviour, and services to children in need.
- ◆ Children looked after and those young people involved in the Criminal Justice System who are eligible or relevant with respect to 16+ service provision pursuant to the Leaving Care Services Act.
- ◆ The provision of services to children under 10 years of age with respect to Child Safety orders.
- ◆ The provision of services to young offenders sentenced to custody.

These activities relate, in broad scope, to the Crime and Disorder Act strategy priorities S06 and S07.

This protocol will not specifically address issues concerning information exchange, which is subsumed under a wider protocol between the local authority and its partners. The respective duties and responsibilities of the YOT and Children's Social care concerning local Child Curfews, and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders are dealt with elsewhere and will not be specifically addressed in this document.

**2. Youth crime prevention**

2.1 Traditionally, Youth Justice services have been delivered to young offenders being prosecuted at court. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (CDA), however, clarifies the aim of the Youth Justice Service as being to prevent offending behaviour. This entails:

- ◆ Targeted intervention for young people at risk of involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour, preferably at the pre-offending stage
- ◆ Early intervention before patterns of offending behaviour have become firmly established, i.e. schemes of diversion for young people receiving Reprimands/Final Warnings and, as of 2002, Referral order programme for young offenders pleading guilty at their first appearance in the Youth Court for offences not warranting custody



- ◆ Evidence-based interventions aimed at reducing the risk of re-offending for young people receiving Reparation orders, Community Penalties and custodial sentences.

- 2.2 The range of services provided or co-ordinated by the YOT with respect to Pre-offending intervention, Early intervention, and Confronting offending behaviour are outlined in the local annual Youth Justice Plan.
- 2.3 This protocol seeks to improve key areas:
- ◆ Broaden the definition of agency roles and responsibilities with respect to young offenders and their families.
  - ◆ Increase clarity as to the role and function of partner agencies in the youth justice arena, and improve the shared understanding of the requirements of S17 1998 CDA.
- 2.4 The involvement of one agency in a case does not preclude the involvement of another. The emphasis should be placed upon delivering a 'joined-up' service, rather than segmented interventions. This process will require clear Case Management, and the active involvement of operational and service managers to prevent young people being left unsupported, inter-agency conflict or, alternatively, wasteful duplication of efforts.

This protocol provides a framework for working effectively in partnership to prevent offending, reduce re-offending and to address significant risk factors associated with involvement in crime and other aspects of social exclusion.

### **3. Work with children 8 – 13 years**

- 3.1 The age for criminal responsibility is 10 years and, therefore, younger children cannot commit offences. However, many children misbehave in ways that would constitute an offence if they were aged 10 years or over. Research indicates that the early onset of such behaviour is associated with future persistent and/or serious offending.
- 3.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced the Child Safety order to provide local authorities with the means to address effectively concerns relating to this age group.
- 3.2.1 A Child Safety order is available in the Family Proceedings Court upon application by the local authority, and the order is a Family Proceedings as defined by the 1989 Children Act.
- 3.2.2 The criteria for application are:
- i) Behaviour which would constitute an offence if aged 10 years or more
  - ii) Evidence of being at risk of behaving in a way that would constitute an offence if aged 10 years or more.
  - iii) Breach of a Local Child Curfew order.
  - iv) Behaviour likely to cause alarm or distress to persons not living in the same household.
- 3.3 The order is of 12 weeks duration and may be accompanied by a Parenting order. A Parenting order requires the parent(s) to attend counselling/guidance sessions once per week for a maximum of 12 weeks. Additional requirements, such as ensuring their child attends school regularly may be imposed for up to a year.
- 3.3.1 The YOT provides a range of services for parents that may be appropriate under these circumstances, and is experienced in the process of assessing the suitability of a Parenting order, which may include intensive support to the whole family provided by the Family Intervention Project.

- 3.4 If breach proceedings are necessitated by the child's failure to comply with requirements without reasonable cause the court may consider Family Proceedings pursuant to S31 1989 Children Act. (The grounds for breach proceedings are set out in Section 7.4.3 of the National Standards for Youth Justice, with which all Responsible Officers must be familiar).
- 3.5 The process for identifying children at risk, determining the need for intervention and whether this can be delivered on a voluntary basis or requires the imposition of an order is set out below.
- 3.5.1 Concerns about children's behaviour in relation to the criteria outlined in 3.2.2 will enter the system by differing routes. Concerns relating to criteria *iv* may be conveyed to Children's Social Care and the YOT by the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, who will have been alerted by Housing Management Services or the police. Breaches of Local Child Curfews, where applicable, will be notified to Social Care by the police. These two areas are addressed in specific protocols elsewhere. In most cases the YOT and Children's Social care will be notified via the police Merlin reports via the Public Protection desk, although the process needs to be sufficiently flexible to respond to concerns raised by schools, and parents themselves, and these may be routed through the Assessment Safeguarding and Family Support Services (ASAFs) or the YOT.
- 3.5.2 Merlin reports are sent to Children's Social Care and the YOT, where they are reviewed by the seconded police sergeant for concerns in relation to criteria *i* and *iv*, concerns relating to *ii* and *iii* are most likely to be identified by Children's Social care, and shall be conveyed to the operational manager (YOT) for Early Intervention Services. It is expected that a Child in Need Assessment will have been undertaken prior to notification so that concerns and possible interventions can be specified.
- 3.5.3 All Merlin notifications are entered on the YOT's database for reference. In the event of behaviour likely to result in prosecution, rather than Reprimand, if the child were aged 10 years or over, or a repetition of less serious behaviour, an assessment for intervention is indicated. An officer designated under the joint information sharing protocol will check whether the child is currently allocated to Children's Social care and, also, confirm the child's status with the education services.
- 3.5.4 All cases of concern, whether identified by the YOT or a partner agency with respect to children aged 8 – 13 years, will be discussed at a monthly multi-agency Youth Inclusion and Support Panel meeting. There are two Panels in the borough (North and South) with senior representatives in attendance from the YOT Early Intervention Team, Education, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Police and the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit. The Panels are currently chaired by senior managers from Children's Social Care.
- 3.5.4.1 The YISP will determine whether the threshold for an intervention has been met based on an assessment of the risk factors associated with future involvement in offending or anti-social behaviour (see separate YISP proposals document). If the thresholds are met, the YISP will identify a lead agency:
- Children's Social Care if a Child in Need, or where there are Safeguarding concerns.
  - YOT where risk of offending or anti-social behaviour is indicated.
  - On occasion other agencies can take on the lead role.
- The lead agency is responsible for agreeing an Individual Support Plan with the child, family and partner agencies, and the allocated worker will be responsible for co-ordinating and case managing the various agency responses, and reporting back to the YISP as indicated by the chair.
- 3.5.4.2 It is imperative that the plan is supported by rigorous assessment and it is expected that the YISP-specific Onset assessment tool will be used. This tool will always be used even

when Children's Social Care have already completed a core assessment as the Onset identifies the criminogenic risk factors to be addressed in an intervention.

- 3.5.4.3 It is a general requirement that children who are referred to the YISP should not be discussed unless there is parental consent. In certain circumstances where consent has not been given but the chair of the YISP takes the view that the concerns about a child or young person outweighs this the YISP will review the young person.
- 3.5.4.4 In some cases children and families may not engage voluntarily. The Panel must then consider the grounds for a statutory intervention with respect to the powers and duties of a local authority pursuant to the Children Act 1989 a Child Safety Order (see above) if the child is aged under 10 years, or an Anti-Social Behaviour Order if 10 years or above. If the grounds for an ASBO application are met, the YISP can fulfil the functions of a properly constituted ASBO conference without recourse to a further conference. All other powers available under the Children Act should also be considered.

#### **4. Young people aged 10 – 17 years at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour**

- 4.1 Joint working between the YOT and Children's Social Care depends upon a reciprocal flow of information, and the provision of appropriate support.
- 4.2 Children's Social Care will have numbers of young people in need, or looked after who may be involved, or at risk of involvement in crime. The YOT has a duty to prevent offending by young people and will offer an assessment and, where appropriate, an intervention to address evident criminogenic factors.
- 4.2.1 Children Looked After in other situations, or requiring individual work, and children deemed at risk of involvement in crime should be referred by the ASAFs or CLA Services (Team Manager) to the YOT for the attention of the operational manager (Prevention). The post holder will decide:
- a. Whether a YOT assessment (using Onset) is appropriate, and
  - b. On the basis of any assessment whether an intervention should be offered

These decisions will be taken in consultation with the referee, but will be based on the evidence of criminogenic risk factors.

***The involvement of the YOT is predicated on the assumption of working in partnership and is not an alternative to continued Children's Social Care involvement (ASAFs.).***

- 4.3 Notification of youths at risk will, ordinarily, be made by police, or the Anti-Social Behaviour Team. The latter is dealt with in a separate multi-agency protocol.
- 4.3.1 As noted above, Merlin reports are analysed by the police sergeant seconded to the YOT. Youths identified as coming to police notice for criminal behaviour, but not Reprimanded, Warned, or Charged, or anti-social behaviour without reference to SASBU will be offered a YOT assessment after consultation with Children's Social Care and the LEA. Where the young person is currently allocated to Social Care joint working will be offered. If the young person is not allocated, the YOT will offer a service separately after due consultation. A young persons status in relation to ASAF or CLA services can be checked by YOT through access to the Care First database.
- 4.3.2 Where concerns arise, during an assessment or intervention process, relating to broader issues of welfare or child protection, the operational manager (Prevention) will make a referral to the Referral and Assessment Duty Service. It is imperative that action is not delayed through repetitive assessments of children and their families. It is, therefore,

required that the agency receiving the referral, responds within 1 working day of receipt of the referral. These requirements will apply also where young people are receiving a statutory service from the YOS and referrals will be made via the appropriate Operations Manager.

4.3.3 Procedures with respect to child protection concerns are detailed elsewhere. However, in the event of children and young people assessed by the YOT as appearing to need accommodation services pursuant to S20 1989 Children Act. R&A or the allocated team should accept the YOT assessment of need until the first review. The case manager should refer to the weekly YOS/ASAF liaison meetings to discuss whether an inter-agency referral is appropriate, and/or which services can be provided to mitigate the concerns (see 5.4.1). If the YOS case manager in consultation with their line manager considers that more immediate action is required, the line manager should consult with their counterpart in R & A. The necessity for prompt inter-agency action may arise in the following circumstances:

- Where the Court grants bail with a condition to reside as directed by Children's Services because parents/carers have refused to accept care responsibilities for the young offender, have not attended court and cannot be contacted, or the Court has imposed a negative requirement prohibiting a return home. Where subsequently, the parent or carer is contacted, every effort should be made to support a return home for the young person provided it is in his / her best interests, and bail conditions imposed by the court permit.
- In such cases, the Operations Manager (Court Services) will refer the case to the Referral & Assessment Service or the allocated team for appropriate assessment and intervention in partnership with the YOT supervising officer. The agreement to accommodate under Section 20 1989 Children Act must be made at the level of service manager within the ASAF.
- A young offender under the age of 16 years subject to supervision in the community by the YOT becomes estranged from their family. Estrangement from family at age 16 or 17 should be discussed with ASAF as they may be entitled to continuing support from Children's Social Care with respect to their vulnerability.
- In such cases, the case manager (Court Services) will refer to the YOS/ASAF weekly liaison meetings to enable the YOT and Social Services to joint plan an assessment and intervention. In the event that the situation has broken down without advance warning, the YOT and Referral & Assessment Service will co-ordinate an emergency response which will mobilise available resources to enable the young person to remain at home. Where this work proves unsuccessful, the Referral and Assessment Service will arrange for accommodation to be provided on the day of referral in consultation with the YOT as to the needs and supervision requirements of the young person. In this event, an inter-agency planning meeting will be convened within 2 working days to determine an agreed course of action.
- Young offenders under the age of 16 years who are estranged from their families at the point of release from custody (see below).

## **5. Pre-court services to young offenders aged 10 to 17 years**

- 5.1 Young offenders in receipt of a Police Reprimand or Final Warning are immediately notified to the YOT. A Final Warning necessitates a YOT assessment and, in most cases, the offer of a 12-week intervention programme. Reprimands who are CLA/CiN, excluded from school, or have siblings who are offenders will also be offered an assessment and intervention.
- 5.2 The Operations Manager (Pre-Court and Prevention) will ensure that with respect to CLA/CiN details of offences and programmes offered will be entered onto the Care First

database within 2 working days of the bail-back meeting. The allocated social worker will be contacted by the YOT officer, and notified of outcomes and plans within 1 working day. Where cases are already open to Social Care the allocated social worker will be consulted in relation to assessment and planning, and will be regularly updated on progress by the YOS Triage worker.

- 5.3 The issues outlined in 4.3.2 will be managed as described in that note.
- 5.4 In order to reduce the number of First Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice system the YOS in partnership with the police operate a Triage service. Based on an initial assessment and in consultation with the police young people committing low level offences and with no previous offending history may be diverted from caution or prosecution. This has impacted most significantly on the number of Reprimands and Final Warnings issued to young people. The diversionary programme involves 6 sessions covering issues consistent with the needs and/or risk of offending identified by the assessments.
- 5.4.1 In some cases the assessment will identify issues relevant to need or safeguarding indicating a consultation and possible referral to ASAF as per 4.3.2 and 8.5. In the event of significant risk of concern or safeguarding concerns being identified, the worker should contact the Referral and Assessment Service without delay, to consider whether an immediate referral is necessary.
- 5.4.2 However, in all non-emergency cases the concerns should be raised at the weekly YOS/ASAF liaison meetings to consider whether a referral to R&A is appropriate, what range of services may be appropriate and how they may be provided. If the decision of the meeting is that R&A involvement is necessary the inter-agency referral is to be considered as accepted from that point. In all other circumstances an inter-agency referral will be required, although this should always follow an inter-agency consultation at Practice Manager or Operations Manager/Team Manager level. The only exceptions to this are if a referral to R & A follows an instruction from the YISP or Risk Management Panel in which case R&A must automatically undertake an initial assessment.

*The above principles apply to all young people supervised or supported by the YOT where Social Care involvement is indicated.*

## **6. Young people appearing in court and young offenders made the subject of court-ordered interventions.**

- 6.1 The YOT has responsibility for monitoring all young people appearing in court, recording outcomes, and advising the court of services available where appropriate. However, not all young people appearing in court require services provided directly or co-ordinated by the YOT, particularly where young people are remanded to appear on unconditional bail.
- 6.2 Where objections to bail are raised the YOT will provide an assessment, wherever possible on the day of the 1<sup>st</sup> hearing and, where practical, provide or co-ordinate a bail supervision programme. The bail assessment may give rise to concerns relating to the home circumstances that would warrant a discussion with R&A or the allocated team. This will be progressed via the YOT duty manager. In cases where Children's Social Care are already actively involved they are expected to retain their involvement, and the YOT caseworker will involve the Social Worker in the planning process, and vice versa. Clearly, open information exchange within the parameters of the information sharing protocol in line with S115 1998 CDA is required.
- 6.3 The court has the power to Remand into Local Authority Accommodation a young person under the age of 17 years appearing for an offence for which a custodial sentence would be available if they were an adult.

- 6.3.1 Young males aged 15 or 16 years will ordinarily be remanded into custody where bail has been refused. However, if assessed as vulnerable by the YOT officer in court, they will be remanded into local authority secure accommodation. Any young person aged between 12 and 14 years remanded for serious offences may be similarly remanded into secure accommodation. Young women may not be remanded into custody under the age of 17 years.
- 6.3.2 The YOT manages the Children's Social Care placement budget for remands and has responsibility for commissioning placements, either through Children's Services brokerage or, in the case of secure accommodation, through the Youth Justice Board.
- 6.3.3 Exceptionally, young people will be bailed with a condition to reside as directed by the YOT / Children's Services. This will occur where the offence does not warrant a remand into local authority accommodation or custody, but the young person cannot offer a safe address for the purposes of bail. In such cases the YOT will commission a placement where appropriate, but will automatically consult with R&A or allocated team, given the current estrangement from the primary carers. The case will transfer to the Children Looked After Service if the young person remains looked after at the time of the first review.
- 6.4 All young people RiC, RiLAA, or bailed with a condition to reside due to estrangement from primary carers will be allocated a YOT worker to manage the remand, and to liaise with Children's Specialist Services about the provision of services. However, all young people remanded into local authority accommodation will be notified to R&A by the YOT officer(s) in court at the point of the remand, and a social worker from R & A will be allocated within 2 working days. The social worker will be responsible for liaising with any accommodation provider in relation to a placement agreement in consultation with the allocated YOT officer, completing all Looked After Children documentation and ensuring compliance with timescales for statutory reviews in consultation with the Quality Assurance Unit. The R&A social worker will retain case responsibility until the first review at which point the case will be transferred to the CLA Service. The YOT and R&A worker will conduct a joint assessment prior to the first CLA review within 4 weeks, which the social worker will arrange in consultation with the Quality Assurance Unit. At first review a CLA social worker will be allocated for the duration of the looked after episode.
- 6.5 A critical function of the joint assessment, as well as identifying criminogenic factors, is to assess the possibility/desirability of a return home upon completion of the criminal proceedings. Where this is deemed unlikely or undesirable, the young person will be accommodated (S20 1989 C.A). If the young person can return home with support a joint referral will be made to ASAFs, Integrated Child Support Service, or Targetted Youth Support.
- 6.5.1 In cases where Children's Social Care are actively involved it is required that case involvement continue and be integral to the case planning and service delivery process.

**N.B.** *Where young people are already looked after, the allocated social worker is primarily responsible for ensuring the young person's attendance at court, and that the department is represented in proceedings.*

Where a pre-sentence report is required, this will be completed by the YOT, but details of the young persons Care Plan (or Pathway Plan) must be included.

- 6.6 Court-ordered interventions will be supervised by the YOT, in accordance with sentence requirements and National Standards for Youth Justice. This role does not preclude Children's Specialist Services remaining involved in a case, or becoming involved after an assessment of need prompted by a YOT referral. It would be appropriate for reviews of court-ordered interventions to be organized and chaired by a YOT manager, while

Child Care reviews are chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers. A single meeting can fulfil both functions if agreed by both services.

- 6.7 In the event of CLA/CiN being charged with an offence and prosecuted in court the following procedures will apply.
- The YOT will notify the allocated social worker within 1 working day of having received notification of the offence, court appearance, or PSR request. The YOT will continue to update the social worker. However, where the child is looked after, the functions of the YOT **do not** remove the imperative for the social worker to act in loco parentis as a responsible adult in the court proceedings.
  - In the case of Children Looked After, out-of-borough and committing offences, the social worker will notify the YOT of any proceedings within 1 working day of notification of charge, court appearance, or conviction to enable Southwark YOT to liaise with the home YOT as appropriate. In the final quarter of the financial year CLA services will provide the YOS Performance Manager with details of all CLA cautioned or convicted for offences whilst placed out of borough for the purposes of data verification.
- 6.8 If a child has been RiLAA until the first statutory looked-after review, arrangements must be made for the young person (CLA) to be transferred to the CLA Services. This must happen within five working days after the review (to be arranged by the allocated ASAFs social worker).
- 6.9 Assessment and intervention is a dynamic process and, on occasion, needs and/or safeguarding concerns will emerge post-sentencing while the young person is being supervised in the community. It is imperative that the case manager in consultation with their line manager/operations manager discuss the case with R&A, or if already known to Children's Social Care convey the information of concern to the allocated social worker both verbally and in writing. The level of concern will determine whether the case is discussed at the weekly joint meetings (see 8.5) or, if a case is open to ASAF/CLA, an arranged network meeting, or is escalated with a request for immediate action.

## **7. Joint procedures relating to young offenders sentenced to custody**

- 7.1.2 The majority of custodial sentences for young people are Detention and Training Orders with a minimum sentence of 4 months and a maximum of 2 years. In general, half of the sentence is served in custody and the remainder served in the community under supervision of the YOT. Young people charged with an offence for which a longer sentence would be appropriate, are committed by the Youth Court to the Crown Court, where they can be sentenced to longer terms of imprisonment pursuant to S91 or 92 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. However, it is usually the case that the young person will be released into the community under the supervision of the YOT at the midway point of the sentence.
- 7.1.3 The facility exists for the Prison Governor, in both categories of sentence, to allow early release in response to good behaviour. The prison authority will inform the allocated YOT worker of the early release date and the mandatory release date in the early days of the sentence.
- 7.2.1 All young prisoners are the subject of a Training Plan agreed by the custodial establishment and the supervising YOT, which considers tackling offending behaviour, associated risk factors, education, well-being, and post-release arrangements and continuing supervision. The supervising YOT officer will invite an officer from the Quality Assurance Unit to the final Training Plan meeting held in custody with respect to any Child Looked After (S31 1989 C.A.), or who was looked after (S23 1998 C.D.A, or S20

1989 C.A.) immediately prior to sentencing and considered to require continuing support upon release from custody. **LOCAL AUTHORITY CIRCULAR LAC (2004)26**

In the case of Children Looked After whether pursuant to S31 or S20 1989 C.A, it is the Training Plan must be integrated with the local authority Care Plan. It is recognised that S20 1989 C.A status ceases upon sentencing to custody, but remains good practice for the former care authority to remain involved in the planning process. This may include plans to accommodate upon release, where the young person remains vulnerable.

Children Looked After allocated workers should maintain involvement unless and until a statutory review considers that planned objectives have been met, and that satisfactory arrangements consistent with the child's welfare and rehabilitation to the community are in place.

It is therefore expected that the CLA service will make arrangements for regular contact with any child who is looked after under a care order while they are in custody, whether by visiting themselves or by making arrangements with the local authority in whose area the YOI or STC is located. The responsible authority should arrange to maintain regular contact with the child and reviews of his care plan or pathway plan should continue. The responsible Team should also ensure that ongoing contact with siblings, where that is part of the care plan, is facilitated. When considering where the young person should live on release from custody, it will be necessary to make appropriate plans in advance of the end of the sentence. It will be important to assess the parental capacity to resume care of the young person or to plan for their move to a placement that is appropriate to meeting the needs identified in the care or pathway plan. Local Authority Circular LAC (2004) 6

- 7.3 In the event of a young prisoner being entitled to early release, the YOT is required to provide the Prison Governor with details of the intended address for the young person and its suitability for the installation of electronic monitoring. The Governor must receive this information 10 working days before the release date or early release may be denied. Children Looked After services will work with the YOT to enable the YOT to comply with these requirements by providing details of the post-release placement 20 working days prior to release to enable the premises to be assessed as suitable for the purposes of electronic monitoring.
- 7.4 Some complex cases may require a more flexible approach in relation to referral pathways:
- The domestic arrangements for young offenders supervised by the YOT in the community, whether as part of a custodial sentence post-release, or a community penalty either temporarily or permanently, and appropriate levels of support must be provided without the delay occasioned by repetitious assessment processes.

Therefore, in the case of:

- A young person aged 16 years or over eligible for a leaving care service (a period of Remand into Local Authority Accommodation is relevant to eligibility) the YOT must arrange a planning meeting with the CLA Adolescent and Aftercare service to consider what support can be provided to the young person. Continued service delivery will be monitored through the existing case review process. The YOT worker will invite the CLA Service to the pre-release Training Plan meeting to plan release arrangements, which may include the provision of accommodation under S20 1989 C.A depending upon the assessed vulnerability of the young person, although it is expected that plans will be well-advanced at the point of the pre-release meeting.
- A child under the age of 16 years may need to be accommodated by the Referral & Assessment Service or the allocated team pending joint assessment of need taking account of welfare factors and the risks of re-offending. Subsequent



assessment and review should be jointly conducted by R&A and the YOT. The YOS will refer to R&A at the point of sentencing to custody in the event that Social Care involvement with the family upon release, or estrangement from family requiring S20 accommodation, or immediate concerns are identified during the custodial part of sentence if not apparent prior to sentencing. The allocated social worker should attend Training Plan meetings in the YOI/STC with the YOT officer. If accommodation is to be provided by Social Care the YOT case manager must be notified of the details 20 working days prior to release to enable licence documentation to be completed and electronic monitoring, if appropriate, to be arranged.

## **8. Safeguarding concerns in relation to young people affected by gang activity**

- 8.1 Safeguarding procedures can provide a key tool for all agencies working with young people in partnership to prevent their involvement with gangs either as members or victims of gang-involved offending.
- 8.2 The key principles build on those outlined in Working Together:
- The safety and welfare of the child is paramount
  - Children who harm others are both perpetrators and victims of gang activity
  - All decisions or plans for children should be based on good quality assessments (core assessments, Asset, Onset, etc), action taken must be proportionate and in the best interests of the child
  - All agencies must work in partnership to safeguard young people
- 8.3 Young people engaged with the YOS who are gang involved as evidenced by a combination of Asset/Onset assessment tools, or intelligence (particularly from the police) will require the case manager to complete a Risk of Serious Harm assessment and, if of medium or higher risk, a Risk Management Plan to mitigate the risk of harm to others. In many cases the young person will also be vulnerable to harm due to the cyclical nature of the link between offender and victim, their own reckless behaviours including substance misuse, or sexual exploitation. In this event the YOS case manager must complete a vulnerability management plan.
- 8.5 As of May 2010 all cases of concern for the YOS will be reviewed at a weekly joint YOS/ASAF meeting led by the Service Manager for Court Services and their counterpart in Referral and Assessment to jointly determine the level of risk and/or vulnerability, the nature of safeguarding concerns and whether joint assessment and/or intervention is appropriate.
- 8.5.1 It will not be necessary to complete an inter-agency referral but the YOS should provide relevant assessment and case documentation 1 working day in advance of the meeting. ASAF will confirm whether the young person is known and, if so, provide any relevant information at the meeting. Concerns may not be restricted to young people directly involved with gangs as victims or perpetrators but may include siblings who may be drawn into the margins of gang-involved offending or may be the victims of reprisals.
- 8.5.2 The meeting should use the Risk Matrix outlined in Section IV of the Home Office Guidance for Safeguarding Children and Young People who may be affected by gang activity, April 2010, as a reference tool for decision making.
- 8.6 The activity of the meetings will be reviewed in October 2010 following a thematic audit within the YOS of risk and safeguarding.

## **9. Further interface issues**

9.1 This protocol does not include issues concerning:

- ◆ The interface between young sex offenders and the child protection process (procedures have been written under separate cover).
- ◆ Service obligations with respect to the investigation and intervention vis complaints of anti-social behaviour, and the application for orders in the Magistrates Court
- ◆ Applications for local child curfew schemes and the implementation of specified notices.

Such documentation will be appended to this protocol as is appropriate.

## YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICES

YOS is a multi-agency service, including Social Care, Connexions, Probation Service, CAMHS, Police and PCT, whose principal aim is to 'prevent young people from becoming involved in offending or anti-social behaviour'. This entails supervising young offenders subject to court orders and intervening to reduce the risk of re-offending, but also diverting young people at risk away from criminal behaviour and into positive activities.

The service is composed of a number of core elements:

## COURT SERVICES

The YOT Court Services Team provides a duty service to the Youth Court. Providing staff on a rostered basis to undertake Appropriate Adult duties, supervise young people in the court environs and give oral evidence as appropriate to the circumstances. They are responsible for the preparation of Pre-Sentence Reports and the supervision of a range of Court-ordered interventions following a high quality assessment, in accordance with National Standards and the principles of Effective Practice to address offending behaviour, and the assessment and management of Risk of Harm to others, Safeguarding and the assessment and management of vulnerability.

Southwark is an inner-city borough with a number of high-risk young offenders and therefore we aim to provide high quality interventions and innovative solutions to the problems young people face.

[For further information contact Sharon Barton-Chambers or Jo Tattersfield]

## GANG DISRUPTION PROJECT

The project aims to challenge young people's attitudes demystifying the appeal of gangs, and raising consciousness about the effects of negative behaviour.

Based within the Youth Offending Team, the Gang Project is working with individuals who are identified as either known gang members or those on the periphery of involvement, interventions are geared towards exploring the influences on young people, dissecting values and beliefs and assisting them to make more informed life choices.

We offer a 14 week programme that confronts young people on pertinent issues around violence, masculinity, identity, and peer pressure. Using a variety of mediums and sources from visual aids, video, photography, literature and interactive workshops, an emphasis is placed on empowerment and peer education. Where it is felt that individuals are unsuitable for group engagement, one to one work is employed to address issues relating to offending and re-integrating the young person back into society.

[For further information contact Maggie Gilbert or Sameera Khan]

### **EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM**

The Early Intervention Team (EIT) is part of the Youth Offending Team and is, along with a multi-agency network, responsible for delivering youth inclusion and support services. The team work with children and young people aged between 8 and 16 who have started to exhibit anti-social and disruptive behaviour and may be at significant risk of offending.

They provide support for parents/carers and young people through mediation and mentoring to help strengthen family relationships.

They support young people by providing group work programmes, one-to-one sessions and constructive leisure activities. They also give support to manage transition to secondary school and home-school liaison to enhance links between home and school. *[For further information contact Jenny Brennan or Vicky Agnew]*

### **YOUTH INCLUSION and SUPPORT PANEL (YISP)**

Young people requiring support from more than one service to reduce criminogenic risk factors are referred to multi-agency Youth Inclusion and Support Panels who coordinate holistic intervention plans.

*[For further information contact Vicky Agnew]*

### **YOUTH INCLUSION PROJECTS (YIPs)**

A YIP provides generic youth support for young people, including a range of magnet activities. Targeted support is provided for the 50 most at risk of involvement in crime in the targeted geographical area. This includes dedicated keyworker support.

There are 6 YIPs in the borough, 3 are provided by Kickstart (voluntary sector) and 3 by the YOT in partnership with Southwark Community Games.

*[Now at Targeted Youth Support - For further info contact Hannah Edwards or Anna Lumley]*

**A Protocol Between  
Southwark Children's Services  
Children's Specialist Services Division  
And  
Southwark Youth Offending Team**

**ACCEPTANCE**

**I agree to the terms of the protocol as set out above**

*Signed* ..... *Date:* .....

**Chris Domeney**  
*Head of Youth Offending Service*

*Signed* ..... *Date:* .....

**Rory Patterson**  
*Asst. Director for Specialist Children's Services*

*Signed* ..... *Date:* .....

**Romi Bowen**  
*Director of Children's Services*

<b>Item No.</b> 8.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Placement Stability	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Assistant Director Children's Specialist Services	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The corporate parenting committee recognises the significant progress made since the JAR (Joint Area Review) inspection in April 2008 to deliver improved permanent outcomes for looked after children.
2. The corporate parenting committee supports the proposed reconfiguration of the fostering service to deliver increased numbers of new carer approvals whilst retaining the capacity of the Service to continue providing high levels of carer support and stability.
3. The corporate parenting committee supports the proposed management integration of the adoption and permanence service into the 0-12 Service.
4. The corporate parenting committee requests an appraisal from the Virtual Head concerning the possible impact the reconfiguration of the children looked after education team might have upon placement support and stability.
5. The corporate parenting committee requests the lead commissioner of CAMHS (Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services) to review and report on the impact of any proposed service reductions upon Carelink and its capability to deliver targeted interventions for children in care and foster carer support.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

6. This report is commissioned as part of the February corporate parenting agenda - "staying safe".
7. Placement stability was identified as the main practice development recommendation from the 2008 JAR Inspection.
8. A strategic planning group chaired by Rory Patterson, assistant director for Specialist services had been established in 2007 to review and enhance Southwark's adoption outcomes. Following the JAR Inspection and improved adoption performance, this strategic group undertook a review of placement stability. A comprehensive overview and action plan was signed off by the strategic group in October 2008.
9. The CLA service has implemented the action plan since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 which has delivered year on year improved stability outcomes.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

10. Given the length of time it takes to have an impact upon stability outcomes for children in care a scheduled review was undertaken after two years in November 2010. The review has now been completed and is submitted as Appendix 1.
11. It is currently anticipated that the 2010/11 financial year report in April 2011 will indicate a third successive year of improved stability performance.

### Policy implications

12. There are no policy implications concerning this report. The proposed changes to the fostering services are subject to consultation processes in keeping with council and human resource processes which are scheduled for implementation in April 2011.
13. Under council policy it is expected that any proposed changes to the CLA Education Team and CAHMS link team will be subject to agreed consultation processes.

### Resource implications

14. The reconfiguration of the fostering team and management changes for the adoption and permanence team are part of the overall CLA reconfiguration proposals for April 2011 which are currently being consulted upon to deliver necessary budgetary reductions.

### Community impact statement

15. There is a strong correlation between placement disruption (especially in later childhood years) and vulnerability to anti social or self harming behaviour i.e. teenage pregnancy, substance misuse and youth offending. It is therefore crucial for the CLA Service to deliver successful economic well being and achievement outcomes for looked after children.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
JAR inspection report 2008	160 Tooley Street, SE1	Eleanor Parkin Tel: 020 7525 5032

**APPENDICES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Review of Long Term Stability of Southwark Children in Care

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Rory Patterson Assistant Director Children's Specialist Services & Safeguarding	
<b>Report Author</b>	Chris Saunders Head of Services for Children in Care/Service Manager 0-12 Service	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	3 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director of Communities, Law and Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		3 February 2011



## Appendix 1

### Long Term Stability of Southwark Children in Care

**Author:** Alasdair Smith, Service Manager CLA 0-12 Service

**Date of Report:** 2011-01-28

**Introduction:** This report considers reviews performance around the *long term stability* of LAC as defined by the DoE indicator N63. It is a difficult indicator to effect given its long term nature. 100% performance is not desired. Placement changes are inevitable and in some cases desirable however the key is to minimise the number of changes children experience and to understand better the characteristics of children who the care system is unable to keep stable. Secure attachments in early life are an essential ingredient of normal child development. Placement instability compromises this and negatively effects emotional functioning, behaviour, education and identity. It has long term consequences for employment, social relationships, financial management and housing<sup>1</sup>.

**Definition:** “The percentage of looked after children aged under 16 at 31 March who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or are placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement together last for at least 2 years”. The definition of this indicator has remained fairly consistent over several years which enables some longitudinal comparisons.

#### Overall performance figures:

	Nov 2006	March 2009	Jan 2011
LAC Total	635	530	522
LAC over 2.5 yrs	220 (35%)	186 (35%)	142 (27%)
Same place 2 yrs - <b>stable</b>	135	130	108
Not same 2 yrs - <b>unstable</b>	79	56	34
N63	<b>61%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>76%</b>

**Summary:** There has been significant improvement in the performance in this area. It is not possible to identify any one factor that has made a difference. Likely influences are:

- continued investment in skilled and responsive multi-agency work to support the social work and fostering role (Carelink and LAC Education Team);
- consolidation of improved structures to focus on age groups of LAC (CLA 0-12 Service and AAC); increased awareness across the system of issues relating to stability;
- renewed focus on permanence tracking;
- continuing strong fostering support service.

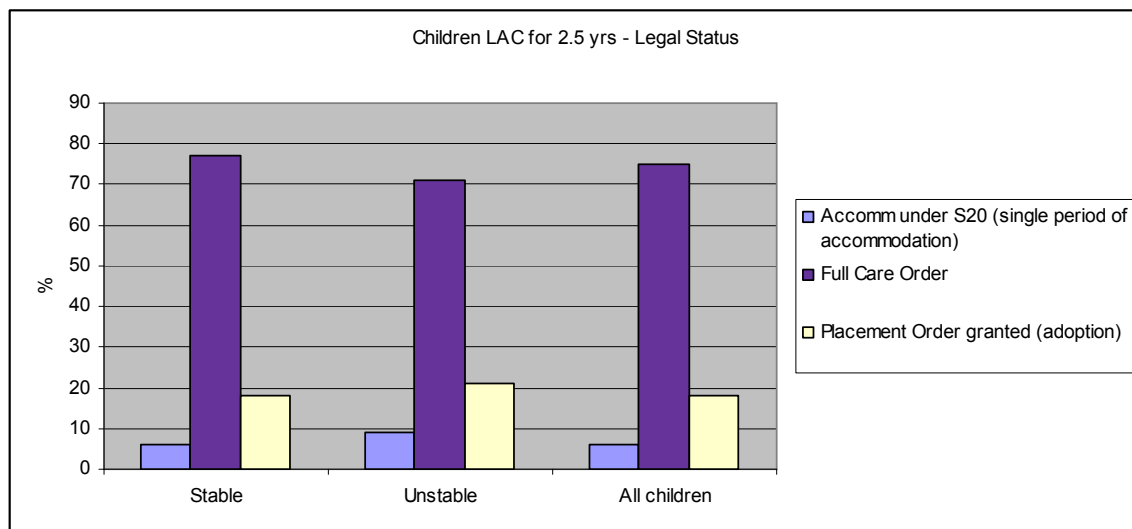
---

<sup>1</sup> Placement Stability – a review of the literature Emily R. Munro and Ainsley Hardy (University of Loughborough 2007)

Unstable LAC are more likely to enter the care system later and particularly they are more likely to have decisions finalised by a court about their future care significantly later than stable children. The great majority of these children are known to the care system under the age of 8 yrs old and will have legal orders (Care or Placement) in respect of them. Unstable LAC need considerably more intervention from Education and CAMHS and are in more expensive care placements. Only a small number of unstable LAC experience unplanned changes of placement. Significantly more undergo planned moves to enable their needs to be better met elsewhere.

Unstable LAC are children we know very well and so: understanding their needs better; planning for their care more rigorously; and learning how to manage their often complex difficulties is a continuing challenge.

### Legal Status:



### Age:

	Current age	Mean age when child first becomes looked after	Mean age when Care Proceedings end if relevant
All children	11yrs 2mths	4yrs 7mths	6yrs 4 mths
Stable	11yrs 4mths	4yrs 4 mths	5yrs 6 mths
Unstable	10yrs 3mths	5yrs 4 mths	8yrs 3 mths

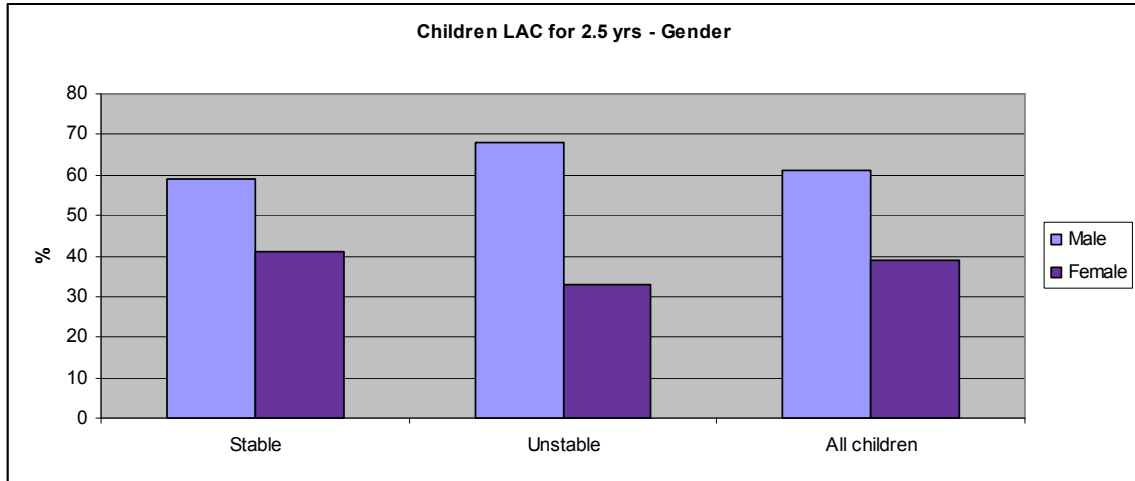
### *Ages children became looked after*

Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Stable	15	10	6	14	12	12	13	8	6	3	3	2	4		108
Unstable	6	3	2	2	3	2	4	4		3	2	2		1	34
Total	21	13	8	16	15	14	17	12	6	6	5	4	4	1	142

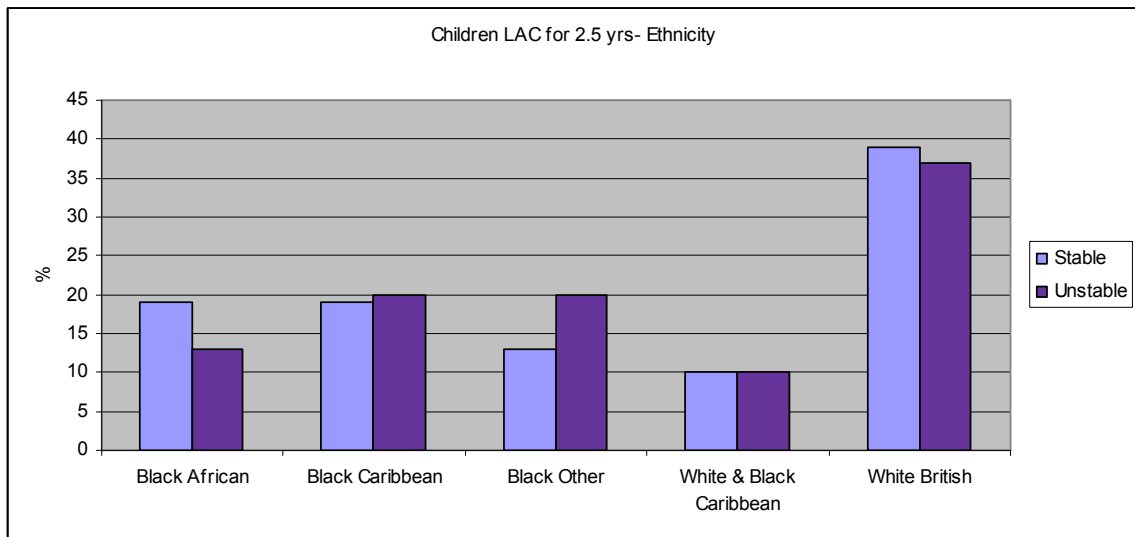
### *Age care proceedings ceased excluding children placed for adoption*

Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Stable	5	9	5	9	6	11	13	18	12	4	5	3	1	1	102
Unstable	1	1	3	2	1	3	3	2	4	1	3	1		2	27
Total	6	10	8	11	7	14	16	20	16	5	8	4	1	3	129

**Gender:**



**Ethnicity**

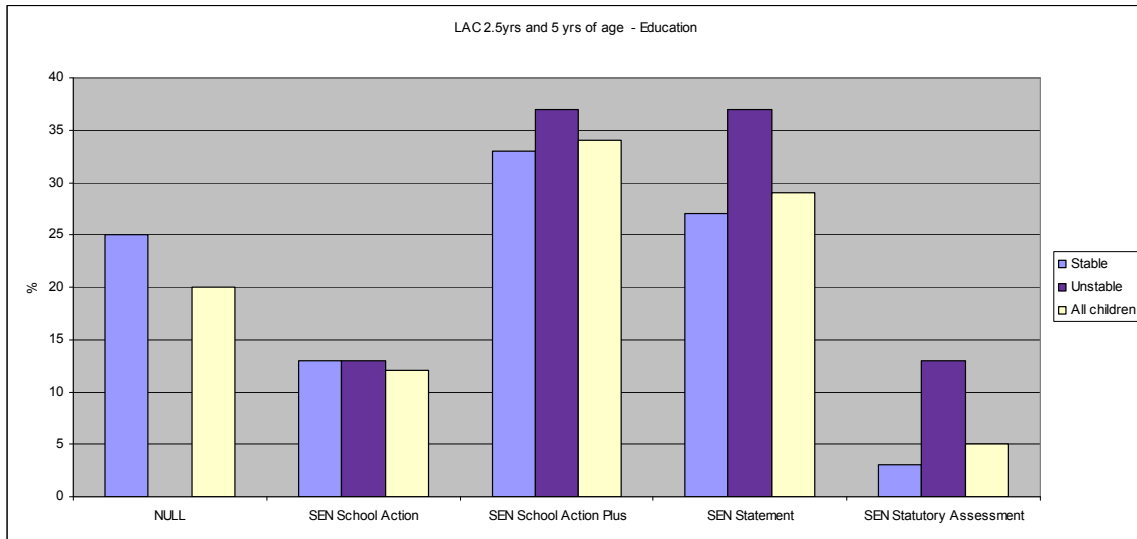


Black other children seem to be disproportionately in the unstable group. Black African children seem to be more likely to be in stable placements.

**Disability:**

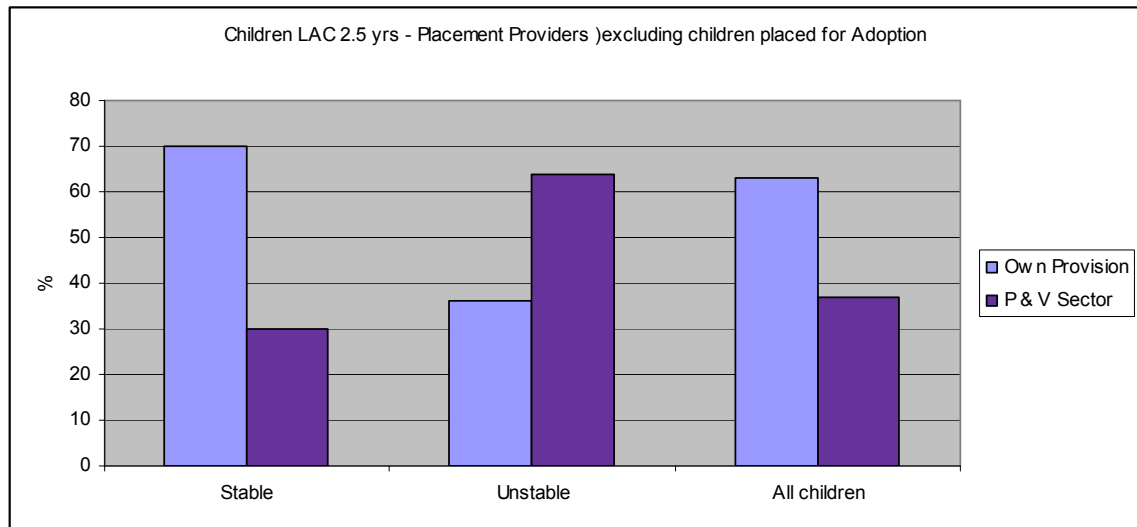
Children with disabilities are much more likely to be in stable placements. Of eight children with disabilities looked after for more than 2 ½ years only one is in an unstable placement.

**Education:**



Unstable children have significantly higher educational needs. They require significantly more intervention within their schools. All children in the unstable group are on a minimum of School Action Plus indicating a higher awareness in the school setting of the needs of the child and strategies / assessments to promote his or her needs.

**Placement providers:**



Unstable children are far more likely to be in Private and Voluntary sector placements. The costs of these are considerable compared to in house fostering resources. 5 of the 18 children in this category in the unstable group were in residential care and none of these were joint funded with Southwark Education.

### **Unstable Group:**

**Planned changes** - 18 children (53%) had planned placement moves: mostly to long term foster care (7) residential care (4), to another foster carer but not long term (2) to a family member (1) Adoption (4). In April 2009 this proportion was 36% so this has shown some improvement.

**Unplanned changes** (disruptions) - 11 children (32%). The main reasons for moves were the behavior of the child (8) of these 2 involved offending. A minority appeared to be purely issues with both carer and child (2). 1 seemed to involve the undermining of the placement by the parent. Child behaviour issues may mask underlying issues relating to: inadequate matching (may or may not have been predictable); inadequate care; carer not equipped/supported to manage changing needs of a child (offending/gangs); inadequate service provision (CAMHS, social work, educational support) Only an audit of this group will be able to understand the issue around placement disruption. In April 2009 the proportion was 56% so the decrease in unplanned changes is positive.

**Unavoidable changes** - 5 (15%) children changed placements due to reasons beyond control. 4 of the children had foster carers who ceased fostering for a variety of reasons (retirement, family tragedy, divorce). 1 moved following decisions of child protection strategy meetings. This proportion was 9% last time.

### **Audits:**

2 audits undertaken by the Fostering Service and CLA 0-12 Service have thrown some light on social work practice in this area that has led to a number of actions. In the Disruptions Audit undertaken by the Fostering Service, of the 19 cases looked at, 8 disruptions were judged unavoidable. Boys were significantly in the majority and better training of foster carers around specific issues were identified as well as raising awareness of the need to improve processes around the potential disruption of placements for all professionals.

In the CLA 0-12 Audit of Children in Long Term Foster care it was recognised that the understanding of the needs of this group of children needed better analysis. The focus on matching needed to improve and a plan to develop a better practice and service wide awareness of this to take account of children's needs was instigated.

### **Considerations:**

Since last reviewing this group in detail in April 2009 it is clear that there have been significant improvements across the system in delivering more stable placements for LAC. Of note is the overall increase in the proportion of stable placements, and within the unstable group an increase in the amount of planned placement news and reduction in the number of unplanned moves.

In respect of equalities it is notable that children with disabilities are particularly likely to have a stable placement. The proportion of boys who experience an unstable placement as opposed to a stable placement is significantly higher and it is also notable that the black other group is also higher in the unstable group.

Following the JAR in 2008 and reviews of unstable placements in Oct 2008 and April 2009 considerable awareness was promoted across the system to improve the multi-agency working to support stability. A long-term stability working group was established under the leadership of Assistant Director Rory Patterson, and CLA Management Days and Service Days focused learning and understanding of the topic. There was no *lightning bolt* intervention or strategy that made a difference. The work focused on continuing to work along the 4 key principles established by Jane Held's research, commissioned by the DFE'S entitled '**Qualitative study: The Placement stability of looked after children**' published in 2005 and subsequently endorsed by the DCFS commissioned literature review as articulating the key approach to working to deliver sustained improvement in placement stability.

**1) effective diversion from care and early intervention:** since April 2009 the LAC population saw a considerable increase particularly following the publicity surrounding the death of Baby Peter. This placed considerable strain on the system and we are only now seeing the numbers of care proceedings starting to drop. In July 2010, the Assessment and Safeguarding Services (Sumner House) introduced a S.20 panel which is multi-agency and seeks to look rigorously at the needs of older children who may be at risk of entering the care system. This will support long-term stability by enabling resources within the care system to be focused on younger children in care to enable better outcomes to be delivered for them.

The Legal Planning Panel meets twice a month to plan for children entering the care system through Care Proceedings. This is a well established function (since September 2006) overseen by established Service Managers. The CLA 0-12 Service Manager attends all such meetings to enable good joined up planning at an early stage. It is notable that the findings of this study show that children whose legal permanence is finalised later are less likely to achieve stability in placement, it is therefore crucial that staff are aware of the importance of early planning and helped by cross service planning for cases likely to enter care proceedings.

**2) strong tracking and case planning to avoid drift and achieve permanence** the CLA 0-12 Service has consolidated and re-configured into smaller teams with Team Managers directly managing social work practice. This has reduced delay in the system and tightened up planning. The Permanence Tracking System was reviewed in October 2010 and a new strategy to track LAC through permanence has been established. This is more rigorous and uses the information in Care First more intelligently and the Quality Assurance IRO Manager attends the panel to take issues back to IROs and develop a broader view and understanding of permanence as well as a tighter system.

*Standards of practice by individuals and teams can and does have a crucial impact on placement stability but can be minimised through robust monitoring practices*<sup>2</sup>. Improved performance management and addressing of concerning social work practice has contributed to improvements in this area. Maximum Impact Management Training for all CLA Managers is not unrelated to a better focus on social work practice addressing the needs of children.

It is recognised that the proposed reconfiguration of CLA services proposes to place the Adoption and Permanence team within the overall management of the 0-12 Service.

### **3) increased placement choice**

Good placement choice has always been an important part of social work practice in Southwark for children who need to be placed long term in local authority care. The priority has been to utilise Southwark's own fostering service as much as possible importantly because this allows for close access to an excellent support service and co-location with Carelink. Where Southwark carers have been unable to meet the needs of a particular child then an appropriate placement has been sought in the private and voluntary sector.

Southwark's ability to recruit new carers has been limited, and anecdotally it is felt by some social workers and managers that some placements could benefit from less children to enable the foster carer to better focus on the needs of the children in placement. A more imaginative, creative and forward-looking recruitment strategy for Foster Carers is being proposed to refresh the current cohort of carers and enable greater placement choice, and better placement quality. A more rigorous commissioning strategy will also be in place from March 2011 for contracting with independent fostering agencies to enable better placement choice and standards of support and care.

### **4) increased multi-agency and multi-disciplinary support**

Key partnerships have been consolidated and continued to focus on working to enable the complex needs of this group of children to be met.

Carelink provides continued expert child mental health support to foster carers and social workers as well as undertaking direct therapeutic/clinical work on some cases. This is highly valued by foster carers and social workers who acknowledge its significant contribution to building resilience in placements with carers and promoting understanding of the complexities of caring for challenging children.

The LAC Education Team have continued to work alongside social workers to provide direct and responsive support to negotiate the plethora of problems and barriers that can get in the way of LAC accessing fully the benefits of the education system with the right support. Co-location with social workers and great knowledge and passion have meant that foster placements have been supported by children remaining within their school placements or accessing a new appropriate placement quickly with their needs considered. In some cases there have been considerable problems requiring direct intervention and support from the LAC Education Team. Such support to enable

---

<sup>2</sup> 'Patterns and Explanations of Placement stability and Change', published in 2004, carried out by the Social Work Research and Development Unit at the University of York, studied 13 participating councils. Although a very comprehensive study of practice this report concentrates on a number of key findings which should resonate with all those involved in prioritising good outcomes for looked after children;

placements to consolidate and stabilise is the essential platform upon which later achievement is built. It is notable that 80% of all children LAC over 2.5 years need a significant focus in their education of (*School Action, School Action Plus, Statement*) and that 100% of unstable children do.

From September 2010 the management of the CLA education service passed to the Virtual Head Teacher. The team is now subject to reconfiguration proposals as part of the 2011/12 children's services review.



<b>Item No.</b> 9.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Looked After Children and Interim Care Orders	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Deputy Director of Specialist Children's Services	

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the committee considers the report as set out in Appendix 1 on Looked After Children with interim care orders.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. This report was produced to gain an insight into children in care on interim care orders.

### KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. Improvement on number and rate per 10,000 of Looked After Children, with lowest figures end January 2011 over the last 5 years.

### Interim Care Orders

4. The number of Looked After Children on interim care orders has fluctuated over the last 4 years with a slight increase more recently.
5. Over half of Looked After Children are aged 13 or above and one fifth under 6.
6. Looked After Children on interim care orders are more likely to be younger (under 6).
7. The main ethnic difference between all Looked After Children and those on interim care orders is those of a mixed ethnic background with a higher proportion of those on interim care orders.
8. Differences between white British Looked After Children is also evident between all children and those on interim care orders.

### **Current proceedings as at 31 January 2011**

9. There are currently 78 care proceedings cases in court (not numbers of children subject to proceedings). Below is a breakdown of when those proceedings were issued:

2008: 01  
 2009: 19  
 2010: 54  
 2011: 04

We currently have instructions to issue 7 new sets of care proceedings in February. We have 15 cases listed for final hearing in February and 8 in March. Not all cases listed for final hearing conclude as planned as cases can be adjourned for a number of reasons.

### **Proceedings issued and concluded in 2010**

10. On the attachment are the statistics for cases issued and concluded in 2010. In total from April 2010 there were 52 final hearings. The outcomes for these cases were as follows:

11 Special guardianship orders  
 10 Care orders with placement orders being made at the same time  
 12 Care orders  
   9 Supervision orders  
   5 Residence orders  
   2 No order  
   1 Case transferred to another LA  
   1 Withdrawn  
   1 Other outcome

Of the 52 cases which concluded, 37 were in the Inner London Family Proceedings Court (ILFPC) and 15 were at the Principal Registry of the Family Division (PRFD). We are therefore managing to keep the over two thirds of our cases in the lower court. This means that the costs of proceedings are kept lower for the following reasons:

- The in-house legal team is more able to undertake advocacy.
- If counsel is instructed they are paid at a lower rate than at the PRFD.
- The demand for bundles from the ILFPC is lower than the PRFD, the latter requires a bundle every hearing.
- The ILFPC renews interim care orders automatically, unlike the PRFD which requires papers to be sent for every renewal.

### **Policy implications**

11. This decision has been judged to have no policy implications.

### Community impact statement

12. The decision to note this performance report has been judged to have no or a very small impact on local people and communities. Clearly the quality of these services has a big impact on children looked after from all communities.

### Resource implications

13. This decision has no resource implications.

### Consultation

14. The management teams of Children's Safeguarding and Specialist Services have discussed the analysis set out in this report.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
LAC Key Performance Indicators	160 Tooley Street, SE1	Strategy Planning and Performance 020 7525 5032

### APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	LAC and Interim Care Orders
Appendix 2	Interim care order monthly chart
Appendix 3	Performance indicator C18

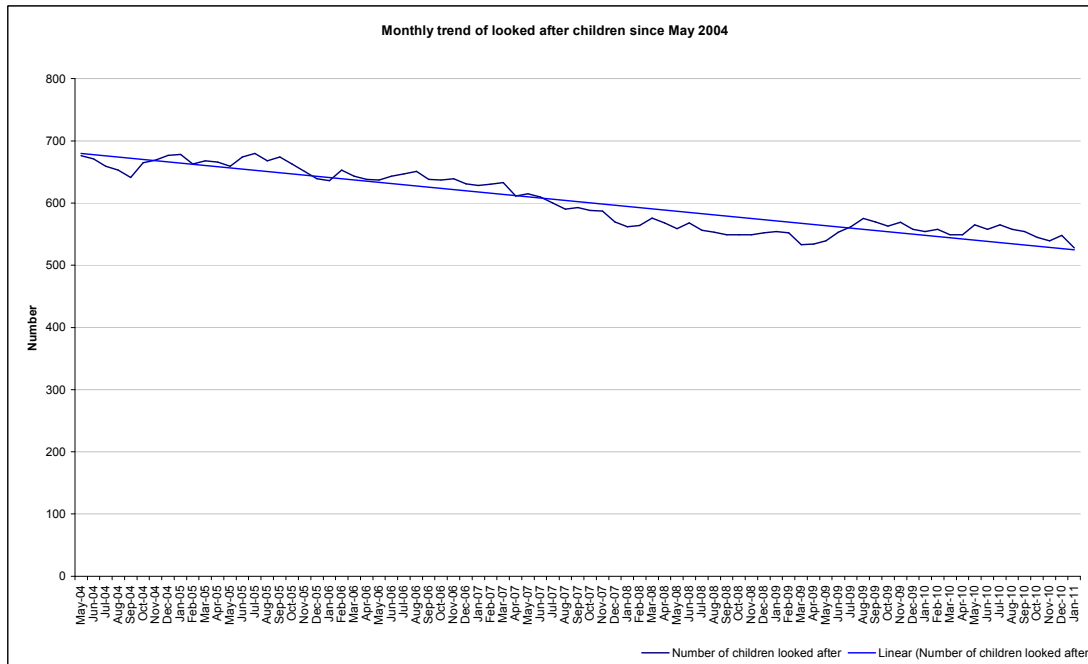
### AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Deputy Director Children's Specialist Services & Safeguarding	
<b>Report Author</b>	Principal Performance Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	3 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
	<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>
		<b>Comments included</b>
	Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No
	Finance Director	No
	List other officers here	No
	<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes
	<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Officer</b>	3 February 2011

## Appendix 1

### Looked after children and Interim Care Orders

Number of children looked after has steadily declined over the last 12 months to reach 525 as at end January 2011. This is a considerable improvement on end of March 2010 figures and is the lowest over the last five years. This also impacts on our rate of looked after children, which is now 95 per 10,000 children aged under 18.

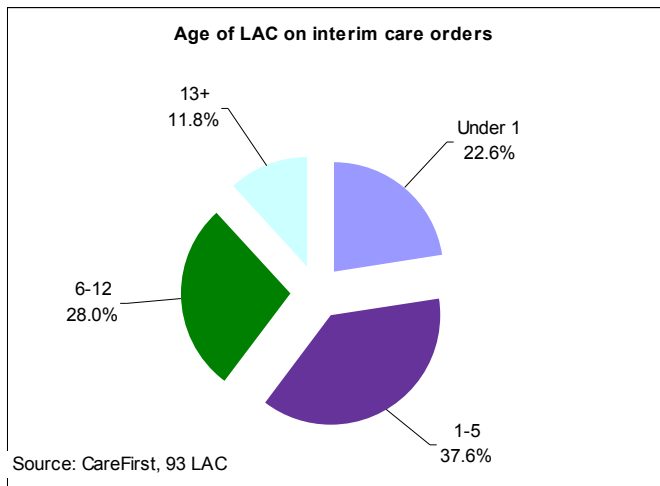
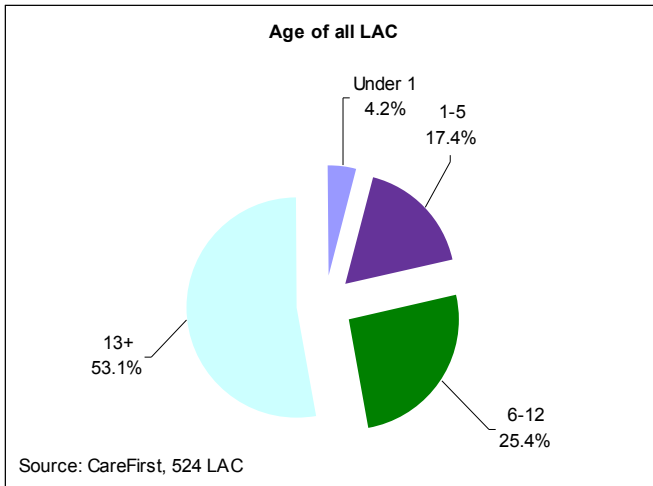


End of January figures show that 18% of looked after children were on interim care orders. This figure has fluctuated slightly over the last four years and has shown a slight increase.

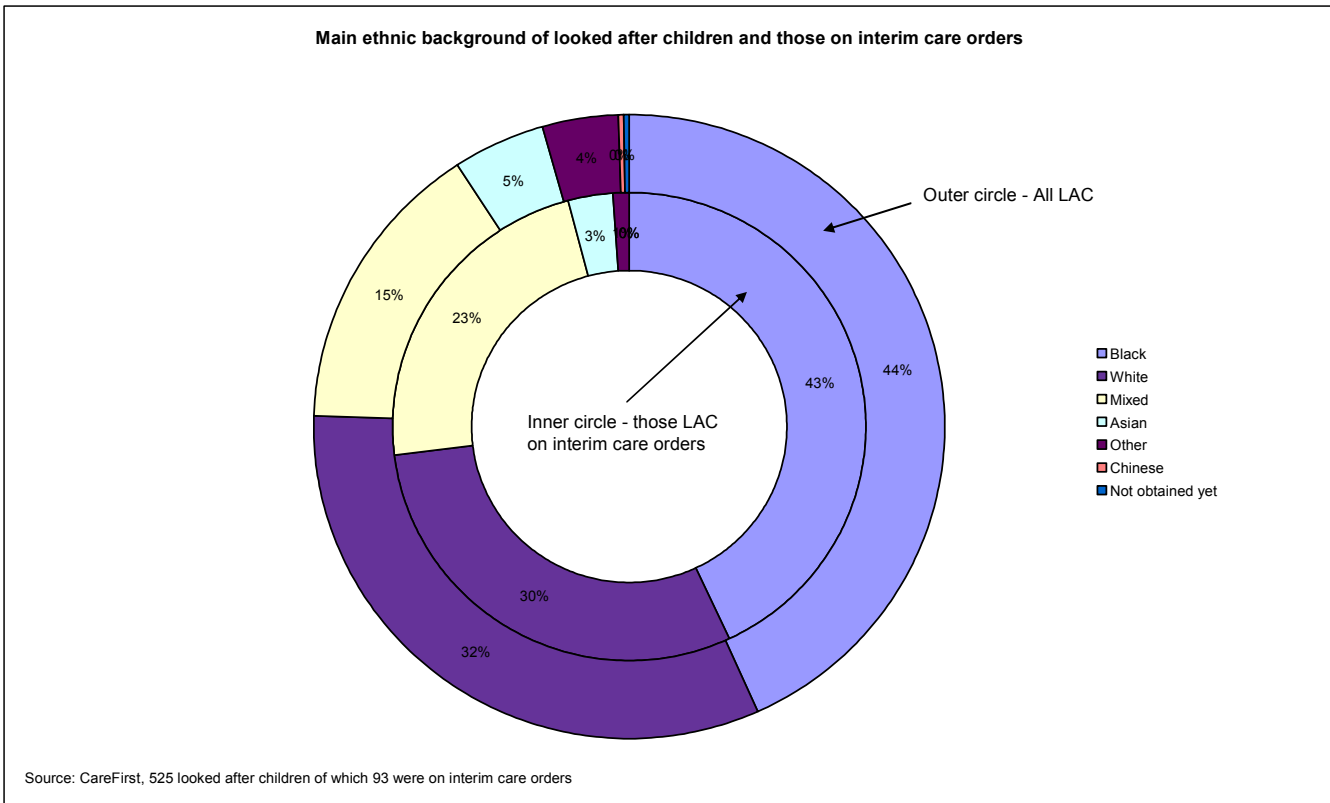
	2007	2008	2009	2010	Jan 2011
Looked after children as at 31st March	625	575	535	555	525
of which, are on interim care orders	85	65	75	85	93

Source: DfE published data excluding Jan 2011 where data is from CareFirst

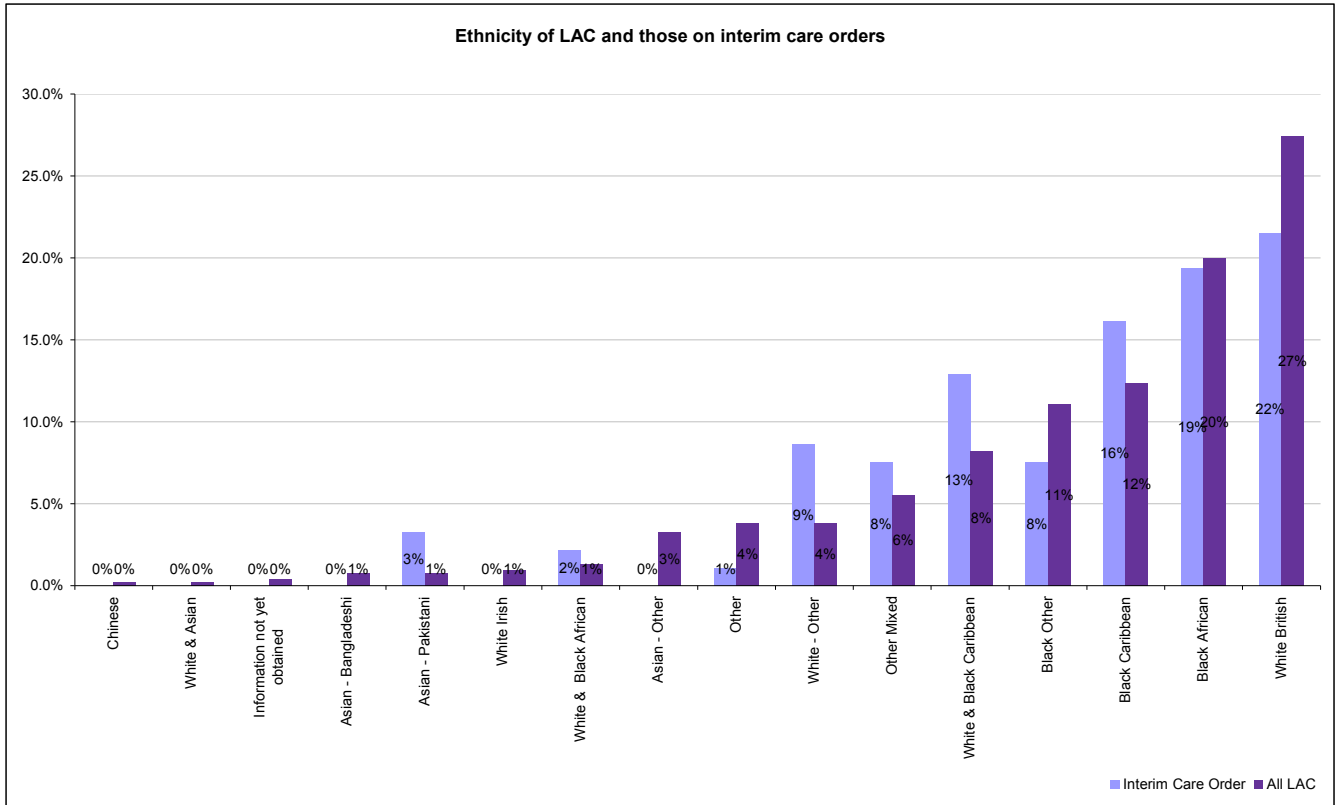
The age breakdown for looked after children on interim care orders is quite different in comparison to the whole looked after cohort with a higher proportion of younger children (under 6). Of those children in care end of January 2011 over half were aged 13 or above and a quarter between 6 and 12. One fifth of children in care were aged 5 or under. Of those children aged under 1 all but one were on interim care orders and nearly two fifths of those aged between 1 and 5 years were also on interim care orders.

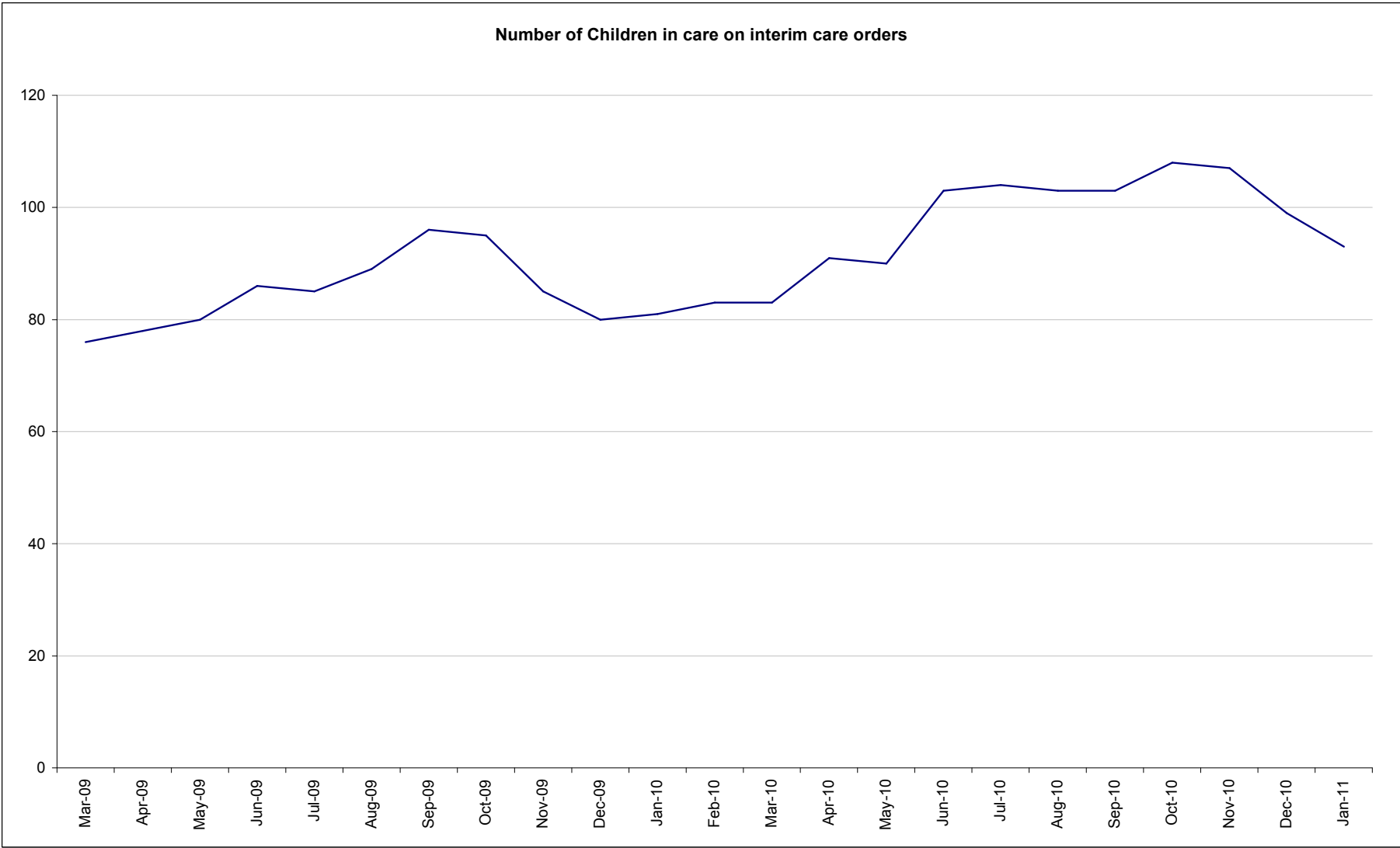


The ethnic background of all looked after children and those on interim care orders also showed slight differences with the main difference being a higher proportion of looked after children on interim care orders of a mixed background (23%) compared to all looked after children (15%).



However, a further breakdown shows the largest difference between the 2 groups was between white British (6pp higher for all LAC compared to those on interim care orders). This was followed by children with other white and mixed white & black Caribbean backgrounds.

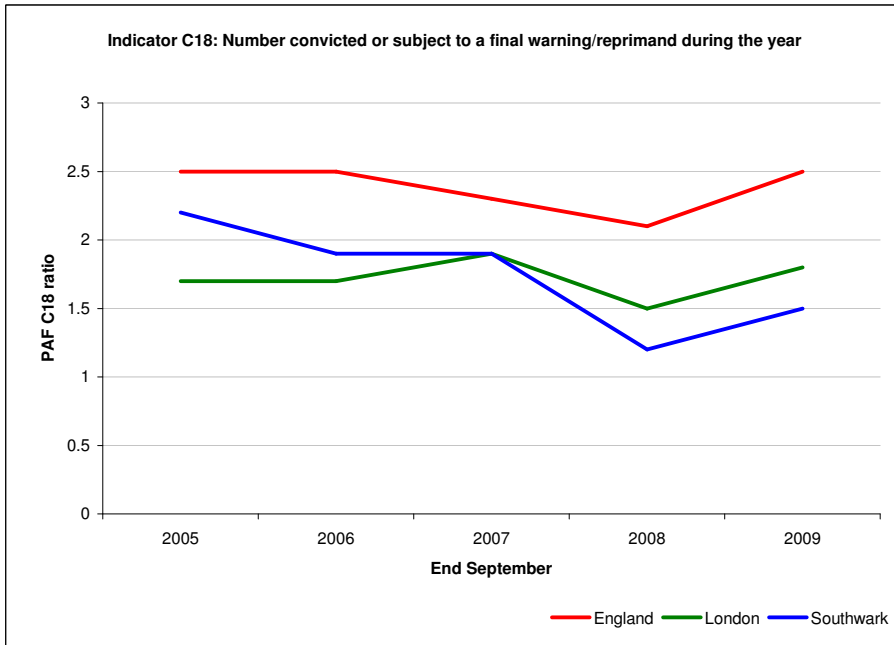




## Appendix 3

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
England	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.5
London	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.5	1.8
Southwark	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.2	1.5

Source: DfE, OC2 return based on end September cohort



- 2 The proportion of children (aged 10 or over) who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, who were convicted or given a final warning/reprimand during the year for an offence committed whilst they were looked after, expressed as a ratio of the proportion of all children and young people convicted or given a final warning/reprimand for an offence in the police force area.



<b>Item No.</b> 10.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Care Proceedings Activity – Legal Services	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Deputy Director of Specialist Services	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note this report and its findings submitted in response to the committee's request raised on 10 November 2010 for a report of families that are subject to multiple care proceedings and outlining preventative and supportive measures in place.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Care proceedings are initiated by London Borough of Southwark's Children's Services where there are significant and profound safeguarding issues and the local authority is seeking permission from the courts to be granted parental responsibility to protect the child.
3. The court will initially determine whether there is sufficient evidence being provided by Southwark to meet the threshold criteria.
4. The court will consider granting an interim care order and will then commission a range of further assessments and interventions to determine whether the child needs to be removed from the family on a permanent basis and grant a care order to Southwark.
5. The court is at liberty to require the parents to undertake an extensive residential assessment from specialist providers which will enable the family to receive extensive parenting support and training whilst assessing their capacity to provide a safer care environment for their child. The court will order Southwark to bear the costs of all assessment processes which presents significant budgetary pressures given the number and range of care proceedings initiated in Southwark.
6. Throughout the proceedings the parents and child have separate and independent legal representation. In addition the child is appointed an independent guardian through CAFCASS.
7. From September 2006 new guidance was issued concerning how care proceedings are managed and what activities should take place before proceedings can be brought to the attention of the court. Known as the "public law outline" the new guidance was issued to make the system easier to navigate and reduce timescales between initiating procedures and the final decision. In reality all local authorities have reported that care proceedings are now taking between 2 and 6 months longer on average.
8. Before making a final decision to grant a care order, the court needs to be entirely satisfied that there are no members of the extended family who could assume care for the child and that they are fully satisfied with the local authority's care plan.
9. Since the public law outline was introduced, local authorities have noted a steady change in the approach of the family courts where adoption is being valued less in favour of placements with extended family members (Special Guardianship Orders).

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### 10. Current proceedings as at 31 January 2011

There are currently 78 care proceedings cases in court (not numbers of children subject to proceedings). Below is a breakdown of when those proceedings were issued:

2008: 01  
 2009: 19  
 2010: 54  
 2011: 04

We currently have instructions to issue 7 new sets of care proceedings in February. We have 15 cases listed for final hearing in February and 8 in March. Not all cases listed for final hearing conclude as planned as cases can be adjourned for a number of reasons.

### 11. Proceedings issued and concluded in 2010

Appendix 1 provides the statistics for cases issued and concluded in 2010. In total from April 2010 there were 52 final hearings. The outcomes for these cases were as follows:

11 Special guardianship orders (family members assuming care of child)  
 10 Care orders with placement orders being made at the same time (plan for adoption)  
 12 Care orders (long term fostering)  
 9 Supervision orders (child remaining at home but with strong child protection and supervision arrangements)  
 5 Residence orders (older child placed with relatives)  
 2 No order  
 1 Case transferred to another LA  
 1 Withdrawn  
 1 Other outcome

### 12. Of the 52 cases which concluded 37 were in the Inner London Family Proceedings Court (ILFPC) and 15 were at the Principal Registry of the Family Division (PRFD). We are therefore managing to keep the over two thirds of our cases in the lower court. This means that the costs of proceedings are kept lower for the following reasons:

- The in-house legal team is more able to undertake advocacy.
- If counsel is instructed they are paid at a lower rate than at the PRFD.
- The demand for bundles from the ILFPC is lower than the PRFD, the latter requires a bundle every hearing.
- The ILFPC renews interim care orders automatically, unlike the PRFD which requires papers to be sent for every renewal.

### 13. Southwark has an extremely good reputation with the Inner London Family Proceedings court and CAFCASS for the quality of it's legal services and care planning/decision making processes.

### 14. Appendix 2 outlines the number of applications over the last two years by Inner London boroughs. During 2009, Southwark saw a rise in proceedings as a result of the Baby P case. Analysis of the 2009 cohort has also seen the cumulative impact of care proceedings cases taking longer to be resolved (between 2 to 6 months). All local authorities have noted the longer court times involved and have fed this back to the London Family Proceedings Court and Principal Registry of the Family Division. The number of new cases being issued have remained relatively stable for the last eighteen months showing a slight slowing of demand in the safeguarding system. The fall in the total number of proceedings in 2010 is in response to this gradual reduction and the fact that the additional cases in the system (due to Baby P) and cases generally taking longer have now been concluded.

**Policy implications**

15. There are no new policy considerations.

**Community impact statement**

16. There is no community impact arising from this report.

**Resource implications**

17. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Case Issued and Final Hearings	160 Tooley Street, SE1	Winsome Levy 020 7525 0633

**APPENDICES**

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Cases Issued & Final Hearings 2010
Appendix 2	Inner London Borough Applications 2009 & 2010

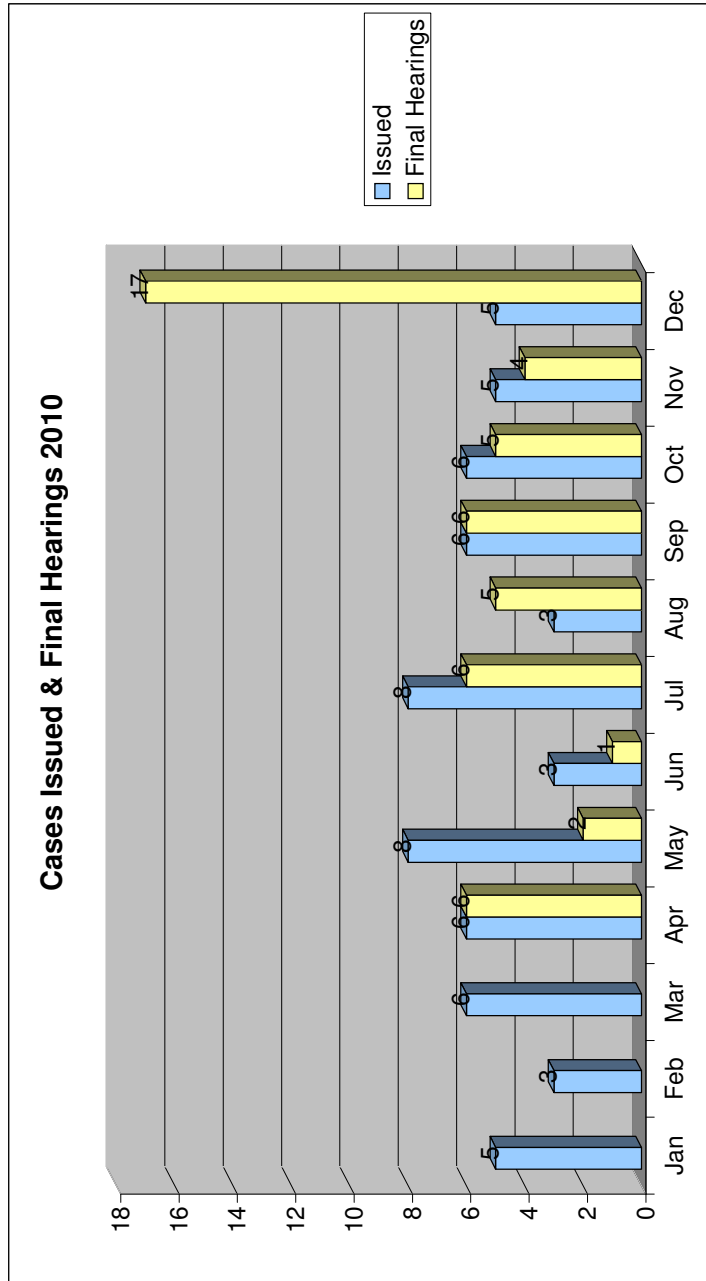
**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Deputy Director, Children's Specialist Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Senior Lawyer, Legal Services	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated:</b>	3 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Yes
Finance Director	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional/Community Council/Scrutiny Team</b>	3 February 2011	

Cases Issued & Final Hearings 2010

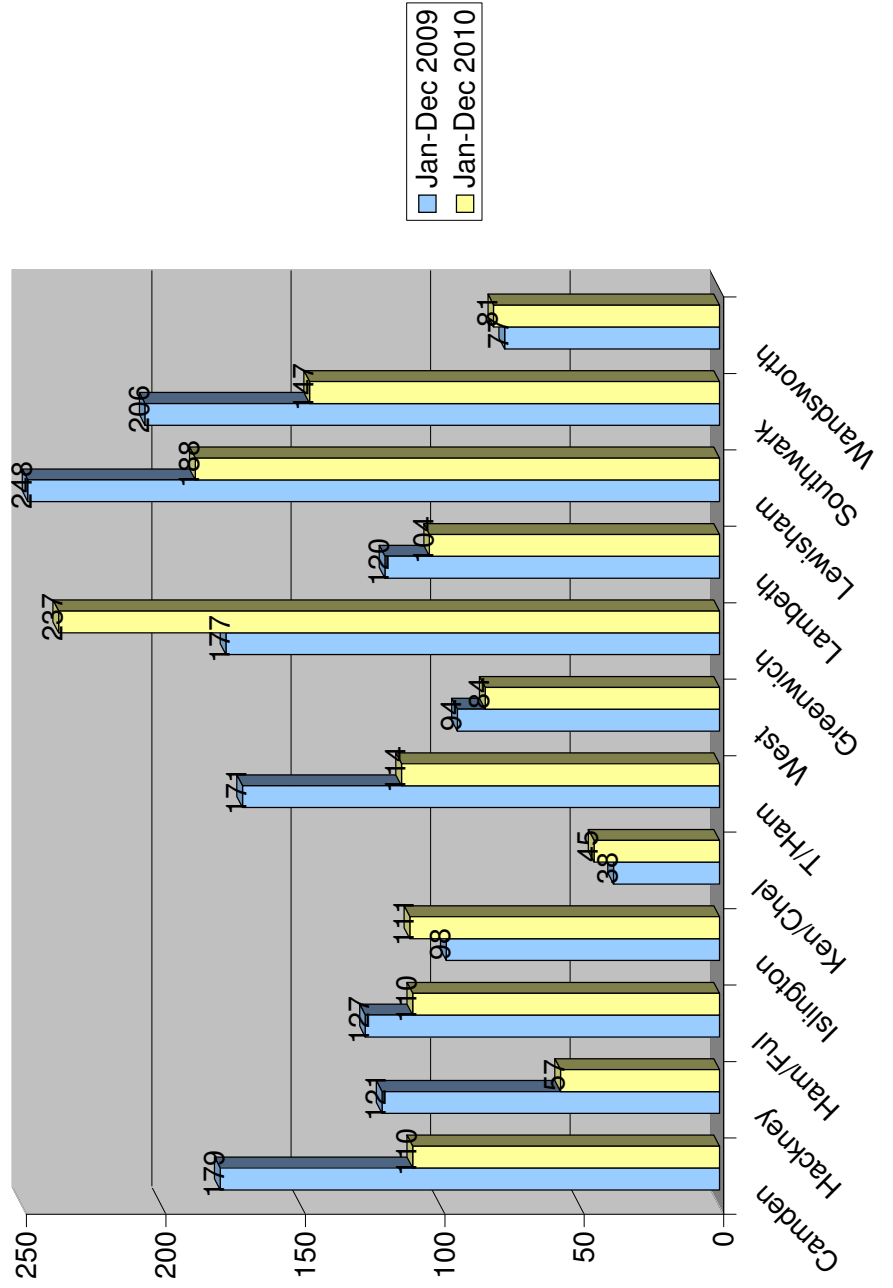
APPENDIX 1

Months	Issued	Final Hearings
Jan	5	
Feb	3	
Mar	6	
Apr	6	6
May	8	2
Jun	3	1
Jul	8	6
Aug	3	5
Sep	6	6
Oct	6	5
Nov	5	4
Dec	5	17



Local authority	Jan-Dec 2009	Jan-Dec 2010
Camden	179	110
Hackney	121	57
Ham/Ful	127	110
Islington	98	111
Ken/Chel	38	45
T/Ham	171	114
West	94	84
Greenwich	177	237
Lambeth	120	104
Lewisham	248	188
Southwark	206	147
Wandsworth	77	81

Inner London Borough Applications 2009 and 2010



# Agenda Item 11

<b>Item No.</b> 11.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Stay Safe Performance Update – Looked After Children	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Deputy Director of Specialist Children’s Services	

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the corporate parenting committee notes this report.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2 Children in Care

The number of children in care has reduced to 521. This is the lowest number of children in Southwark’s care for a considerable period of time. This is due to a range of factors which include: a significant reduction in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children; a slight drop in the number of care proceedings; and a strengthening of gate keeping measures designed to keep children at home with their families.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. NI 62 - Children looked after with 3 or more placements

Year to date figures show 7.8% of looked after children had 3 or more placements. This is within the good banding. This time last year our performance was at 13%, showing an improvement this year. Currently this is also showing an improvement on the previous 12 months (14.9%) and better performance than end of year 2009/10 national results (10.8%). Ensuring stability of placements is key to delivering good long-term outcomes for children in care, so we are showing good progress in this area.

4. NI 63 - Long term stability of looked after children: length of placements

As at 20 January 2011 73.8% of looked after children who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or were placed for adoption. This shows an improvement on performance this time last year (69.6%) as well as a slight improvement on 2009/10 end of year results (72.8%). Performance currently remains above end of year 2009/10 national results (68.0%). As above, long-term stability is one of the factors underpinning good outcomes for children in care. There is clear evidence that the service is making good progress.

5. NI 66 - The percentage of children looked after at 31st March all of whose reviews during the year were completed on time

A high proportion of reviews have been completed on time as at 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Tracking reports have been produced to help monitor this performance. We are expecting performance to be above or in line with last year (92.8%), keeping us above national end of year 2009/10 performance (90.5%). Although this is good performance, further work is underway to ensure that all reviews are conducted within statutory timescales. This is monitored by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service, which also monitors the quality of reviews and care planning.

#### Other performance indicators

6. NI 147 - Percentage of care leavers at age 19 who are living in suitable accommodation (as judged by the council)

Current performance for care leavers in suitable accommodation is at 86.6% as at 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Not all outcomes have been recorded and hence we are expecting an improvement on 86.6% by end of year. The 3 children to be considered to be living in unsuitable accommodation were in custody on their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. The children looked after service and Youth Offending Service work together to support young people who enter custody to ensure that they have accommodation, and access to employment, education and training when they leave custody.

7. We are expecting performance to be in line or above end of year 2009/10 national figures (90.3%).

8. NI 148 - % of Care leavers in employment, education or training at age 19 LAA

Due to the economic climate we are expecting performance for care leavers in employment, education or training to drop by end March 2011 compared to end March 2010 (60.5%). Currently 47.8% of care leavers are in employment, education or training. Not all outcomes have been recorded and hence we are expecting an improvement to around 55%. Three of these children were not in any education, employment or training due to disability.

Depending on how this has impacted on national performance we are expecting to be slightly below national results this year (2010 national results - 62.1%).

9. NI 58 - Emotional and behavioural health of children in care

The mean Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) score as at 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011 was 14.2, which was slightly below end of year performance (12.1) but remains in line with end of year 2009/10 national figures (14.2). Children and young people do not have to undertake this questionnaire, so some caution must be applied when interpreting the results.

#### Resource implications

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### Community impact statement

11. The decision to note this performance report has been judged to have no or a very small impact on local people and communities. Clearly the quality of these services has a big impact on children and looked after from all communities.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
CLA Key Performance Indicators	160 Tooley Street, SE1	Monika Ciurej 020 7525 5271

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Rory Patterson, Deputy Director, Specialist Children's Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Rory Patterson, Deputy Director, Specialist Children's Services	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	3 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Officer</b>	3 February 2011	



<b>Item No.</b> 12.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 16 February 2011	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Corporate Parenting Committee – Workplan 2010/2011	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Children's Services	

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the corporate parenting committee review the work plan for 2010-11 as set out in paragraph 5 of the report.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### Role and function of the corporate parenting committee

2. The constitution for the municipal year 2010-2011 records the corporate parenting committee's role and functions are as follows:
  1. To secure real and sustained improvements in the life chances of looked after children, and to work within an annual programme to that end.
  2. To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy and work plan
  3. To seek to ensure that the life chances of looked after children are maximised in terms of health educational attainment, and access to training and employment, to aid the transition to a secure and productive adulthood.
  4. To develop and co-ordinate a life chances strategy and work plan to improve the life chances of Southwark looked after children.
  5. To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all council departments, schools and the voluntary sector to lead towards better outcomes for looked after children.
  6. To ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable looked after children and young people to play an integral role in service planning and design, and that their views are regularly sought and acted upon.
  7. To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes for looked after children.
  8. To receive an annual report on the adoption and fostering services to monitor their effectiveness in providing safe and secure care for looked after children.
  9. To report to the council's cabinet on a twice yearly basis.
  10. To make recommendations to the relevant cabinet decision maker where responsibility for that particular function rests with the cabinet.
  11. To report to the scrutiny sub-committee with responsibility for children's services after each meeting.
  12. To appoint non-voting co-opted members.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. The committee has previously received an annual report on adoption and fostering services and independent review officers service, quarterly reports on performance indicators for children looked after, regular reports from the speakerbox service for children looked after and ad hoc statistical analyses and the outcome of statutory service inspections. The corporate parenting committee agreed on 7 July 2010 to move towards thematic meetings.

### Policy implications

4. The policy agenda has been measured against the government's five "Every Child Matters" outcomes: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution; Achieve Economic Well-Being. The committee's programme of work has been developed to meet these outcomes.

### Future agenda items

5. The following workplan sets out the allocation of items for future meetings. The committee may wish to review the scheduling.

16 February 2011

#### Stay Safe Theme

- Safeguarding children – trends and court actions (report from legal services and CLA 0-12 services)
- Stability and Permanency for Children in Care, including life story work
- Children in Care and Youth Offending (including data analysis and joint working).
- Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual report
- Children looked after (CLA) performance indicators 2010-11 Quarter 3, focusing on key indicators for the Stay Safe theme and wider performance data.

26 April 2011

#### Economic Wellbeing Theme

- Annual report on the adoption and fostering services (deferred from February 2011)
- Unaccompanied minors
- Adolescent and After Care Service
- NEET Strategy (Not in Education, Employment or Training) (including university support, apprenticeships, coaching, drop-in services, connexions, Southwark Works, training partnerships.
- Children Looked After (CLA) performance indicators for the Economic Wellbeing theme and wider performance data.
- Financial management issues for children leaving care and avoidance of loan sharks.

July 2011

#### Making a Positive Contribution

- Feedback from joint meetings between Speakerbox and members of the Corporate Parenting Committee and Speaker box action plan

- Speakerbox mission statement

#### Items to be allocated

- Report on the intergenerational review and the results to be reported back to corporate parenting committee (as requested under Designated Doctor for Children Looked After Annual report 2009/10 and Draft teenage pregnancy strategy items considered 22.09.10)
- To receive the draft 2011-12 Young People's Substance Misuse Commissioning Update Treatment Plan for comment prior to its presentation to the Southwark Children and Families trust and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team Board
- Financial costings for extending the 16 plus transition phase and to mainstream more comprehensive work in respect of the work of the under 5's.

#### Community impact statement

6. The work of the corporate parenting committee contributes to community cohesion and stability.

#### Resource implications

7. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Minutes of meetings of Corporate Parenting Committee	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street SE1 5LX	Bola Roberts 020 7525 7232

#### AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Rory Patterson, Assistant Director Children's Specialist Services & Safeguarding	
<b>Report Author</b>	Bola Roberts, Constitutional Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	7 February 2011	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Officer</b>	7 February 2011	

**CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST MUNICIPAL YEAR  
2010-11**

**NOTE:** Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to  
Bola Roberts 020 7525 7232

To	Copies	To	Copies
<b>Membership</b>	1 each	Constitutional Officer to Bola Roberts, Tooley Street	10
Councillor Catherine McDonald		<b>Total:</b>	37
Councillor Lisa Rajan			
Councillor Eliza Mann			
Councillor Claire Hickson			
Councillor Patrick Diamond			
Councillor Althea Smith			
<b>Reserves</b>			
Councillor James Barber			
Councillor Helen Hayes	1 each		
Councillor Darren Merrill			
<b>Co-opted members</b>			
Barbara Hills			
Chris Sanford	1 each		
<b>Libraries</b>			
Albion			
Dulwich	1 each		
Newington			
Local Studies Library			
<b>Children's Services</b>			
Romi Bowen			
Rory Patterson			
Chris Saunders			
Adrian Ward			
Debbie Walsh			
Eleanor Parkin			
<b>Legal</b>		<b>Dated: 5 October 2010</b>	
Sarah Feasey			
Jill Easty			
<b>Organisational Development</b>			
John Howard			