Item No. 9.	Classification: Open	Date: 16 February 2011	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Looked After Children and Interim Care Orders	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		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1 Withdrawn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

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