

Corporate Parenting Committee

Monday 3 November 2014

2.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Membership

Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)
Councillor Evelyn Akoto
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Radha Burgess
Councillor Eliza Mann (Vice-chair)
Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Kieron Williams
Barbara Hills (Co-opted Member)
Carolyn Martin (Co-opted Member)

Reserves

Councillor James Barber

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.

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Contact

Kenny Uzodike 020 7525 7236 or Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395

Or email: kenny.uzodike@southwark.gov.uk; paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

Eleanor Kelly

Chief Executive

Date: 24 October 2014



PRINTED ON
RECYCLED PAPER

Item No.

Title



Corporate Parenting Committee

Monday 3 November 2014

2.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Order of Business

Item No.

Title

Page No.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones should be turned off or put on silent during the course of the meeting.

PART A - OPEN BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

A representative of each political group will confirm the voting members of the committee.

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

In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear days of the meeting.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Members to declare any interests and dispensation in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.

Item No.	Title	Page No.
5.	MINUTES	1 - 3
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the open section of the meeting held on 21 July 2014.	
6.	CHILDREN MISSING FROM CARE AND DISTANCE PLACEMENTS	4 - 11
7.	PLACEMENT STABILITY - FACTORS AFFECTING LONG TERM STABILITY	12 - 19
8.	REPORT BACK FROM SPEAKERBOX	To follow
9.	VIRTUAL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT	20 - 25
10.	2014/15 MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT - LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	26 - 32
11.	FOSTER SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2013- 2014	33 - 40
12.	CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE - WORKPLAN 2014-15	41 - 43

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 1-7, Access to Information Procedure rules of the Constitution.”

PART B - CLOSED BUSINESS

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



Corporate Parenting Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Monday 21 July 2014 at 2.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)
Councillor Evelyn Akoto
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Radha Burgess
Councillor Eliza Mann
Councillor Kieron Williams

OFFICERS PRESENT: Rory Patterson, Director, Children's Social Care
Jackie Cook, Head of Social Work Improvement and Quality Assurance
Jane Scott, Team Manager, Specialist Children Services
Rachael Flagg, Principal Strategy Officer
Paula Thornton, Constitutional Team
Kenny Uzodike, Constitutional Team

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kath Whittam, Barbara Mills and Carolyn Martin.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members listed as present were confirmed as the voting members for the meeting.

3. ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor Eliza Mann be elected as the vice-chair of the committee for the 2014/15 municipal year.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2014 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

5. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were none.

6. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

7. PRESENTATION ON CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

RESOLVED:

1. That the presentation be noted.

8. 2012/13 PROVISIONAL END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT - LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the director, children's social care for future performance reports include more data, scenarios and case studies (with the anonymity of children/young persons retained). The committee wished to see more examples and context to the statistical evidence.
3. In discussion, the following issues were raised for inclusion in future reports to the committee by the director, children's social care:
 - Factors affecting long term stability of placements and social workers
 - Additional information on the benchmarking data
 - The correlation between children missing from placements and poor educational performance
 - Distinction between out of borough residential placements and in borough residential placements

- Information on the percentage of initial care plans that end up as long term care plans.

9. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2014/15

RESOLVED:

1. That the report work programme be noted.
2. That in addition to the programmed reports, the following be listed as items on the agenda for the next meeting of the committee:
 - The link between out of borough placements and children missing from care
 - Report back from Speakerbox meeting (which are due to meet with the committee in October 2014)
 - Factors affecting long term stability of placements (including common causes of multiple placements).
3. That the following areas of interest also be included in the work programme:
 - Transition from Care to independent living (availability of independent living accommodation) (February 2015)
 - The effect of the recent developments in public health (transfer from NHS to council) on children in care
 - Teenage pregnancies among children in care
 - Progress reports and the measures of success for children in care
 - Feedback on work currently being undertaken by the department to improve the service
 - Education – how achievement levels can be further improved
 - Adoption challenges
 - Mentorship by members of the committee
4. A meeting be arranged with the committee and Speakerbox in October 2014 and that a follow up report is submitted to the November meeting of the committee.

Meeting ended at 4:20pm.

CHAIR:

DATED:

Item No. 6.	Classification: Open	Date: 3 November 2014	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Children Missing from Care and Distance Placements	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director, Children's Social Care	

RECOMMENDATION

1. Members note the information presented in this report on children looked after missing from care in 2013/2014.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The reasons children go missing whilst in care are complex and varied. In 2013 Ofsted reviewed 105 cases where children had gone missing across 10 local authorities. They found that these children had experienced inadequate parenting, past or current abuse, bullying and domestic violence. Some had experienced several placement moves. They found that children who went missing were subjected to considerable associated risk, most often from sexual exploitation, drug and alcohol abuse, and becoming the victim or perpetrator of crime¹.
3. In Southwark we aim to secure suitable placements for children and young people where they are required to come into care. We aim to achieve placement stability, in terms of the child's emotional stability and physical placement.
4. In 2013/2014 there were 119 recorded occasions when a child went missing from care in Southwark, a total of 38 children. This report provides a data analysis of those 38 children, presenting their common characteristics in provides insights into their cases histories to understand why they went missing from care.

Department for Education (DfE) definition

5. Where children and young people are recorded as missing from placements for more than 24 hours this is counted by the DfE as a placement change. The way the DfE records missing placements has changed recently and in future there will be separate indicators on children and young people who go missing from their placements and children and young people who move placement.

¹ Ofsted (Feb, 2013) Missing children <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/surveys-and-good-practice/m/Missing%20children.doc>

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Missing children

10. In 2013/2014 there were a total of 119 episodes of children looked after reported missing for more than 24 hours. A total of 38 children were accountable for these missing episodes and went missing at any time during 2013/2014.

Age

11. All the children who went missing were aged 13-18, the majority were aged 16 and 17.

Age	Number of children
18	8
17	13
16	8
15	4
14	3
13	2

*The data records the age of young people at the date the report was run and therefore shows that 8 children were 18. At the time they went missing all the young people were under 18.

Gender

12. There is an equal split with 19 males and 19 females who experienced missing episodes.

Male	Female
19	19

Ethnicity

13. The majority, 40%, of those who had missing episodes were white British.

Ethnicity	Number of children
White British	15
Black African	5
Black Caribbean	5
Black other	3
White mixed Black Caribbean	2
Asian, Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
Other	1
Mixed other	1

Number of missing episodes

14. 1 child had 10 missing episodes. The majority of children went missing between 1-3 times.

Number missing episodes	Number of children
10	1
9	1
8	2
7	2
6	2
5	2
4	2
3	6
2	10
1	12

Legal status

15. Most children were on Full Care Orders or accommodated under Section 20.

Legal status	Number of children
Interim care order	2
Full Care Order	17
Remanded to care	1
S20	18

Distance placements

Distance

16. At 31 March 2014 of the total Looked After Children (LAC) population of 550 children and young people, 143 (26%) are in placements 20 miles and over away from Southwark.

Distance- miles	Number of Children and Young People (C&YP) placed over 20 miles away
20-50	67
50-100	22
100-200	21
200 and over	12
No applicable*	21

*not applicable – is those placed with parents, unaccompanied asylum seeking children or missing

Age

17. The majority of those placed over 20 miles away were aged 13-18.

Age	Number of C&YP placed over 20 miles away	
	Female	Male
0-5	5	7
5-9	9	13
10-15	23	31
16-17	17	38
Total	54	89

Gender

18. The majority of those placed over 20 miles away are male.

Female	Male
54	89

Legal status

19. The majority of children and young people are on Interim Care Orders.

Legal status	Number of C&YP placed over 20 miles away	
	Female	Male
Full Care Orders	6	4
Interim Care Order	37	50
Placement Order	0	3
Remanded to Care	8	28
Total	54	89

Types of providers

20. The majority of those in distance placements have been placed for adoption.

Placement type	Number of C&YP placed over 20 miles away		
	Female	Male	Total
Placed for adoption	37	45	82
Residential Care	12	25	37
Children's home	0	9	9
Missing	3	3	6
Placed with parents	1	2	3
Foster Care	1	1	2
Young offender institute	0	2	2

Children who went missing from out of borough placements in 2013/14

21. 34 children who were placed outside of Southwark went missing on 92 occasions. More children went missing from privately provided out of borough placements than those provided by Southwark (22 compared to 14). Looking at the provider of each placement the children were in prior to going missing shows that although fewer children went missing from own-provision placements, on average they went missing on more occasions.
22. On half of all occasions a child went missing from an out of borough placement in 2013/14 the placement they were in was an own-provision foster placement (not with a relative or friend).

Children who went missing from out of borough placements in 2013/14				
Placement child went missing from	No. of episodes	%	No. of children	Average missing episodes
Own provision (by the Local Authority)	47	51%	14	3.4
Private provision	45	49%	22	2.0
Grand Total	92	100%	34	2.7

Type and provider of placement child was in prior to going missing – Out of borough				
Previous placement type	Own Provision	Private Provision	Total episodes	No. of children
Homes and hostels	0	6	6	5
Independent living , e.g. in flat, lodgings, bedsit, B&B or with friends, with or without formal support	0	17	17	9
Foster placement with relative or friend	1	0	1	1
Placement with other foster carer*	46	15	61	19
Residential care home	0	7	7	6
Grand Total	47	45	92	40

* There were a number of children who went missing more than once from foster care placements and a small number, 3, who went missing from both our own provision and private provision foster care placements. 10 were in our own provision only and 6 were in private provision only.

Missing from care – learning from local research

23. The Children's Rights team produced a Missing in Care research report in July 2014 which considered the views of 15 of the 38 who experienced missing

episodes. Interviews were conducted with children who were in a range of placements including foster care, semi-independents, children's homes and young offenders institutes, the reasons they gave for going missing were as follows:

Reason for going Missing	Number of Interviewees
Placement Location	2
Support at Placement (not feeling loved or cared for)	6
Conflict at Placement	1
Wanting family contact	2
To see friends or girlfriend/boyfriend	4

24. The research report concluded that the two primary reasons that young people went missing were placement location and wanting to be loved. Over 50% of the young people interviewed in the research talked about receiving a negative reaction when they returned to their placement and none of the young people said that they had received a return to care interview after they had returned.

Policy implications

25. It is Southwark's policy to place children in or near to the borough so that children and young people can benefit from the high quality services provided locally. It also ensures that they can maintain contact with their families and community.

Actions being taken

26. As noted above achieving permanence and stability for looked after children is complex and involves a number of different professionals. For example: social workers, brokers who buy independent sector places, the in-house foster care service and the virtual school.
27. A LAC Strategic Group has been established which will improve co-ordination between the different parts of the looked after system. This group will co-ordinate the development and delivery of a LAC Strategy which will incorporate the work already undertaken on ensuring Southwark complies with the statutory Sufficiency Duty on ensuring an appropriate supply of good quality placements.
28. Recent stability and distance placements audits have taken place and a number of actions are being taken to address the issues raised including:
- Further work on hearing and acting on the voice of children and young people who are looked after by increasing young people's involvement in the development and on-going monitoring of care plans and pathways plans and providing an independent service for young people who go missing to be interviewed on their return

- St Christophers fellowship have been commissioned to provide a return interview service for all children who go missing from care. This service will be starting from 1/11/14 and will provide independent high quality face to face interviews within 72 hours of the young person being found or returning home. The service will also, where appropriate, provide one to one support for young people and offer mediation and signposting services.
- We will ensure all mechanisms to fully understanding the current and future needs of children and young people are monitored, such as the use of Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires for example.
- Build on existing work, engaging children and young people in provider monitoring and improving contract management to ensure our contracted providers are meeting the needs of children and young people.
- Providing additional training for staff and foster carers on recognising and supporting mental health/therapeutic support needs of children and young people.

29. In addition the LAC Strategic Group is prioritising work on initiatives which will increase services and support to enable more children and young people to remain at home. This includes developing more “edge of care” services with a particular focus on work with adolescents.

Community impact statement

30. Southwark Looked After Children services works to promote the best possible outcomes for children in care. The care population is diverse in terms of age, gender and ethnicity and we closely monitor these protectiveness characteristics to ensure we understand specific needs and are able to deliver services that address these needs. It is recognised that placement stability, engagement in education, access to leisure and healthy lifestyles all help to build resilience for young people to successfully achieve economical wellbeing and make a positive contribution. Effective performance monitoring supports these objectives and enables us to identify areas where improvements may need to be made.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Children Missing in Care	Children's and Adults' Services, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Elaine Gunn 020 7525 5479 elaine.gunn@southwark.gov.uk

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Director, Children's Social Care		
Report Author	Rory Patterson, Director, Children's Social Care		
Version	Final		
Dated	22 October 2014		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services		No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			22 October 2014

Item No. 7.	Classification: Open	Date: 3 November 2014	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Placement Stability - Factors Affecting Long Term Stability	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director, Children's Social Care	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Members consider the information presented in this report on placement stability and note the actions we are taking to ensure positive outcomes are achieved for looked after children in Southwark.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Achieving stable and permanent placements for children and young people who are not able to live at home is a priority and leads to better outcomes.
3. Permanence for looked after children implies that they do not move around the care system, achieve stability of placement, and have a family they can rely on and where they feel included. DfE guidance describes permanence as consisting of three aspects: emotional permanence (attachment); physical permanence (stability) and legal permanence (the carer has parental responsibility for the child) (Baker, 2011)¹.
4. In their 2013 Data Pack² the DfE state that 'research shows that repeated placement breakdown or moving between home and care increases the likelihood of children developing multiple problems, becoming more challenging and needing intensive, high cost placements'. In 2005 the Joseph Rowntree Foundation³ reported that young people who experience stable placements providing good quality care are more likely to succeed educationally, be in work, settle in and manage their accommodation after leaving care, feel better about themselves and achieve satisfactory social integration in adulthood than young people who have experienced further movement and disruption during their time in care.
5. In Southwark we aim to achieve stability by supporting children to stay with their families where this is appropriate and by ensuring that for those who do move into care there is a thorough assessment of their needs and a care plan is developed which outlines how these needs will be best met, including where children and young people will live.

¹ Baker (2011) Permanence and stability for disabled looked after, IRISS.
children <http://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/permanence-and-stability-disabled-looked-after-children>

² DfE (2013) Data Pack: Improving Permanence for looked after children.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-permanence-for-looked-after-children-data-pack>

³ Morris (2005) Children on the edge of care, JRF

Long-term stability

6. The DfE defines long-term stability as follows:
 - The long-term stability indicator is defined as the percentage of looked after children aged under 16 who have 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 lasted for at least 2 years.
7. The long term stability indicator takes time to affect. 100% performance is not expected as placement changes are inevitable and, as mentioned above, are sometimes desirable in order to better meet children and young people's needs.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

2013/2014 Long term placement stability

8. At the end of each financial year a detailed data return is submitted to the DfE this is then published which makes it possible to compare Southwark's performance with other local authorities. The latest comparative data available is for 2012/2013.
9. As at 31 March Southwark had 550 children looked after. Of those 169 (31%) have been looked after for over 2.5 years; 101 of which are considered stable (living in the same placement for at least 2 years) and 68 are considered 'unstable'; having at least one placement change in the last 2 years.
10. The indicator has decreased by 3 percentage points to 59.8% from 2013 to 2014 percentage of looked after children in Southwark aged under 16 recorded in the long-term stability. The mid year figure (September 2014) is currently 67%, which demonstrates a recent improvement.
11. In 2012/2013 the long term stability rate for our statistical neighbours was 69% and for England it was 68%.

Age

12. Based on the age of the child at 31 March 2014, those aged 11-15 make up 63% of the unstable cohort (of those the highest proportion are aged 12 (16%)).

Age at 31 March 2014	Number of C&YP
4	1
5	3
6	4
7	3
8	6
9	4
10	4
11	7
12	11
13	9
14	7
15	9

Age at start of current placement	Number of C&YP
3	2
4	2
5	3
6	8
7	2
8	7
9	2
10	9
11	8
12	5
13	8
14	8
15	4

13. Most unstable children were aged between 10-14 when they started in their current placement.
14. Those aged of 4-9 when entering care make up 69% of the unstable cohort, the majority of those are aged 7.

Age at entry into care	Number of C&YP
0	3
1	4
2	2
3	5
4	9
5	5
6	9
7	10
8	5
9	9
10	2
11	4
13	1

15. In the current cohort, those who became looked after before the age of 5 are more likely to be stable.

Gender

16. There are more males in the unstable cohort than females.

Male	Female
40	28

Ethnicity

17. The majority of those in the unstable cohort are white British.

Ethnicity	Number of C&YP
White British	16
Black African	13
Black Caribbean	10
White Other	8
Black Other	7
Mixed White Black Caribbean	6
Mixed Other	3
Asian Bangladeshi	3
Mixed White Black African	2

Legal status

18. 88% of the unstable cohort are on a full care orders.

Legal status	Number of C&YP
Full Care Orders	60
Placement Order	6
S20	2

Types of placement

19. 49 (72%) children and young people in the unstable cohort are in placements provided by voluntary or private sector providers. 46 of those are placed out of borough either in children's homes or with independent fostering agencies (IFAs).

	Children's Homes	Whereabouts known	FC-Relative or Friend	FC-other	Care Home	Grand total
Own provision (LA)			1	17		18
Private Provision	15			33	1	49
N/A		1				1
Grand total	15	1	1	50	1	68

Distance placement

20. 60 of the 68 (88%) unstable placements are in out of borough placements. 32 (47%) of these were placed 20 miles or over from Southwark. In the stable cohort, 76% were placed out of borough and 23% were placed 20 miles+.

	In	Out	N/A	Grand total
Own provision (LA)	4	14		18
Private provision	3	46		49
N/A			1	1
Grand total	7	60	1	68

Missing

21. Analysis of this group shows that only the unstable group of children aged 13 or over have missing from care episodes (17 children).

Unstable cohort - categorisation of changes of placement

22. **Planned changes** - 34 children (51%) had planned placement moves. The vast majority of these were to planned long term foster carers. For some this had been when the previous long term placement had ceased to be able to meet the child's needs and although this was a move for the child it was felt best for them that this move went ahead. For a small number of these the issues related to the quality of care that was provided by the carer.
23. **Unplanned changes** 26 children (39%). The main reasons for moves were the behavior of the child, a significant minority of these involving offending. A significant number (9) had previous long term placements that ended in an unplanned way. This group has the children with the most needs and they show very challenging behaviour including violent, sexualised and/or offending behaviour. Child behaviour issues *sometimes* masks underlying issues relating to: inadequate matching (may or may not have been predictable); quality of 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. This proportion is broadly the same as previous analysis of this group.
24. **Unavoidable changes** - 7 (10%) children changed placements due to reasons beyond control. 1 of the children had a foster carer who ceased fostering (retirement) but the child is placed very well with another carer and sees her former carer as a grand parent figure. 6 out of 7 moved due to allegations against the foster carer. This included a sibling group of 3, the oldest of whom was physically assaulted by the male foster carer who was convicted of assault. This proportion is broadly the same as previous analysis of this group

Policy implications

25. Ofsted's recent thematic review; From a Distance⁴, which examined looked after children living away from their home area in 9 local authorities across the country noted that too often, the quality of the care and support that was provided to children was assessed and monitored by social workers without the appropriate level of expert advice from health or education specialists.

⁴ Ofsted (April, 2014) From a Distance; Looked after children living away from their home area.

26. The same report noted that Independent Reviewing Officers rarely contacted children living out of area between reviews and did not provide enough challenge and that careful matching was much more likely to occur when agreeing for children to live in foster families than it was when the decision was for them to live in a children's home.
27. Research⁵ conducted by Boddy (2013) found that older children entering the care system have distinct and often more challenging needs, which has implications for their experiences of permanence. They have particular needs for stability and support as they move towards adulthood, but do not necessarily need or want a permanent alternative family.
28. The Joint All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) enquiry heard evidence that children living away from family and friends were more likely to go missing and, therefore, were at higher risk of physical and sexual abuse, criminality and homelessness. The report detailed local authority difficulties in monitoring the progress of children placed away from their home area and the considerable problems in accessing the necessary support services for this vulnerable group of children.⁶

Causes of placement instability – learning from research and feedback from children and young people

29. In addition local research and feedback from children and young people indicates that the following issues impact on placement stability:
 - Lack of availability of placements to meet specific needs
 - Lack of additional support – for both foster carers and children
 - Poor quality provision
 - Unsuccessful attempts at family reunification.
 - Inability of placement providers to address behavioural issues.

Actions being taken

30. As noted above achieving permanence and stability for looked after children is complex and involves a number of different professionals. For example: social workers, brokers who buy independent sector places, the in-house foster care service and the virtual school.
31. A LAC Strategic Group has been established which will improve co-ordination between the different parts of the looked after system. This group will co-ordinate the development and delivery of a LAC Strategy which will incorporate the work already undertaken on ensuring Southwark complies with the statutory Sufficiency Duty on ensuring an appropriate supply of good quality placements.
32. A recent placement stability audit has taken place and a number of actions are being taken to address the issues raised including:

⁵ Boddy (April, 2013) The Care Inquiry: Understanding permanence of Looked After Children http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/data/files/Care_Inquiry_files/Understanding_Permanence_-_review_of_evidence.pdf

⁶ Report from the joint inquiry into children who go missing from care, The All Party Parliamentary Group for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Looked After Children and Care leavers, 2012, p 9; www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-lobbying/parliamentary-work/appg-inquiry-children-who-go-missing-or-run-away-c.

- Further work on hearing and acting on the voice of children and young people who are looked after by increasing young people's involvement in the development and on-going monitoring of care plans and pathways plans and providing an independent service for young people who go missing to be interviewed on their return
- Developing a better understanding of the current and future needs of children and young people, through more use of Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires for example.
- Improving contract management
- Providing additional training for staff and foster carers on recognising and supporting mental health/therapeutic support needs of children and young people.
- Strengthen the role of the IRO in reporting issues with all relevant staff.

33. In addition the LAC Strategic Group is prioritising work on initiatives which will increase services and support to enable more children and young people to remain at home. This includes developing more "edge of care" services with a particular focus on work with adolescents.

Community impact statement

34. Southwark Looked After Children services works to promote the best possible outcomes for children in care. The care population is diverse in terms of age, gender and ethnicity and we closely monitor these protectiveness characteristics to ensure we understand specific needs and are able to deliver services that address these needs. It is recognised that placement stability, engagement in education, access to leisure and healthy lifestyles all help to build resilience for young people to successfully achieve economical wellbeing and make a positive contribution. Effective performance monitoring supports these objectives and enables us to identify areas where improvements may need to be made.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Director Children’s Social Care		
Report Author	Alasdair Smith, Head of Service, Permanence		
Version	Final		
Dated	20 October 2014		
Key Decision?	NO		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included	
Director of Legal Services	N/a	N/a	
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	N/a	N/a	
Cabinet Member	No	No	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		22 October 2014	

Item No. 9.	Classification: Open	Date: 3 November 2014	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Virtual Headteacher's Report	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Education	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the committee notes the information provided in this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Looked After Children (LAC) Education Team champions the educational needs of children looked after through systemic approaches to pupil support.
3. Southwark's LAC Education Team builds effective relationships with schools, social workers, carers and multi-agency professionals. Working collaboratively in multi-agency contexts, the team maintains a focus on the educational needs and aspirations of the looked after child. Education Advisors hold schools to account for pupils' education attainment and progress.
4. Most pupils enter care at low starting points. Depressed attainment levels on entry to care are attributable to a variety of reasons including:
 - pupils missing education
 - their care histories
 - the impact of coming into care
 - a high percentage of this cohort additionally have special educational needs.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

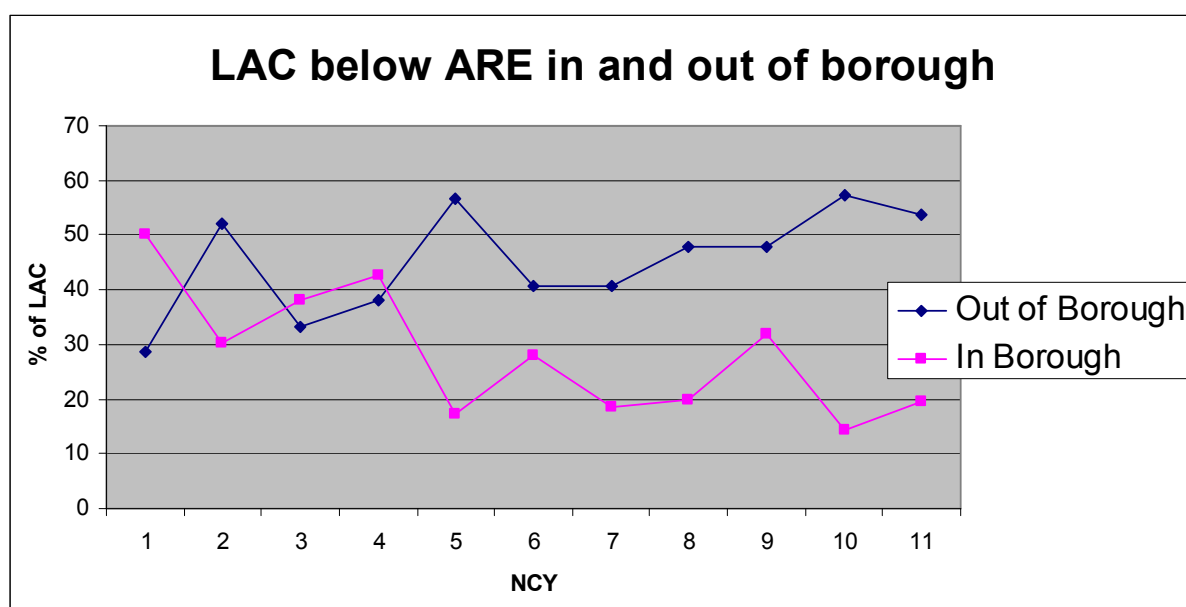
Progress

5. Pupil performance data is published by the DfE each Autumn. The DfE calculates performance on the basis of those pupils who have been in care for at least 12 months continuously as at 31st March of that year.
6. The most recent DfE published data relates to academic year 2012/13, where Southwark LAC attainment remained at, or above, national averages for Looked After Children.
7. In summer 2013, 26.7% of the cohort achieved 5 A* - C GCSEs including English and maths. This exceeded national (15.3%) and London (20.8%) CLA results.
8. Key Stage 2 attainment remained consistent over the last two years, at near to, or above, national CLA outcomes. 71% of the cohort achieved Level 4 in reading (63% nationally), 57% in writing (55%), 50% in Grammar, Punctuation and

Spelling (45%) and 57% in maths (59%).

9. Over one third of the looked after cohort had statements of SEN (compared with the national incidence of 2.8% of all pupils). Depending on the nature of their special educational need, some of these pupils demonstrate significant attainment gaps with their peers and are not expected to achieve national age-related expectations at end of Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 4.

Narrowing the Gap



10. Pupils that are placed out of borough are furthest adrift from age-related expectation. Years 10 and 11 represent the largest group of newly-looked after young people and here the gap with age-related expectation is greatest. Looked after children are placed out of borough as more specialist foster care placements are sought to manage most complex needs
11. Systemic approaches to the collection of pupil attainment data informs a clear account of individual pupil progress.
12. Pupils receive the same input and Education Advisor presence regardless of placement location.

Priorities for 2014-15

13. The LAC Education Team will improve the systemic collection of attainment and progress data, to support the analysis of pupil underachievement, particularly in English and mathematics.
14. The Team will bring greater influence to care placement decisions, reducing disruption to education and increasing pupils' access to high quality, appropriate provision.
15. The Team will design a rolling programme of education updates for social care practitioners, contributing regularly to Social Care Practice Groups meetings,

maintaining a clear focus on education issues.

16. Pupil destination data, collected at end of Yr 11, will be used to track learners moving to Key Stage 5, to raise engagement with employment, education and training.
17. The LAC Education Team will reinvigorate the impetus to narrow the attainment gap through close monitoring of Personal Education Plans and schools' judicious spending of Pupil Premium (LAC).

Community impact statement

18. This item will have an impact on the work that the council does with looked after children.
19. The decision to note this report has been judged to have no or a very small impact on local people and communities.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	2013/14 Key stage 2 outcomes – unvalidated data
Appendix 2	2013/14 GCSE outcomes – unvalidated data

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Merril Haeusler, Director of Education		
Report Author	Liz Britton, Manager, Priority Learners		
Version	Final		
Dated	8 October 2014		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services		No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services		No	No
Cabinet Member		Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			21 October 2014

APPENDIX 1**2013/14 Key stage 2 outcomes – Unvalidated Data**

DfE data will be published in November 2014. The following comments are based on unvalidated results collected directly from schools.

	Key Stage 1 % at age-related expectation (Level 2)	Key Stage 2 % at age-related expectation (Level 4)*
English/reading	68	70
writing	68	44
GPS	N/A	52
maths	79	59

*the proportion of looked after children disapplied/missing from SATS reduced in 2013/14, leading to more reliable and inclusive results for this cohort.

2013/14 Key Stage 1 outcomes

This is the first year that information has been collected in this way, outcomes are strong and will form a sound basis for pupil progress tracking.

2013/14 Key Stage 2 outcomes

Maths, GPS and reading outcomes remain in line with previous years, writing is lower. Approximately one third of this cohort has a statement of special educational need (now an EHC Plan).

Pupil progress is strong, narrowing the gap with all children. Twenty two of the 24 pupils made expected levels of progress (some pupils are not expected to achieve 2 full levels of progress, in line with their stated special educational needs).

% pupils achieving at least 2 levels of progress:

Reading	85%
Writing	75%
Maths	81%

Five pupils achieved above the age-related expectation in reading, 3 in GPS and one in maths.

Three children did not achieve Level 4 in writing as expected. LAC Education Team will ensure these pupils' early inclusion in literacy interventions to address the attainment dip.

APPENDIX 2**2013/14 GCSE Outcomes – Unvalidated Data**

DfE data will be published in November 2014. The following comments are based on unvalidated results collected directly from schools.

OFSTED have been instructed by HM Chief Inspector of Schools not to compare year on year results because the performance measure calculation methodology and assessment in key subjects has changed significantly. This has led to turbulence in GCSE results across the country and has led to a significant drop in the overall GCSE outcomes in some academies this year.

Schools projected that 30% of the cohort would achieve 5 x A* - C. This was not realised, due in part to the above reasons but also Schools report the following reasons for the individual performance disparity:

- Increasing pupil disengagement on approach to GCSE period (2)
- Pupil narrowly missing C grade outcomes (3)
- Unrealistic predictions by school (3)
- Managed move to another school (1)

In future, school predictions will be closely monitored in line with pupil's individual academic starting points, to ensure that schools generate realistic, achievable, while still ambitious, projections. Pupils at risk of disengagement will be identified through regular tracking meetings and supported through a cross-service approach to maximise pupil retention. Support will be delivered via school interventions, education advisor input, foster carer engagement, specialist service provisions (e.g. careers guidance) and social workers.

A sharper focus to Year 11 support will see:

- Attendance at targeted PEPs to maximise pupil GCSE attainment for those at risk of underperforming
- Close monitoring of Pupil Premium (LAC) to narrow the attainment gap
- Examination of school projections in collaboration with Social Care practitioners, to inform an holistic view of each pupil

GCSE outcomes Summer 2014

	English A* - C (%)	Maths A* - C (%)	English & maths A - C (%)	5 A* - C (%)	5 A* - C inc English and maths (%)
DfE cohort – 50 pupils	24	20	16	12	6

32% of this cohort is statemented. Although three pupils were not entered for GCSEs in line with their learning disabilities, they are included in performance calculations.

The nine learners who did not achieve projected GCSE grades will be targeted by LAC Education Team, to maximise access to appropriate learning and support in Key Stage 5.

Item No. 10.	Classification: Open	Date: 3 November 2014	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		2014/15 Mid-year Performance Report – Looked After Children	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director, Children's Social Care	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That members note the information provided in this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. This report is a mid-year update on the performance figures and data reported in the annual performance report.
3. Statistical neighbour and England benchmarking figures are from 12/13 DfE publications. 13/14 benchmarking figures will be available later this autumn.
4. Overall, the performance of the service is sound, although we are assessing the impact of the changes brought about by the transition.
5. A Children Looked After Strategic Group has been formed to focus on all elements of performance and the quality of practice in the service.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Our looked after children population

6. The number of children looked after at the mid year point (29 September 2014) is 525, which is a 4.5% drop on the 13/14 end of year position. The table on the next page shows the current number of looked after children and rate per 10,000 (using the 2013 ONS mid year population estimates) and the position for the previous five years together with the latest benchmarking figures. Although our number of looked after children has reduced, we are still above our statistical neighbours, London and the National averages. It is important to note that Southwark has the 18th highest proportion of children living in low income households (according to figures released by the government in February 2014) in the country and the 11th highest in London, so we would expect there to be high rates of children and young people entering care. However work is underway to develop specialist “edge of care” services to enable more children and young people to remain safely in their families and communities.

Description	Benchmarking			Southwark Historic					Current*	
	2012/13									2014/15
	National	London	SN	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	mid-year
Number of children looked after at end of reporting period	68110	10090	392	535	557	522	552	565	550	525
Rate of children looked after at end of reporting period per 10,000 pop aged under 18	60	55	72	92.7	95.5	89.1	93.5	95.7	90	85.9

* Using ONS 2013 mid year estimate population figures

7. The proportion of children looked after at the mid-year point in each placement type is largely unchanged from the end of the 2013/14 year. There has been a small decrease in the proportions of children living in children's homes (-3% points) and increases in those living independently (+2% points) & in other residential settings (+2% points).

Looked after children - Placement type								
Placement type	Southwark						Stat neighbours	
	2012/13	%	2013/14	%	2014/15 mid-year	%	2012/13 Average	%
Foster placements	425	75%	424	77%	409	78%	300	76%
Placed for adoption	20	4%	29	5%	20	4%	16	4%
Placement with parents	15	3%	6	1%	7	1%	10	3%
Other placement in the community (Independent living)	35	6%	28	5%	35	7%	18	4%
Secure units, children's homes and hostels	17	3%	50	9%	31	6%	42	11%
Other residential settings (Residential care home, mother and baby unit, NHS, Youth offender institute)	37	7%	10	2%	20	4%	9	3%
Residential schools	12	2%	0	0%	0	0%	5	2%
Missing - Absent for more than 24 hours from agreed placement	3	1%	3	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Other placement	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	565		550		525		400	

Please Note: In 12/13 the published figures show that 12 children were placed in residential schools on 31 March 2013. This is inaccurate, although these placements are schools, because they are dual-registered as Children's Homes (as defined in section 1(6) of the Care Standards Act 2000) they should be shown in our figures as Children's Homes. The figures from onwards 2013/14 correct this.

8. The proportion of looked after children on full care orders has increased slightly (+2% points) as has the proportion looked after under s20 of the Children Act (voluntary accommodation) (+3% points). The proportions looked after on interim care orders and placement orders have both decreased slightly (-2% points). The reduction in interim care orders is a result of a fall in the number of care proceedings following an all time high in 2013\14. Care proceeding activity is now more in line with statistical neighbours. The number of children in care under Section 20 remains high because of the number of older teenagers entering care because of homelessness. At any one time we have between 80-90 17 year olds in care.

Looked after children - Legal status						
Legal status	2012/13	%	2013/14	%	2014/15 mid-year	%
Detained in LA	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Full care order	224	40%	263	48%	263	50%
Interim care order	115	20%	63	11%	46	9%
On remand, or committed for trial or sentence, and accommodated by LA	11	2%	4	1%	2	0%
Placement order granted	80	14%	72	13%	58	11%
Single period of accommodation under section 20	134	24%	148	27%	156	30%
Grand Total	565		550		525	

9. As can be seen when compared to the Southwark 0-18 population (see table below), the younger age groups in our looked after children appear under-represented, whilst the opposite is true for children in the older age groups. However, some of the children entering care at a young age are ultimately adopted (and so leave care) and since this is an area of national policy this trend is likely to continue and the numbers of these children increase. Southwark's recent success at adopting more children from care (21 rising to 33 in 2013/14) has reduced the number in the young age groups. This is also a result in the reduction in care proceedings, which usually involve younger children. Overall, the cohort of children currently looked after has seen a shift to an 'older' cohort. However the 'Staying Put' national strategy has influence here; there is an expectation that children who are looked after at 18 should remain in care until they reach 21, particularly if they are in further and higher education. As a consequence, these considerations need to be borne in mind when evaluating this data.

Looked after children - age							
Age band	2012/13	%	2013/14	%	2014/15 mid-year	%	Southwark 0-17 pop
0	42	7%	28	5%	29	6%	4,789
1 - 4	88	16%	78	14%	58	11%	16,965
5 - 9	115	20%	101	18%	96	18%	17,007
10 - 15	183	32%	186	34%	182	35%	16,627
16 - 17	137	24%	157	29%	160	30%	5,707
Total	565		550		525		61,095

10. The table below shows that the ethnicity of looked after children in Southwark has remained fairly stable, with Black or Black British (44%) and White (33%) making up the biggest proportions.

Looked after children - Ethnicity						
Ethnicity	2012/13	%	2013/14	%	2014/15 mid-year	%
White	193	34%	190	35%	174	33%
Mixed	93	16%	91	17%	77	15%
Asian or Asian British	20	4%	18	3%	18	3%
Black or Black British	239	42%	235	43%	232	44%
Other ethnic groups	20	4%	16	3%	24	5%
Total	565		550		525	

11. When compared to projected figures for the ethnicity of the wider Southwark population, shown in the table below, it appears that children from a Black Caribbean background (6%) are over-represented in our looked after children cohort (14%), whereas children from an Asian background (11% in total) are under-represented in our looked after cohort (5%). The projected ethnicity figures come from the Greater London Authority and were published in February 2014. As with any projected figures these figures need to be used with caution because they are built upon a range of assumptions, any of which may be inaccurate. They are the best measure we can currently use.

Looked after children - Ethnicity				
Ethnicity	2014/15 mid-year to compare with Southwark	%	Southwark 0-17 pop*	%
White	174	33%	21,100	34%
Black Caribbean	71	14%	3,500	6%
Black African	114	22%	13,800	22%
Black other	89	17%	11,500	19%
Indian	0	0%	800	1%
Pakistani	3	1%	400	1%
Bangladeshi	4	1%	1,300	2%
Chinese	3	1%	1,150	2%
Other Asian	11	2%	3,300	5%
Other	56	11%	4,850	8%
	525		61,700	

* Using GLA 2013 Round Ethnic Group Projections - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Final

12. From the table below it is possible to see that there were more Males than Females in care at 31st March, this contrasts with the general population where there is an almost even split. The balance in our looked after children cohort has been fairly consistent over the last 18 months.

Looked after children - Gender								
Gender	2012/13	%	2013/14	%	2014/15 mid-year	%	Southwark 0-17 pop	%
Female	249	44%	242	44%	234	45%	29,979	49%
Male	316	56%	308	56%	291	55%	31,116	51%
Total	565		550		525		61,095	

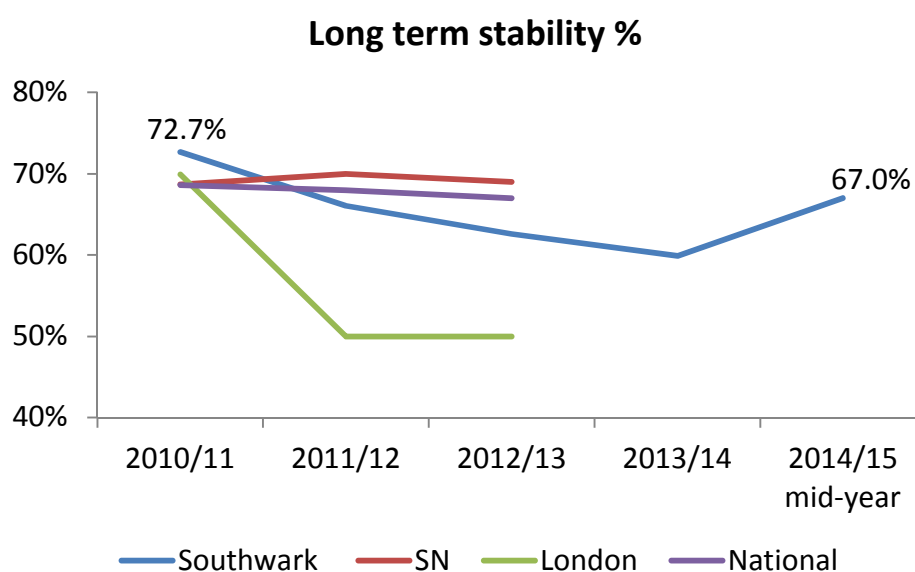
13. The table below looks in more detail at the children who were looked after on the 29th September and their gender by the age band they are in currently. This reveals that in the younger age groups there are more girls than boys. From the age of 5 this starts to change and in the older age groups there are more boys than girls.

Looked after children - 29/09/2014			
Current age band	Female	Male	Number of children
0-4	56.32%	43.68%	87
5-9	46.88%	53.13%	96
10-15	39.56%	60.44%	182
16-18	42.50%	57.50%	160
Total	44.57%	55.43%	525

Performance figures

Long-term placement stability

14. The graph below shows the proportion of children aged under 16 who have been both looked after for two and a half years or more, and been in the same placement for the last two years (if they are placed for adoption the calculation looks at the last two placements equalling two years or more). It shows that the performance over the last three and a half years had been declining but has improved in the last six months



15. Long term stability is a key determinant in securing positive outcomes for children in care. Southwark is recruiting more foster carers both in and closer to the borough to ensure that children and young people can remain near to their families and communities. All foster carers receive support to enable them to cope with more challenging children or look after larger sibling groups. Long-term stability of children in care will continue to be monitored closely so that further improvements can be secured and the upward trend in performance maintained.

Children placed out of borough

16. As can be seen from the table below, there has been a slight improvement in the numbers of children placed inside the Borough. Despite this high figure it is important to remember that 82% of the cohort are placed in foster care or placed for adoption and are in permanent long-term alternative family settings. Work is already underway to identify those young people who can either return to their parents or move closer to Southwark so that they can receive the support they need from local services.

Looked after children - borough of placement				
	2013/14		2014/15 mid-year	
Placed inside Southwark	141	25.6%	148	28.2%
Placed outside Southwark	406	73.8%	374	71.2%
Not included	3	0.5%	3	0.6%
	550		525	

Children placed more than 20 miles from home

17. The table below shows the distance that children are placed from their home address. The mid-year position shows a slight improvement on the end of year position. There is more detail on this in the placement stability report. Services are working to bring children back to the borough where possible as more local foster carers are recruited.

Looked after children - distance from home				
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 mid-year
% of LAC at the end of the period placed more than 20 miles from their home	17%	17%	23%	22%

Community impact statement

18. Southwark Children Looked After services works to promote the best possible outcomes for children in care. It is recognised that placement stability, engagement in education, access to leisure and healthy lifestyles all help to build resilience for young people to successfully achieve economical wellbeing and make a positive contribution. Effective performance monitoring supports these objectives and enables us to identify areas where improvements may need to be made.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Director, Children’s Social Care		
Report Author	Rashid Jussa, Strategic Intelligence and Performance Manager		
Version	Final		
Dated	21 October 2014		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services		No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			21 October 2014

Item No. 11.	Classification: Open	Date: 3 November 2014	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Fostering Service Annual Report 2013 - 2014	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Looked After Children by the London Borough of Southwark	
From:		Director, Children's Social Care	

RECOMMENDATION

1. Members to note the information provided in this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. This report provides details of fostering activity over the financial year April 2013 - March 2014. The fostering team's core business as part of Children's Services is to:
 - provide quality foster care placements for Children Looked After in Southwark
 - recruit, assess, train and support a suitable and diverse range of foster carers to provide quality care for Children Looked After.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

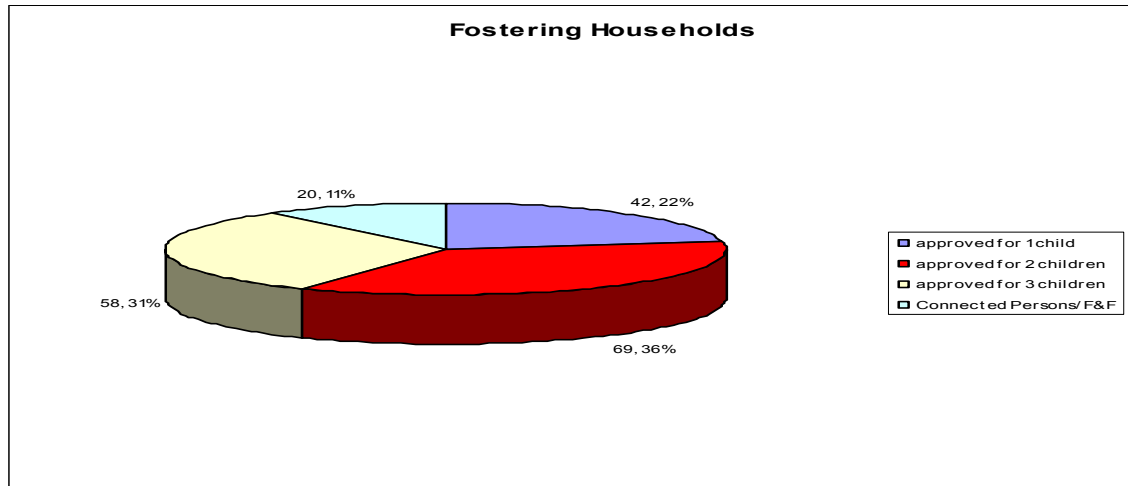
The Fostering Service

3. The fostering service is committed to supporting foster carers to provide good quality stable placements for Looked After Children. The service is made up of two separate fostering teams of seven supervising social workers and a team manager. There are also two administrators who support the team's duty and fostering panel systems. Each supervising social worker holds an average caseload of between 15 and 18 foster carers. The Supervising Social Workers also provide additional support to the children and young people placed with foster carers.
4. A fostering recruitment manager is responsible for liaising and quality assuring all fostering assessments completed by NRS, the recruitment agency commissioned to recruit new foster carers for Southwark.
5. The work of the service has increased due to new approvals of Connected Persons carers as well as in house foster carers. This has brought with it the challenge of meeting the individual demands of different parts of the service. Supervising Social Workers are involved in training events and facilitating coffee mornings that enable foster carers to meet and support each other. They also take part in the daily duty system and 'out of hours' service for foster carers who may need advice or support.

Children Looked After

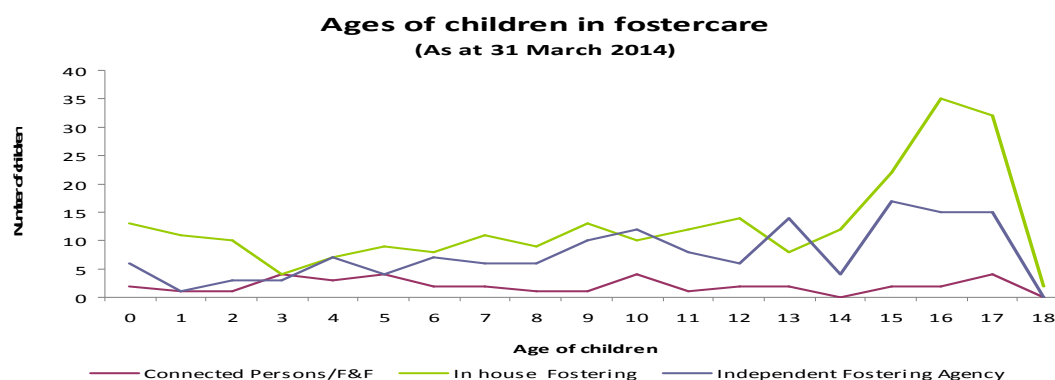
6. The overall number of Children Looked After in Southwark fell from 562 (2012/3) to 550 (2013/14). This is a reduction of 12 children (2.14%) over the course of the year.

Fostering households



7. During the course of the year, 284 children were Looked After in 169 in-house fostering and 20 Connected Persons (Family and Friends) households.
8. In-house fostering households are approved for one, two, or a sibling group of three children. Those approved to care for two children (69) can provide care for one child, two unrelated children or a sibling group of two children. In house fostering households approved to care for three children (58) can be just as flexible, however these carers are generally used to care for sibling groups to prevent separation. During 2013/14, 19 out of 23 sibling groups, involving 40 children were placed together.
9. A smaller number of carers are approved to care for one child (42) the majority of whom are young children or babies.
10. There are occasions when it may not be appropriate to place another child in a household approved for more than one child due to the needs of the child in placement. Although this may mean a carer approved for two children carrying a vacancy, careful matching of a child with a fostering household is likely to reduce the risk of disruption and placement breakdown.

Ages of children in foster care



11. In-house fostering households provide care for 58% of all children placed in foster care. While Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) households care for more 10 year olds (46%) and 13 year olds (58%) in-house fostering households care for a higher percentage of children across the age range. This is most evident among the older cohort of 14 (75%) 15 (53%) 16 (67%) and 17 year olds (62%).

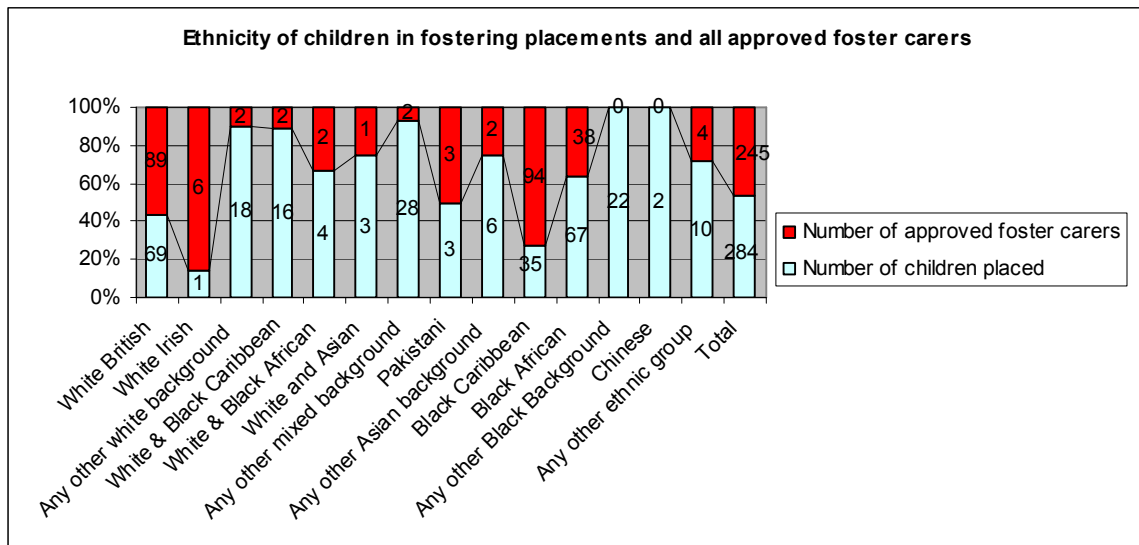
Connected persons carers

12. Connected Persons carers, also known as Family & Friends Carers are usually extended family members, or friends of the family. These carers enable children to remain with people they know and trust if unable to return to their parents. Connected Persons include grandparents, aunts and uncles and older siblings, but can also include people who have a pre-existing established relationship with the child, such as a neighbour or even a teacher. The majority of children do well, but carers continue to need support if children are to achieve good outcomes. These carers are therefore expected to attend foster carer training and receive ongoing support from a Supervising Social Worker. At year end 2013/14 there were 20 Connected Persons carers providing care for 38 children across the age range.

Short breaks care

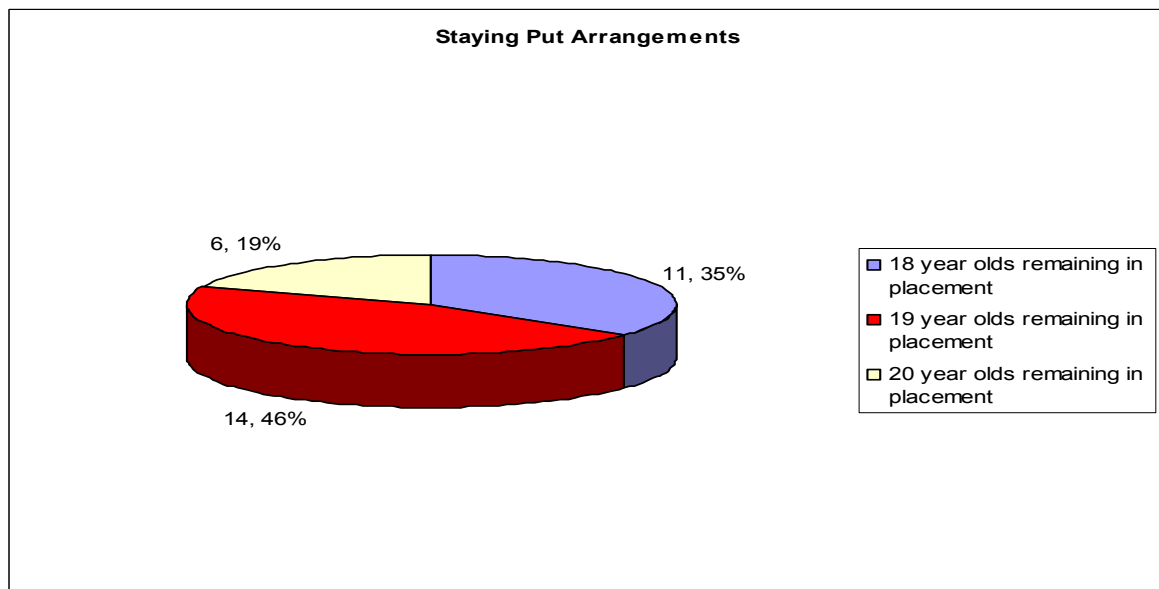
13. The fostering service had 37 short break respite carers offering care to 37 children with disabilities one weekend a month enabling the child's parents to have a break. Short break foster carers are specialist carers assessed and matched to a particular child. These carers generally develop a good relationship with the child's parents and often provide short break care for many years.

Ethnicity of children in fostering placements and approved carers



14. White British (69) black African (67) and black Caribbean (35) represent the highest number of children in foster care. While there appears to be no shortage of white and Caribbean carers there are fewer black African carers, therefore black African children may be placed with black Caribbean carers. All carers are however expected to meet the cultural needs of children placed in their care and receive training and ongoing support to enable them to do so.

“Staying put’ arrangements



15. The Children and Families Act 2014 has introduced a duty on the local authority to provide ‘staying put’ arrangements for fostered young people to continue to live with their former foster carer beyond their 18th birthday and potentially up to the age of 21 years. This is a welcome development for young people who do not have the maturity to move into independent living on their 18th birthday.

16. During 2013/14, 27 young people reached their 18th birthday. Of these 11 remained in placement under 'staying put' arrangements. During the same period 14 young people, aged 19 and 6 aged 20 remained in placement with their foster carers. While it is positive that young people will have the same opportunity to remain with their carers as many other young people living at home, it has resource implications for the fostering service as these households cannot be utilised until the young people move on.

Training programme

17. The Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards for Foster Carers has been developed to ensure that all foster carers receive the relevant induction, training, support and continuing professional development (CPD). The standards clearly set out what all foster carers should know, understand and be able to do. They build on existing good practice to help foster carers care for the most vulnerable children.
18. Foster carers can only attend training between a certain period of time and some live outside of the borough. In order to support these carers an on line version of the Standards has been developed to enable carers to complete them from home at a convenient time. To date 130 foster carers have completed their Standards, supported by their supervising social worker, while others are at various stages of completing them.
19. In addition to the TSD Standards, foster carers are able to book themselves onto a variety of training courses specially developed for them to increase their knowledge and experience. Foster carers are expected to complete two new pieces of training each year to support their continued development.

Southwark foster carers association

20. The purpose of the Foster Care Association is to share relevant information and provide support for each other. The Association is very active and recently began producing a newsletter that is published on a monthly basis. This is now emailed to all foster carers. A manager from the service supports the association and attends all meetings to provide updates and respond to queries.

Southwark fostering panel

21. Changes to the Fostering Panel took place in 2013, with the recruitment of a new chair and new panel members. The new panel is now a wider diverse mix of experience and gender balance. The Fostering Panel has various functions, including responsibility for approving foster carers and the numbers and ages of children they are approved to care for.
22. The reformed panel has had a successful year under the guidance of the experienced new chair. A joint induction training session took place during the year that provided the opportunity for departmental members to meet with new independent panel members recruited at the end of 2013. The Panel meet on the last Wednesday of the month and has met on twelve occasions during 2013-2014.
23. The 2011 Guidance and Regulations allow panel members to remain on the panel with no maximum or minimum tenure, enabling those panel members who choose to remain on the panel the opportunity to do so. Fostering Panels do not

have fixed membership, so panel members are drawn from a 'central list' of members for each panel. Panel membership meets the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

Panel business

24. During 2013/14, 26 in house, 5 Connected Persons and 7 Short Break foster carers were approved. During the same period 2 foster carers sadly died, 2 left to register with another agency, a further 5 left to do other things and 7 retired after many years of service. The service terminated 1 foster carer's approval due to safeguarding concerns and 1 foster carer adopted the child they had been caring for.

Fostering recruitment

25. Members will be aware that Southwark engaged NRS recruitment agency under contract in June 2013 to recruit local foster carers. This was due to the pressure on fostering resources in Southwark as the increase in fostering households had not kept pace with the placement demand. Children were placed with Independent Fostering Agencies carers when it was not possible to place with in house carers, often at greater expense.
26. NRS was contracted to provide 50 new fostering households within a 12-month period. The focus was to be white carers who could care for larger sibling groups and carers who could care for children between the ages of 0-4 and 10-15 year olds. The request was also for carers who could care for sibling groups.
27. NRS has held a number of information sessions in the borough and Skills to Foster 3 day training events for people interested in becoming foster carers. They complete assessments within a 10-12 week period, rather than the 20-32 week period. At the end of 2013/14, the Fostering Panel had approved 14 fostering households to care for 24 children. While this was fewer than anticipated, it was acknowledged that we had not taken into consideration the lead in time to set up the various systems required. The contract has been renewed for a further 12-month period and the search extended beyond Southwark to include surrounding boroughs.

Allowances

28. Members may be aware the existing fees and allowances scheme needed to be reviewed to ensure it met the legal requirements for Connected Persons (Family & Friend) Foster carers. After completing a benchmarking exercise against other local authorities and consulting with foster carers arrangements are now being made to introduce these more competitive rates. The process has been complex and it has taken longer than initially anticipated to finalise, however should be implemented shortly. We believe that the new rates will help attract more applicants to the borough and increase the number of in-house foster carers.

Finance

	Gross Spend
Fostering Allowances	4,921,671
Other Carer support	306,420
Staff Costs	951,202
Total	6,179,293

Average weekly cost per child

Internal foster placement £474.05

External foster placement £850- £900

Community impact statement

29. There are no specific equality implications.

Resource implications

30. The recruitment agency is paid by results, therefore it is anticipated that the substantial savings resulting from Children's placements with in-house foster carers will meet the cost of the contract, however half of the overall cost will be taken from the fostering recruitment budget.
31. An increase in the number of in-house foster carers will require an increase in social work support. The service will use the current quota of social workers; however will need to recruit two additional social work posts over the next 12 months as the number of in-house carers increase. It is envisaged that some of the savings realised from the use of in-house as opposed to IFA foster carers will transfer to the recruitment budget to meet salary cost.

Conclusion

32. This report has set out the functions of the fostering team and outlined its core business and successes over the past year. Our priorities over the coming year are:
- 1) To recruit a number and range of foster carers to meet the diverse placement needs of our looked after children and young people.
 - 2) To continue to provide quality support and training to our foster carers in order to ensure their retention and to enable them to provide quality care and placement stability for the children and young people they look after.
33. We shall continue to work closely in partnership with other services in order to provide a quality service to our foster carers and to improve the life chances of Children placed in their care.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Director Children’s Social Care		
Report Author	Shirley Walker, Interim Service Manager		
Version	Final		
Dated	21 October 2014		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services		No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			21 October 2014

Item No. 12.	Classification: Open	Date: 3 November 2014	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Corporate Parenting Committee – Work Plan 2014/15	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director, Children's Social Care	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the corporate parenting committee review the work plan for 2014/15 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 2014/2015 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 corporate parenting committee review and update the work plan each meeting.

Future agenda items

4. The following work plan sets the programme of items for future meetings. The committee is required to set its annual work plan at this meeting.

3 November 2014

- Key stage 2 results and confirmed GCSE results
- Report from Virtual Head Teacher
- Mid year performance review
- Annual report on fostering services
- Placement Stability - Factors affecting long term stability *
- Link between out of Borough Placements and children missing from care *
- Report back from Speakerbox (from meeting held in October 2014) *

* Report backs requested at last meeting 21 July 2014.

24 February 2015

- Annual Report from Designated Doctor for Children Looked After
- Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report
- Transition from Care to Independent Living (including availability of independent living accommodation) *

Issues to be programmed

- The effect of the recent developments in public health (transfer from NHS to council on children in care)
- Teenage pregnancies among children in care
- Progress reports and the measures of success for children in care
- Feedback on work currently being undertaken by the department to improve the service
- Education and how levels can be further improved
- Mentorship by members of the committee.

Community impact statement

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

Resource implications

6. 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 London SE1 2QH	Kenny Uzodike 020 7525 7236

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Director, Children’s Social Care		
Report Author	Kenny Uzodike, Constitutional Officer		
Version	Final		
Dated	23 October 2013		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included	
Director of Legal Services	No	No	
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No	
Cabinet Member	No	No	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		23 October 2014	

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CORPORATE PARENTING DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014-15**

NOTE: Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to
Kenny Uzodike Tel: 020 7525 7236

Name	No of copies	Name	No of copies
Membership		Constitutional Team	
Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)	1	Paula Thornton	1
Councillor Evelyn Akoto	1	Kenny Uzodike	10
Councillor Jasmine Ali	1		
Councillor Radha Burgess	1		
Councillor Kath Whittam	1		
Councillor Kieron Williams	1	Total	29
Councillor Eliza Mann	1		
Reserves		Dated: 23 October 2014	
Councillor James Barber	1		
Co-opted members			
Barbara Hills	1		
Carolyn Martin (external)	1		
Children's Services			
Jim Crook	1		
Rory Patterson	1		
Alasdair Smith	1		
Patricia Rowe	1		
Liz Britton	1		
Eleanor Parkin	1		
Shirley Walker	1		
Legal			
Sarah Feasey	1		