

<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

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
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
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