

Item No. 8.	Classification: Open	Date: 1 May 2012	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Performance Report – Looked After Children	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Children's Services	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Corporate Parenting Committee notes this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Children in Care. This report relates to performance for quarter 3.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. Overall performance in the service and its key performance remain strong. This reports sets out some key issues for consideration.
4. The number of looked after children continues to rise, current figure is 551. Of these, approximately 45% of children looked after are between 0-12. 31% of all children are accommodated under section 20, and 40% on full care orders.
5. Overall stability of placements remains good with good performance levels for 3 plus placements and long term stability. NI 62 – 3 plus placements, year to date shows an improvement in those children had 3 or more placements, currently at 12%. However, it should be noted that although the indicator shows improvement approximately 70 children have had three or more placements, a similar rate to last year. Due to growth of LAC numbers, this now reflects a smaller percentage of LAC given growth of looked after numbers. Performance remains within the good banding. This time last year our performance was at 13%, showing an improvement this year. Long term stability of placements remains good at 85.6%.
6. Permanence planning remains good. Recent inspections of fostering and adoption found services to be good with some outstanding features. Adoptions performance is on a par with last year, with 17 completed so far, against 18 for last year's outturn. Recent figures released by the DfE regarding adoption timeliness shows that in 2012 Southwark had a shorter than average time scale between the appointment of court authority and matching to an adoptive family (93 days compared to the 171 nationally). However the proportion of children adopted from care and adoptions for children aged over 5 years in particular, fall below the national averages.
7. Planning and review of children looked after remains strong. At present, 96% of children have had an up to date review and 74% have up to date health assessments. In both cases, this is improvement performance. All reviews are completed by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service, which also monitors the quality of reviews and care planning. For older children, there is

proactive screening of drug use and teenage pregnancy, although improving timeliness of pathway planning remains an area for improvement.

8. The council continues to perform on par with the national picture on finding suitable accommodation for care leavers. 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 has increased to 89%, compared to 86.6% at the same time last year. 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. This area of work was commended in the recent YOS inspection
9. Due to the economic climate there was an expectation that that the performance of care leavers in employment, education or training would decrease by March 2012. NI 148 - % of Care leavers in employment, education or training at age 19 LAA, recent figures show that, in contrast, the proportion of EET care leavers has increased to 63.6%, with 62% in full time education, and now in line with national performance.
10. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) suggests mental and emotional wellbeing of CLA is improving. NI 58 - Emotional and behavioural health of children in care, the current score of 13, an improvement on the previous year's performance (14.2) and again in line with national figures. Children and young people do not have to undertake this questionnaire, so some caution must be applied when interpreting the results.

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 an impact on children looked after from all communities and good performance outcomes are dependent on equalities considerations being central to delivery of services and provision

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
CLA Key Performance Indicators	160 Tooley Street, SE1	Monika Ciurej monika.ciurej@southwark.gov.uk

APPENDICES

No	Title
Appendix A.	Data and graphs with further details of key performance

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Rory Patterson, Deputy Director, Specialist Children's Services	
Report Author	Rory Patterson, Deputy Director, Specialist Children's Services	
Version	Final	
Dated	18 April 2012	
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
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	18 April 2012	