

Corporate Parenting Committee

Wednesday 16 July 2025

2.00 pm

Ground floor meeting rooms GO2B and C, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1
2QH

Membership

Councillor Jasmine Ali (Chair)
Councillor Mohamed Deen
Councillor Natasha Ennin
Councillor Emily Hickson
Councillor Sarah King
Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall
Councillor Charlie Smith

Reserves

Councillor Sunil Chopra
Councillor Sabina Emmanuel
Councillor Sunny Lambe
Councillor Bethan Roberts
Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Irina Von Wiese

Non-voting co-opted members

Dr Mark Kerr and Rosamond Marshall

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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Access

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Contact

Beverley Olamijulo on 020 7525 7234 or email: Beverley.olamijulo@southwark.gov.uk
or paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

Althea Loderick

Chief Executive

Date: 8 July 2025



Corporate Parenting Committee

Wednesday 16 July 2025

2.00 pm

Ground floor meeting rooms GO2B and C, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Order of Business

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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.

5. MINUTES

1 - 5

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the open section of the meeting held on 17 April 2025.

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 6. | ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE 2025-26 (2.10PM - 2.15PM) | |
| 7. | SPEAKERBOX: PRESENTATION /DISCUSSION ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (2.15PM - 2.35PM) | |
| 8. | CARE LEAVERS EMPLOYABILITY PATHWAY (2.35PM - 3.05PM) | 6 - 28 |
| | BREAK (3.05PM - 3.10PM) | |
| 9. | DRAFT ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (3.10PM - 3.30PM) | 29 - 61 |
| 10. | SOUTHWARK HOMES FOR SOUTHWARK CHILDREN - SHORT REPORT (3.30PM - 3.40PM) | |
| 11. | CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2025-26 (3.40PM - 3.50PM) | 62 - 66 |

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.”

Date: 8 July 2025



CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Thursday 17 April 2025 at 2.15 pm at the Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT:	Councillor Natasha Ennin (Chair) for the meeting Councillor Irina Von Wiese
OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:	Dr Mark Kerr (subject matter expert) Rosamond Marshall (foster carer)
OFFICER SUPPORT:	Helen Woolgar, Assistant Director – Safeguarding and Care Elaine Reid, Head of Service: Permanence and Resources Sarah O Connor, Designated Nurse for Looked after Children Matthew Izeke, Employment adviser, Children and Adults Young people who have experienced the career / employment service Clare Ryan, Service Manager, Looked After Children Paula Thornton, Constitutional Officer Beverley Olamijulo, Constitutional Officer Liam Reid, Cabinet office

ELECT CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Natasha Ennin be elected chair for the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jasmine Ali, Charlie Smith, Esme Dobson, Sarah King and Maria Linforth- Hall

(Councillor Irina Von Wiese attended in place of Councillor Linforth-Hall).

Apologies for absence were also received from Speakerbox, Dechaun Malcolm, Ekta Gupta, Joy Hopkinson, Alasdair Smith, Joy Edwards and Dr. Stacy John-Legere.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

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

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

There were none.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

6. SPEAKERBOX VERBAL UPDATE

Clare Ryan provided an update on behalf of Speakerbox. Key points included:

- Residential visit to farm which was a big success
- Speakerbox work and aims planned including looking at core values
- Plans to focus on three main priorities relating to education, wide range of opportunities and how they line up with the corporate parenting strategy and protection against exploitation and crime.

As a result of questions and what the committee could do to support the young people, it was suggested that funding for a yearly trip to the farm would be welcomed.

7. CARE LEAVERS INTO EMPLOYMENT - WORKSHOP / DISCUSSION

The committee heard a presentation from the careers and jobs 16 + service and work being undertaken to prepare careleavers for the world of work.

Matthew, a careers adviser informed the committee of the in-service provision and work with experienced practitioners and collaboration with the world of work and businesses, including PricewaterhouseCoopers, Berkley Homes and internship opportunities at the Department of Work and Pensions. The support provided by the team aims to demonstrate the experience of being in the workplace. Young people are provided with support in terms of interview practice and other measures to provide practical support and encouragement.

A number of young people present at the meeting were able to give examples of this support. A young person was able to show how the council had supported her application, improved her interview skills which enabled her to build confidence in her application to the civil service.

Another young person present had undertaken work experience in the council's local economy team which she described as an 'amazing' opportunity, enabling her to gain a wide range of skills and understanding.

Additionally, work experience opportunities had taken place within the council's highways team and homeownership team.

It was confirmed that a Southwark careers event taking place Tuesday 22 April 12-2pm at Talfourd place for Southwark careleavers.

Summary of discussion arising from the presentation

- The presentation referred to the tragic loss of a young person and the meeting. The chair referenced the particular challenges faced by some groups of young people, for example young black boys and work to be done in this area, while acknowledging the good progress and achievements to

date

- The work of the programme was commended and its contribution to the support given to young people in order to overcome the first hurdle on how to get selected and into work opportunities / placements
- Young people present were asked what could be done to further encourage others and paid work was mentioned as one option
- Officers referred to the use of 'career champions' within teams and the discussion taking place across corporate management team and the whole council approach to further promote the opportunities for careleavers and young people
- Noted secured additional funding from the Mayor of London
- Elaine Reid thanked Matthew for his dedication and drive for the past two years for careleavers and work identify the next opportunities and next steps
- The need to understand the statistics of the careleavers cohort and whether the internships / employment strategy has resulted in an increase in the numbers.

8. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE - WORK PLAN 2025-26

RESOLVED:

That the following items be added to the workplan:

- Each corporate parenting committee to receive a Southwark Homes for Southwark children update.

October 2025 committee. Add the following

- Clinical service, update on mental health support and CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services)
- Fostering report to include a focus on recruitment
- Update on corporate parenting strategy 2025-30
- Annual corporate parenting strategy report.

April 2026 committee. Add the following:

- Update on local offer for kinship care.

Date to be confirmed

- Exploitation, risk and harm and what doing to break cycles.

The meeting ended at 3.25pm.

CHAIR:

DATED:

Meeting Name:	Corporate Parenting Committee
Date:	16 July 2025
Report title:	Care Leavers Employability Pathway
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/a
From:	Helen Woolgar – Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the committee note the content of the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

National Policy Context

2. Under the Children Act 1989 (the Act) as amended by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 the council has a range of duties and responsibilities for care leavers aged 16 to 21, including:
 - Personal Advisor support and planning to ensure they are able to transition successfully to an independent adulthood.
 - Financial support to meet education, training and employment
 - Assistant to access and sustain in education, training and employment with that support continuing through to 25 if the young person is engaged in education and training throughout.
3. The Children & Social Work Act 2017 extended the overarching duty to offer advice and support through to age 25 if requested by the young person. It further introduced Corporate Parenting Principles in relation to children and young people in the council's care which are to:
 - Act in their best interests, and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing
 - Encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings
 - Take into account their views, wishes and feelings
 - Help them gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners

- Promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes
 - Be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
 - Prepare them for adulthood and independent living
4. The statutory principles place a duty on all local authorities, leaders and staff to ensure their organisation delivers:

“[A] strong corporate parenting ethos [which] means that everyone from the Chief Executive down to front line staff, as well as elected council members, are concerned about those children and care leavers as if they were their own.

This is evidenced by an embedded culture where council officers do all that is reasonably possible to ensure the council is the best ‘parent’ it can be to the child or young person”.

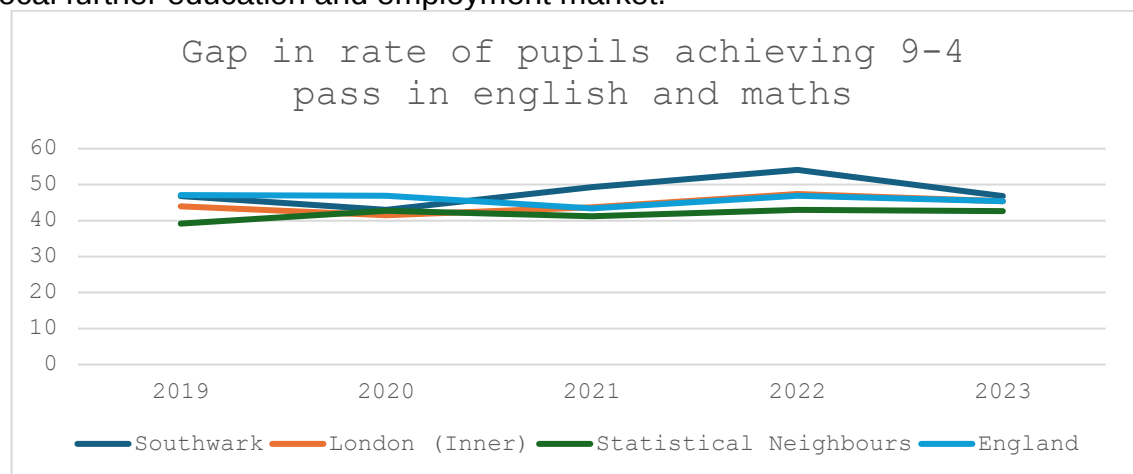
5. The Care Leaver Covenant is a national inclusion programme supporting care leavers aged 16-25 to live independently. The aim of the Care Leaver Covenant is to provide additional support for those leaving care. Making available a different type of support and expertise from that statutorily provided by local authorities.
6. At 31 March 2024, nationally 27% of 19- to 21- year-old care leavers were in education (6% higher education, 21% education other than higher education) and 27% were in training or employment or an apprenticeship; 39% were not in education, employment or training (NEET). This compares to just 13% of all young people aged 19 to 21 years old
7. The difficulties for care experienced young people moving into sustainable employment and training is exacerbated by the difficulties faced earlier in life including in education with less than one in five (14%) care-experienced children gaining at least 5 A*-C grades in their GCSEs, compared to almost three in five (58%) children not in care.

Local Policy Context

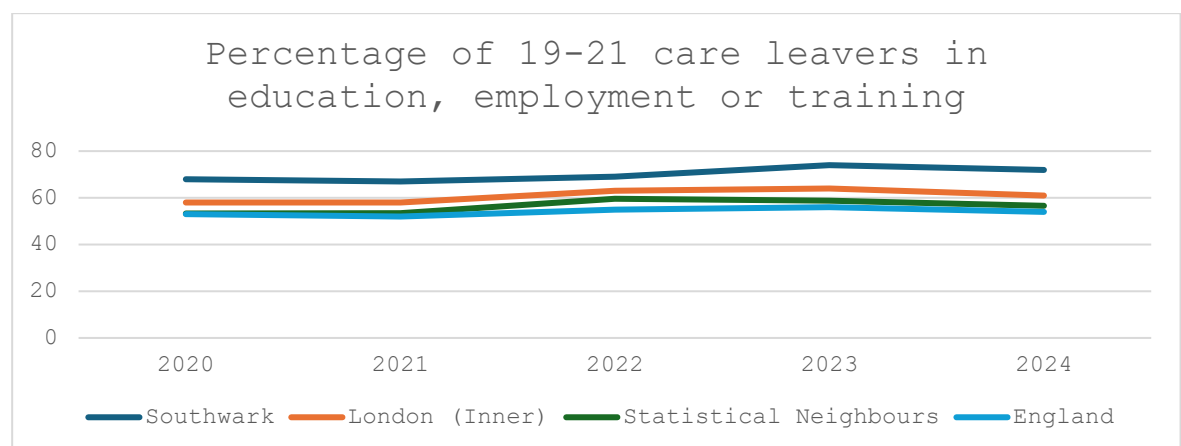
8. The Southwark 2030 Strategy outlines Southwark Council’s vision to build a fair, green and safe Southwark where everyone can live a good life as part of a strong community.
9. Underpinned by the principles of reducing inequality, empowering people and investing in prevention, the strategy focuses on six goals - decent homes for all, a good start in life, a safer Southwark, a strong and fair economy, staying well, and a healthy environment.
10. The Strategy commits the whole council to working to *improve outcomes for children who face disadvantage, working to reduce the gap in outcomes experienced by children who face disadvantage, so every child in our*

borough can flourish, supporting our young people to overcome the barriers they face to help them build a solid foundation for adult life.

11. Our People Plan is key to helping us deliver Southwark 2030 by ensuring that the council has a workforce that is ready to deliver the organisation's vision and goals. This includes supporting progression through the organisation.
12. Our looked after children significantly outperform their national peers in educational attainment (measured by a good pass in key stage 4 English and Maths). However, largely due to the equally strong and successful work of our local schools, with non-care experienced pupils also significantly exceeding the performance of their national peers, the achievement gap in outcomes between all our local pupils and our local care experienced young people remains wider than the London, statistical neighbour and national gap. Placing our care experienced young people at a greater disadvantage in the local further education and employment market.



13. Again, our care experienced young people are significantly more likely to be in education, employment or training than their peers in all parts of the country. However, we know that for those who are not in such circumstances, the barriers and potential impact on their later life remains significant.



14. National and local reviews and research into care experienced young people not in education, employment or training often notes that those least likely to be in those circumstances are those with caring responsibilities, those seeking to access or undertake part-time and flexible education, and those facing ongoing disadvantages such as disruptions to their accommodation status or difficulties

with their mental health and general wellbeing. This highlights the importance of the corporate parent in its unique position to create bespoke and flexible options for our own young people.

Case Study

The leadership and management within the council's customer contact centre has proven an exemplary corporate parent in creating employment opportunities and targeting a support offer to care leavers to encourage applications and successful appointments to the team. With a number of care leavers taking on and sustaining employment in the team in recent months.

However, a small number of young people who secured a position in the team were also seeking to match employment with part-time education to further their skills. One young person in particular was keen to work evenings and particular day shifts so that they could sustain both education and employment. Unfortunately, and through no fault of the Team or management in the contact centre, finding the right pattern of work for the young person wasn't successful and they had to leave the role to pursue their education.

There is an opportunity for the organisation as a whole to think creatively about how we could adapt some working policies and arrangements to meet broader positive opportunity needs of individual care experienced young people.

15. One of the most effective ways in which the local authority can both discharge its corporate parenting responsibilities and support our care experienced young people to tackle the barriers impacting on their early adulthood outcomes is to recognise and mobilise its own internal employability opportunities, and in turn to model effective arrangements across key stakeholders and organisations with which the authority has a commissioning and influencing relationship. Using its position and connections to directly create and broker opportunities for our young people, very much as any good parent would seek to do for their own children. To do this the council needs to role model arrangements internally first.
16. Based on the above the corporate management team of the council has recently agreed:
 - The implementation of an employability pathway for care experienced young people within the council, including:
 - Skills workshops and career conversations
 - Work experience
 - Supported internships
 - Ring-fenced apprenticeships
 - Ring-fenced entry level positions
 - The design and implementation of a training module 'supporting care experienced young people' for managers and teams, to be delivered in partnership between the Organisational Development Team and Leaving

Care Service, building locally on the Care Leaver Covenant 'Inclusive Employment Toolkit'.

- To set minimum expectations on council departments for engagement in the above plans.
- That each department will appoint a care experienced young person's champion who will support implementation and delivery in each department, and act in a convening role with peers in other departments.
- To implement revised approaches to entry level job criteria, and recruitment procedures. Including targeted communications with care experienced young people on job opportunities.
- To receive twice yearly reporting at the corporate management team and the Corporate Parenting Committee on the implementation and delivery of the pathway.

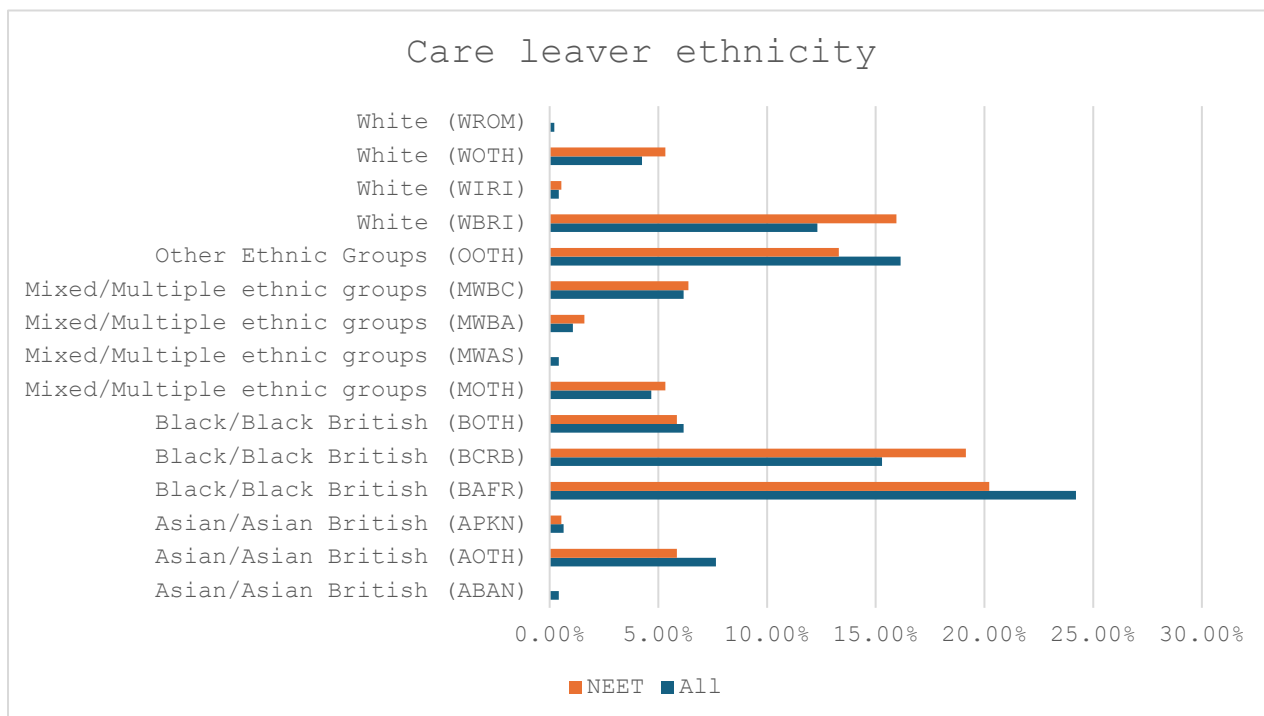
KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

17. Following the attendance of the Children in Care Council, Speakerbox, at the Council's Directors Forum meeting, work has been being undertaken to test a number of approaches and opportunities specifically for care leavers in supporting employability, including collaborative design and ongoing engagement with our young people, and internal early adopters and council champions throughout.
18. Supporting our most disadvantaged young people into employment requires careful development, particularly ensuring a focus on the wraparound support offer for both the young people and those working alongside and managing their journey into work.
19. It is important that these steps are undertaken carefully and sensitively to ensure sustainability and to prevent failures which could have difficult implications for the future ability of our young people to thrive. We must ensure that the design and implementation of activity is led by our young people to ensure it meets their expectations and aspirations, providing them with the experiences that they both need and want.
20. Over the last year, employability support initiatives for care leavers have been trailed in areas across the council (Appendix A). Through this our young people have shown the ambition, the drive and the change they want to see. They have challenged us as a council to be the vehicle to help facilitate that change. The recent work has included:
 - **Care Leavers Apprenticeship Events** bringing teams from across the council together to meet with and support young people who are interested in apprenticeships
 - **Pilot care leaver work experience** with placements delivered in a range of teams across council departments, including:

- Highway designs and development
 - Local economy
 - Homeownership services
 - Recruitment resourcing
- **Careers and wellbeing events** hosted in our Young Peoples Hub, Talfourd Place, with a range of council teams and partner organisations delivering 'speed dating' and stalls for young people in the building, for young people to learn about new opportunities and career paths.
 - **Interacting events** bringing groups of care experienced young people into council teams and services to spend a day with staff and managers, hear about the work they do and learn about different job roles
 - **Growing talent events** group visits to partnership organisations to promote careers in other industries, including construction, finance and the civil service
21. We have taken the learning from pilot activity and through the agreement and support of the Corporate Management Team are now formalising arrangements to put in place a comprehensive support pathway that will scale up impactful opportunities for our young people.
22. The proposals outlined in this report seek to tackle the practical barriers to employability for many young people, as well as begin to address policy and process barriers to increase accessibility and inclusion.

Scope

23. There are 104 of our care leavers aged 19-21 who are not in education, employment or training and a further 50 young people aged 22-25 who are receiving continuing support from our service and are also not in education, employment training.
24. There are currently 279 children in care or care leavers who are 16 or 17 years old being supported towards transition into adulthood, 32 of whom are also currently not in education, employment or training.
25. Of our care leavers who are currently not in education, employment or training:
- 66% (125) are male and 34% (62) are female
 - Black Caribbean and white British care leavers are more likely to be NEET compared to the overall group of our care leavers.



- 21% of our NEET care leavers are former unaccompanied asylum seeking children, compared to 26% of all care leavers.
- 67% (126) of our NEET care leavers live in Southwark or our neighbouring boroughs. 21 young people (11%) live outside of London.
- Where there is an identified mitigating factor impacting on young people's NEET status, these are:

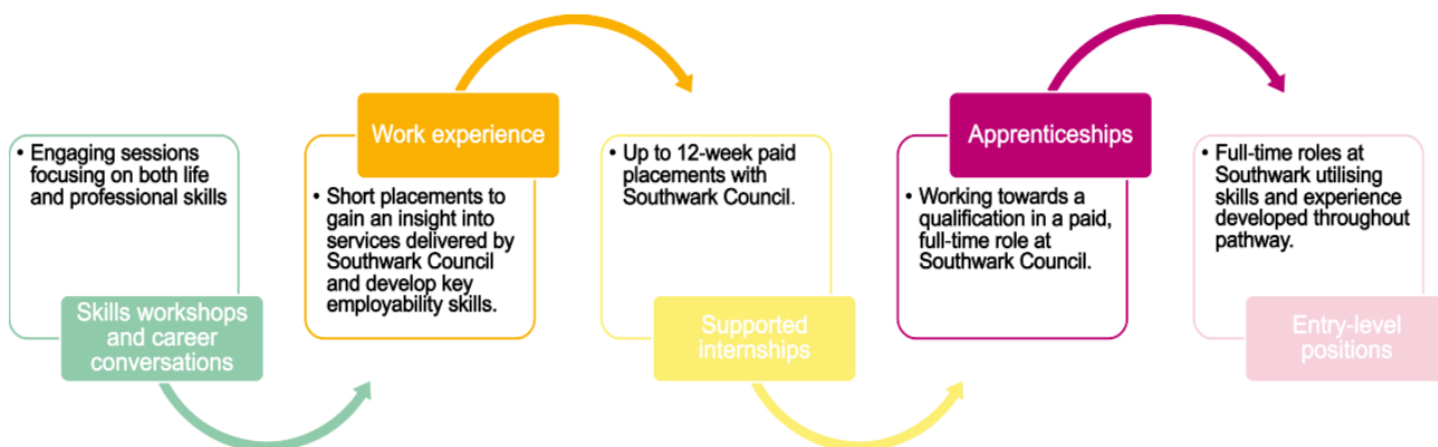
Issue	Number of NEET young people (%)
Acute housing difficulties	15 (8%)
Mental health and wellbeing concerns	43 (22%)
Parenting responsibilities	8 (4%)
Physical impairments impacting access (temporary or acute)	9 (4%)

26. As with national findings the largest group of our young people with additional concerns that are impacting on their ability to enter employment and education, is those with particular mental health and wellbeing concerns. This emphasises the need to carefully build supportive structures and planned pathways into these activities for our young people.
27. The proposed employability pathway is focused initially on care experienced young people, those which the local authority has a corporate parenting responsibility to support into education, employment and training. However, it is recognised that our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are similarly impacted by barriers to employability, and the council has a similar duty to promote and deliver the same activity for them. Many of whom are also care leavers. The employability pathway programme will deliver to:

- Existing care leavers not in education, employment or training (NEET) aged 18-21
 - Care leavers identified as at risk of becoming NEET aged 18-21
 - Young people in care aged 16-17 at risk of becoming NEET
 - Care leavers aged 22-25 who are receiving continuing support from services and are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET
28. We will identify young people who are eligible for the pathway by working through the care and leaving care services, our schools, virtual school and alternative provisions to intervene early with those at risk.

The Pathway

29. From the experience of pilot activities, engaging with our young people, and researching best practice in supporting disadvantaged young people, an **employability pathway** has been drafted outlining the activities.



- **Skills workshops, engagement showcases, shadowing and career conversations** – engaging group sessions delivered by Southwark Council staff focusing on upskilling young people in both life and work-related skills and showcasing the breadth of work of different teams. Career conversations would focus on one-to-one discussions exploring career pathways and opportunities. Shadowing and bite-sized work opportunities would offer young people the chance to get a taste of different types of work in a flexible way.
- **Work experience** – short unpaid work placements in a particular service at Southwark Council to gain an insight into the working world and key employability skills. This would be suitable for young people who have no work experience and flexible to meet the needs of the young person and fit around their other commitments, for example two days per week for three weeks.
- **Internships** – up to 12-week paid placements in a particular service at Southwark Council.

- **Apprenticeships** – full-time, paid roles at Southwark Council working towards a qualification.
 - **Entry-level positions** – full-time, junior roles at Southwark Council.
30. This will be a progressive pathway meaning that our children will be fully supported and equipped at each stage they complete to meet any essential criteria required to move onto the next phase of the pathway in a timely and well supported way. With consistency of support throughout their journey. This will ensure that young people can be supported at every stage of the journey so they can move from skills workshops into work experience, work experience into an internship and internship into apprenticeship if this is something they would like to do. We will time opportunities so that young people can move directly from stage of the pathway into the next.
31. It is crucial for wraparound support to be available for young people before, during and following their participation in employability initiatives:
- **Communications** – All opportunities relating to the employability support pathway will be advertised via a variety of channels, including the Care Leaver Local Offer, Speakerbox monthly newsletter and WhatsApp broadcast channel.
 - **Information sessions** - Ahead of their participation, young people will be invited to attend information sessions to learn more about the employability support pathway and the specific activities on offer.
 - **Application support** - Young people will also be offered support in creating their application and preparing for an interview if required.
 - During their time participating in employability activities, young people will be encouraged to access support from their activity coordinator, Personal Advisors and Speakerbox.
 - **Practical support** care leavers are already entitled to support to access positive activities, including clothing allowances, food and travel costs. The programme will ensure these are in place to promote access to opportunities.
 - **Next steps** - All young people who partake in employability support activities at Southwark Council are guaranteed a reference. They will also be invited to a CV writing workshop and mock interviews, as well as more tailored support to apply for their next steps.
 - **Sustainability coaching/support for young people** – Difficulties arise for everyone in their working lives, for most people a network of friends and family provide the resilience to fall back on. This is support that is too often not available to many care leavers. Where needed young people on the pathway will be supported by identifying a coach or mentor outside of the same employment area, to work alongside their existing leaving care support worker and help extend their employment support network.

- **Dedicated delivery partners** working with Southwark College and Bosco College two excellent local further education providers with dedicated care leaver support capacity to work alongside young people and the council to offer job coaching and formal development of workplace skills.
 - **Southwark Works** improving joint working between Southwark Works and our care leaver support teams, to ensure those working directly with our young people are more aware of the comprehensive support offer already available.
32. The organisation will also be supported to deliver employability support for care experienced young people via the following means:
- **Internal communications** – advertising opportunities for managers and teams to get involved in supporting young people.
 - **Information session** – introductory session for managers and teams who are interested in supporting and/or hosting a young person in their team. The session will give them more information about the employability support pathway and activities they could get involved in.
 - **Training module** – all managers and teams support and/or hosting a young person will be required to attend an in-person or virtual workshop delivered by our delivery partners, Early Careers team (OD) and Children's Services and based on the Care Leaver Covenant 'Inclusive Employment Toolkit'.
 - **Supported recruitment and selection training** – Practical sessions for recruiting managers on the Learning and Work Institute's *Building successful careers: Employer guide to supporting care leavers in the workplace*.
 - **Work experience guidance document** – all managers and teams will have access to a guidance document focused on how to prepare and deliver a high-quality work experience placement for young people.
33. To support the successful delivery the employability pathway programme, the Council's senior leadership has agreed to:
- Champion and advocate for the programme among their peers and services.
 - Encourage and empower members of staff to support the programme, including giving their time and capacity.
 - Commit to offering the full range of opportunities in their area of work where appropriate.
34. Members of Southwark Council staff volunteering to support the programme are expected to:

- Attend and complete the 'supporting care experienced young people' training module, developed using the Care Leaver Covenant 'Inclusive Employment Toolkit'.
- Develop a plan for their activities which will be reviewed and quality assured by OD and Children's Services teams in a supportive and collaborative manner with those offering opportunities.
- Support and coach participants, behaving as a positive role model.

Impact and outcomes

35. The impact of the pathway and programme will be evaluated against the following measures:

- Achieving a 25% reduction in existing NEET care leavers
- A reduction in the incidence of children transitioning from care becoming NEET
- An increase in ring-fenced education, employment and training opportunities across the local area public and private sector.
- Delivering a re-design of existing local authority single departmental services into an integrated function across care, education and employment support to deliver a sustainable future state
- Care leavers self-reporting positive change in their support offer, and confidence in sustaining in education, employment and training
- Care leavers self-reporting positive change in the support and awareness within EET settings
- EET providers self-reporting greater confidence and skills in supporting care leavers access
- Reduction in Care leavers accessing out of work benefits

36. We would also expect to see some other ancillary outcomes at smaller scaler, these would include:

- Improvements in mental health and wellbeing – with some reductions in the need for mental health interventions for care leavers
- Reductions in incidents of crime involving care leavers
- Reductions in homelessness and risk of eviction for care leavers
- Reductions in care leavers requiring substance misuse interventions

Departmental ask

37. The table below outlines the minimum figures which have been agreed for each department to commit to supporting the employability pathway over the next financial year. This is based on overall breadth of departments, but we wholly anticipate through proper promotion and the cross council support to exceed these numbers:

Department	Estimated number of staff	Number of Champions (1 per division)	Number of skills workshops, shadowing and career conversations opportunities registered	Number of work experience opportunities available
Children's and Adult's Services	1396	3	10	5
Environment, Sustainability and Leisure	1949	5	20	10
Governance and Assurance	355	5	4	2
Housing	796	4	8	4
Integrated Commissioning	50	1	1	1
Resources	759	6	8	4
Strategy and Communities	72	2	1	1
Total		31	52	27

38. Modelled on the Impact Graduate Scheme placement requests, colleagues across the council are being invited and encouraged to submit opportunities for sessions and experiences. These are being centrally quality assured between the leaving care services and HR/OD. Where appropriate the relevant staff will now be supported through the training module to support young people.
39. Service teams will also work in a targeted way with key areas of the council that have been identified as those that our young people want to gain experience in, such as digital and communications.
40. Once staff training is complete a register of approved opportunities will be kept, updated and routinely shared with leaving care support workers (Personal Advisors and Social Workers) and made openly available to our young people.
41. Grouped by key themes and areas of interest this will support our young people and those who plan for them to proactively identify opportunities that fit with their interests and aspirations.

42. It is important to recognise that this is only the beginning of a journey and not all opportunities that we are able to create will necessarily be right for the changing cohorts of our care experienced young people, but what is important is that the council works to create as broad and engaging a range of opportunities as possible.

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	Care Leavers Pilot Activity Slides

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Helen Woolgar – Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting		
Report Author	Michael Crowe – Assistant Director for Transformation & Operations		
Version	Final		
Dated	4 July 2025		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance		No	No
Strategic Director, Resources		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			7 July 2025

Care experienced young people employability activities

Summer-Winter 2024

Careers & Wellbeing Event



Berkeley Homes – exploring careers in the construction industry



Southwark Contact Centre – Interactive session



Southwark Housing Needs – Interactive session



Interactive managers event with Southwark managers



Growing talent event – visiting to PwC



Civil Service Internship Session



Health and social care careers event - Agincare



Care leavers now employed by Southwark



Thank You!!

You are making a positive difference to our lives.

Meeting Name:	Corporate Parenting Committee
Date:	16 July 2025
Report title:	Draft Annual Health report for Children Looked After
Ward(s) or groups affected:	Children in Care and Care Leavers, London Borough of Southwark
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness	Not Applicable
From:	Dr Stacy John-Legere, Designated Doctor for Children Looked After and Care Leavers (CLA) Southwark. Joy Edwards, Designated Nurse for Children Looked After (CLA) Southwark. Dr Jenny Taylor, Virtual Mental Health Lead for Looked After Children.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Corporate Parenting Committee note the report contents in relation to the delivery of health services for Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers who are in the care of London Borough of Southwark.
2. That the Corporate Parenting Committee feedback any comments on the Southwark Children Looked After Health report for consideration by the Children Looked After Health leads across the health economy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The following report is an annual overview of the provision of health services across the health economy for Children Looked After and Care Leavers including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).
4. The purpose of the report is to inform and to advise the Corporate Parenting Committee of the annual evaluation of health services by the Senior Health Leads for Children Looked After (and Young People). The report outlines the effectiveness of health care planning and describes the progression of services to fulfill relevant performance indicators including statutory timescales within the current commissioned services.
5. The report aims to advise the Corporate Parenting Committee of initiatives, considerations and challenges within health with the aim of improving and developing current and future service delivery.

6. This report has been collated with the Virtual Mental Health Lead for CLA in Southwark and contributions from health services, including Medical Advisor for Adoption.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. Health services for Children Looked After continue to provide services in line with current commissioning arrangements.
8. This report highlights the Children Looked After Health service delivery to children and young people in care to London Borough of Southwark during the reporting period of April 2024-March 2025.
9. The key areas of progression within health and recognizing the plans for the year ahead.

Policy framework implications

10. The Children Looked After report reflects both national and local policies that aim to improve the health and well-being of Southwark Children Looked After and to support those that care for them.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community Impact Statement

11. Improving health outcomes for CLA and Young People remains a priority. The report aims to reflect the progression of work, key achievements and future plans to continue to highlight and improve the health needs and outcomes of the CLA population across the health economy.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

12. The report outlines the delivery of health services to all Children and young people in care to Southwark Local Authority.
13. Health services are committed to delivering health services to everyone and consider individual need and accessibility with all areas of health service provision.

Health impact statement

14. Promoting the health needs of Looked After Children and Young People continues to be highlighted across the health economy.

Climate change implications

15. There are no overt implications to climate change.

Resource implications

16. At the time of reporting there are no resource implications.

Other officers

17. The report has been shared with the Senior Leads both within Southwark ICB and Provider Services.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Safeguarding Children's Annual Report	Southwark ICB	Julie.lane@selondoncis.nhs.uk
Safeguarding Adult's Annual Report		
Southwark Annual Looked After Children and Care Leavers Health report 2023/2024		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Annual Health Report

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Darren Summers Strategic Director Integrated Health and Care/Southwark Place Executive Lead	
Report Author	Dr Stacy John-Legere, Designated Doctor for Children Looked After and Care Leavers (CLA) Southwark. Joy Edwards, Designated Nurse for Children Looked After (CLA) Southwark. Dr Jenny Taylor, Virtual Mental Health Lead for Looked After Children.	
Version	Final	
Dated	4 July 2025	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Resources	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		4 July 2025

Southwark Corporate Parenting Annual Health Report :

Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers

July 2025

Contributing Authors:

- Dr Stacy John-Legere Designated Doctor Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers. (Southwark Integrated Care Board).
- Joy Edwards Designated Nurse Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers. (Southwark Integrated Care Board)
- Dr Rachel Massey (Named Doctor Looked After Children and Young People GSTT)
- Sarah O'Connor (Named Nurse Looked After Children and Young People GSTT).
- Dr Jenny Taylor (Virtual Mental Health Lead, Southwark)
- Dr Luca Molinari (Medical Advisor Adoption, Adopt South London)

INTRODUCTION:

Highlighting the current picture of commissioned specialist health arrangements for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The presentation not only reflects the statutory requirements but aims to show additional priorities within health, thus aiming to achieve optimum positive health outcomes for our children and young people. By listening to the voice of children and young people, this presentation will reflect the emerging health needs that are being presented and that they are experiencing.

Following the full annual report July 2024, the report aims to assure Corporate Parenting Board that positive health outcomes for Children in Care to Southwark Local Authority remain a top priority. The report is a shared update from the Designated Professionals, Specialist LAC Health Providers, Mental Health provision and Adoption and Fostering and includes the following:

- Most recent demographic profile and statutory reporting to Department for Education (DFE) of Southwark's Looked After Children and access to health services.
- Outlines five areas of strategic focus 2025/2026. (Neurodiversity/Gender Identity/SEND/Southwark Children's Homes/improving mental health access and outcomes. The focus on child safeguarding continues.
- Identifies the progress, challenges and risk mitigations across the distinct health services for Looked After Children and Young People.
- Includes an Adoption update from the Medical Advisor.

Review of aims and ambitions set for 2024/2025

Ambition	Update 2024/2025
To develop and build upon the influence of the voice of the child; Including the value and meaning of their health summary as they transition to adulthood.	Work continues to engage with young people, via working with Southwark representatives through Speaker Box/Leaving Care Group. Further work will be progressed in the year ahead.
Locally support and review guidance and support for Children Looked After who are seeking information in relation to gender identity and development advice	Professional partnership viewed all known individual cases, to ensure that services were in place to support. Awaiting audit outcome of any identified challenges. Strategic Planning to establish a ‘wrap around’ care pathway to be progressed. Our embedded clinicians have all been trained in the NHSE guidance on working with children with gender-related questions or distress, and have rolled out the training to the looked after children’s social work and fostering teams

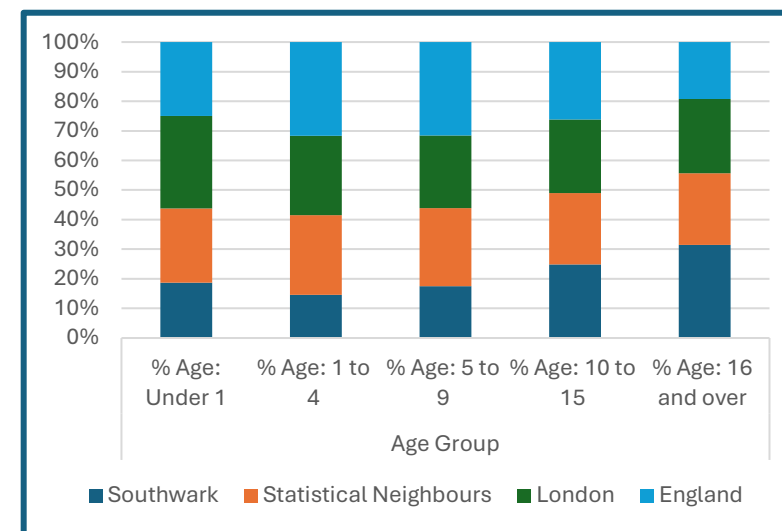
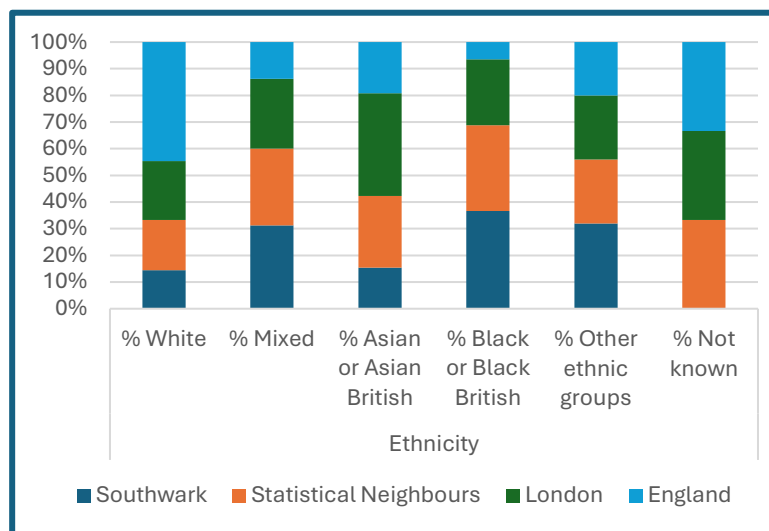
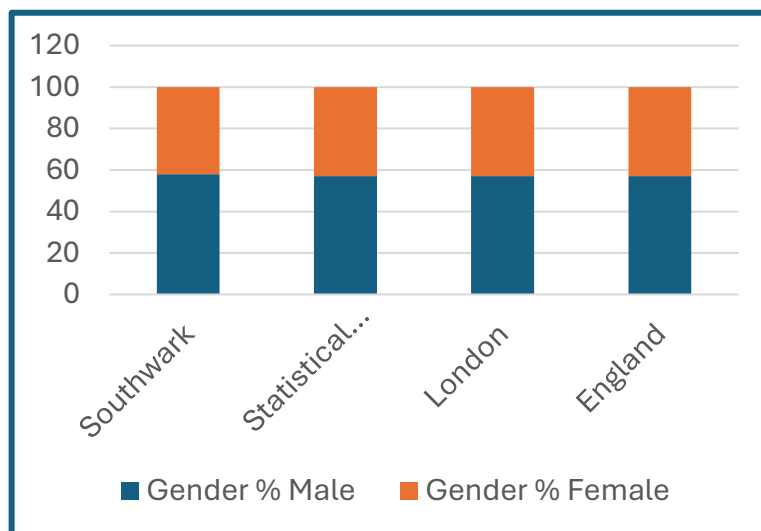
Outcomes of aim and ambitions 2024-2025 continued:

Ambition	Update 2024/2025
Support the planned opening of a residential unit	Multi-professional health training has been delivered to staff. Planned health review on admission and subsequent 12 weekly reviews by Named Nurse once children are placed. Quarterly meetings with Manager and Designated Nurse. In partnership with Pharmacy undertake a medication audit within the next financial year. Further support to be offered when second unit is opened. There is a designated senior mental health clinician in place for our residential unit who has supported the development of policies and delivery of training
Continue to develop and progress learning across the partnership. In addition, aiming to support the partnership with any identified learning needs that are specific to Children Looked After.	Quarterly Looked After Children Health Forums continue alongside the Safeguarding Children Health Forum. Health are represented at Complex Case Panel. Partnership Learning Opportunities continue. Serious Case review outcomes and learning events are shared.

Outcomes of aim and ambitions 2024-2025 continued:

Ambition	Update 2024/2025
Consider a distinct pathway to support young people who are approaching Leaving Care to have a greater understanding of their health summary and increased confidence in maintaining and accessing relevant health services needed.	Work continues with engaging young people in how this can be promoted. Speaker Box have been approached to support health in promoting the importance of the health summary. Further consideration to be given in developing a guide for Young People and Personal Assistants.
Data regarding CLA that are identified within GP patient recording systems as a diagnosis of ASD/LD	The Named GP reviewed data collection across Southwark GP practices. Initial data indicates that there is a variation amongst practices. A detailed review will be considered for 2025/2026.

Cohort of Looked After Children



- 79% of Southwark looked after children are placed out of borough; 19% are placed >20 miles from home
- Children in care of LB Southwark demonstrate a similar gender profile to London and England with slightly more males in care
- There are proportionally more children in care of mixed and black/black British ethnicity in care
- Southwark has on average 10% more young people aged 16 and over in care compared to London and statistical neighbours; and almost 20% more than the average for England
- Understanding our cohort contributes to effective planning and commissioning of health services for children and young people in care of LB Southwark

Trend of statutory returns

	31 st March	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (Draft)
	CLA at 31 st March	459	449	457	417	383	387
	CLA looked after for 12 months continuously as of March 31 st	307	337	317	346	276	263
Key performance Indicators	Health Assessments up to date	98%	97%	94.6%	98%	97%	98.2%
	Immunisations up to date	91%	86%	82.3%	65%	69.2%	80%
	Dental Assessments up to date	82%	30%	57.4%	76%	84%	Pend
	Developmental assessments up to date (under 5's)	100%	72%	100%	79%	*	100%
	Substance abuse problem	5%	3%	5.4%	8%	13%	15.3%
	SDQ % completed	86%	79.9%	79.1%	63%	87%	82.4%
	SDQ average score	14.1	13.9	13.2	13.5	14.3	Pend

- Completion of immunisation schedules remains an area of focus
- Children in care can access immunisations from a variety of places; with some challenges regarding co-ordination, opportunity and consent.
- Access to a dentist and completion of Health Assessments show improvement.
- Southwark performance is in line with statistical neighbours

Strategic Focus 2025-2026

- **Neurodiversity**

The Designated professionals work with Commissioners to ensure that looked after children are considered as a high priority within health service delivery, including waiting times for diagnosis and potential to spot purchase an assessment for a child living out of borough.

The Designated Dr and Virtual Mental Health Lead have pioneered a joint neurodevelopmental assessment clinic based at Sunshine House prioritising children in care and those supported by a CP Plan.

- **SEND**

Cohort (Students 230)		
	Number	%
ECHP	80	35%
SEN Support	16	7%
Total	96	42%

Cohort 12 month + as at May 25 (161)		
	Number	%
ECHP	72	45%
SEN Support	16	10%
Total	88	55%

- Work has been progressing across the partnership to ensure that looked after children are highlighted within the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) strategic groups/delivery including those on the Dynamic Support register (DSR)

Strategic Focus 2025-2026

- **Gender Identity**

- Specialist Gender transitioning services, has, understandably a complex and lengthy waiting list for referral and treatment. Over the past twelve months there has been significant changes in how these services are to be delivered, including the cessation of puberty blockers for under 18 years.
- In line with current NHSE guidance, the Designated Professionals in partnership with specialist services, plan to develop and progress an individual ‘wrap around’ care pathway for Looked After young people who are requesting support to explore gender transitioning services, whilst on a referral waiting list.

- **Southwark Children’s Homes**

- Work is progressing on delivery of 2 children’s homes in Southwark. The designated professionals have linked in to support policy development and staff training.
- Local links established with GP practice, dentist, pharmacy provision and the CLA health team.

Strategic Focus 2025-2026

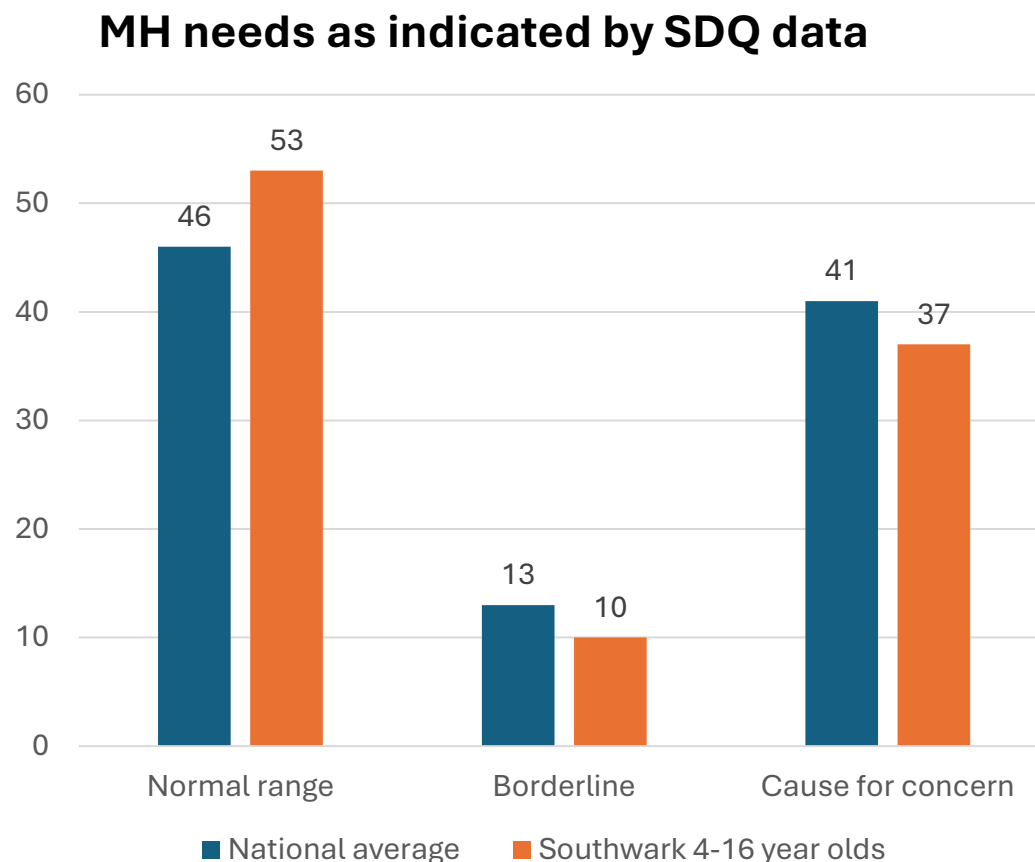
- **Improving mental health access and outcomes**

- Joint Local Authority & GSTT ASD clinic for looked after children now runs fortnightly, providing expedited access to assessments and a holistic trauma-informed approach to ASD diagnosis
- Dedicated senior mental health clinician for our children in residential care
- Dedicated mental health clinician for our 18+ careleavers
- Continuation agreed for our Lifelong Links team with embedded mental health clinician

- **Safeguarding and Child protection**

- Remains an area of focus. Specific consideration to dissemination and implementation of learning from partnership reviews. Additional vulnerabilities of children and young people subject to DOLS noted

Monitoring our children and young people's mental health



- In line with national requirements we currently monitor our children's mental health with the SDQ – we had a 82.4% completion rate in 24-5 (compared with 77% UK average)
- More of our children appear to be scoring in the normal range than the UK average (53% compared to 46%)

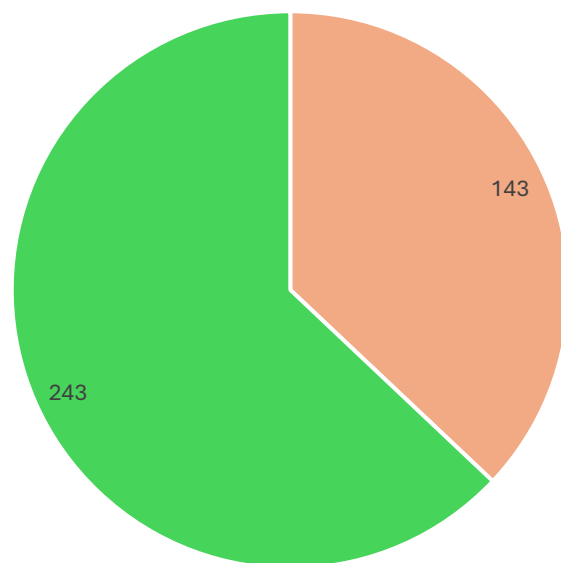
Mental Health Provision

Southwark's looked after children continue to benefit from access to an array of mental health provision:

- **All our looked after children and our careleavers**
 - Embedded clinicians employed by the local authority advise SWs/PAs and provide direct support as needed
- **Children up to the age of 18**
 - our specialist NHS CAMHS provision (Carelink)
 - our Open Access CAMHS provision (The Nest)
- **18-25 year olds**
 - NHS AMHS provision
 - our Open Access CAMHS provision (The Nest)
- **Children/young people out of borough**
 - Carelink if within the SLAM boroughs
 - Local CAMH/AMH services out-of-borough
 - Private providers

Estimated 90% of under 18s whose mental health was a 'cause for concern' received mental health treatment in 2024-5

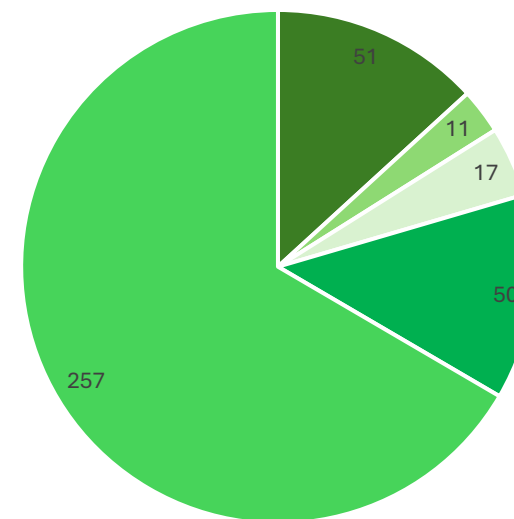
Estimated number of under 18 year old looked after children in need of mental health services (extrapolated from SDQ scores)



■ Cause for concern

■ Normal/borderline range

Number of children recorded as receiving mental health services in 2024-5 by service



■ Carelink

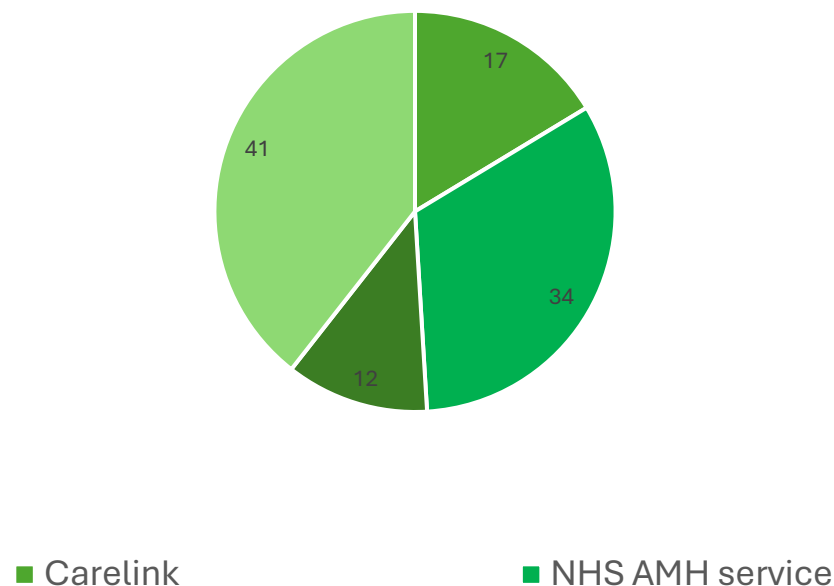
■ OOB NHS CAMHS

■ Private provider

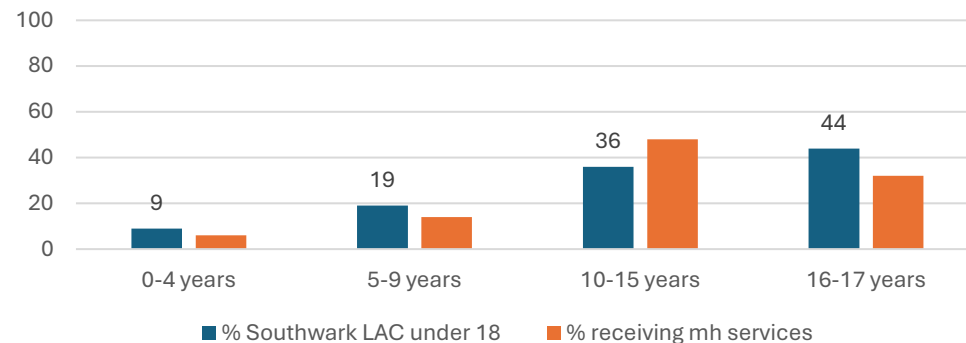
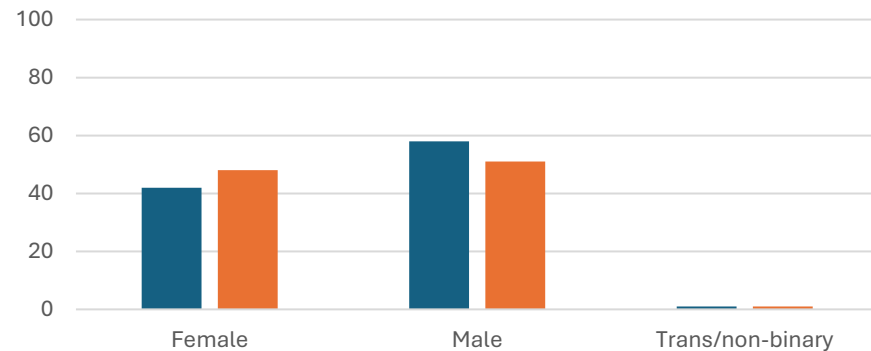
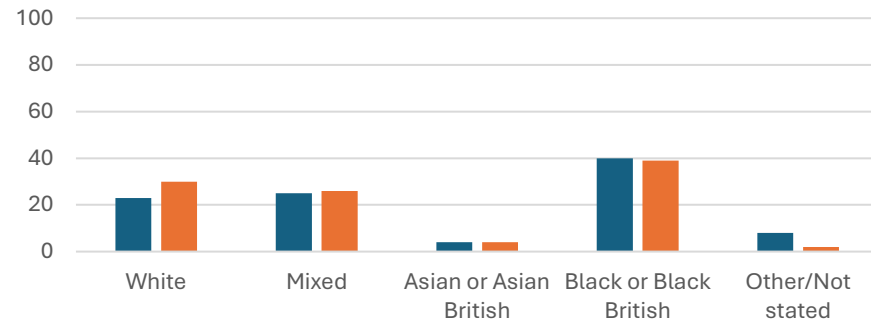
■ Embedded mental health team

104 (21%) of our 457 over 18s are known to have received mental health services in 2024/25

Number of over 18 year old Careleavers recorded as receiving mental health services by service in 2024-5



Equity of access to mental health services for our under 18s

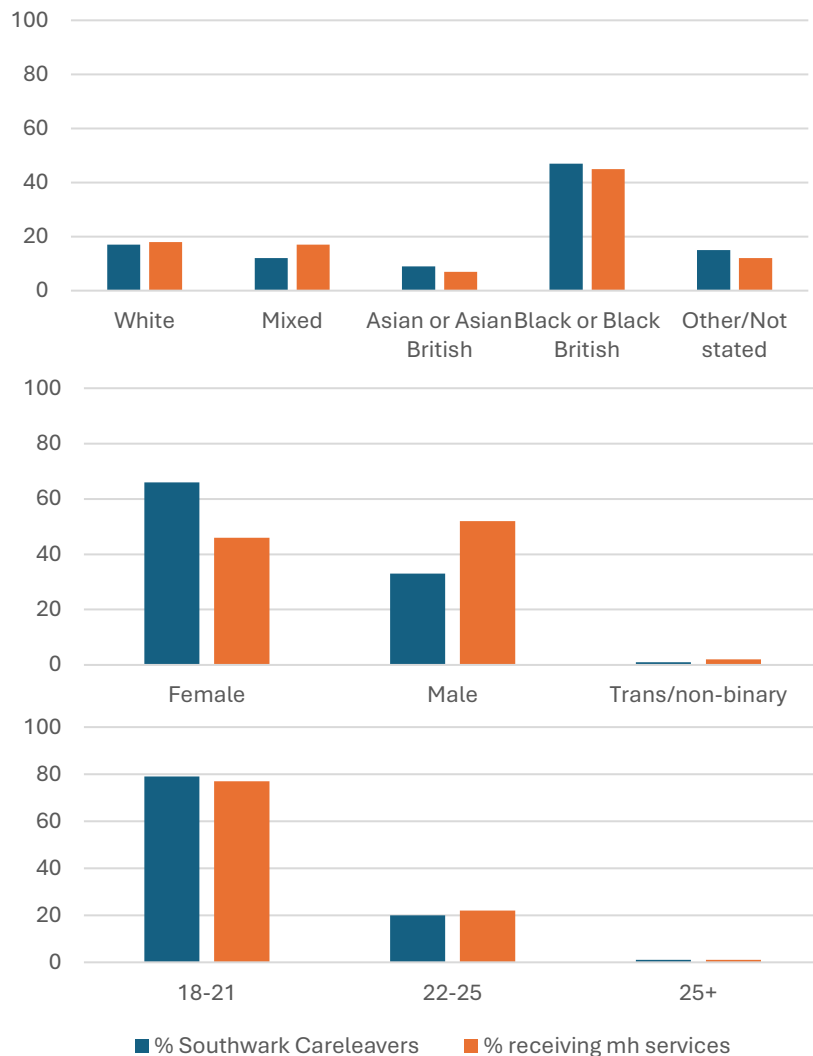


Our access by ethnicity suggests we are not reaching children whose ethnicity is described as ‘Other/Not stated’ – this is a small but obviously heterogenous group that we will look into to try to make sense of this pattern.

Our data also suggests we see slightly more females than males, but this is in keeping with the higher prevalence of ‘cause for concern’ in under 16 year old girls as compared with boys.

We also need to look at how to make our services more accessible to our over 16 year olds, who typically access services less than would be expected.

Equity of access to mental health services for our careleavers



In terms of equity of access by age and ethnicity, this seems proportionate.

Our data does suggest that less of our female careleavers are accessing MH services than our male careleavers, although it is known that mh difficulties are more prevalent in older male than female careleavers, nonetheless this is an issue we will look into further.

Summary of Annual Data and Key Performance

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Initial health assessment for children looked after 20+ days	61	117	117
New accomodations of looked after children 20+ days	141	155	149
% IHAs on time (or not yet due)	43%	75%	79%

Initial health assessments (IHA)

IHA Performance Summary				
Total	IHA Breakdown	Referral received within 5 working days	Appointment within 20 days of referral	Appointment within 20 days of BLA
187	168 Southwark 19 OOB referrals	52 (31%)	159/161 (99%)	128/161 (80%)

Summary of Annual Data and Key Performance

Review health assessments (RHA)

RHA Performance Summary		
Total	RHA Breakdown	Health Assessments up to date
329	Nurses 211 Paediatrician 124 Placed in Borough 36 OOB 28	98.2%

329 RHAs completed for Southwark's looked after children

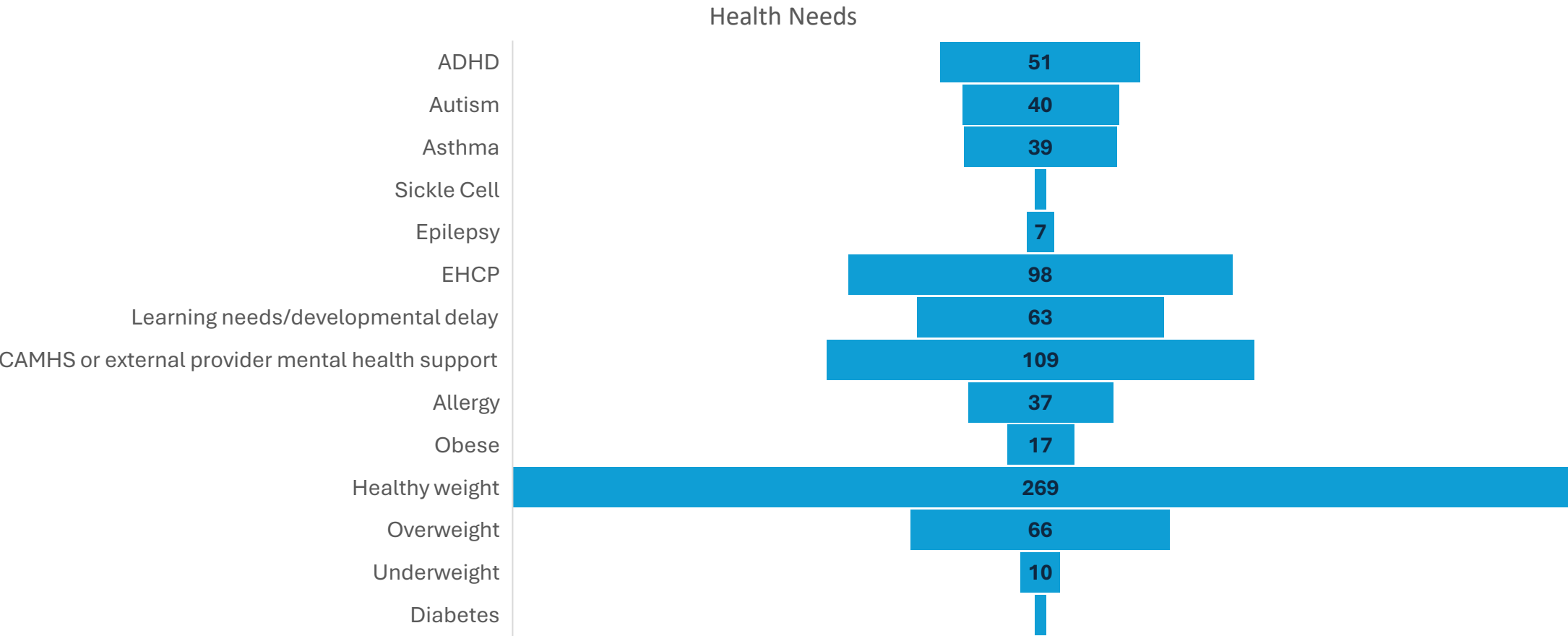
Return of Part C:

48% of reports were returned within 10 working days of appointment and 71% of reports were returned within 20 working days. This is an area of focus for 25/26.

Care Leavers Health Summaries:

99 Young people (32 IHA and 67 RHA) required a CLHS and 77 (78%) were completed by the end of the year – Considerable improvement from 2023/24 and continues as a focus for 25/26.

Identified Health Needs of Southwark CLA Population



Quality Improvement

Name of project	Findings and recommendations
Engagement work with CYP – care leavers and Speaker box cohort	Engagement work with CYP – care leavers and Speaker box cohort The aim of this piece of work was to examine barriers to YP attending RHAs • Initial work shop was held in October 2023 with care leavers / 17 plus years. • Small group • YP felt DNA's were due to them feeling healthy and not feeling a health appointment was needed. • Key message from the group was that they would like to get GP appointments quicker • Information sessions were offered and held regarding the role of LAC health team. • Plan for similar sessions in 2025 and similar focus group exercise to take place with 13-17yrs • For the focus group to take place engagement with Speaker Box is required • Recommendations will follow

Quality Improvement

Name of Project	Findings and Recommendations
Audit of quality of health assessments for children	<u>Background</u> Timely high-quality assessments are vital to monitor the health, emotional, behavioural and developmental needs of the CLA population. Guy's and St Thomas's NHS Trust introduced a new patient data system called Epic. This new system has changed the way health appointments are made and how health assessments are documented. This audit was to assess the quality of current health assessments. <u>Design</u> The audit tool in the Appendix H of Payment by Result Guidance (DH 2013-14) was used to assess quality. The case mix was selected randomly to include 20 Review Health Assessments, 10 completed by doctors and 10 by the CLA nursing team. The audit tool was distributed to members of the medical and nursing teams The auditors were asked to identify whether the chosen criteria were present/reported to have been discussed in the Part C report of the health assessment. In the absence of this we ticked no. <u>Analysis</u> The above data shows strengths with GP registration, height and weight documentation, identification of health needs, assessing developmental or learning needs, seeking the views of the child or young person and carer and discussing health and lifestyle. FULL RESULTS TO FOLLOW IN TIME FOR SUBMISSION <u>Recommendations:</u> 1. The audit results will be discussed at the CLA peer review. 2. We will present to the health oversight meeting. 3. The named doctor will raise with the EPIC build team that there needs to be modifications to report to allow consent to appointment to be documented. The audit cycle will be repeated in 12-24 months.

Adoption

- The health services supporting adoption are an integral part of the LAC Health service and the community paediatric service.
- “The agency medical advisors input when discussing children’s health and development as well as any issues regarding prospective adopters’ health continues to prove invaluable. They not only bring their medical knowledge and expertise, but having read the paperwork for each case, ask questions and provide clear recommendations.” (from Panel Chair’s Report 2025).

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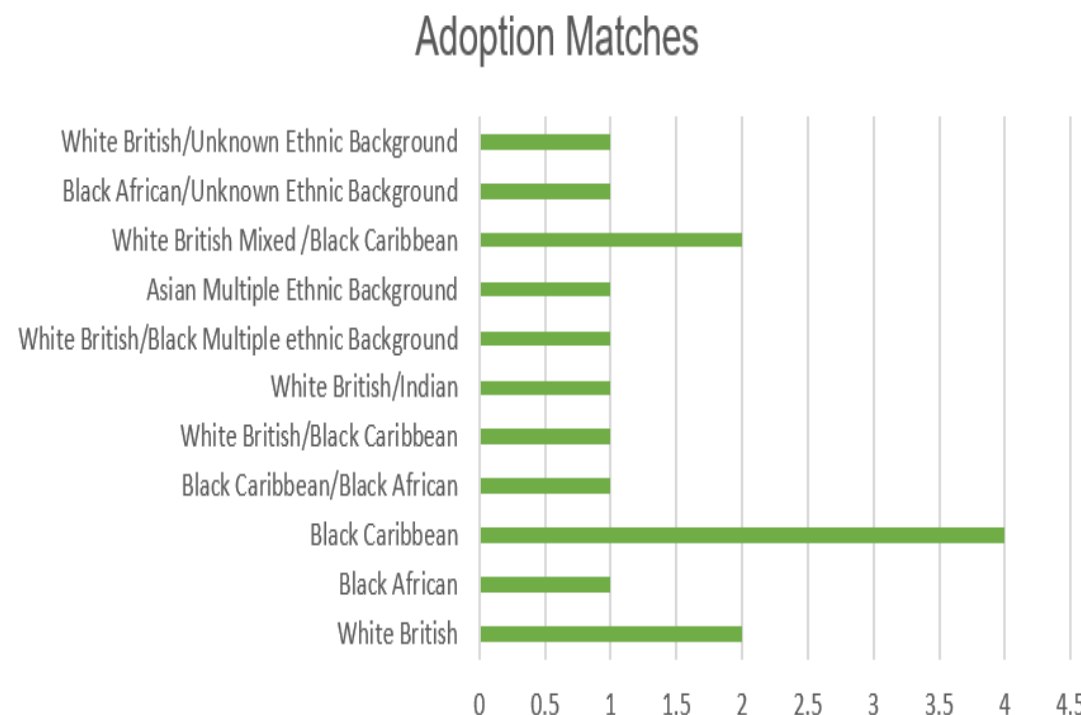
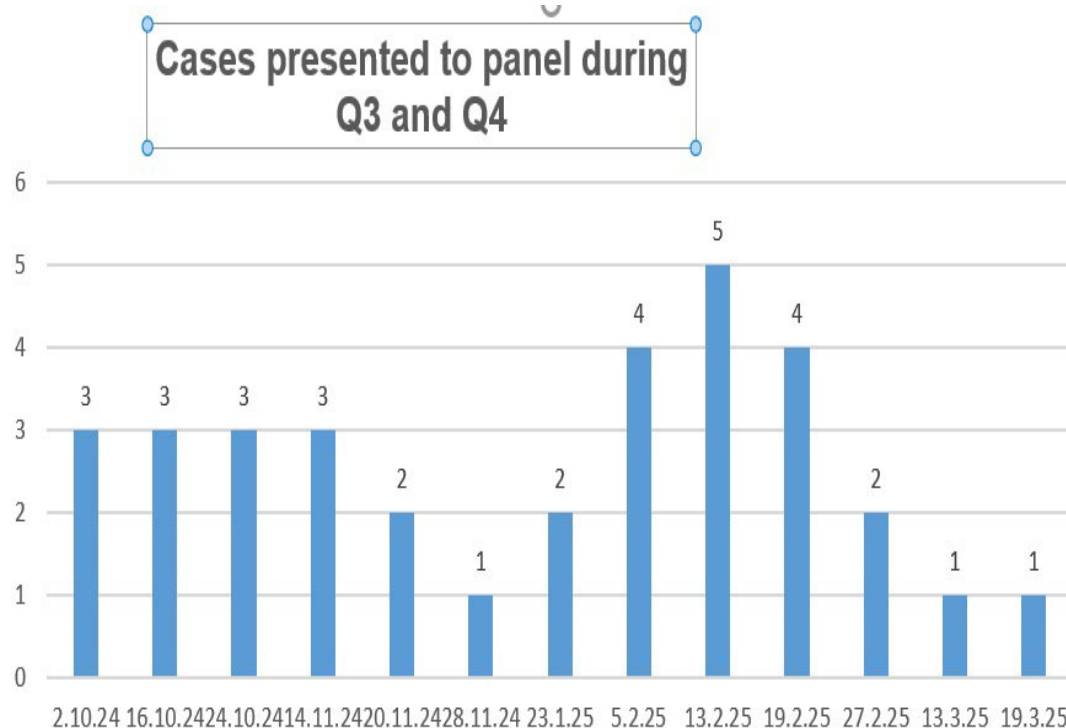
ADOPTION ACTIVITY

- Presenting a full and thorough assessment of the child’s health and developmental needs
- Offering medical perspective on the health of prospective adopters regarding parenting – usually in the form of written reports made available to Panel
- Meeting with prospective adopters regarding ongoing health needs and any implications to future health of the child’s previous life experiences/identified health conditions
- Teaching and training offered to prospective adopters and social workers
- Attending panel

Panel Chairs' Report for period 1st October 2024 – 31st March 2025

Overall panel activity

A total of 34 cases were heard during this period involving 16 approvals, 9 of which included those also considered suitable to be early permanence carers and 2 best-interest consented adoption cases. 16 matches were presented to panel, all of which were single children



Action Plan 2025-2026

Action	Responsible Officer	Expected outcome	Where reviewed
Completion and return of IHAs within statutory timescale	Designated and Named Dr for Looked after Children	Completed IHAs returned in time for first LAC review	Health and Social care Forum
Audit of access to health services for children placed in residential care	Designated Dr and Nurse for Looked after Children	Oversight of access and promotion of better access to local health services	Corporate parenting
Relative increase in substance misuse noted – review with commissioned provider : CGL	Named Dr and Nurse for Looked after Children	Improved uptake of offered intervention. Outcome monitoring – link to borough wide offer	Health and Social Care Forum
Learning from partnership Safeguarding reviews	Named and Designated professionals for Looked after Children	Improved understanding of safeguarding and child protection concerns for vulnerable looked after children	Corporate parenting Southwark Safeguarding Partnership
Accessibility of mental health services to looked after children and careleavers 16plus	Virtual Mental Health Lead	Improved access to services in line with need	Corporate parenting

CLA Health Service feedback 2024-2025

My daughter and I felt
listen[ed] to. Doctor
was very
approachable, kind,
caring.

The nurse
communicated well
with the young
person, had a good
rapport. Persuaded
to have injections
which was very good

Thank you I
didn't want to
come but I was
happy to meet
you

The professionals
spoke to my child and
kept her included
instead of talking
about her.

On time, Nurse I
knew before
Helpful sorting
out health with
Gp injections

We have seen the same
nurse for several years
who we have a good
relationship with

They will
listen to
your views
and show
concerns.

Friendly, coped
well with my
child's behaviour,
clear diagnosis.

Initial Feedback from the CP/CLA ARD clinic

They made me feel welcome, it felt comfortable, as long as my child is comfortable that's what mattered and he seemed happy

Parent of 6 year old

The feedback was different to what I expected but it did make sense and at the end I felt happy with it

What was good about going to the autism assessment clinic?

Parent of 17 year old

They treated us with respect, and they seemed to listen to us and the concerns we had

This has been very important for me. There are many behaviours we now understand. Autistic kids behave differently, we did not understand them as well before the assessment

Parent of 15 year old

What was not so good about the assessment clinic?

Nothing – it was all good actually.. It didn't feel that long of a wait

Nothing, they gave a good service

We've had the diagnosis but have not had any support yet, I really need support

Celebrations



- Voice of child and Young People has changed the way in which health assessments are appointed and offered flexibility in where they take place.
- Their views and opinions continue to influence health services for Children and Young People.
- Free prescription certificates continue for Care Leavers who may have to pay.
- Commissioning of Catch 22 to improve access to work within health services continue.
- Distinct improvement evidenced within reaching statutory requirements for health assessments.
- A joint neurodevelopmental assessment clinic based at Sunshine House is prioritising children in care and those supported by a CP Plan.

Conclusion and Summary

Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers continue to require distinct health care support from relevant health professional services, thus ensuring that any identified health needs are met in a timely manner.

Southwark Health Professionals continue to work in partnership with all relevant partners to achieve best possible health outcomes for our children.

Work progresses in line with statutory requirements, in addition focussing on distinct areas of need that are influenced by national and local drivers.

The overall picture shows that the figures of our LAC cohort of children has been stable both locally and nationally but the needs of children entering care are becoming more complex.

Areas of progress within strategic and provider delivery indicate positive progress across all domains and a proactive approach is embedded to identify and respond areas of challenge.

NB: Consideration must be given to the distinct changes within the NHS and the financial challenges across both the ICB and Provider services. As of March 2025, whilst remaining a statutory function, all ICB's across England have been tasked to review Safeguarding arrangements including Looked After Children within the ICB as part of the NHS England ICB cost saving measures. Final details will not be available until December 2025, at time of reporting the arrangements remain unchanged.

Meeting Name:	Corporate Parenting Committee
Date:	16 July 2025
Report title:	Corporate Parenting Committee – Work Plan 2025-26
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/a

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the corporate parenting committee agree the approach and work plan as set out in the report.
2. That the committee review and identify any further items for consideration in the work plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Role and function of the corporate parenting committee

3. The constitution for the municipal year 2025-2026 records the corporate parenting committee's role and functions as follows:
 - a. To secure real and sustained improvements in the life chances of looked after children, and to work within an annual programme to that end.
 - b. To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy and work plan.
 - c. 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.
 - d. To develop and co-ordinate a life chances strategy and work plan to improve the life chances of Southwark looked after children.
 - e. 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.
 - f. 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.

- g. To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes for looked after children.
- h. 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.
- i. To report to the council's cabinet on an annual basis.
- j. To make recommendations to the relevant cabinet decision maker where responsibility for that particular function rests with the cabinet.
- k. To report to the scrutiny sub-committee with responsibility for children's services after each meeting.
- l. To appoint non-voting co-opted members.

National and local context for care leavers

- 4. There is national momentum towards improving outcomes for care leavers. The government introduced 'Keep on Caring' strategy in 2016, increased council statutory duties to care leavers in the Children and Social Work Act in 2017, appointed a national Adviser for Care Leavers who produced a report in 2018, alongside the national launch of the Care Covenant. The council has responded to the various recommendations, for example by prioritising education, employment and training outcomes for care leavers in the Council Plan and developing the care leaver local offer as well as increasing service capacity for the extended personal adviser duties to 25.
- 5. Although much has been done to improve services and outcomes for care leavers, the council has an ambition to go above and beyond, by creating the best Leaving Care Service possible, by co-designing this with young people, learning from other organisations and trialling new ideas to test what works best.
- 6. In 2017 the council and Catch22 received funding from the DfE Social Care Innovation Programme to work in partnership to design and test new ways of working to support care leavers. The Care Leavers Partnership (CLP) works to improve outcomes for young people in Southwark by working across boundaries, reshaping the service delivery model, unlocking capacity in the community, and co-designing solutions. There are a number of strands that the CLP is working on to achieve our goals.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 7. The corporate parenting committee review and update the work plan each

meeting. Following the beginning of the municipal year 2019-20, and reflecting on the momentum towards improving outcomes for care leavers, the opportunity has been taken to review how the committee works and present proposals to refresh this in relation to: non-voting co-opted members; committee approach; and work plan and suggested agenda items.

Corporate Parenting Committee work plan – 2025-26

22 October 2025

- Speakerbox verbal update and report back on actions
- Exclusions report back
- Update on mental health support and CAMHS
- Foster annual report (including focus on recruitment)
- Southwark homes for Southwark children update
- Update on corporate parenting strategy 2025-30.

25 February 2026

- Speakerbox verbal update / annual report
- Annual independent reviewing officer report
- Adoption annual report
- Annual virtual head teacher's report
- Southwark homes for Southwark children update.

22 April 2026

- Speakerbox verbal update
- Southwark homes for Southwark children update
- Update on local offer on Kinship care.

To be allocated

- Exploitation, risk and harm and measures to break the cycle.

SpeakerBox

8. SpeakerBox, established in 2005, ensures that the views of looked after children and care leavers are used to influence decision making that affects their care and support particularly service planning and design. Representing children and young people between 8 and 24 years the group also provides a peer-to-peer networking support system for looked after children. The programme is operated independently and run by the young people themselves, although it is supported by the council's children services and councillors.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

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

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact and health impact statement

6. Relevant issues will be addressed in the reports submitted to the corporate parenting committee.

Climate change implications

7. The work plan process for the committee has no direct implications.

Resource implications

8. 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	Paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk
Web link: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=129&Year=0		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children and Families		
Report Author	Beverley Olamijulo/ Paula Thornton, Constitutional Team		
Version	Final		
Dated	7 July 2025		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance		No	No
Strategic Director of Resources		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			7 July 2025

CORPORATE PARENTING DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025-26**

NOTE: Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to
Paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk; Beverley.olamijulo@southwark.gov.uk

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Councillor Natasha Ennin	1	Total:	9
Councillor Mohammed Deen	1		
Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall	1	Dated: 8 July 2025	
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