

Corporate Parenting Panel

AGENDA

DATE: Tuesday 27 March 2018

TIME: 7.00 pm

VENUE: Committee Room 5, Harrow Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow HA1 2XY

MEMBERSHIP (Quorum 3)

Chair: Councillor Aneka Shah-Levy

Councillors:

Simon Brown	Janet Mote (VC)
Mrs Christine Robson	Lynda Seymour
Anne Whitehead	

Non-Voting Advisory Member:

Valerie Griffin

Reserve Members:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Sue Anderson | 1. Christine Bednell |
| 2. Ms Pamela Fitzpatrick | 2. Ameet Jogia |
| 3. Margaret Davine | |
| 4. Kairul Kareema Marikar | |

Contact: Daksha Ghelani, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 020 8424 1881 E-mail: daksha.ghelani@harrow.gov.uk

Useful Information

Meeting details:

This meeting is open to the press and public.

Directions to the Civic Centre can be found at:
<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/site/scripts/location.php>.

Filming / recording of meetings

The Council will audio record Public and Councillor Questions. The audio recording will be placed on the Council's website.

Please note that proceedings at this meeting may be photographed, recorded or filmed. If you choose to attend, you will be deemed to have consented to being photographed, recorded and/or filmed.

When present in the meeting room, silent mode should be enabled for all mobile devices.

Meeting access / special requirements.

The Civic Centre is accessible to people with special needs. There are accessible toilets and lifts to meeting rooms. If you have special requirements, please contact the officer listed on the front page of this agenda.

An induction loop system for people with hearing difficulties is available. Please ask at the Security Desk on the Middlesex Floor.

Agenda publication date: Monday 19 March 2018

AGENDA - PART I

1. ATTENDANCE BY RESERVE MEMBERS

To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.

Reserve Members may attend meetings:-

- (i) to take the place of an ordinary Member for whom they are a reserve;
- (ii) where the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting; and
- (iii) the meeting notes at the start of the meeting at the item 'Reserves' that the Reserve Member is or will be attending as a reserve;
- (iv) if a Reserve Member whose intention to attend has been noted arrives after the commencement of the meeting, then that Reserve Member can only act as a Member from the start of the next item of business on the agenda after his/her arrival.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from:

- (a) all Members of the Panel;
- (b) all other Members present.

3. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 12)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2018 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS *

To receive any public questions received in accordance with paragraph 16 of the Executive Procedure Rules.

Questions will be asked in the order in which they were received. There will be a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

[The deadline for receipt of public questions is 3.00 pm on Thursday, 22 March 2018. Questions should be sent to publicquestions@harrow.gov.uk.

No person may submit more than one question].

5. PETITIONS

To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 47 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

6. DEPUTATIONS

To receive deputations (if any) under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 48 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

7. INFORMATION REPORT - ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE (Pages 13 - 36)

Report of the Interim Corporate Director of People.

8. INFORMATION REPORT - HARROW CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER HEALTH (CLA) REPORT (Pages 37 - 40)

Report of the Head of Children's Services and Operations, CNWL NHS Foundation

9. CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IRO ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 (Pages 41 - 60)

Report of the Interim Corporate Director of People.

10. FOSTER CARER PAYMENTS (Pages 61 - 74)

Report of the Interim Corporate Director of People.

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Which cannot otherwise be dealt with.

AGENDA - PART II - Nil

*** DATA PROTECTION ACT NOTICE**

The Council will audio record item 4 (Public Questions) and will place the audio recording on the Council's website, which will be accessible to all.

[**Note:** The questions and answers will not be reproduced in the minutes.]

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES

9 JANUARY 2018

- Chair:** * Councillor Aneka Shah-Levy
- Councillors:** * Simon Brown Lynda Seymour
Janet Mote † Anne Whitehead
* Mrs Christine Robson
- Non-Voting
Advisory Member:** * Valerie Griffin

- * Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

168. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance.

169. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members.

170. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2017, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

171. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions, petitions or deputations were received at this meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMS

172. INFORMATION REPORT - Harrow Children Looked After Health (CLA) Annual Report

The Panel received a report of the Head of Children's Services and Operations, CNWL NHS Foundation, which set out the delivery of health services to Harrow's Children Looked After (CLA) during 2016/17 in line with national guidance. The report reviewed performance indicators, clinical work undertaken by the CLA health team, service improvements, including gaps or challenges identified.

Emma Hedley, Named Nurse – CLA Harrow/CNWL, introduced the report and reported initially on the key aspects of the quarterly position, as follows:

- bi-monthly monitoring meetings between the CCG and the Council continued, including the monitoring of tuberculosis (TB) and blood screening referrals. Whilst the data obtained was good, officers would continue to look at methods of improving data collection and monitoring;
- training had been delivered to ten social workers and students and weaning sessions with foster carers would continue. In response to a question from a Member, Emma Hedley clarified that information and training on weaning, including attachments, would be provided to carers and that the official advice from the Department of Health stated that babies should start to be weaned from milk alone onto solid foods at six months;
- she was proud to have attended the CLA awards ceremony at The Hive Football Stadium, a wonderful event which celebrated the achievements of CLA and their carers;
- the creative and advocacy work being undertaken in relation to health assessments, as set out in the examples in the report, indicated that multi-agency approach was paying dividends.

Emma Hedley also reported on the Annual Report on Children Looked After Health Service (Harrow) 2016/17, as follows:

- partnership working had strengthened and partners were developing procedures and processes in order to maintain high standards of care. Emma explained that due to CNWL administrative issue 93% of Review Health Assessments (RHAs) were achieved in June compared to 100% every month despite the high increase in the number of CLA. Comparatively, 93% of RHAs was higher than the England average but slightly lower than statistical neighbours;
- the data collected on the RHAs was good and that every assessment was quality assured. A dip sample had shown that all CNWL assessments were graded either excellent or good;

- immunisation data required attention but the direction of travel was positive. It would take a few years to improve the take up. The number of dental checks had increased by 4.6% to 93% and, in the last year, 100% of children under five had had up to date developmental assessments;
- in relation to emotional health, improvements had been made in the levels of CLA who had completed Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) due to a concerted effort from the social workers and CLA health team.
- medical summaries for all CLA was requested from GP's practicing in and out of the borough. Members welcomed this approach;
- tuberculosis (TB) screening process was working well but it was important to recognise that the NHS had introduced new processes. The CLA health team worked closely with the TB service at Northwick Park Hospital and had implemented a process for all UASCs to be referred for new entrant TB screening. Recently, this had been replaced with a directive from the NHSE, where for those over 16 who were eligible for IGRA screening, were referred to their GP. In response to this change the CLA health team were undertaking a project to ascertain the impact on UASC. Since the publication of the annual report, the original TB screening process that the CLA health team had introduced had been re-instated;
- the development of health passports, including a health questionnaire from non-attendees, had had a positive start. This initiative had allowed officers to obtain views about the service from CLA and Care Leavers to obtain their views about the service. It was intended to move from health passports for 16-17 year olds to each child at the point when they entered the care system. The CLA health team had undertaken a survey focusing on the health needs of CLA and had also completed its first client satisfaction audit;
- an audit of the health needs of Harrow's CLA had shown the following order of ranking: (1) immunisation, which included TB screening (2) dental health (3) substance use (4) emotional needs. Transparent partnership working and co-location had helped to reap benefits in these areas and health was now rated 'good' by Ofsted instead of 'inadequate'. In response to a question from a Member, Emma outlined the practical steps and strategies - access to mosaic, compiling lists of all CLA, communicating effectively with social workers, carers, IROs and GPs – that were applied to improve the immunisation process. She added that some 16-17 year old CLA were refusing immunisation and parents were refusing their children MMR vaccine. Moreover, additional vaccines were being recommended which had resulted in a number of anomalies. Due to the mobile nature of CLA, GPs were now requested to look at the history of CLA rather than make assumptions.

Members were pleased with the outcomes and it was acknowledged by all that the service had come a long way. Members were pleased with the transformation achieved and applauded the partners for their efforts in weaving together the various services to achieve positive outcomes for CLA. They noted that the feedback received was shared with CLA, particularly those that chose to exclude themselves from making use of the health services available with a view to encouraging their participation. Members noted that a further report on sharing of information and the methods adopted would be presented to a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Annual Report of Children Looked After Health Services (Harrow) 2016/17, including the interim health report of CLA for October and November 2017, be noted;
- (2) it be noted that a report on the sharing of information and methods adopted would be presented to a future meeting.

173. INFORMATION REPORT - Harrow Virtual School: Headteacher's End of Academic Year Report 2016/2017

The Panel received a report of the Corporate Director of People, which provided an overview of the Performance and Standards of Children Looked After (CLA) by the end of key stage, an analysis of attendance and exclusions, an overview of the work of the Virtual School and development priorities for the Virtual School for 2017-18.

The Headteacher of Harrow Virtual School introduced the report and set out the key aspects of the report. She informed Members that since April 2017, the remit of Virtual Headteachers had changed in that they now assumed new duties concerning promoting the educational achievement of previously CLA, such as the provision of advice and information to adopted children and their parents, those with special guardianship orders and school staff.

The Headteacher provided an overview of the key areas monitored by Harrow Virtual School in the academic year 2016/17, and drew attention to the various statistics provided in the report, as follows:

- year 1 phonics test – there were four children who were eligible to sit the assessment and they all met the expected standard;
- key stage 1 – of the five children in Year 2, only one pupil was able to sit the SATs papers. The cohort had had various needs, including complex ones, and close monitoring was required;
- further analysis of CLA schooled in Harrow compared to those outside was required to identify the issues in attainment and how these could

be addressed. Currently, CLA schooled in Harrow performed better than those outside the borough;

- headteachers often sought advice from the Virtual Headteacher prior to making a decision to exclude CLA. To assist, intervention and support was provided to schools to ensure that extremely vulnerable children were not unnecessarily excluded. Recent figures showed that more girls than boys had been the subject of fixed term exclusions (FTEs) and the pie chart in the report showed the types of behaviours that led to exclusions, including physical assaults. For secondary schools, the number of FTEs increased, particularly for those with Special Educational Needs (SEN);
- key stage 2 – performance in SATs of CLA children was good. The results obtained in reading, writing and mathematics of 60%, 90% and 70% respectively were considered to be good. There was no regression due to the support provided which had helped to ensure momentum and pupil engagement;
- key stage 4 – the grading structure for GCSEs had been amended and there had been a move from letters to numbers 9-1 where 9 was equivalent to A*. Level 4 was considered a pass at GCSE. Last year there had been four CLA who passed eight GCSEs. There were two CLA who passed eight GCSEs of level 4 and above. 58% of CLA passed 1 GCSE and, overall, CLA were better at getting through five GCSEs instead of eight. The challenge for social workers was to increase these figures;
- ethnicity also played a part in achievement levels and further work was required to understand and improve poor levels of attainment in order to meet the national average. A number of measures and support had been put in place, such as the use of EAL consultants (English as an Additional Language). The use of visual methods, including for carers, buddying systems and assessments had been put in place;
- further support was required key stage 3 to ensure that there was no regression in pupil progress as they entered key stage 4. The attainment levels of CLA children at key stage 2 were good but they dipped when they entered secondary school. Overall, children who had been in care for longer periods performed better at school;
- personal education plans (PEPs) - the quality of PEPs rather than the quantity needed to be improved and an action plan had been put in place to address this issue;
- education health and care plans (EHCPs) – the trajectory was that CLA were receiving their statements on time but they had gaps in education/learning difficulties. There were a number of students in HVS with identified learning difficulties who did not meet the criteria for

an EHCP. Work with SEN teams was underway to improve the situation.

The Panel was informed that comparison of data with raw data was required and that further work would be carried out. Additionally, figures on the number of care leavers attending University would be provided.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the performance of, and standards being achieved, by Harrow's CLA, in particular the improved performance of CLA at the end of Key Stage 4, be noted;
- (2) the work of the Virtual School and the strategies used to improve CLA outcomes be noted;
- (3) it be noted that comparative data would be present to the Panel, including University attendance.

Reason for Decision: To be availed of the performance of CLA pertaining to their attainment, progress and attendance, which, although improving, remained below England's averages for CLA of Statutory School Age. To note the priority for Harrow Virtual School.

174. INFORMATION REPORT - Activity and Performance

The Panel received a report of the Corporate Director of People, which set out activity for Children Looked After (CLA) and care leavers at 30 September 2017, where available, as well as provisional performance position at end of October 2017-18. Where appropriate, national and comparator data had also been included to provide context.

The Head of Business Intelligence introduced the report and referred to the earlier discussions which had alluded on the key challenges and successes regarding the activities of the CLA. He added that whilst the number of CLA had decreased following the historic high, the figure was not at its lowest level.

The Divisional Director of Children and Young People and the Head of Business Intelligence agreed that there was a long way to go to meet the challenges and that, to assist, a Children's Analysis Tool ('CHAT') had been introduced with gusto. It provided the opportunity for standardised holistic screening and assessment. The CHAT was the tool that would be used by Ofsted for data analysis in future inspections and the Divisional Director of Children and Young People had suggested it be used now as part of 'business as usual' and would feed into the performance reports on an ongoing basis.

Overall, the indicators had shown that the direction of travel was positive and Members were informed that Ofsted had commented that the Council understood the challenges it faced and was self-aware of its role as corporate

parent for CLA. Ofsted had carried out a further visit in November 2017 and the outcome had been positive. There would be further annual visits from Ofsted until the next Inspection in three years. The Inspectors had thanked the Head of Service of Corporate Parenting for solidifying the care arrangements of CLA.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Reason for Decision: To be availed of performance in the role as Corporate Parents.

175. Corporate Parenting Panel Forward Planner

The Panel received the Forward Planner, which set out the items planned for future meetings. The Divisional Director of Children and Young People reported that an information report on foster care allowances would be presented to the next meeting. He added that foster care allowances had been reviewed recently by stakeholders and different ways of remunerating foster carers would be included in the report. It was intended to implement the scheme in the 2018/19 financial year.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Planner be noted and that an additional item on foster care allowances be included in the Planner for reporting to the next meeting scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 27 March 2018.

Reason or Decision: To be availed of the programme for future meetings.

[See also Minutes 172 and 173 regarding additional reports.]

176. Urgent Business

Start Time of Corporate Parenting Panel Meetings

The Chair suggested a 7.00 pm start time for future meetings of the Panel. Members were of the view that this had previously been raised.

The clerk stated that in, accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution, she would consult the nominated Member and report back. She added that the Chair had the power to alter the time if she believed it to be appropriate for the conduct of the business of the Panel.

Officers Present:

Daksha Ghelani	Senior Democratic Services Officer [Clerk to the meeting], Harrow Council
David Harrington	Head of Business Intelligence, Harrow Council
Emma Hedley	Named Nurse for CLA, Harrow/CNWL

Paul Hewitt	Divisional Director, Children and Young People, People Directorate, Harrow Council
Zoe Sargent	Head of Children's Services and Operations, CNWL
Mellina Williamson Taylor	Headteacher, Harrow Virtual School, Harrow Council

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.34 pm, closed at 8.55 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR ANEKA SHAH-LEVY
Chair

REPORT FOR: CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Date:	27 March 2018
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – Activity and Performance
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Paul Hewitt, Interim Corporate Director of People
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Christine Robson, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools
Wards affected:	All
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No, as the Recommendation is for noting only
Enclosures:	CLA Performance Report

Section 1 –Summary and Recommendations

This is an information report which sets out activity for children looked after and care leavers at 28th February 2018 (where available) as well as provisional performance position at end of January. National and comparator data is also included where appropriate for context.

RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted

Reason for Recommendation: To keep the Panel informed of performance in their role as Corporate Parents.

Section 2 – Report

See the attachment which shows provisional outturn position at the end of January and an update of activity for children looked after (CLA) at the end of February where available.

Key Points:

- The performance summary table has been changed and we now use a tool shared by Ofsted to give us an indication of direction of travel and comparison with latest published data. The current position is for period ending January 2018.
- Numbers of CLA have decreased since the last report from 179 to 160. Harrows (2016-17) overall rate of CLA per 10,000 children (36) remained below the 2017 comparator data for national (62) and statistical neighbour (39.2) averages, and this has dropped further over quarter 3.
- Health indicators remain very positive overall. Immunisations and SDQ (emotional health) could be further improved.
- School attendance and fixed term exclusions continue to need further monitoring.
- The percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation has increased since last quarter to 86%. Currently 29 % of care leavers are not in employment education or training, which is greater than in quarter 2. All efforts are made to help young people gain skills and training through Xcite and similar projects. Published data shows Harrow to be better than statistical neighbour and England averages.
- Comparator data shows that Harrows % of CLA who had a missing incident during 2017 (14%) was higher than England's average (10%), but in line with our statistical neighbours (14%). The percentage of CLA with a missing incident and the percentage of CLA away from placement have remained stable since last quarter.
- CLA with 2+ moves is high and likely to be above SN and England averages for the year. All placement moves are carefully monitored. Long term stability has improved and is now very strong at 83%.
- The percentage of all new CLA placed more than 20 miles from home has varied throughout the year, currently at 14.3%. Slight increase in all CLA placed over 20 miles.
- CLA offending data is updated quarterly, Q3 data shows an increase of 5 young people but in line with previous quarters

Options considered

Not applicable as this is an information report.

Risk Management Implications

The Children's Services Risk Register has been updated to reflect the performance risks highlighted in this report.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? No

Legal Implications

Not applicable as this is an information report.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable as this is an information report.

Corporate Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for families

The report focuses on the qualitative and quantitative measures of service delivery to vulnerable children, young people and families. These measures help to inform & improve service planning.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Sharon Daniels

on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 15 March 2018

Ward Councillors notified:	NO, this is an information report only
EqIA carried out:	NO
EqIA cleared by:	N/A information report only

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

- Source: Local data taken from Mosaic System
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2016-to-2017>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2015-to-2016>

Contact:

Dipika Patel, Partner- Business Intelligence Unit 020 8420 9258 dipika.patel@harrow.gov.uk	David Harrington Head of Business Intelligence 0208 420 9248 David.harrington@harrow.gov.uk
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Corporate Parenting Report

February 2018

Children Looked After

Activity to end of February 2018

Key Indicators to end of January 2018 (provisional outturns)




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
PART A:	PERFORMANCE INFORMATION	3
A1)	<u>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</u>	3
Part B:		
B1)	NUMBERS OF CLA OVER TIME	5
PART C:	CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA) DETAIL	6
C1)	<u>AGE GROUPS</u>	6
C2)	<u>GENDER</u>	7
C3)	<u>ETHNICITY</u>	8
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

























Part A – CHAT Performance Indicators for children looked after at 31/01/2018

Comparing the child-level data tool to the latest national publications

The table below shows the Local Authority's latest data for each indicator as calculated in the tool, and the direction of travel since the latest published statistics (where available).

Decreasing, low is good 
 Increasing, high is good 
 No change, not RAG rated 

Lowest 25% quartile, low is good 
 Highest 25% quartile, high is good 
 Mid 50% range, not RAG-rated 

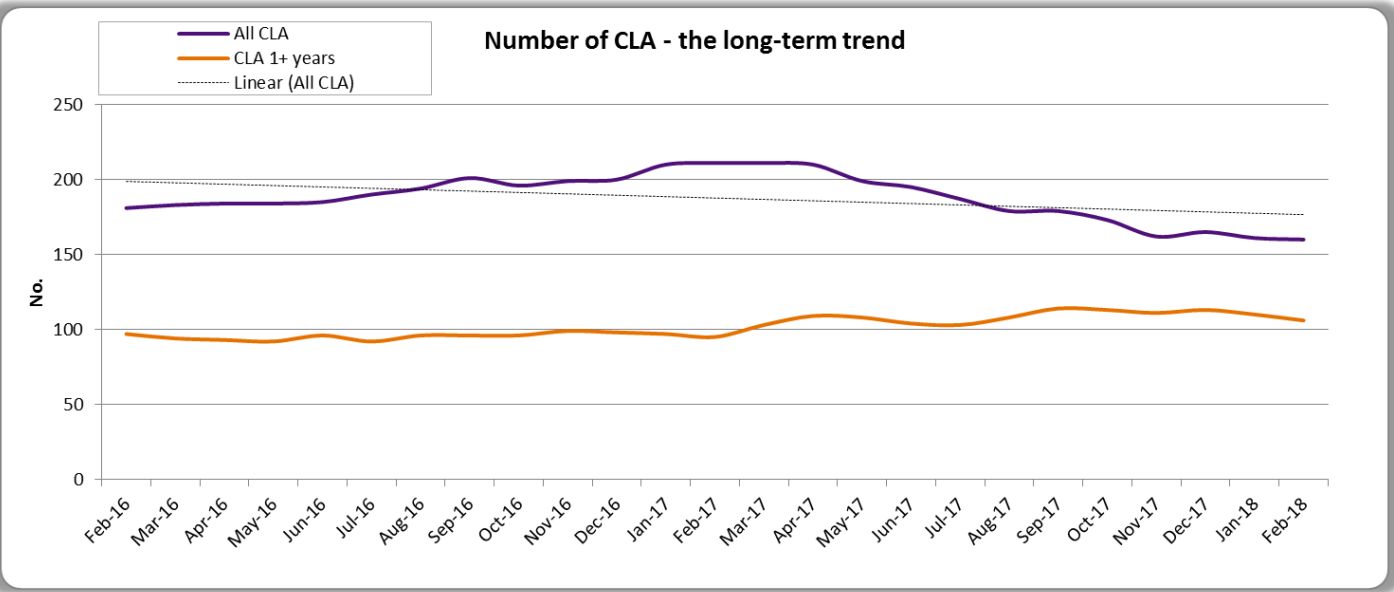
Indicator	Analysis & visualisation tool			Latest published statistics for all local authorities					
	Latest	Direction of travel		LA	SNs	Eng	LA compared to mid-50% range of all LAs		Date
Children who are looked after (snapshot rate per 10,000 children)	28	Decrease		36	39	62	Lower		2016-17
Children looked after who had a missing incident in the period (%)	15	Increase		14	14	10	Higher		2016-17
Children looked after who were away without authorisation in the period (%)	14	Increase		10	9	5	Higher		2016-17
Children looked after who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the last 12 months (%)	82	Decrease		92	86	83	In range		2016-17
Children looked after who had their annual health assessment (%)	85	Decrease		93	95	89	In range		2016-17
Children of statutory school age who are looked after and have a statement or EHC plan for SEN (%)	23	Decrease		30	33	27	In range		2015-16
Children who ceased to be looked after in the period who were adopted (%)	10	Increase		4	7	14	Lower		2016-17
Children who ceased to be looked after in the period due to a Special Guardianship Order (%)	21	Increase		16	12	12	In range		2016-17
Children leaving care over the age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday (%)	67	Decrease		69	66	71	In range		2016-17
Care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation (%)	69	Decrease		88	81	84	In range		2016-17
Care leavers aged 19-21 in education, employment, or training (%)	53	Decrease		63	51	50	Higher		2016-17
A1 - Average time between entering care and moving in with family for children who were adopted (days)	381	Decrease		439	605	558	Lower		2013-16
A2 - Average time between LA receiving placement order and LA deciding on a match with family (days)	104	Decrease		154	223	226	Lower		2013-16

Part A – Education Performance Indicators for children looked after

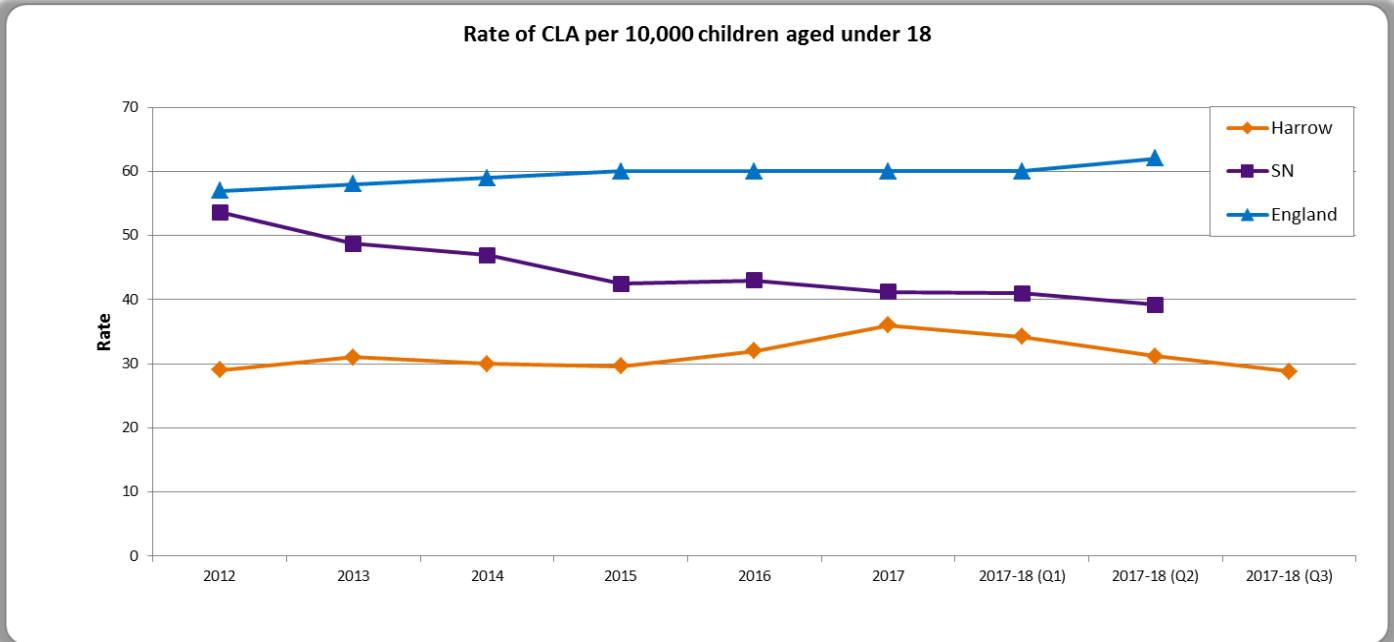
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	England average	SN Average	Harrow 2013-14	Harrow 2014-15	Harrow 2015-16	Harrow 2016-17 provisional
Educational attainment						
Percentage of children looked After achieving at least level 4 at KS2 in Reading, writing and maths (Source DfE)	25	38	0	50	100	40
Percentage of children Looked After who achieve 5+ A* -C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics.	17.5	24.4	0	0	14.3	8
Attendance & Exclusions						
Percentage absence. from school (CLA 1 year+)	3.9	4	4.3	5.6	5.3	Not yet published
Percentage classed as persistent absentees (CLA 1 year+)	9.1	12.9	X	14.3	X	Not yet published
Percentage of children with atleast one fixed term exclusion	10.4	12.5	X	15.56	Not yet published	Not yet published
X = Data is suppressed if number is less than or equal to 5 or percentage where the numerator is less than or equal to 5 or the denominator is less than or equal to 10.						

Part B –Numbers of CLA over time

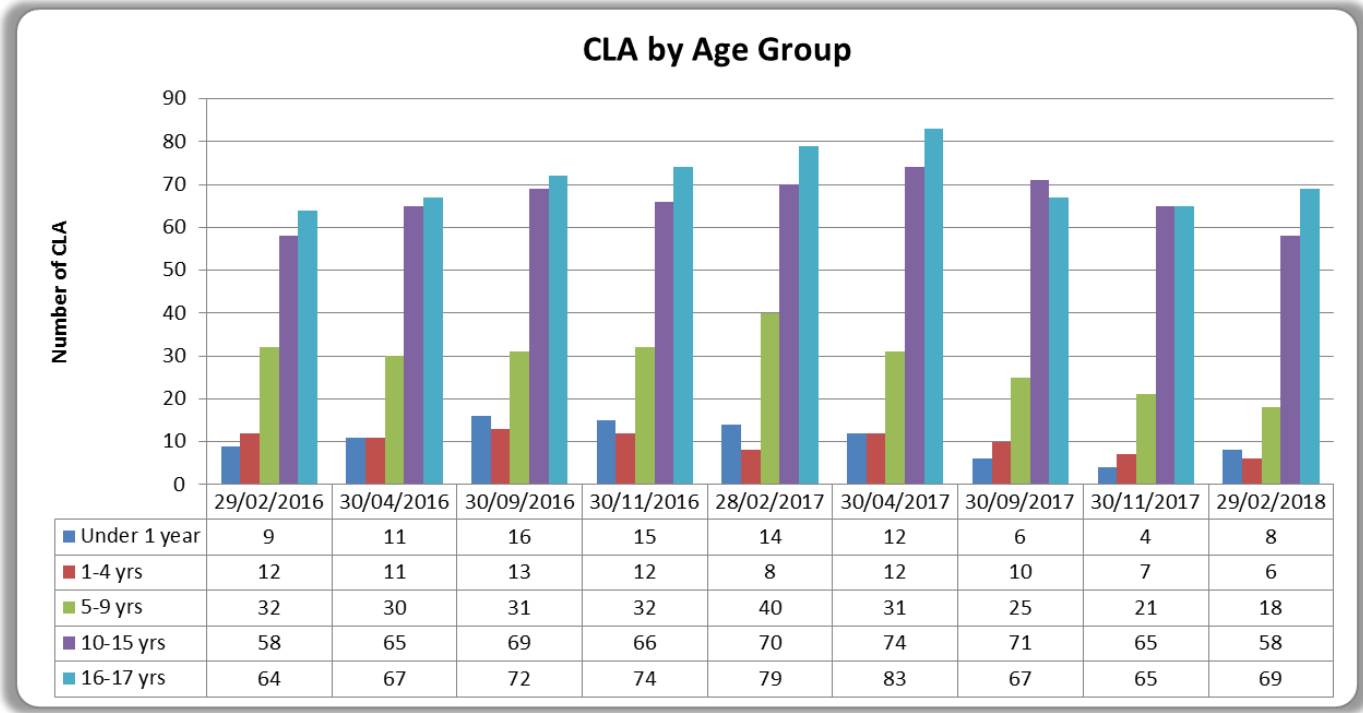


21



The number of all CLA has decreased since the start of the financial year, with CLA 1+ years showing a slight decrease as well.

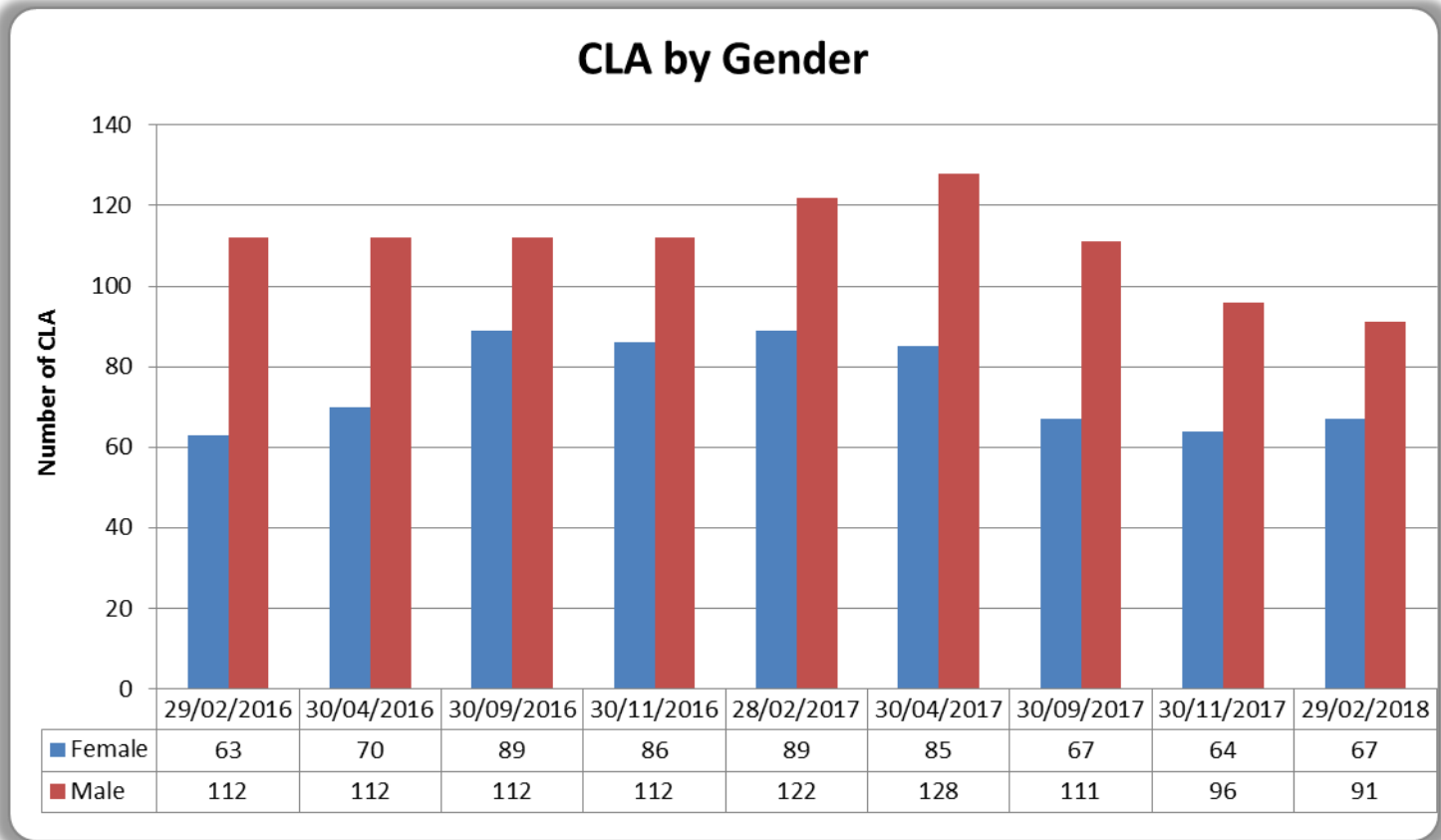
The rate of CLA per 10,000 decreased since 16/17 Q4 and continues to remain below the England average. For 2017 Harrows rate per 10,000 increased and the statistical neighbours decreased, causing Harrow to fall only marginally below their rates.



The overall numbers of CLA have decreased from the previous report. One child in this cohort is aged 19. Comparator data has been published for 2015-16, this shows Harrow to have a higher proportion of CLA aged 16+ and a lower proportion in aged 10 – 15. Higher numbers of CLA aged 16+ will continue to have an impact on leaving care services. 47 children will be turning 18 this year.

Comparative data (%) year ending March 2016	Age				
	Under 1	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	16+
Harrow	5	6	18	33	39
Stat Neighbour	4	9	16	38	34
England	5	13	20	39	23

23

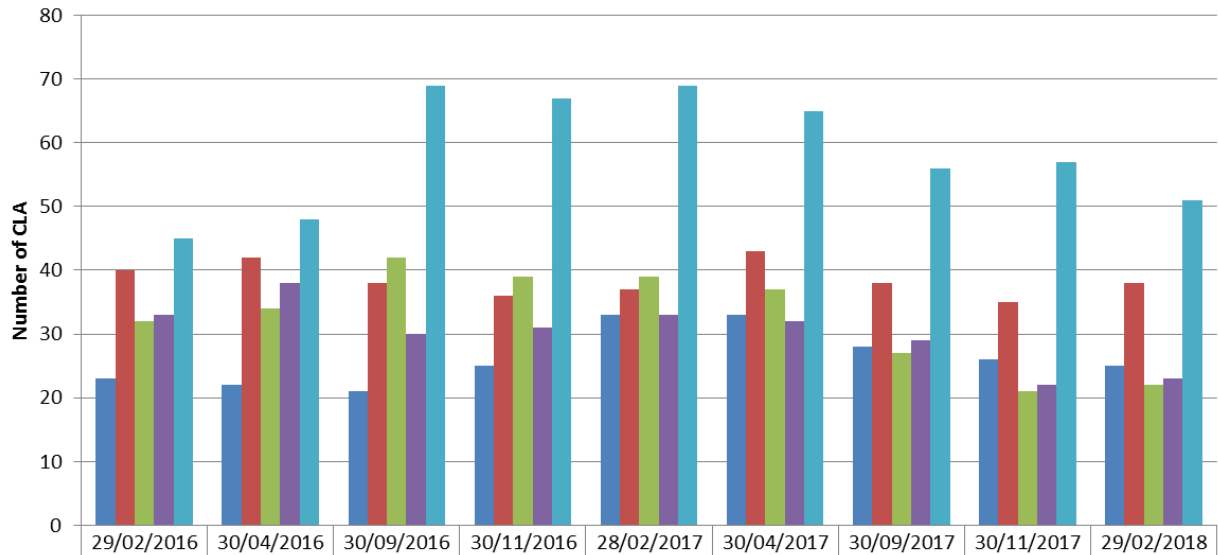


The number of females in care has increased since last quarter whilst the number of males has decreased. Comparator data shows Harrow has a higher percentage of males in care.

Comparative data (%) year ending March 2016	Gender	
	Male	Female
Harrow	64	36
Stat Neighbour	59	41
England	56	44

24

CLA by Ethnicity



	29/02/2016	30/04/2016	30/09/2016	30/11/2016	28/02/2017	30/04/2017	30/09/2017	30/11/2017	29/02/2018
Asian	23	22	21	25	33	33	28	26	25
Black	40	42	38	36	37	43	38	35	38
Mixed	32	34	42	39	39	37	27	21	22
Other	33	38	30	31	33	32	29	22	23
White	45	48	69	67	69	65	56	57	51

In line with population projections, Harrow’s Black and Minority Ethnic groups are considerably higher than England and the statistical neighbour average.

Overall two thirds of Harrow’s children looked after population are from BME groups and more in line with the local population breakdown, Mixed, Black British and other ethnic backgrounds are overrepresented in the CLA cohort.

The main shift from the previous report is a decrease in the white cohort by 6.

Comparative data (%) year ending March 2016	Ethnicity				
	White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Other Ethnic Groups
Harrow	28	20	13	23	17
Stat Neighbour	47	17	12	18	7
England	75	9	4	7	3
Ethnic breakdown of young people aged under18, 2011	30.9	9.5	42.6	12.2	4.5

C4 – Children looked after placement type

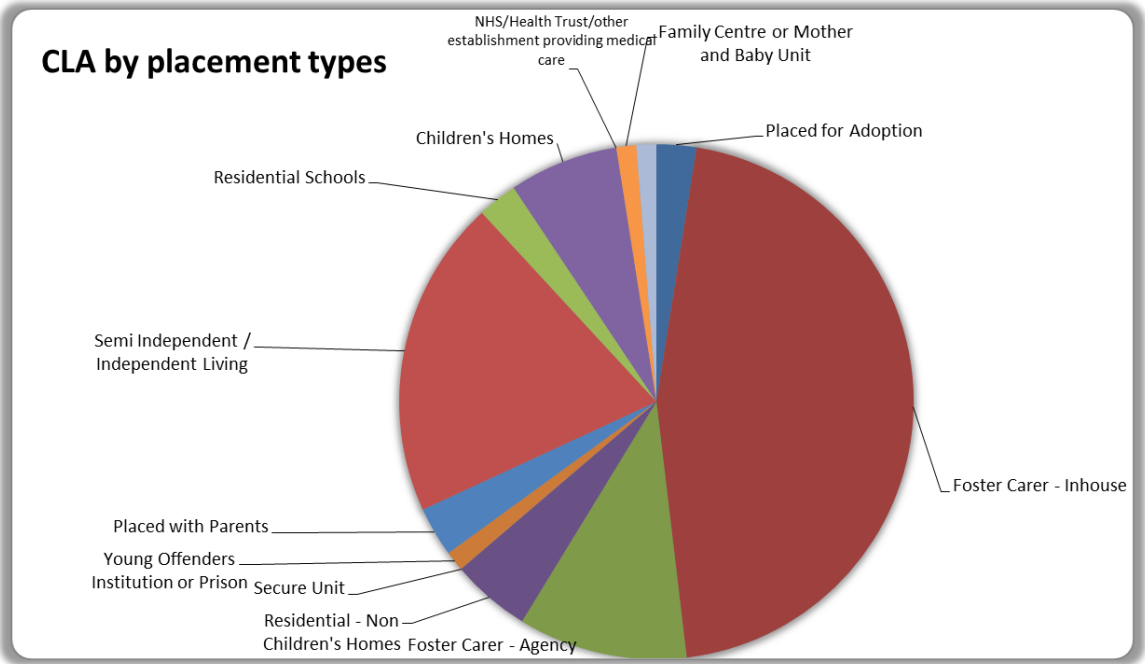
Placement Type	Sep-15	Dec-15	Feb-16	Apr-16	Sep-16	Nov-16	Feb-17	Apr-17	Sep-17	Nov-17	Feb-18
Placed for Adoption	7	10	9	6	4	5	6	7	10	7	4
Foster Carer - Inhouse	53	67	71	70	107	100	101	100	74	71	73
Foster Carer - Agency	30	23	20	29	25	26	32	31	28	25	17
Residential - Non Children's Homes	14	11	9	8	5	6	11	14	11	8	8
Secure Unit	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Young Offenders Institution or Prison	1	3	3	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2
Placed with Parents	0	4	4	2	0	2	0	0	6	7	5
Semi Independent / Independent Living	13	21	24	25	31	33	33	31	26	26	32
Residential Schools	5	4	6	8	6	7	7	7	5	5	4
Children's Homes	13	17	16	16	13	10	13	16	12	10	11
NHS/Health Trust/other establishment providing medical care	1	0	0	0	4	4	3	2	1	0	0
Family Centre or Mother and Baby Unit	0	0	0	2	3	3	2	2	1	0	2
Temporary placement	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	2
Grand Total	137	160	162	168	201	199	211	213	179	162	160

There are no significant changes to placement types. In house foster placements remain the most common placement type accounting for 45.6% of all placements. Comparator data with statistical neighbours shows Harrow to have a lower proportion of CLA in foster placements and a higher proportion in placements in the community (independent and semi- independent placements).

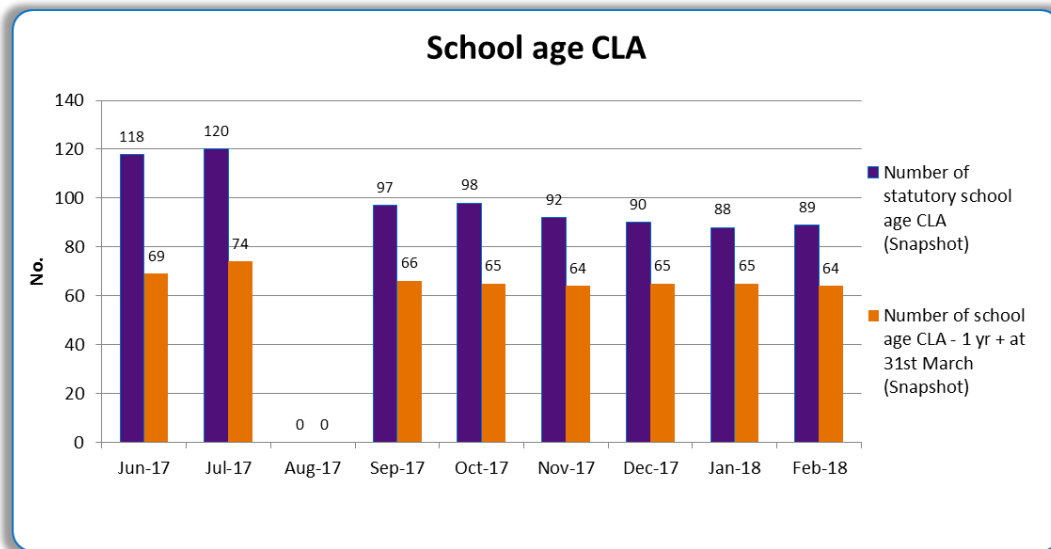
Harrow Placement Details at 29th February 2018

25

Comparative data % of children looked after by placement type as at 31st March 2016	HARROW	Stat Neighbour	England
Foster placements	59	71.2	74.0
Placed for adoption	4	2.4	4.0
Placement with parents	-	1.5	5.0
Other placement in the community	14	7.1	4.0
Secure units, children's homes and hostels	17	16.6	11.0
Other residential settings	3	5.7	1.0



C5 – school age CLA



Harrow monitors all school children and those looked after 1 year plus.

At the end of February 86 out of 89 CLA of statutory school age being monitored by Welfare Call. 3 CLA are attending college or not on roll or on remand and not monitored by Welfare call. There have been no permanent exclusion this academic year, but 10.1% of school aged CLA had at least one fixed term exclusion. 12.8% of sessions have been missed and 34.8% of CLA are classed as persistent absentees. Of the CLA school age cohort 64 have been looked after for over a year. The PEP indicator is updated at the end of each term, at the end of Dec 70.0% of CLA had a PEP.

PI Description	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18
% of school age CLA (all CLA) permanently excluded this year (Sept to date)	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of school age CLA (1 yr + at 31st March) permanently excluded this year (Sept to date)	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.4	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% of school age CLA (all CLA) with at least one fixed-term exclusion this year (Sept to date)	1.0	4.0	4.6	5.9	7.4	9.0	10.2	10.8	N/A	0.0	2.0	2.2	3.3	8.0	10.1
% of school age CLA (1 yr + at 31st March) with at least one fixed-term exclusion this year (Sept to date)	1.0	1.0	3.6	5.3	8.3	9.7	13.0	12.2	N/A	0.0	1.5	3.1	4.6	7.7	10.9
% absence from school (all CLA - % of sessions missed)	9.3	11.0	11.5	14.0	12.8	12.2	11.0	11.3	N/A	8.5	10.3	11.8	11.7	12.6	12.8
% absence from school (1 yr+, % of sessions missed)	10.6	9.4	9.5	9.7	10.1	10.4	9.0	10.0	N/A	8.0	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.2	9.4
% of CLA (all CLA) classified as persistent absentees	20.6	17.8	19.3	23.7	24.0	23.8	27.1	29.2	N/A	16.5	24.5	26.1	26.7	30.7	34.8
% of CLA (1 year+) classified as persistent absentees	12.4	8.9	16.0	15.8	16.7	17.7	17.4	20.3	N/A	14.9	20.0	17.2	16.9	18.5	25.0
% of CLA (all school age CLA) with up to date PEP	end of term only		70.6	end of term only		68	end of term only	81.7	N/A	end of term only			70.0	end of term only	

CLA educational attainment trends - Provisional Results for 2016-17

Calculations are based on eligible children in the cohort, not those who sat exams.

DfE indicators include only CLA who have been looked after for more than one year to measure outcomes. **Education data is updated annually**

Performance Indicator	All pupils		In Care 1 Year +	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total number of eligible pupils (all Year 11s)	24		12	
Total no of pupils who sat at least one exam	12	50%	7	58%
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-4 in English Literature	2	8%	1	8%
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-4 in English Language	2	8%	1	8%
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-5 in English Literature	0		0	
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-5 in English Language	2	8%	0	
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-4 in Mathematics	2	8%	1	8%
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-5 in Mathematics	1	4%	1	8%
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-4 in English and Mathematics	2	8%	1	8%
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving 9-5 in English and Mathematics	0		1	8%
Attainment 8 score	not yet available for all CLA			
No of Pupils in Year 11 achieving GCSE English and Mathematics at grades 9-4 plus 3 or more other grades A*-C	1	4%	1	8%

One young person achieved GCSE English and Mathematics at grades 9-4 plus 3 or more other grades A*-C. The GCSE curriculum is changing and this is the first year of the new GCSE's for English and maths and so no comparator data is available.

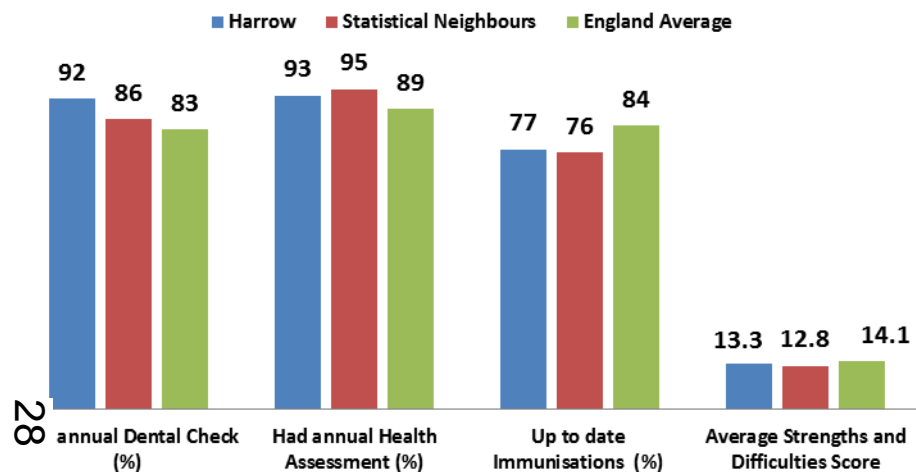
CLA Looked after for over a year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Children in KS2 cohort (1yr +)	3	1	6	1	10
Attained at least Level 4 in Maths at end of KS2	67%	100%	83%	100%	50%
Attained at least Level 4 in Reading at end of KS2	67%	100%	83%	100%	40%
Attained at least Level 4 in Writing at end of KS2	67%	0%	50%	100%	50%
Attained at least Level 4 in Reading, Writing and Maths at end of KS2	67%	0%	50%	100%	40%

40% of CLA one year +reached the expected standard in all three subjects – reading, writing and maths.

C7 - CLA Health

Latest comparative information shows that Harrow has performed well at annual dental checks for children looked after and slightly below SN average for Health assessments. We are in line with statistical neighbours for immunisations and strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ)

Comparator Health Data 2016-17

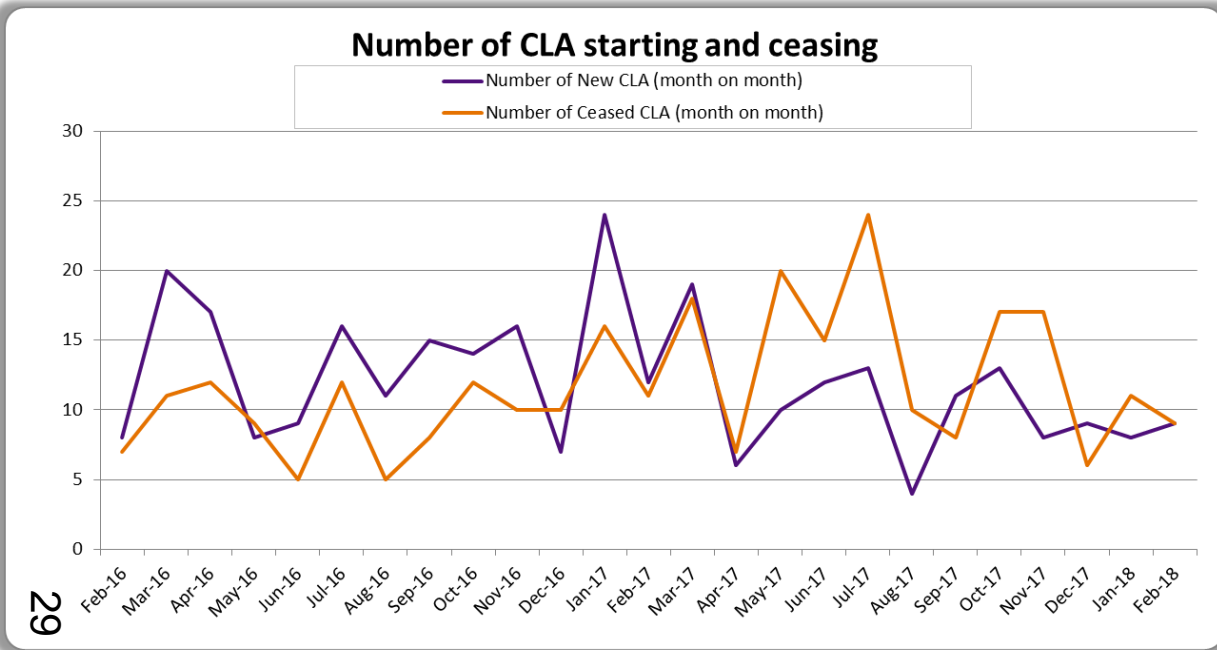


Comparative Data (%) year ending 2017	Had annual Dental Check (%)	Had annual Health Assessment (%)	Up to date Immunisations at 31st March (%)	Average Strengths and Difficulties Score
Harrow	92	93	77	13.3
Statistical Neighbours	86	95	76	12.8
England Average	83	89	84	14.1

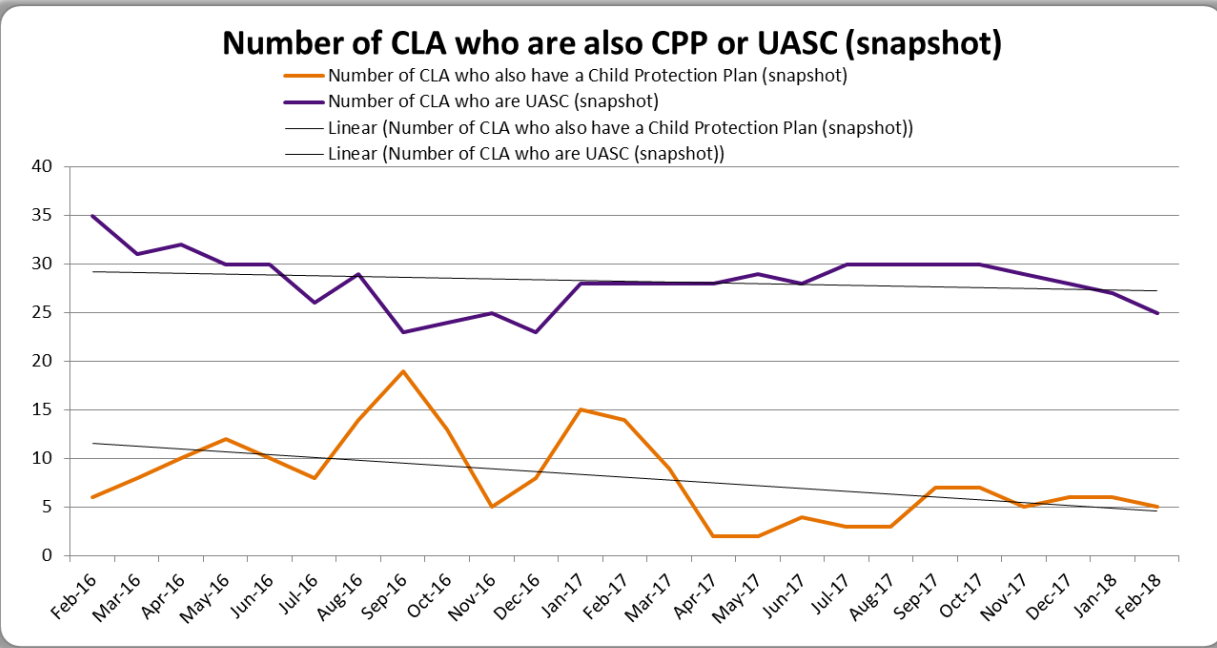
Note on SDQ scores: a score of under 14 is considered normal, 14-16 is borderline cause for concern and 17 or over is a cause for concern.

Indicator Description	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	17/18 Average
% of all CLA aged 4-16 who have an up to date strengths and difficulties (SDQ) score	75.6			68.5			93.4			78.3			80.9
% of CLA (1 yr +) with immunisations up to date	68.9			66.3			64.1			66.4			65.2
% of CLA with up to date Dental Checks (CLA 1 yr +)	77.7	72.5	73.8	74.5	78.8	80.6	86.8	86.7	79.3	84.1	81.8	84.9	77.8
% of CLA with up to date Health Checks (CLA 1 yr +)	89.3	88.1	90.7	90.6	92.3	93.5	93.0	94.7	93.7	89.4	84.5	89.6	91.4
% of new CLA where health assessment has been completed within 28 calendar days YTD	49.2		50.0	38.5	57.9	66.7	69.6	84.0	80.0	80.5	77.3	78.6	56.5

C8 – Number of new CLA, number of ceased CLA and number of children looked after who also have a child protection plan or are unaccompanied asylum seeking children.



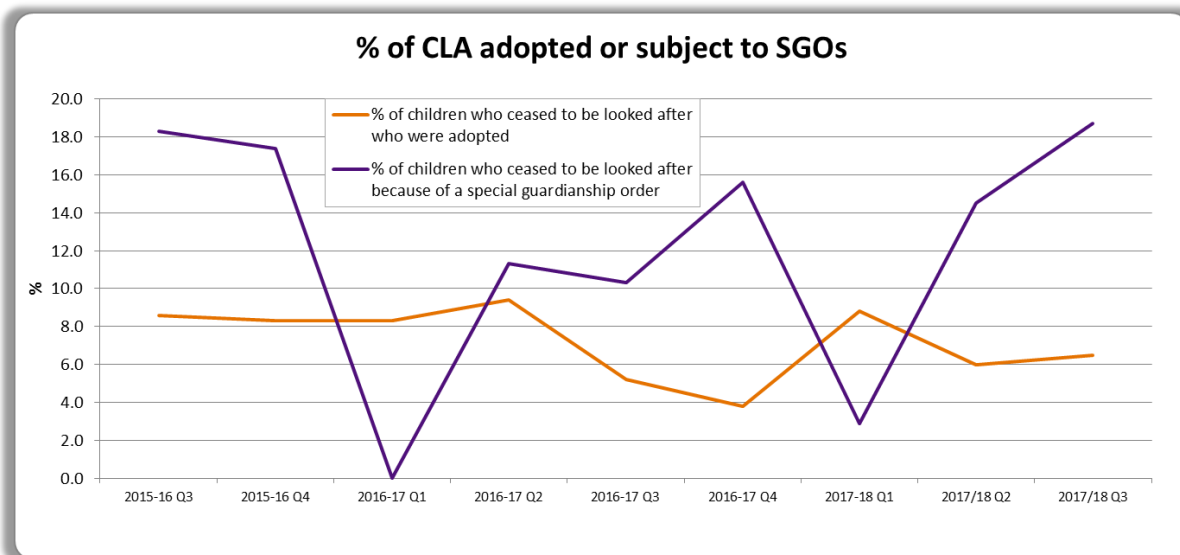
The number of new and ceased CLA continues to vary, the overall new CLA average currently rests at 9.4 for 2017/18 compared to 14 the year before. The ceased CLA average rests at 13.1 at the end of November compared to 10.7 the year before.



The number of dual allocated CLA who also have a Child Protection Plan has decreased from the previous report. The number of CLA who are UASC has also decreased from 29 to 25.

29

C9 – Adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders of CLA

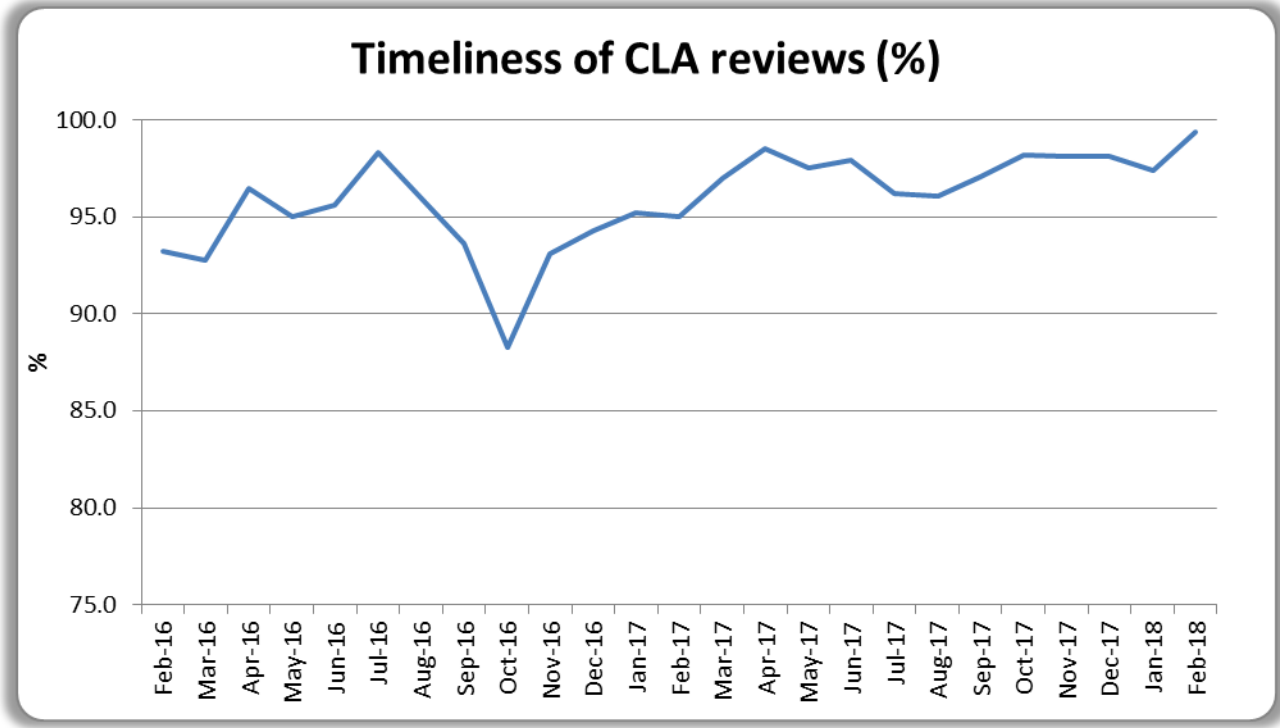


	LA	2011-14	2012-15	2013-16
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (days)	Harrow	440.00	339.00	439.00
	Statistical Neighbours	607.60	588.00	603.30
	England Average	628.00	593.00	558.00

	LA	2011-14	2012-15	2013-16
Average time between a LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match	Harrow	84.00	104.00	154.00
	Statistical Neighbours	196.30	207.90	217.80
	England Average	216.00	223.00	226.00

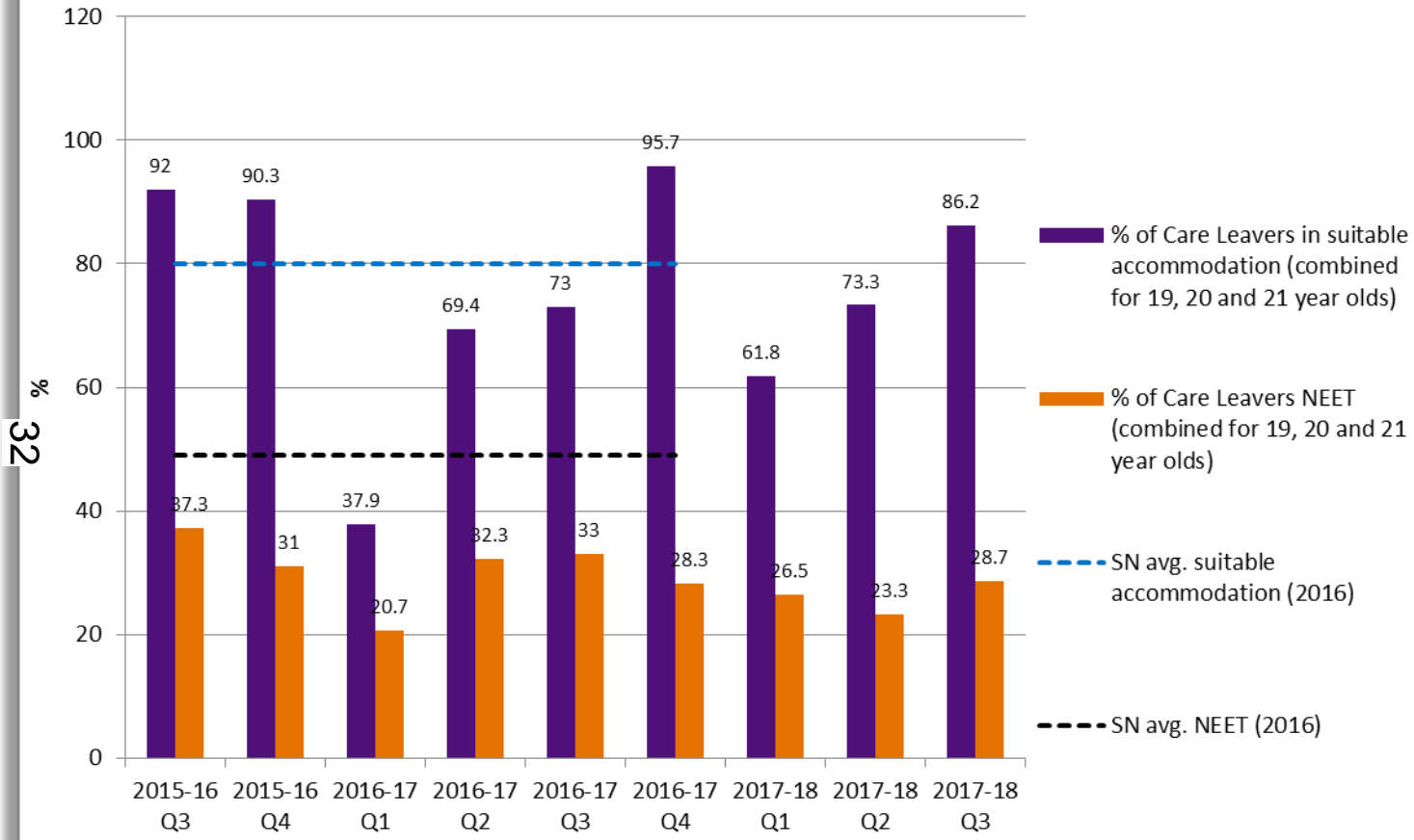
30 The percentage of ceased CLA who were adopted continues to fluctuate, currently sitting at 6.5%. Ceased CLA due to an SGO has increased to 18.7%. The average days between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family has decreased from 506.6 last quarter to 380.3 in quarter 3. Harrows average for this indicator lays below both the England and statistical neighbour figures in the most recent comparable dataset. The average time between the LA receiving a court order to place a child for adoption and a suitable match made has decreased and remains better than SN and England average. DfE have gradually reduced the waiting time from 20 to 14 months. The 2013-16 waiting time is based on 14 months waiting time.

Indicator	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17
The average time (days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted. Measured Quarterly (YTD).	390.5	543.0	506.6	380.3
The average time (days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family. Measured Quarterly.	167.0	86.0	102.0	93.9
Percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. Measured Quarterly.	83.0	0.0	20.0	50.0



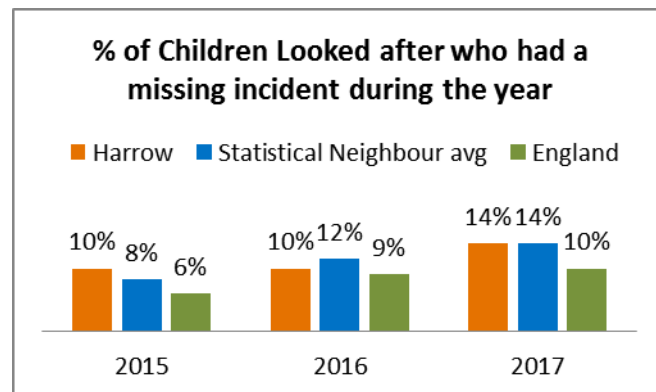
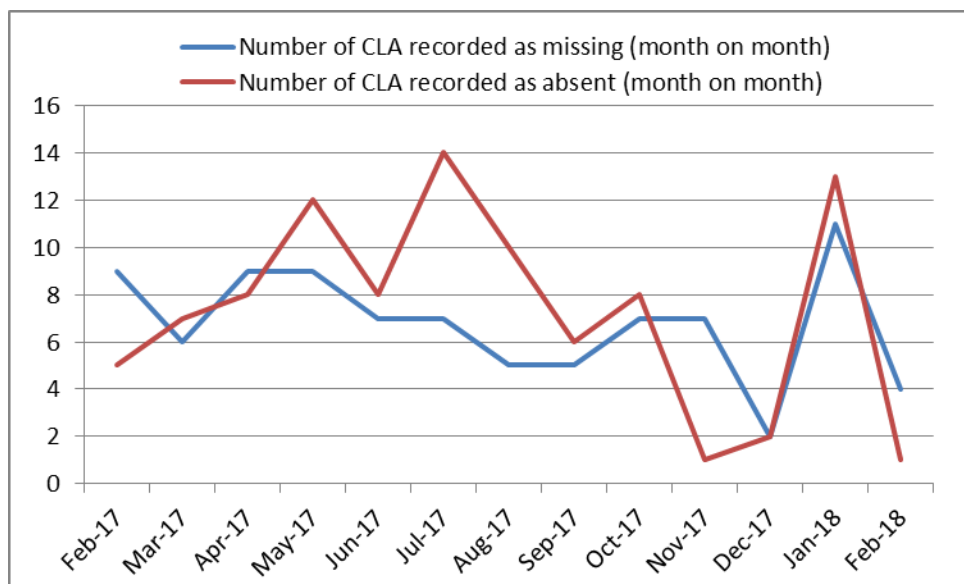
The timeliness of CLA reviews has increased since the last report.

Care leavers suitable accommodation and NEET



Provisional figures show that the percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation has increased from the last report to 86.2% overall. The NEET percentage has increased to 28.7% of care leavers were NEET at 29th February. 2015 -16 published data shows us above statistical neighbour averages for both these indicators, provisional figures show we have less NEET and slightly below for suitable accommodation though this does change as seen by year end figures. (Q4 – 2016-17)

C12 – children who go missing or are absent



	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17
% of CLA who had at least one missing incident (year to date)	14	12.2	12.5	12.8
% of CLA away from placement without authorisation at least on one occasion (year to date)	10	10.5	11.7	11

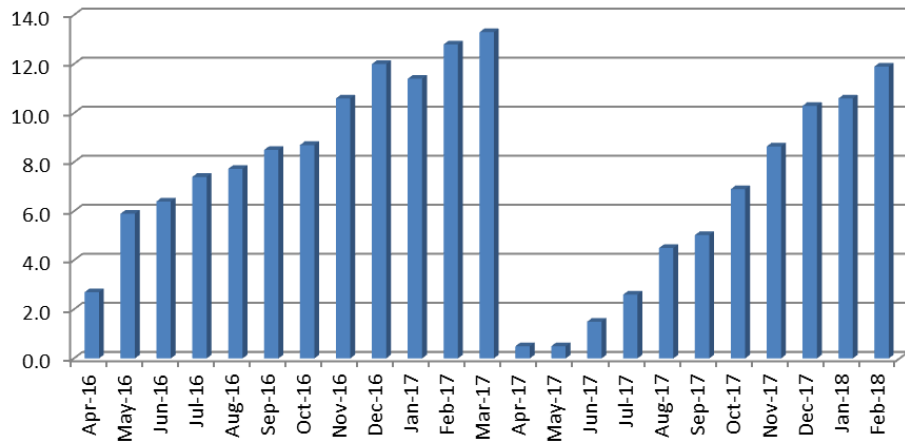
33

The quarterly percentage of CLA missing and away from placement have remain stable from last quarter. The numbers of CLA recorded as missing and absent (month on month) spiked in January but have fallen since. Children reported missing continues to remains a focus. Profile of children missing from home or care as well as those missing from education are subject of multi-agency oversight. Runaways Worker also in post and undertakes return interviews with children who go missing. Published data for 2017 shows Harrow have had a similar proportion of CLA who had a missing episode in the year compared to previous year whilst statistical neighbours' and England trend is an increase from previous year

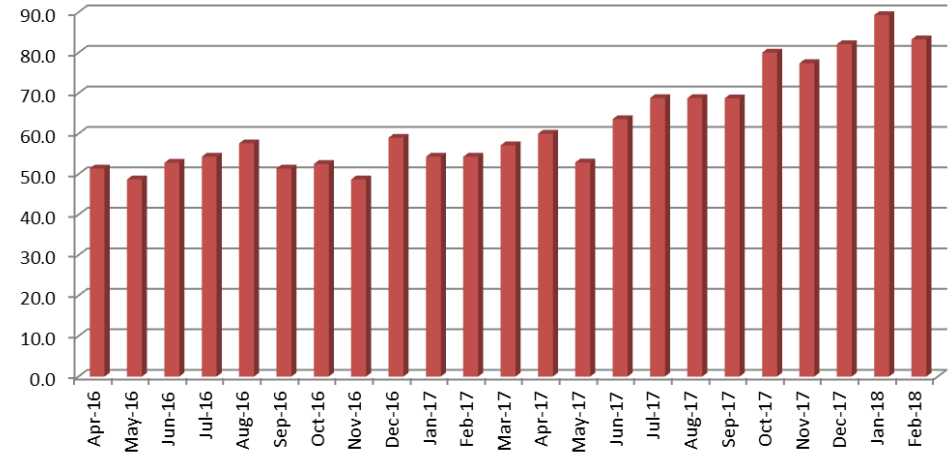
PI Ref	PI Description	Feb-17	Mar-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18
73	Number of CLA recorded as missing (month on month)	9	6	9	7	7	5	5	7	7	2	11	4
68	Number of CLA recorded as absent (month on month)	5	7	12	8	14	10	6	8	1	2	13	1

C13 – CLA placement stability

% CLA with more than 2 placement moves in year



% CLA looked after for 2.5 years who have been in same placement for 2 years

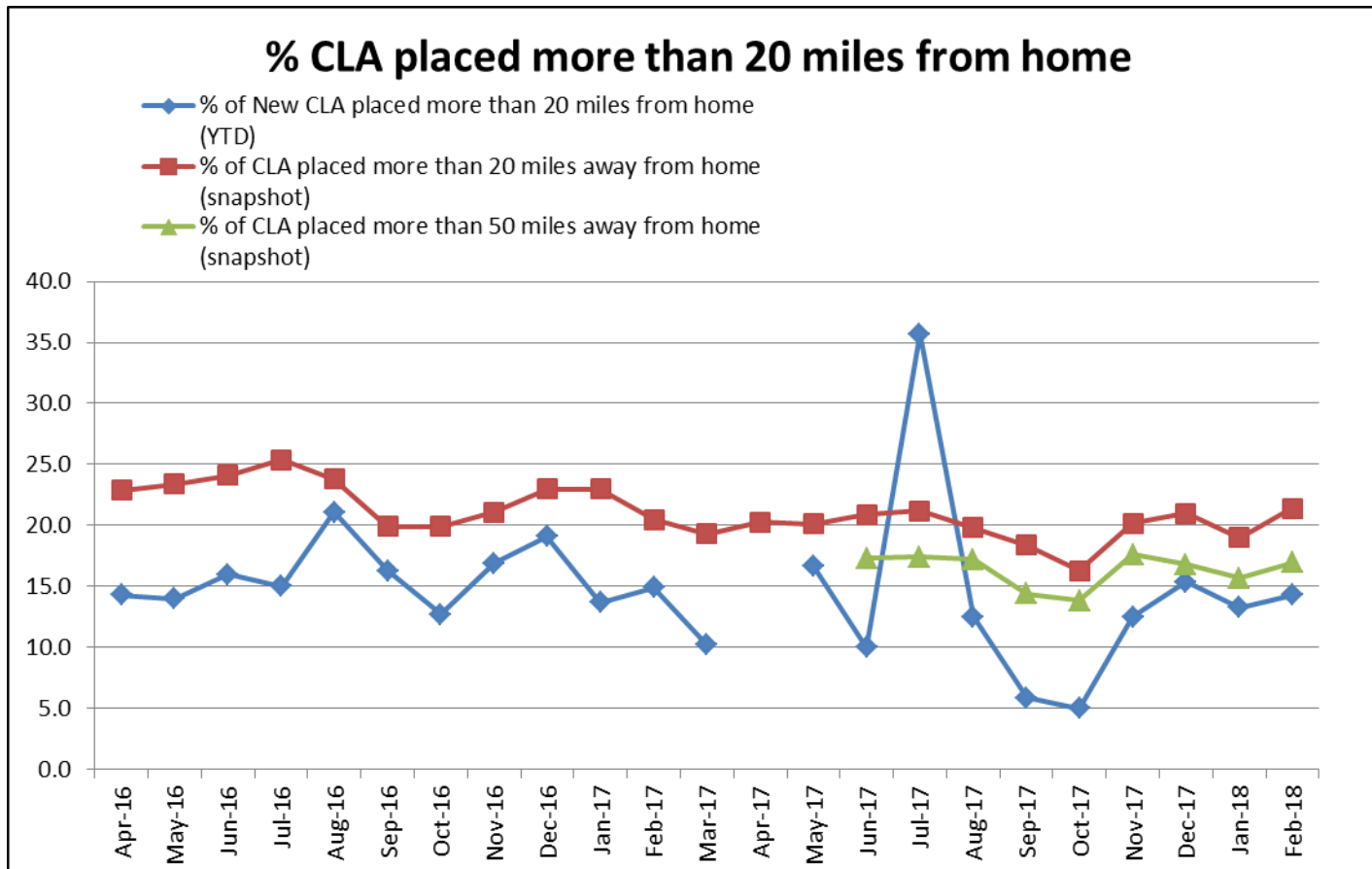


34

The percentage of CLA with more than 2 placement moves has continued to increase throughout the year and is currently at 11.9%. The percentage of children looked after for more than 2.5 years have been in the same placement for more than 2 years has increased since the last report to 83.3%.

C14 – CLA placed over 20 miles from home

35

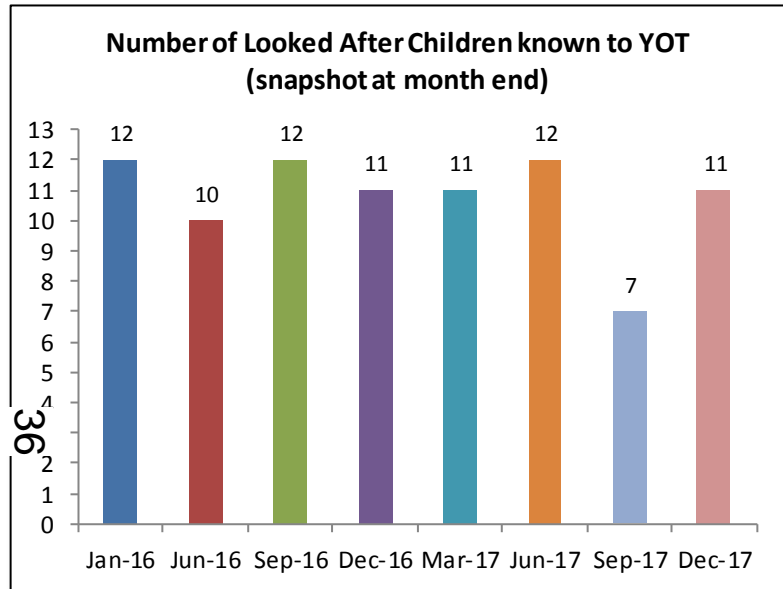


The percentage of all new CLA placed more than 20 miles from home has varied throughout the year, currently at 14.3%. The percentage of all CLA at the end of each month who are placed more than 20 miles from home has averaged around 19.9% throughout the year and is currently at 21.4%. A new indicator measuring the percentage of all new CLA placed more than 50 miles from home rests at 17.0%. In order to give a balanced view, these indicators exclude looked after children who are placed with parents, adopted or are unaccompanied asylum seekers.

C15 – CLA Offending

Number of Looked After Children known to YOT (snapshot at month end)

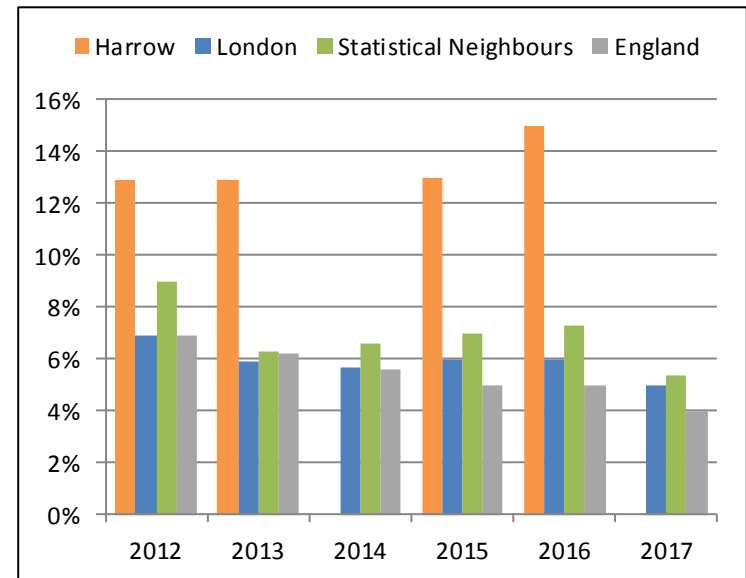
Jan-16	Jun-16	Sep-16	Dec-16	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17
12	10	12	11	11	12	7	11



The number of Looked After Children known to YOT has increased from the last report. Harrow's CLA offending rate is higher than comparators – this is being investigated and may be due to the comparatively small numbers of young people who are looked after, and a corresponding tendency towards higher levels of risk and vulnerability amongst this group.

% of children looked after for 1 year+ subject to a conviction, final warning or reprimand during the year

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Harrow	13%	13%		13%	15%	
London	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Statistica	9%	6%	7%	7%	7.30%	5.40%
England	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	4%



**REPORT FOR: Corporate Parenting
Panel**

Date of Meeting:	27 March 2018
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – Harrow Children Looked After Health (CLA) Report
Responsible Officer:	Zoe Sargent, Head of Children’s Services and Operations, CNWL NHS Foundation
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No, as the report is for information only
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Harrow Children Looked After (CLA) Health Report

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out the delivery of health services to Harrow’s Children Looked After (CLA) during December 2017-February 2018 in line with national guidance. It reviews performance indicators and clinical work undertaken by the CLA health team.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Further Information

See enclosure.

Section 3 – Financial Implications

Not applicable.

Section 4 - Equalities implications

Not required.

Section 5 – Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for communities

The report focuses on the service delivery from health to Children Looked After, a vulnerable group of children including those from the local community.

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Emma Hedley, Named Nurse for Children Looked After Harrow,
01895 484945

Background Papers: Corporate Parenting Panel Reports - January 2018

<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=64156&x=1>

Children Looked After Health Report

09.03.18

Targets

All targets for December, January and February were met for initial health assessments and review health assessments from health. For the past 3 months 100% of children have been seen for their initial health assessment within statutory timescales, which highlights the good partnership working between the Social Workers and the CLA health team.

Month	Target For IHA's	Target for RHA's	Number seen in timescales
December 2017	100%	100%	100% IHA 67% RHA
January	100%	100%	100% IHA 78% RHA
February	100%	100%	100% IHA 100% RHA

Monitoring

Bi-monthly monitoring meetings continue with the CCG and Harrow Council.
3 monthly immunisation monitoring in partnership with Harrow Senior Performance Analyst.
Meeting with Senior Commissioning Manager (substance misuse, public health) and Service Manager for Compass to discuss current service, referrals and data collection.

Work Undertaken

We have attended all strategic and partnership meetings to best support the health needs of children looked after, these include CLA reviews, MASE (multi agency sexual exploitation) panel, Children at Risk meeting, adoption and fostering panel, joint health, education and YOT (youth offending team) meeting, quarterly CAMHS meeting, independent reviewing officers meeting. Liaison with CAMHS and Harrow Horizons to discuss cases and referrals.

Training

Named Nurse delivered training on the health needs of CLA to Health Visitors and School Nurses in training at Oxford Brooke's University. Positive feedback received from all students rating the session as excellent.
Attendance at London North West peer group meeting.
Named Nurse attended CWHHE meeting with designated professionals to discuss CHIS (child health information system)

Voice of the child and Care Leavers Update

We have just completed our annual client satisfaction survey which is currently being analysed.
Presentation at leaving care forum to approximately 50 UASC and Care Leavers regarding general health and TB. Positive feedback from young people.
Updated Harrow Council website page about the CLA health team for CLA to access.

Health Assessments – Creative Working and Complex Case Studies

Specialist Nurse has weekly case discussion with CIN, UASC and CLA teams.

Joint visit with Social Worker to a young person with CSE (child sexual exploitation) risks, emotional health concerns, smoking and alcohol. Follow up visit by the Specialist Nurse for CLA resulted in a referral to Compass following liaison with the compass manager, who will arrange to see the young person at home. Referral made to Harrow Horizons and referral of possible CSE location made to the VVE (violence, victimisation and exploitation) manager.

17 year old female – discussed at children at risk panel – missing episode, risk of child sexual exploitation, refused previous health assessments. Completion of a written health questionnaire was followed up by the Specialist CLA Nurse in December. Specialist Nurse contacted young person to follow up recent hospital admission. Liaison with Named Nurse for Safeguarding at the hospital and medical secretary to facilitate further outpatient appointments as young person did not attend 2 appointments. Outcome young person agreed to review health assessment with Specialist Nurse and attended follow up hospital appointment on the 3rd attempt.

Future Plans

To continue to work in partnership with Social Workers to ensure that SDQ's (strength and difficulties questionnaires) are sent with all review health assessment requests.

To analyse client satisfaction audit and present results at next corporate parenting board.

To begin CLA annual report for health 2017/18.

Report by Emma Hedley – Named Nurse for Children Looked After Harrow, CNWL.

9th March 2018



**REPORT FOR: CORPORATE
PARENTING PANEL**

Date of Meeting:	27 March 2018
Subject:	Children's Services, IRO Annual Report 2016/17
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Paul Hewitt, Interim Corporate Director of People
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Christine Robson, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No, as the recommendation is noting only
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Harrow Council – Children's Services, IRO Annual Report 2016/17

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report details information about the children looked after activity in Harrow during the period 1 April 2016 through to 31st March 2017 and is an evaluation of the work of the Independent Reviewing Officers.

Recommendation:

Panel is requested to consider and note the content of the report.

Reason for Recommendation: The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that there are Independent Reviewing Officers reviewing the Care Plans for Looked After children and young people (see report attached).

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

The Independent Reviewing Officer is a statutory requirement and their role is integral in ensuring that the local authority provides a quality service to its Looked After population which is in line with the Council's vision and corporate priorities.

Options considered

None.

Current situation

See report attached.

Legal Implications

The role of the IRO is set out in sections 25A-25C, Children Act 1989; statutory guidance issued under s7 of the Social Services Act 1970 – the IRO Handbook 2010 and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, in particular regulations 36, 45 & 46 and schedule 7.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

The looked after population comprises of children and young people from a wide background of cultures, ethnicities, languages and religions and part of the role of the IRO is to check that a child's needs are being met in all these areas.

Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for communities
- Making a difference for families.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 9 March 2018		
Name: Helen Ottino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 13 March 2018		
Ward Councillors notified:		
		NO, as it impacts on all Wards
EqIA carried out:		
		NO
EqIA cleared by:		
		N/A - No decision is required

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Barbara Houston, Quality Assurance Manager
Telephone: 020 8736 6934
Email: barbara.houston@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None.

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**Harrow Council
Children's and Young People
Services
IRO Annual Report 2016/17**

Harrow Council – Children’s Services IRO Annual Report 2016/17

The Contribution of Independent Reviewing Officers to Quality Assuring and Improving Services for Children in Care

This Annual IRO report provides quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the IRO Services in Harrow as required by statutory guidance.

The IRO Annual Report must be presented to the Corporate Parenting Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Purpose of service and legal context

The Independent Review Officers’ (IRO) service is set within the statutory framework of the updated IRO Handbook, linked to revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance which were introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO has changed from the management of the Review process to a wider overview of the case including regular monitoring and follow-up between Reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for children Looked After and for challenging drift and delay.

The National Children’s Bureau (NCB) research ‘The Role of the Independent Reviewing Officers in England’ (March 2014) provides a wealth of information and findings regarding the efficacy of IRO services. The foreword written by Mr Justice Peter Jackson; makes the following comment:

The Independent Reviewing Officer must be the visible embodiment of our commitment to meet our legal obligations to this special group of children. The health and effectiveness of the IRO service is a direct reflection of whether we are meeting that commitment, or whether we are failing.

The NCB research outlines a number of important recommendations with three having a particular influence on IROs work plan priorities:

1. Where IROs identify barriers to their ability to fulfil their role, or systemic failures in the service to looked after children, they must raise this formally with senior managers. These challenges and the response should be included in the Annual Report.
2. IROs method for monitoring cases and how this activity is recorded should be clarified.

3. A review of IROs core activities and additional tasks should be undertaken. There is a need to establish whether IROs additional activities compromise independence or capacity.

Key messages – learning and improvement

This Annual IRO report provides quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the IRO services in Harrow, as required by statutory guidance.

Improvement priorities identified for 2016/17 included:

- Improving the quality of IRO reports to ensure they have SMART recommendations
- To continue to monitor Health Assessments/SDQs to ensure that they are supporting physical and emotional health outcomes
- To continue to monitor the quality of Personal Education Plans and that they are being used to support children and young people
- To continue to support and deliver training sessions with regards to CSE
- To continue to monitor care planning and escalate through the Dispute Resolution Protocol and Care Planning Group, where there is unreasonable delay or no permanency plan by 2nd Review.

Professional Profile of the IRO Service

The IRO Service sits within Quality Assurance and Service Improvement with its core functions consisting of reviewing plans for children in care and monitoring the Local Authority in respect of its corporate parenting and safeguarding responsibilities. Their position within this service area has supported the IROs need for independence and challenge as their management line, up to and including the Head of Service, is different to that of the children and young peoples' social workers and managers.

The IRO Service is located in the Civic Centre. This location supports effective work with social work teams. The team had been very stable for a number of years with children and young people experiencing continuity of IRO. During the period 2016/17 one of the part-time IROs left and a new IRO was appointed in to the post. The IROs bring a wealth of knowledge and stability to the service which is additionally supported by the fact that there are now a number of Child Protection Conference Chairs who also have the skillset to chair Looked After Reviews. This helps to ensure that work is completed within timescales, particularly at points of pressure within the service.

IROs are part of Quality Assurance and Service Improvement and are qualified Social Workers. There are 3.2 permanent IRO posts which are currently covered by 4 members of staff, 2 full-time and 2 part-time. In terms of gender and diversity, the profile of the service did not reflect the Looked After population, most pertinently as the IROs were all female. However the new appointment to the vacant IRO post is a male. The IROs do reflect diversity with regards to their ethnicity and cultural backgrounds.

The IROs are managed by a part-time Quality Assurance Manager who provides them with professional supervision and working within Quality Assurance and Service Improvement ensures that there is a culture of continuous review and development of the service.

Administrative Support

The IROs are supported by business support workers who administratively arrange the reviews, send out invitations and consultation documents and afterwards distribute the IRO recommendations and reports. Do to the significant increase in looked after children during the year, plus the review of the role of business support to include more active challenge and tracking with regards to performance management, the establishment increased to 4 posts, including temporary posts, for a period.

What else we have done

The IRO service has embedded the Cafcass and Independent Reviewing Officer Good Practice Protocol for Public Law Work. This has helped to ensure cases in proceedings are subject of robust analysis and challenge about the matters of critical importance to the child's safety, wellbeing and permanency needs.

Quantitative information - Looked After population and the IRO service

Key Messages

The Looked After population for 2016/2017 has ranged from 184 to 211. IRO caseloads have been between 49 – 68 per fte IRO. This compares well with the recommended case load of 50-70 set out in the IRO Handbook. A total of 605 Reviews were Chaired by IROs in the year ending 31st March 2017.

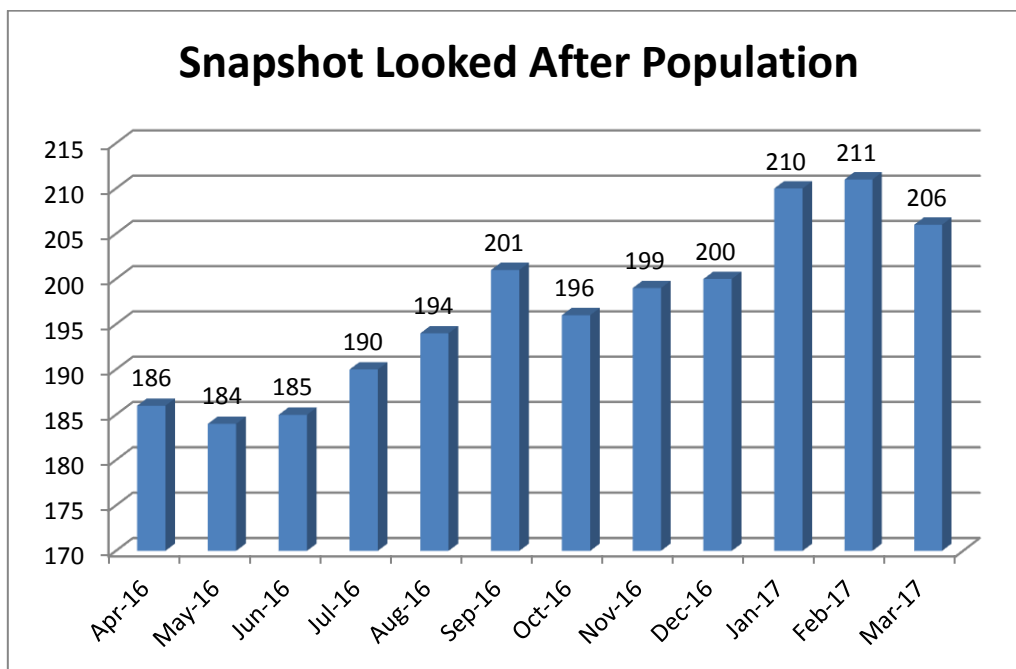
The majority of children and young people who started to be Looked After were aged in the cohort 10-15 (35%).

40 Looked After Reviews concerned children and young people with a disability which equated to 6.5%. In these circumstances the increased time required to elicit the wishes and feelings of a child with additional needs is to be recognised.

In terms of permanency outcomes during 2016/17, the majority returned home to live with parents or other person with parental responsibility, (37.4%) and a smaller number were adopted, (3.7%).

The vast majority of Reviews were held within timescale, (98%). Any Review that is likely to be out of timescale is discussed with the Quality Assurance Manager and it is only in the most exceptional of circumstances that a Review will go out of timescale, details of which would also be reported to the Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Service Improvement.

Looked After population during 2016/17:



The age profile of children and young people entering care during the period:

- 13.7% of children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31st March 2017 were aged less than 1.
- 7.1% of children were aged 1 to 4.
- 19.6% of children who started to be looked after were aged 5 to 9.
- 35% of young people who started to be looked after were aged 10 to 15.
- 24.6% of young people who started to be looked after were aged 16 and over.

A national benchmarking survey (December 2013) identified that the average caseload for IROs ranged between 49 and 95. Within Harrow, IROs have had caseloads of between 49 and 68 per fte worker during the period 2016/17. Caseloads for IRO's in Harrow remain well within guidance requirements, and all IRO's have a balanced caseload so that complexity and distance are shared equitably across the service.

During 2016/17, IROs have continued to assume a number of other responsibilities with their Championing roles in the areas of permanency planning, Health Assessments, Personal Education Plans (working closely with the Virtual School), Participation and Child Sexual Exploitation. The IROs have received training around CSE and have started giving training sessions to staff including one IRO providing a session to foster carers. One IRO attends meetings with the Virtual School plus other key staff to take forward issues to do with education and Personal Education Plans, including issues to do with their completion and uploading on to the child's casefile in a timely manner. The IRO has also attended designated teachers events linking their role with education, the role of the IRO and looked after children procedures. One of the IROs has attended support group for foster carers to

establish links and address any issues that they might have with regards to the role of the IRO and foster carer's experience of this. IROs also have links with the social work teams and attend Team meetings, including with the Fostering Team, Children Looked After and Children in Need Teams, Leaving Care and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Team and the Children with Disabilities Team. This helps to improve consistency within the social work teams and to build up good working relationships between the IROs and social workers. The IROs are also CSE Champions, involved in supporting and delivering on-going training sessions.

During the year the Looked After population reached an unprecedented high with numbers reaching 201 in September 2016 and 210 in January, 2017 and 211 in February, 2017. It is unclear as to why this was the case but the consequence was that IRO caseloads rose quite significantly for a period which placed extra pressure on a small IRO service. However the team pulled together to ensure that 100% of the Looked After population continued to have an allocated, proactive IRO.

Permanency Outcomes

During the period 2016/17, the majority of children have achieved permanency through a return home to live with parents or relatives, 37.4%, with 3.7% being adopted.

The profile in terms of children leaving care as at 31st March 2017:

- 37.4% Returned home to live with parents/relatives.
- 16% Special Guardianship Order granted (7.4% to carers other than foster carers and 8.6% to former foster carers).
- 9.2% Moved in to Independent Living.
- 3.7% Age assessment determined child is aged 18 or over
- 3.7% Adopted
- 2.5% Sentenced to Custody.
- 1.8% accommodation on remand ended
- 1.2% Care taken over by another Local Authority.
- 24.5% Care ceased for any other reason

Entitlements and Advocacy

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Looked-After Children and Care Leavers Inquiry (2013) asked children and young people what the most important entitlements for looked-after children and care leavers were. The All Party Parliamentary Group selected the five that the children and young people said were most important for looked-after children and for care leavers.

IROs have routinely considered children and young peoples' experience of the ten entitlements and have raised issue with the local authority where appropriate.

IROs findings on the five entitlements for looked-after children for the year ending 31st March 2017

1. There is an expectation that all looked after children have a care plan that says what their needs are now, what will be done to meet those needs and the plans for their future. However there are occasions when IROs have highlighted that these need to be updated to reflect the child's current situation.
2. There is an expectation that all looked after children have a care plan that sets out their views, particularly for those aged 4 years and above.
3. 100% of children had information about their entitlements, including information about decision making processes and professionals' responsibilities to hold a review before any significant decision is made in relation to their care plan. This information is sent out by the CLA admin and includes 'The Young Person's Guide to Care Planning', 'CLA Guide Leaflet' and 'Independent Visitor Leaflet', complaints procedure information and for open to the Leaving Care Team, a copy of the Leaving Care Charter.
4. There is an expectation that when a social worker visits a child or young person they must speak to them alone unless the child or young person refuses, or it is not appropriate at that time or the social worker is unable to.

IROs findings on the five entitlements for care leavers (As at 31/03/2016 there were 98 young people aged 16-19 open to the Leaving Care Team)

5. 100% of children had information about their entitlements, including their entitlement to a £2,000 setting up home allowance.

20% of young people received ILG grant of £2,000 for setting up home allowance, (all young people nominated for LOCATA) in the period 2016/17. The Leaving Care Charter is sent out to all relevant young people stating their entitlements.

6. 100% of young people had information about their entitlements, including information about what the local authority must provide to the young person in relation to help with costs of being in education or training up until the age of 21 (or 25 if the young person is still in education).
7. 100% of young people had information about their entitlements, including information about what help the local authority must provide in relation to the costs of getting and keeping a job (up until the age of 21 if the young person is in education, employment or training).
8. 100% of relevant young people (aged 16-21) have a Pathway Plan and received a copy of their Pathway Plan. They also all have a personal advisor (PA) or qualified social worker. The Pathway Plan is a holistic assessment and every young person completed 'my action plan' which is part of the Pathway Plan. There is also a mechanism to inform if they are dissatisfied with their Pathway Plan through the Participation Officer, Advocate, LINAB or Leaving Care Forum (held twice a year). There are no reports of any young people stating they were dissatisfied with their Pathway Plan.

9. 9% of young people are in higher education and provided with vacation accommodation (or money towards it).

Advocacy provision in Harrow is currently provided by Harrow Association of Disabled People (HADS) as part of commissioned services. The Youth Justice Board commissions advocacy services for young people detained in young offender institutions (YOIs) and secure training centres (STCs).

IROs routinely check that children and young people know about advocacy and how it can support them in having a real say in decisions affecting their lives. This is evidenced by the IRO recording within the Review report indicating when an advocate is involved.

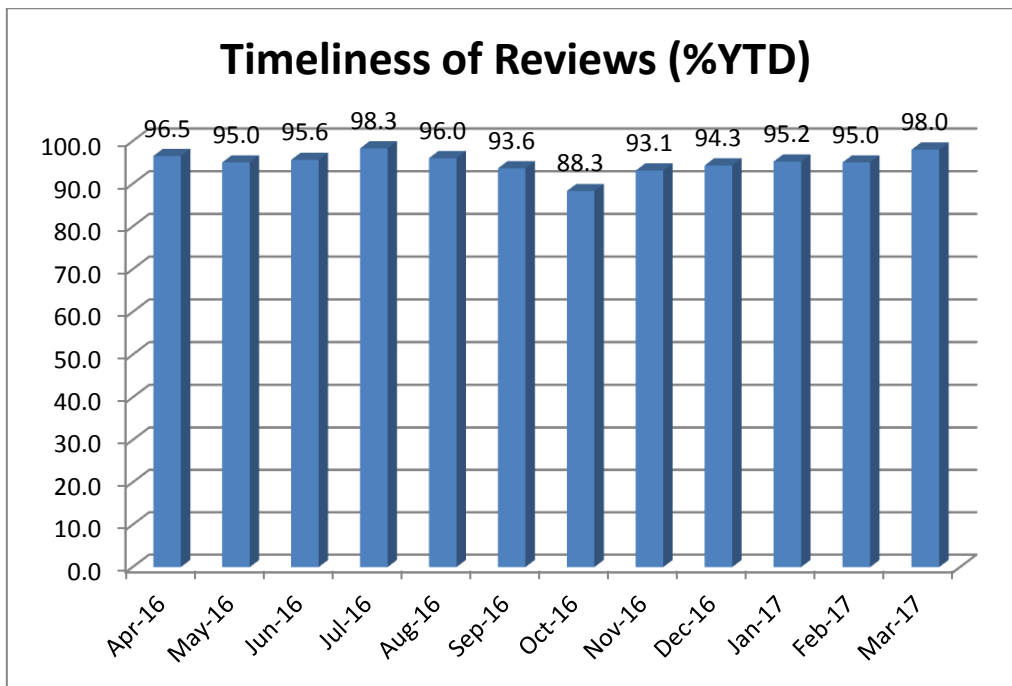
From data collected from the IRO Chairs reports there were 27 looked after children with an advocate during the period 2016/17.

IROs have continued to help ensure that children have access to advocacy but it is important that they continue to discuss at Reviews and record in their reports whether a referral to an Advocate is appropriate, including when this has taken place. Advocacy can be essential for the children and young people and these processes can make a vital contribution to safeguarding and promoting their welfare and rights.

Within the initial pack that is sent by the looked after administrators to all children when they first become looked after there is information on advocacy, The Harrow Children's Pledge, how to make a complaint and Independent Visitors. The Independent Reviewing Officers check within the Review as to whether a child or young person has received all of this information and whether they understand the information including the Harrow Children's Pledge.

Timeliness of reviews

98% of Looked After Reviews took place within the statutory timescales. IROs completed some reviews in a series of meetings to ensure the relevant people were involved and the meeting remained child focused and friendly.



Qualitative information - Achievements and impact of IRO service

Key Messages

IROs routinely check whether children know about individual advocacy and how to make a complaint. They also check at Reviews whether an independent visitor is needed, and any communication needs requiring additional or specialist support.

Children and young people's preparation and involvement in Reviews

Only 3.5% of children and young people did not participate in their Reviews for the year ending 31st March, 2017 which means that 96.5% of children and young people over the age of 4 did participate which is almost all. Participation includes attending and/or contributing to their Review.

IRO's have supported and encouraged young people to be actively involved in their review including a role in part chairing their own review or setting their own agendas wherever appropriate.

Quality of Care Planning

IROs continue to monitor the quality of care plans and raise through the Monitoring Forms and Dispute Resolution Protocol any concerns about the quality of care plans or the care

planning process. Children and young people can expect to contribute to their care plan and to expect that they will have their own copy. IROs routinely check that the care planning process has helped children and young people to have their say about matters important to them and helped them to understand what is happening and why.

Progress-chasing Activities between Looked After Reviews

All children and young people are sent details of their IRO in the initial pack when they become looked after. IROs will follow up after Reviews on the most complex of cases and expect to be informed of significant meetings to do with a child and to be consulted with regards to changes in care planning, significant events or the disruption of a placement. IROs also aim to receive an update from the social worker at the midpoint between Reviews.

Management oversight

The revised statutory Guidance states that operational social work managers must consider the decisions from the Review before they are finalised. This is due in part to the need to ensure any resource implications have been addressed. Once the decisions are completed the Manager has 5 days to raise any queries or objections. This has been achieved by the IRO electronically sending a Task to the relevant manager once the decisions have been completed. The manager then has 5 working days to complete the Task if they are happy with the decisions or respond to the IRO if they do not agree with any of the decisions. The outcome of these across the period indicates that managers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the decisions made at Reviews.

Children's Views about their IRO and their review process

The Participation Officer has been supporting a system of feedback from children and young people to obtain their views. This also allows them to comment about their experience of their IRO. During the period 2016/17, the Participation Officer started to meet individually with children and young people, shortly before one review a year to obtain more detailed information with regards to their views. A consultation form was then completed and made available to the IRO before the review. Their views are also contained within the IRO reports following Reviews.

Examples of written feedback from children and young people:

I remember you from when I was looked after before and it's good to have the same person

I was being bullied at school and we talked about this in my meeting which helped

My IRO listened to me and then we talked about my worries in the meeting

I am now able to go to ICT club

After my review I got extra help with my maths

I said in the Review I want to go home but I'm still here

The Review meeting helped me understand what will happen when I move in to independent living

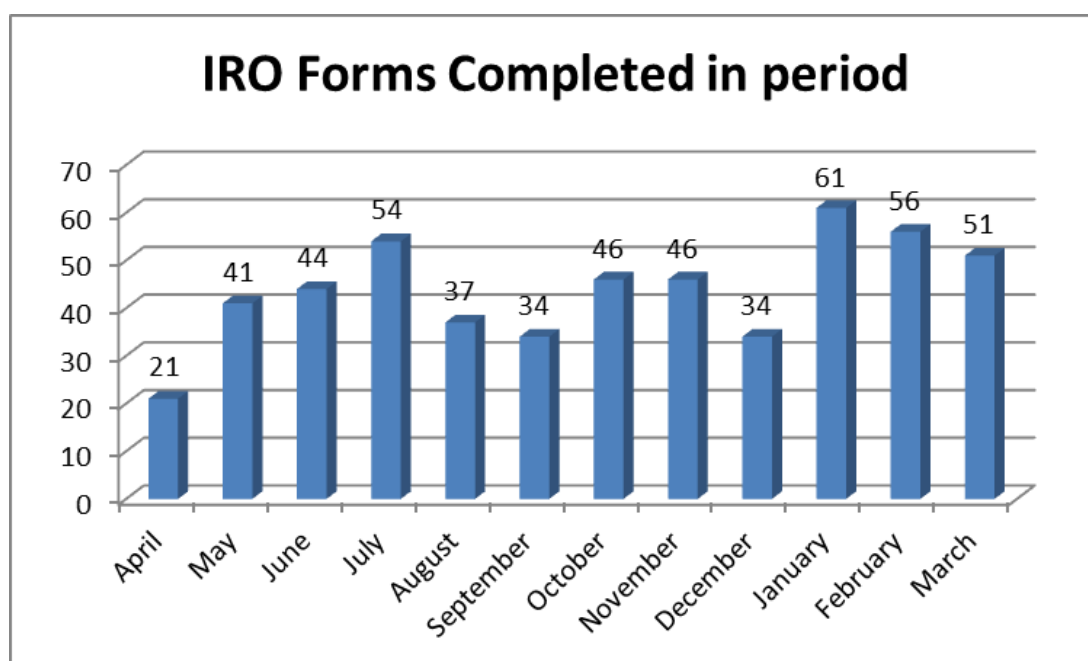
I like my IRO

Quality Assurance of the IRO Service

Identifying good practice, problem resolution and escalation

There has been extensive development of processes to highlight and resolve issues identified through the use of the IRO Monitoring Form and Dispute Resolution Protocol. The IROs also identify examples of good practice.

Monitoring Forms



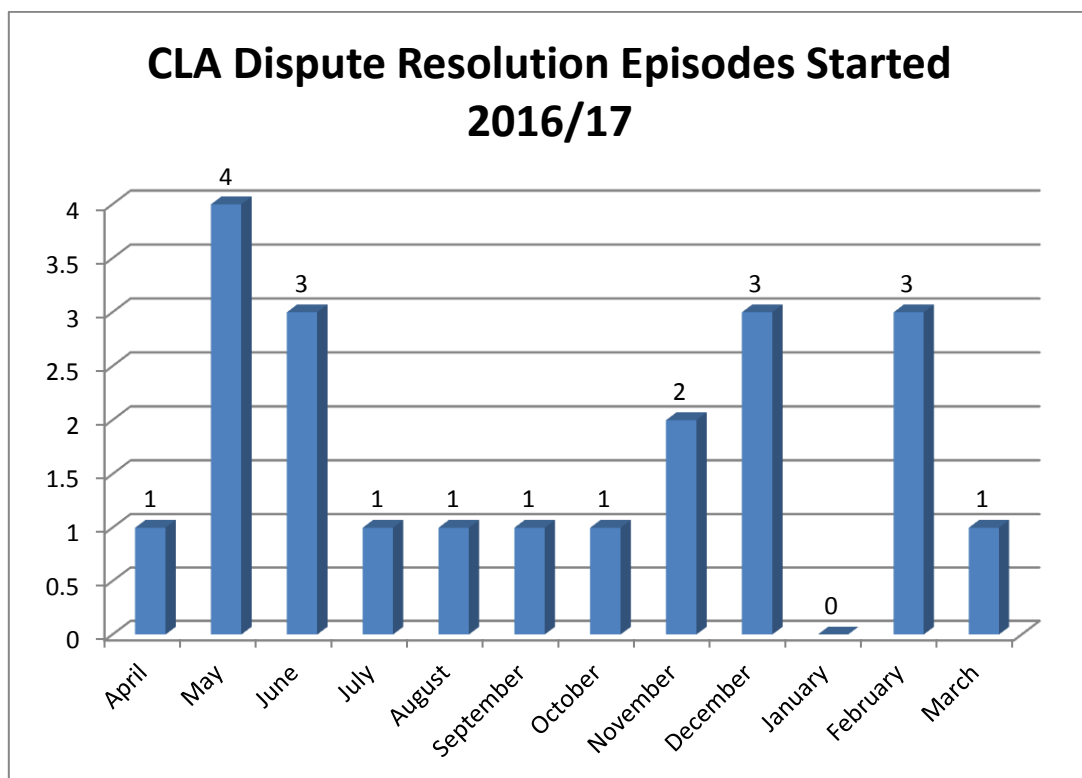
Key information obtained through the Monitoring Forms completed by IROs:

- By 2nd Review, there was a Permanency Plan in place for 85% of children which was a very large majority. Those where there was not a Permanency Plan by 2nd Review tended to be complex cases being in care proceedings, with assessments not yet completed and there therefore being more than one potential plan, dependent on the outcome of those assessments.
- With regards to social worker visits, across the year 86% took place within timescale which was a very large majority. This meant that 14% of visits did not take place within timescale and these were addressed by the IRO, either through the use of the Monitoring Form or the Dispute Resolution Protocol.
- Across the year 79% of children and young people had an up-to-date Health Assessment at the time of their review. The Children Looked After Health team continued to work to improve practice to ensure that health information was relevant, timely and uploaded on to the child's casefile as promptly as possible. The IRO with the championing role for health was also involved in liaising with the Children Looked After Health team and a representative from that team came to

IRO team meetings to provide information and help inform the IROs of how best to help drive up practice through the reviews.

- Across the year 56% of children and young people had an up-to-date Personal Education Plan at the time of their review. This meant that 44% of cases either needed a Personal Education Plan to be completed or updated. It should be noted that the Virtual School have been working to address this but there have remained some challenges with regards to schools and social workers completing the format after a PEP in a timely fashion and for them then to be uploaded on to the child's casefile. However this remains an on-going priority within Children's Services to ensure that Personal Education Plans are up-to-date and on casefiles.

Dispute Resolution Protocol



Key information obtained through the Dispute Resolution Protocols initiated by IROs:

- Throughout the year 88% of Dispute Resolution Protocols were raised and resolved at Stage 1, between the IRO and Team Manager which represented a very large majority. These related to visits not being within required timescales; PEPs or Health Assessments having been completed but not being on the child's casefile; PEPs or Health Assessments being outstanding; Care Plans needing updating or completing and Pathway Plans needing completing or updating. All of these were resolved at Stage 1 by the outstanding actions being completed or dates set for required actions to take place and managers taking forward visit timescales to ensure these improved to the required levels.
- 12% of Dispute Resolution Protocols were resolved at Stage 2, between the Quality Assurance Manager and relevant Head of Service which represented a very small

minority and equated to 3 Dispute Resolution Protocols. One was raised due to IRO concerns that a young man who had come from Afghanistan, fleeing due to fear of persecution following the Taliban killing his father, had not been referred to CAMHS, although this had been a recommendation from a review. Another was with regards to the IRO not being consulted with regards to a significant change to a child's Care Plan and the 3rd was with regards to delay in securing education for a young man who had been excluded from high school.

- There were no Dispute Resolution Protocols that progressed to Stage 3, which would have meant being raised with the Divisional Director.

Supervision and training

IROs have scheduled monthly supervision and adhoc supervision as required. This is provided by their manager. IROs have Appraisals and are encouraged to attend training to meet the HCPC requirements plus areas of interest and development.

Any resource issues that are putting at risk the delivery of a quality service

The IRO role is not to identify the resources needed to meet a young person's needs but to ensure that the team around the young person, their carers' and the young person themselves understand the changing needs of the young person, and that services are appropriately identified and delivered. In addition their views on individual children and their care plans are fed in to the Child Care Planning Group which meets on a monthly basis, chaired by the Divisional Director, to ensure that planning is progressing in a timely manner so that permanency is achieved for looked after children as swiftly as possible.

Achievements for this last year

Quarterly reports analysing the data and information from the Monitoring Forms and Dispute Resolution Protocol to help inform key issues in practice and performance for looked after children is embedded across the directorate. This information is disseminated to the management team across Children and Young People Services to identify areas for development and improvement. IRO's raise matters of good practice and development issues directly with the social worker / line manager at the time of the review meeting.

There has been continued improvement in the quality of IRO reports and recommendations to ensure that recommendations are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely).

There has been consistent monitoring of Health Assessments/SDQs to ensure that young people are supported with their physical and emotional health outcomes.

There has been consistent monitoring of the quality of Personal Education Plans and that they are being used to support children and young people attend and attain in their education.

IRO's continue to monitor where children have a period of missing from care, so that they have Return Home interviews and that there is an understanding of what the push/pull factors are in order to reduce repeat episodes.

IRO's continue to support and deliver training sessions with regards to CSE and Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation (VVE).

IRO's continue to monitor care planning and escalate through the Dispute Resolution Protocol and Care Planning Group, where there is unreasonable delay or no permanency plan by 2nd Review. There is generally good practice in Harrow regarding permanency planning.

IRO's link with the Participation Officer, Complaints and Advocacy services to ensure there is continuous learning from feedback from children and young people; parents, professionals and carers. Generally young people report positively about the value of their relationships with social workers and their carers.

There has been a successful recruitment process to the vacant IRO post, and the team have enjoyed stability and consistency of approach.

Annual work programme with areas for improvement for next year April 2016 – March 2017

Targets for the following areas have been identified and the service expects to deliver improvements during the period, contributing to Key Measurable outcomes linked to the following:

- To continue to monitor Health Assessments/SDQs to ensure that they are supporting physical and emotional health outcomes. Particularly for young people with an SDQ score of 16 or above.
- To continue to monitor the quality of Personal Education Plans and that they are being used to support children and young people attend and attain in their education, and support their ambitions for a move towards independence, further education and employment.
- To continue to support and deliver training sessions with regards to VVE.
- To continue to monitor care planning and escalate through the Dispute Resolution Protocol and Care Planning Group, where there is unreasonable delay or no permanency plan by 2nd Review. Reviews will continue to be delivered in a timely manner to meet statutory requirements.
- Maintaining standards of good quality IRO reports and recommendations which are SMART.
- IRO service, including administrative staff to continue to monitor that correct processes are followed and help raise standards with regards to invitations being sent out in a

timely manner with consultation papers; social worker's reports for reviews always completed before the review and that information is accurately recorded on casefiles and kept up-to-date to reflect the child's journey. This will include ensuring that the young person's NHS number is recorded and leads to good quality information sharing through the successful implementation of the CP-IS project in partnership with NHS digital.

Overview and Summary

The IRO service continues to be vital in helping to ensure that care planning for looked after children progresses in a timely manner, including hearing the voice of the child and that there is a holistic approach to looked after children with consideration of their health needs, including mental health, as well as education, stability of their home and where possible contact with their family and that, where appropriate, there is independent escalation and challenge to achieve this.

These remain challenging financial times for local authorities, and Harrow is no exception to this. Having such experienced, established and longstanding IROs has been very beneficial in providing more consistency for looked after children and has assisted with the process of challenge where it has been appropriate. It has been a challenging year for the IRO service with the numbers of looked after children for parts of the year increasing, and a focus of implementing care planning decisions regarding re-unification / moving from residential care into family based care wherever possible through the targeted use of the Keeping Family Together Service.

Barbara Houston
Quality Assurance Manager
27th February, 2018

REPORT FOR: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of Meeting:	27 March 2018
Subject:	Foster Carer Payments
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Paul Hewitt, Interim Corporate Director of People
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Christine Robson, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Report on Harrow Council Fostering Payments

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out updated proposals in regards to fostering payments for the year 2018- 2019.

Recommendations:

Panel is requested to note the content of the report.

Reason: The Corporate Parenting Panel to understand the payments system to foster carers and the range of activities this covers.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

This is an information report only outlining the updated guidance regarding payments to foster carers. This outlines the rate of payments which are in line with the recent National Fostering stocktake. This report also outlines expectations of how foster carers will spend their payments to ensure that the day to day needs of Harrow's Looked After Children are met and that Looked After Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities and experiences.

The payments are very competitive. The tiered rates recognise the varying complexities of need. This also will mean that children previously placed in higher cost residential and Independent Fostering Agencies can be placed with in-house foster carers.

This report follows consultation with the Harrow Foster Carer Association and has been signed off by the Director of Childrens Services

Options Considered

None.

Legal Implications

The Secretary of State for Education conducted a national fostering stocktake for England during 2017. Their findings and recommendations are set out in their report, Foster Care in England, published in February 2018.

Foster carers get an allowance to cover the cost of caring for a child. The Government sets the recommended national minimum rates and they are updated every April. They range from £125 a week to care for a baby in areas of England other than London or the south east, to £219 a week to care for a 16 or 17-year-old in London. In addition to the allowance, which is intended to cover the costs of caring for the foster child, nearly all fostering services also pay carers a fee - or a reward - on top of the fostering allowance. Although the Government sets the rates for the allowance, it is for individual fostering services and local authorities separately to decide the size of the fee they pay their foster carers.

Financial Implications

Foster carer payments are funded within the overall placements budget. Inhouse foster carer placements represent good value for money being more cost effective than independent fostering agencies or residential placements. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

The payments paper outlines expectations of foster carers and ensures all Looked After Children are treated fairly.

Looked After Children come from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of needs. A range of foster placements are needed to ensure the Council is able to respond to the level of support children and young people present with.

Council Priorities

This report outlines how foster carers support Looked After Children and corresponds directly to the Council priorities of supporting families and supporting the vulnerable

3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 12 March 2018		
Name: Pretal Varsani-Patel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 15 March 2018		

Ward Councillors notified:	NO, as it impacts on all Wards
EqIA carried out:	NO
EqIA cleared by:	N/A - Information report only

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Report Author's name, Job Title, direct telephone number and email address.

Peter Tolley Head of Service Corporate Parenting 0208 736 6943

Background Papers: None.

Harrow Council Fostering Payments 2018/19

Introduction

Harrow payments are very competitive and take into consideration the skills, experience and dedication of our foster carers. We have introduced different bands of payments to recognise the diverse needs of Children Looked After. The majority of fostering placements will be paid at a standard fostering rate of £356 per week, of which £10 will be deducted for the LA to put into savings for the children. Only children and young people with specifically assessed needs will warrant enhanced or specialist payments. The criteria and process for enhanced and specialist payments is outlined on page 10.

This paper outlines the fostering payments carers will receive and also clear expectations of what day to day activities these should cover. We do not want to be over prescriptive but we need to set high standards and expectations of foster carers and the quality of care they provide for Harrows children.

All Fostering payments covers the day-to-day costs of caring for a child:

Food

This includes all meals needed by the young people including school dinners. Older children should be given money out of the allowance if they are required to purchase food.

Education and development

This includes toys, books, educational and developmental materials, sports and music equipment, computer equipment and software, school holidays and outings.

Out of school activities, entertainment and leisure

The foster carer allowance will also cover funding for different activities such as cinema trips, after school clubs, specific children's interests such as sports, music and drama. Each child is different and needs to be encouraged to develop their interests and skills. Foster carers are expected to spend their allowance on at least one leisure activity or hobby for each child each week.

School Trips

If a child has been in placement over 6 months Foster carers are expected to pay the first £150 of any school trip per child and the Local Authority will pay the balance.

Holidays with foster children

Foster carers are expected to take foster children on holiday and the costs be met out of their allowances. In exceptional circumstances a request can be made to the Supervising social worker for additional funding.

Mobile Phone

Foster carers are expected to put aside £15 per month towards mobile phones costs. Reasonable cost of a basic mobile phone.

Toiletries

The allowance also covers toiletries and appropriate hair and skin care.

Luggage

Foster carers are must provide all children placed with them appropriate holdalls or suitcases to transport their belongings.

Contact

The allowance also includes expenses incurred in maintaining contact with the child's family and friends. See section below on transport.

Savings

After consultation with foster carers it has been agreed that £10 per week per child will be deducted from each foster carer's payment and the Local authority will place this in a savings account. When a child moves placement the savings account will move with them.

Guidance regarding fostering allowance

The recommended weekly amounts are

School Dinners	£25 (£5 per day)
Pocket money	£10 per week
Social Activities	£25 per week
Holidays	£15 per week
Mobile Phones	£15 per month
Clothing	£20 per week

For young children carers would buy clothes for the children in placement. Teenagers may be given the allowance directly. This can be clarified at the Placement Agreement Meeting and will depend on the assessment of the young persons capacity to use the allowance appropriately.

Additional Clothing

The majority of clothing needs should be met from the weekly allowance. If a child arrives with little or no adequate clothing; an additional clothing allowance may be

payable. Requests need to be made via the supervising social worker and authorised by the Head of Service Corporate Parenting.

School uniform requirements should normally be met from the weekly allowance. In exceptional circumstances an additional allowance may be made if the child arrives without adequate clothing for school or a change of school has been necessary. Requests need to be made via the supervising social worker and authorised by the Head of Service Corporate Parenting.

Transport

Transport arrangements for all placements should be agreed at the start of the placement and formally ratified at the Placement Agreement Meeting. The following principles apply:-

- 1) Foster carers are responsible for getting children and young people to school and other appointments.
- 2) If foster carers are unable to use their own cars, public transport should be used wherever possible. The use of taxis should be restricted and agreed.
- 3) Back up carers can be used to transport children.
- 4) The foster carer allowance should cover most day to day transport costs.
- 5) Claims can be made for journeys over 40 miles return.
- 6) Any additional expenditure required should be requested at the start of the placement and agreed by the Head of Service Corporate Parenting.

Equipment

For their first placement Foster carers may be provided with basic equipment by the Family Placement Team to enable them to care for children. This could include beds, bedding, buggies, and safety guards. Equipment is the property of the Placement Service and a record will be kept of the equipment issued.

Equipment provided will be of a good quality and will be provided on a one off basis. The maintenance of this equipment will need to be paid for out of the weekly allowance.

Birthdays and Festivals

The following additional allowances are paid for birthdays and for one festival per year. This needs to be identified by the supervising social worker and passed to the Business Support Officer/Finance Officer to process.

The following rates will be paid for the additional birthday and festival allowance

Age Range	Amount per year
0- 4 years	£60.00

5-12 years	£80.00
13-18 years	£100.00

Carer Payments

We strongly recommend that you open a separate bank account specifically for your fostering payments.

Payments will be generated after the relevant week has ended and so will be based on what is actually due to you for services already provided with a payment period of Thursday to Wednesday.

Babysitting

The agreed babysitting rate for foster carers to carer for other carers children is £5.50 per hour.

Respite Arrangements

Foster carers can identify other foster carers to care for their placements for a planned respite but must get these arrangements agreed and approved by their supervising social worker.

Payments for Respite for short periods of time. Deduct clothing allowance (£20) from weekly allowance ie £346 -£20 then divide by 7 for the **daily respite rate £46.57**

Recovery of Overpayments

- When an overpayment occurs and carers still have children placed with them, the overpayment will be netted off future payments until the overpayment is fully recovered.
- In very unusual circumstances when the overpayments are large amounts, recovery can be processed with a special arrangement with the service. All such arrangements are subject to the approval of the Head of Service.
- Finally when over payments are large and there are no other children in place to facilitate recovery, the Local Authority will, in line with corporate policies generate an invoice for the outstanding amount to be paid in full by the relevant carer in due course.

Holiday Payments for foster carers

A holiday payment will be paid each year. This will be equivalent to one weeks of the standard fostering payment £346 per approved number of children or young people approved for. For example:

Approved for one child £346

Approved for two children £346 X 2 = £692

Approved for three children £346 X 3 = £1038

These payments will only be made when foster carers can evidence all of the following for the previous year:-

- They have been available for regular supervision with their supervising social worker
- They have been available and willing to take placements
- They have kept up to date foster carer logs
- They have completed three training courses/activities
- They have completed the Training and Support Development Standards once they have been approved as a Foster Carer for one year.

These payments will be paid after a foster carer annual review when these matters can be evidenced.

Emergency Placements

The Fostering Duty Social Worker provides our Emergency Duty Team social workers with a list of in house Foster carers who make themselves available to take an emergency unplanned placement out of office hours.

Foster carers will be paid £40 per week for this availability.

Foster carers who agree to be on this list must make themselves available to take placements and must take children referred within their age range.

Additional funding

The foster carers allowance is designed to cover all the costs of caring for a child. In very exceptional circumstances additional funding may be seen as necessary to meet the needs of a child. Foster carers need to discuss this with their supervising social workers who in turn will need to seek appropriate management approval.

Any additional funding agreed will need to relate to a specific cost incurred and will be time limited.

Monitoring of allowances

Supervising social workers will monitor through the statutory supervision visits that the fostering allowance is being used appropriately and that expenditure is accounted for. Supervising social workers will be required to regularly view receipts and the purchases. This will be recorded within the supervision visits record.

Retainer

If children are removed from a foster placement due to an allegation, a retainer of £100 per week will be paid to the foster carer whilst an investigation is pending. This will be reviewed monthly and paid for a maximum of three months.

A retainer will not be paid if the carer has asked for the placement to end.

Parent and child placement

The foster carer will receive a payment of £700 per week.

Insurance

Foster carers are required to inform their home insurance company when approved. Foster carers should also inform their car insurance company. Any need to make a claim regarding a foster placement should be discussed with the supervising social worker.

Fostering Network can recommend insurance companies to use.

Annual Fostering payments Statement

An annual statement can be requested in May each year after the financial year has closed by emailing Artinvoices@harrow.gov.uk . We will process your request within 4 weeks and send the statement via email.

Car Parking

Any car parking charges over £2.50 where carers need to pay for attending contact, CLA meetings or training will be reimbursed. Please provide receipts.

Special Guardianship Orders, Residence Orders and Adoption Orders

All payments are means tested using the DFES model. A Financial assessment form will need to be completed and sent to the Head of Service Corporate Parenting.

Foster carers who take an Adoption order, Special Guardianship Order or Residence Order will also be subject to a means test assessment.

Residence Order payments are discretionary.

All Special Guardianship Order, Residence Order and Adoption Order allowances will be time limited and subject to regular review and annual financial assessments, which will require you to provide evidence of all financial income and outgoings.

Post eighteen placements

All looked after young people over 16 should have a Pathway Plan which outlines how that young person will move onto independence and this should be very clear so that when they reach 18 these plans would have been implemented.

Any plan for a young person to remain with their current foster carers beyond the age of 18 needs to be discussed by all relevant parties and agreed by Head of Service Corporate Parenting. The status of this placement will then change at the young persons eighteenth birthday to become a Staying Put placement.

When the placement becomes a Staying put placement the carer will cease to receive a fostering allowance and will be provided with a Staying put allowance of £178 per week.. The young person is expected to claim for all state benefits in which they are entitled. Those young people not entitled to State benefits will receive an allowance from the Leaving Care Team to cover their day to day living costs.

If the young person is in full time study for A levels or equivalent the main fostering allowance may continue until the July after the young persons eighteenth birthday after which the payments would become Staying put rates.

Introduce a friend

We have our recruit a friend scheme and if you nominate someone who goes on to be approved as a Harrow foster carer you will receive £200. Please make sure they mention you when they apply so we can ensure you receive this payment.

Tax advice

Since April 2003, ALL foster carers have been treated as self-employed. You need to register as such when you are approved as a foster carer. Carers are entitled to qualifying care relief. Each financial year you need to calculate your qualifying amount. (the amount you can be paid before paying tax).

STEP 1

Work out your tax-free 'qualifying amount' by adding together two elements:

A basic element of £10,000 per household per tax year on the basis the foster carer has been approved for the whole of the tax year (or pro rata for foster carers newly approved part-way through the tax year)

Plus

A child element, for each week (or part week) a child is placed with you of:

£200 per week per child aged under 11

£250 per week per child aged 11+

Example: child aged 8 is placed for a full year (6th April to 5th April). Basic element £10,000 plus child element £200 x 52 weeks ie £10,400 therefore TOTAL qualifying amount £10,000 + £10,400 = £20,400

Note that a tax week runs from Monday-Sunday, so if a child arrives on a Thursday and leaves on Tuesday, that counts as two 'weeks'.

STEP 2

Work out your total payments from the fostering service for the tax year (6th April to 5th April). This is everything paid to you by the fostering service including fostering allowances, fee or reward payments, holiday or birthday allowances, mileage and any other expenses. We can give you a statement after the 5th April, showing your total payments for the year.

WORKING OUT IF YOU HAVE ANY TAXABLE PROFIT

Now work out your profit – by deducting your 'qualifying amount' from your total payments from your fostering service provider.

If the qualifying amount is more than the total payments from your fostering service, the profit is zero.

If you have a taxable profit from fostering you might still not have to pay any tax if you have not used their personal tax allowance (for example, if you foster full-time and have no other employment). Every UK resident has a personal tax allowance which may vary with their circumstances. This is the amount of income you can receive each year, including any taxable profit from fostering, without having to pay tax on it. The Personal Allowance for most people born after 5 April 1948 for 2015/16 is £10,600. This allowance is how much taxable income you can have before you start paying Income Tax.

You can find more information about tax and national insurance on the Fostering Network website at the following link <https://www.fostering.net/all-about-fostering/foster-carers/finances/income-tax#.Va97ZctRHcs>

NATIONAL INSURANCE

When you register as self-employed you also register for Class 2 National Insurance (NI) contributions. Foster carers have a number of options about how they wish to pay this Class 2 NI:

- Qualify for the **Small Profit Threshold (SPT)**. If a foster carer has no taxable profit from their fostering, or if they have taxable profit (the amount over the threshold) by up to £5,965 automatically they will not have to pay Class 2 NICs. Foster carers can make a voluntary contribution if they want to if their National Insurance record is not complete.
- **Pay them** (tax year 2015-16 they are £2.80/week)
- **NI credits** – foster carers can apply for a NI credit for each week they are approved as a foster care. Foster carers can apply for NI credits at the end of each tax year and they have one year to do so. There is a form they will need to complete

and will require a letter from their fostering service to confirm they have been approved for the tax year. A NI credit will count towards your NI record.

The option you choose from above will depend on your individual circumstances and whether you have a full NI record or not.

If you have further questions or need advice you can contact the Fostering Network member helpline on **0207 401 9582, open Monday-Friday, 10am-3pm**

Criteria for different tiers of payments

1. Standard Fostering

All Children Looked After will have experienced some degree of loss and difficulty and this will be evident in their behaviour and presentation. All foster carers are expected to be able to care for and manage the majority of children and young people and will automatically be paid a standard fostering payment.

2. Enhanced Fostering

For these payments children and young people will be presenting consistent challenges which require enhanced input from the foster carers.

This would include

- regular engagement and involvement with therapists and other professionals
- one foster carer in the household needs to be available fulltime to ensure there is close engagement and supervision
- supporting social workers and other professionals in assessments of young people's needs
- managing and supporting young people presenting high levels of difficult behaviour
- Supporting children who are out of school and needing additional support with their education and learning
- Supporting young people involved in offending behaviour
- Supporting young people at risk of CSE or gang involvement

3. Specialist Fostering

These payments are for children and young people with a considerable complex needs who would ordinarily be placed in residential care. These would be for foster carers who have proven skills and experience in working with complex needs and for young people who have proven and assessed complex needs.

All placements would automatically be paid at a standard rate. All requests for an enhanced or specialist rate will be based on a clear assessment of need and a decision will be made by Head of Service Corporate Parenting.

All enhanced and specialist rates will be time limited and subject to regular review and monitoring

Weekly fostering rates

Standard Fostering payment	£356 - £10 (per looked after child)
Enhanced Fostering payment	£550 - £10 (per looked after child)
Specialist Fostering payment	£850- £10 (per looked after child)
Parent and Child Fostering payments	£700 - £10 (per looked after child)