

Corporate Parenting Panel Agenda

Date: Tuesday 31 January 2023

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Auditorium - Harrow Council Hub, Forward Drive,
Harrow

Membership (Quorum 3)

Chair: Councillor Hitesh Karia

Conservative Councillors: Matthew Goodwin-Freeman
Chetna Halai

Labour Councillors: Simon Brown (VC)
Aneka Shah-Levy

Non-Voting Advisory Member: Valerie Griffin

Reserve Members:

Conservative Reserve Members:

1. Vipin Mithani
2. Govind Bharadia
3. Zak Wagman

Labour Reserve Members:

1. Sasi Suresh
2. Krishna Suresh

Officers:

Contact: Nikoleta Kemp, Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer
Tel: 07761 405898 E-mail: nikoleta.kemp@harrow.gov.uk

Scan this code for the electronic agenda:



Useful Information

Joining the Meeting virtually

The meeting is open to the public and can be viewed online at [London Borough of Harrow webcasts](#)

Attending the Meeting in person

Directions by car:

Go along Kenmore Avenue and head towards the Kenton Recreation Ground. When approaching the end of the Kenmore Avenue turn right before reaching the Kadwa Patidar Centre.

You will be admitted on a first-come-first basis and directed to seats.

Please:

- (1) Stay seated.
- (2) Access the meeting agenda online at [Browse meetings - Corporate Parenting Panel](#)
- (3) Put mobile devices on silent.
- (4) Follow instructions of the Security Officers.
- (5) Advise Security on your arrival if you are a registered speaker.

Filming / recording

This meeting may be recorded or filmed, and if you choose to attend, you will be deemed to have consented to this. Any recording may be published on the Council website.

Agenda publication date: Monday 23 January 2023

Agenda - Part I

1. **Attendance by Reserve Members**
To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from all Members present.
3. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)
That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
4. **Public Questions**
To receive any public questions received.

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, 26th January 2023. 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.
6. **Deputations**
To receive deputations (if any).
7. **Update from care experienced young people about their experiences**
Verbal update.
8. **Update and performance for Corporate Parenting Service** (Pages 11 - 20)
Presentation from the Head of Corporate Parenting.
9. **Virtual School Performance Update** (Pages 21 - 32)
Presentation from the Head of Virtual School.
10. **IRO Annual Report** (Pages 33 - 42)
Presentation from the Quality Assurance Manager for Vulnerable Children.
11. **Update and Performance on Health for Children Looked After** (Pages 43 - 58)
Presentation from the Named Nurse for Children Looked After in Harrow.
12. **Any Other Urgent Business**
Which cannot otherwise be dealt with.

Agenda - Part II - Nil

Data Protection Act Notice

The Council will record the meeting and will place the recording on the Council's website.

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



Corporate Parenting Panel

Minutes

20 October 2022

Present:

Chair: Councillor Hitesh Karia

Councillors: Simon Brown Chetna Halai
Matthew Goodwin-Freeman Sasi Suresh

**Non-voting
Advisory
Member:** Valerie Griffin Foster Carer

**Officers (in
attendance):** Senel Arkut Corporate Director, People
Joy Bell Participation Officer
Jacinta Jain Head of Service – Corporate
Parenting
Sarah Moriarty Assistant Headteacher
Christine Nichols Named Nurse for Children
Looked After In Harrow
Interim Designated Nurse
Safeguarding Children and
LAC (Harrow)
Kathryn Robinson Advisory Teacher
Peter Tolley Divisional Director Children's
Services
Mellina Williamson-Taylor Virtual School Headteacher

15. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Aneka Shah-Levy

Councillor Sasi Suresh

16. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

All agenda items

Councillor Hitesh Karia declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he worked for an organization that provided certain children's services. He would remain in the room whilst the matters were considered and voted upon.

17. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 be taken as a read and signed correct record.

18. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions had been received.

19. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received.

Resolved Items

20. Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received.

21. Update from care experienced young people about their experiences

Members welcomed a care experienced young person who had recently graduated as a Social Worker and Joy Bell, the recently appointed Participation Officer. A further young person had been unable to attend due to previously scheduled maths tuition.

The Head of Corporate Parenting asked the young person in attendance to share what support Harrow had given her in her aspirations and what in retrospect might have helped, particularly given her more recent knowledge as a newly qualified social worker.

The young person reported on her experience of being looked-after by Harrow Council and receiving leaving care services. She stated that at the time of growing up in care she had been unaware of the active support that was given, for example listening to her request for a long term placement. It had been recognised that she wished to advocate for herself and lead meetings. She had received very good support during GCSEs, the Virtual school were aware of her motivation and provided support and extra-curricular assistance.

She expressed the view that many young people did not understand the concept of pathway plans, and doubted whether half of them read it. After the first review she had learned the benefit but it took four reviews before she realised people's roles. Her attendance at number of interview panels for social work staff had been very helpful both in showing how candidates were filtered and graded but also taught her how bias was taken out and what the candidates brought to the table. Her personal advisor was a turning point in life, someone who understood her.

In response to a question as to her experience of health assessments, she stated that she had not understood the intention, she had felt continually screened and at the time had not understood why she was withdrawn from class to, for instance, have weight and height checked. She welcomed the suggestion of a shadowing opportunity and it was agreed that the Named Nurse for Children Looked After in Harrow would offer this.

The Participation Officer stated that she had been the Social Worker for the second young person for three years. The young person had recently turned 16 and was studying at a performance arts college. He had felt well supported during his recent transition, had moved away from where he was living and aimed to attend university when 18. He considered that his aspirations were really well supported such as her attending university open days with him. The only area of disappointment was the timeliness of extra tuition in English and maths as they were not as quickly provided as he would wish, particularly during the pandemic. Now he was 16 he would like to lead reviews.

he Panel was interested that young people who were interested in speaking and advocating for themselves were given the opportunity when ready to lead meetings about their circumstances. It welcomed the flexibility of moving from generic processes in such cases but noted that not all young people wished to develop in this way.

Arising from the discussion, the Head of Corporate Parenting informed the Panel that the pathway plan was effectively the care plan. The officers would need to look at how to engage young people in connection with the plan and ensure that they understood its purpose.

The Head of Corporate Planning asked the young person what three things she considered the Council could do to improve.

The Young Person expressed the view that more regular logs would be beneficial. As a young person in care she had no photographs or memories and life story work from the foster carer and social worker would provide help going forward. She had requested her documents from Harrow Council and was disappointed that her name had been misspelt and the papers were out of date order.

The Head of Corporate Parenting stated that life story and records were considered important. The Head Teacher of the Virtual School informed the Panel that teachers were encouraged to show a piece of work that the child

had been proud of in order to provide memories at every PEP (Personal Education Plan) meeting.

Secondly, the Young Person suggested less use of jargon as it was confusing, for example RO, CLA review and pathway plans. The Panel considered that the need to break down jargon was important, with less acronyms and items such as IRO written in full with an explanation. There should be signposting regarding the understanding of everyone's roles.

Thirdly, better support for moving on from care. There had been a moment when she had felt forgotten but this was then picked up by her personal adviser. It should be recognised that not all young people wanted to move onto independent living at the same age, some needed space and that they might not wish to attend university. The Advisory Member stated that the foster carer could assist in progress chasing and in her experience young people were ready to move on at different paces.

The Panel and officers thanked the young person for the very helpful feedback.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

22. Update and performance for Corporate Parenting Service

The Panel received a presentation from the Head of Corporate Parenting including the performance scorecard, demographics and disproportionality, participation service update, Ofsted regulations and impact on placement sufficiency, and challenges and achievements. Members were invited to the next CIC (Children In Care) awards.

With regard to the performance indicators, the Head of Corporate Parenting stated that Harrow had performed better than its statistical neighbours and England average on all twelve indicators. In response to questions Members were informed that the targets had been previously set by the Panel and could be revised if wished. It was noted that the targets for indicators 3 and 12 were accumulative. It was agreed that future such tables take the form of bar or pie charts.

Arising from discussion on the percentage of Children Looked After placed more than 20 miles away from home, the Divisional Director undertook to provide a breakdown as to the reason for the placements. In addition it was agreed that future such reports would indicate the number of young people in each indicator as some contained small numbers.

The Panel discussed the demographics and a Member suggested that it would be more meaningful to make comparisons with other London Boroughs rather than all local authorities. He also requested a keynote explanation for the number of 16+ CLA.

In response to a question regarding the costs of the Commissioning Alliance accreditation scheme, the Divisional Director stated that the cost impact was speculative.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation be noted; and
- (2) future reports include graphs and further information as detailed above.

23. Virtual School Performance Update

The Panel received a presentation on the performance of the Harrow Virtual School for the 2021/22 academic year from the Headteacher for CLA (Children Looked After).

The Virtual Headteacher drew particular attention to:

- The Virtual School was particularly proud of the seven students beginning university;
- Post Covid, officers were again visiting schools;
- Those young people identified with Special Education Needs received Personal Education Plans which resulted in additional budget provision. PEP returns remained at 100%;
- The number of suspensions remained the same as the pre pandemic level. This was on par with the English average. The aim was to reduce the number of suspensions. It was unusual for more girls to be suspended than boys. A specialist project for girls would be put in place.
- 75% of students from White backgrounds achieved one or more GCSE passes compared to 100% of students from Asian and Other Mixed Backgrounds. Further support and specialist interventions for White/White British students were in place to ensure that this cohort makes proportional progress against their peers. It should be noted that as the cohort sizes were small the situation could change the following year.

In response to a question regarding suspensions it was noted that there was an Inclusion Pathway plan which was a document that schools could tap into. A Member stated that it would be useful to receive more detail on the reasons for suspension. The Director of Children's Services indicated that case studies would be provided in future reports.

The Panel congratulated the Virtual School team on the report. It expressed congratulations to the seven students achieving university places and noted the interventions with regard to the suspension of girls and performance of white young people.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation be noted; and
- (2) future reports include case studies detailing reasons for suspensions.

24. Update and Performance on Health for Children Looked After

The Panel received a presentation from a representative (Named Nurse for Children Looked After in Harrow) of the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust. The presentation outlined the key performance indicators for Harrow CLA, exception reporting, and further areas of assistance provided to the Council.

The Named Nurse drew particular attention to:

- The situation regarding dental checks would be monitored and support provided when contact was made by the social worker. Checks would be made for out of area appointments;
- The reasons for in excess of 41 days between identification as CLA and completion of the Initial Health Assessment included hospitalisation, a large sibling group with one carer, and issues of consent. If appropriate for out borough assessments, there would be liaison with the specialist nurse for that area;
- The Nurse made phone contact the day prior to the appointment as a reminder. In the event the young person did not attend phone contact would be made to ascertain the reason and maybe alleviate worries in order to minimise the possibility of a second missed appointment;
- With regard to the case study, the statement that he had not been listened to had been followed up and the nurse had advocated for him.

The Panel thanked the officer for the comprehensive presentation. It was suggested that texting potentially be used to communicate with the young people. The case study indicated flexibility and willingness to go the extra mile such as the nurse attending both the assessment and LAC review.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 8.30 pm).

(Signed) Councillor Hitesh Karia
Chair

Corporate Parenting Service Update

January 2023

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Jacinta Kane
Assistant Director
Corporate Parenting

- Performance Scorecard
- Children Placed 20+ miles from home
- Demographics and Disproportionality
- Fostering Recruitment Update

Performance Scorecard

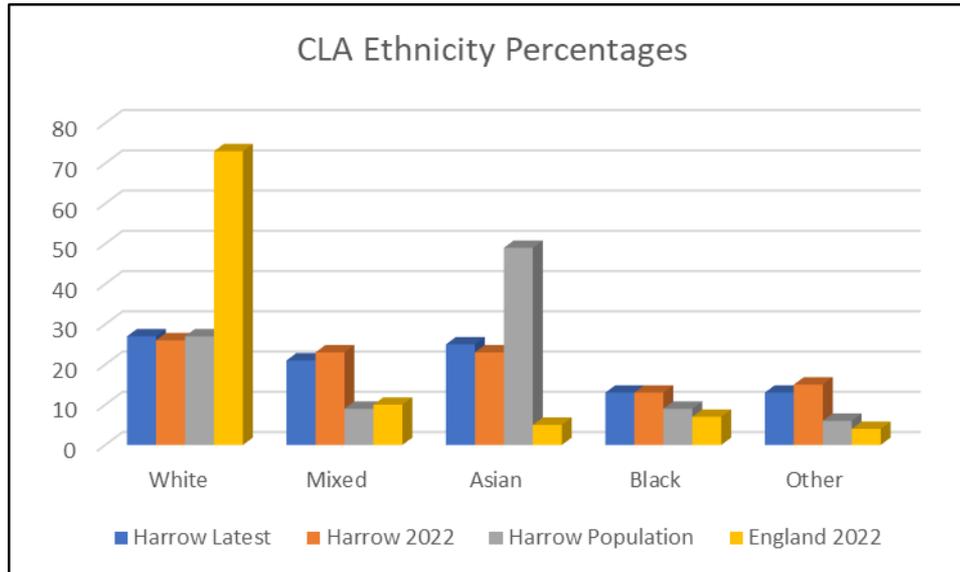
Ref No	Indicator Description	Statistical Neighbour Average 2020/21	England average 2020/21	Harrow 2019-20	Harrow 2020-21	Harrow 2021-22	Harrow target 2022/23	Harrow Q1 2022-23	Harrow Q2 2022-23	
1	Number of current CLA at end of quarter	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	186	182	188	N/A	187	191	
2	Number of current Care Leavers at end of quarter	Not Published	Not Published	166	183	189	N/A	188	191	
3	Rate of CLA per 10,000 children aged under 18	38.6	67.0	31.7	30.0	31.5		31.2	31.8	
4	Timeliness of Reviews of Looked After Children	Not Published	Not Published	98.9	97.1	89.8	95%	93.8 (167/178)	86.7 (157/181)	
5	% of CLA with 3 or more placements	10.0	9.0	13.5	10.0	13.8	Q1 - 2.5% Q2 - 5% Q3 - 7.5% Q4 - 10%	1.1 (2/187)	2.1 (4/191)	
6		% of CLA looked after for 2.5+ years and in the same placement for 2 years	69.5	70.0	69.7	81.0	68.4	70%	76.5 (26/34)	77.5 (31/40)
7		% of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (19 - 21 year olds)	86.4	88.0	92.9	82.1	89.9	85%	96.3 (27/28)	84.3 (43/51)
8	% of Care Leavers not in education, employment or training (19 - 21 year olds)	37.5	41.0	29.1	40.0	27.6	35%	25 (7/28)	35.3 (18/51)	
9	% of CLA who are looked after 1 yr + with up to date Dental Checks (rolling year)	41.7	40.0	94.0	73.0	91.5	90%	89.9 (98/109)	89.9 (94/109)	
10	% of CLA who are looked after 1 yr + with up to date Health Checks (rolling year)	91.8	91.0	94.0	99.0	99.1	95%	93.5 (102/109)	91.7 (100/109)	
11	% of children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted	5.5	10.0	3.1	4.3	3.8	N/A	3.7 (1/27)	4 (2/50)	
12	% Children who ceased to be looked due to a Special Guardianship Order	Not Published	12.3	13.0	19.1	14.3	N/A	0.0	4 (2/50)	
13	% of CLA placed more than 20 miles away from home (snapshot)	22.1	16.0	20.0	20.0	16.0	20%	20.9 (29/139)	20.4 (29/142)	
14	% of all CLA (current and ceased) with at least 1 missing episode in year	12.9	10.0	12.8	9.0	8.8	Q1 - 3% Q2 - 6% Q3 - 9% Q4 - 12%	1.9 (4/214)	4.1 (10/246)	

Children placed 20+ miles from Home Address

In house fostering (long-term)	8
CYADS specialist placement (long-term)	7
Children's home (medium term – risk based)	4
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) (long-term)	4
Parent and child placement (assessment / short term)	2
→ Kinship carer (long term)	2
Young Offenders Institute (YOI) (Short term)	1
Placed for adoption (long term)	1
Grand Total	29

The majority of children placed 20+ miles from home are in long-term, settled placements which meet their assessed needs. A small number of children are placed in short term or temporary placements, based on assessed needs and are living with their parents, in children's homes for safety reasons or in custody due to offences.

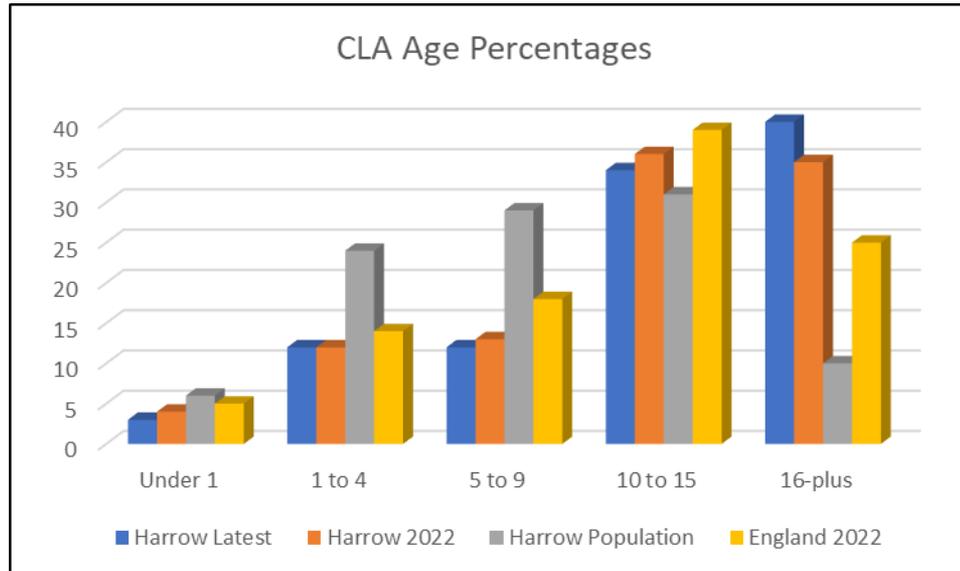
Harrow CLA ethnicity snapshot (% of population)



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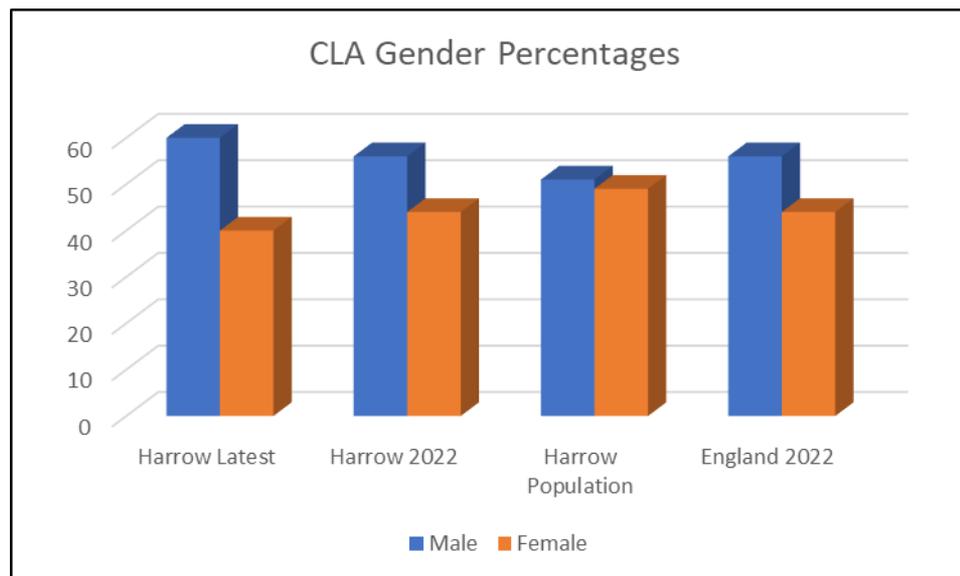
The above graph compares population level data for Harrow (grey) and England (yellow) with Harrow's Q2 data for CLA (blue) and 2022 CLA data (orange).

CLA by Harrow are disproportionately "mixed", "other" or "black" ethnic groups compared to the general Harrow population. Children of Asian ethnicity are significantly under-represented in CLA numbers. Included in the above data are 32 unaccompanied asylum seeking children currently CLA.



The above graph compares population level data for Harrow (grey) and England (yellow) with Harrow’s Q2 data for CLA (blue) and 2022 CLA data (orange).

The graph highlights the much higher percentage of children in care who are 16+ compared to the general Harrow population, and slightly higher percentage of CLA aged 10-15 compared to the Harrow population.



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The above graph compares population level data for Harrow (grey) and England (yellow) with Harrow's Q2 data for CLA (blue) and 2022 CLA data (orange).

The graph highlights there is a significantly higher percentage of males in care than females. Plans are underway to review how gender identity is recorded in mosaic.

Fostering Recruitment Update



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The fostering team raising awareness and promoting fostering in Harrow Town Centre in November and December 2022

There is an active ongoing recruitment campaign in the community, including supermarkets, community events, places of worship, Harrow People magazine, social media and developing relationships with the Romanian and Eastern European Hub.



- 55 households currently fostering for Harrow
- 3 new households approved this financial year (capacity for 7 children), with 5 further households undergoing assessment (capacity for 8 children)
- 81 children currently living with in-house foster carers

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Key Challenges

- Sufficiency challenges for large sibling groups, adolescent carers, particularly teenage girls and children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Competitive fostering allowances to retain and recruit in-house carers and rise in cost of living
- Housing challenges / available spare rooms to foster

Harrow People – Foster Carers Making a Difference



◀ **Jayesh and Roshana have looked after 17 children since becoming foster carers 15 years ago.**

Jayesh said: “Our first foster child was a girl with learning difficulties and our relationship was built on how we supported her, recognising her needs and not ours. When she came to us she could barely read or write. Now she is 27 and a mum herself – and still very special to us. It is challenging, but to be able to turn situations around and improve things for them is priceless.

“There are lots of highs – seeing the child move forward and turn their life around – and there are lows, as any parent experiences. Sometimes you don’t know what you’re doing but there is always back-up available from the Harrow team.

“If you have love and space in your home, fostering is the best thing you can do. The children are brilliant and we wouldn’t change what we do for the world.”

Harrow Virtual School



This presentation will cover the following:

- Training Updates
- Enrichment Programmes
- End of Key Stage Early Predictions
- School Attendance- Autumn Term
- School Suspensions and Case Studies
- Good news...



Training and Programme Updates

22

All training was favourably received and has been impactful.

Programme	Target Group	Frequency
New to Role and Refresher Training	Designated Teachers and school staff supporting children looked after	Termly
Personal Education Plans	New to role Social Workers	Termly
Positive Parenting for Teens'	Parents with social care involvement	Termly
Motivating Our Children to Learn	Parents with social care involvement	Termly
Supporting the mental health needs of children in care	Foster carers	Fortnightly. Training topics are participant led
Relational Practice, Trauma and Attachment Awareness Course	Whole School	Annually . The course is over a school year.

Enrichment



23

Arvon residential was a success in October half-term, with students travelling to Yorkshire for a week of creative writing and exploration. They developed a book of poetry which will be published and posted to them.

Online Philosophy Club (KS2 students). Every Tuesday. Key areas are critical thinking skills, imagination and learning strategies. Students work as a group for reflection and problem solving.

Online Debate Mate for KS3-KS5 students to develop debating skills. This leads up to an in person debating competition in February half-term.

Harrow School Thursday Study Club . The first hour is for tuition and homework support. The remainder of the evening is for enrichment.

Online Reading Club (KS2-KS3 students). Takes place on Mondays monthly. Books are posted to students to read in preparation for discussion at next the book club.

Care 2 Dance (KS3-KS5). Weekly dance lessons on Saturdays in Wembley.



Enrichment cont'd.

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Brunel Urban Scholars . Targeted at Year 10 students to raise aspirations. This takes place monthly on Saturdays at Brunel University.

MyBnk . Aimed at post-16 students. It is a money workshop. Students receive a Level 1 certificate for completion. This certificate is required prior to being put forward for Locata flat. (The CLA & YOT teams also arrange separate sessions)

Drama & Arts Programme for primary aged students to develop arts and drama skills. This starts in February.

Boxing with Mentoring. Targeted at small groups . 10 sessions in total taking place in South Harrow for students Years 9 and 10. It is also open to other age groups. It starts in February.

Fishing – for small groups of primary and secondary students starting this term.

Lumina online 1:1 tuition where teachers (mainly from independent schools) volunteer 1 hour per week to teach GCSE and A Levels.

End of Key Stages 1 and 2- Early Predictions



Year 2

25% (1/4) are predicted to meet expected standards in Maths, Writing and Reading. The England average for CLA across all 3 subjects is 33%.

25

Year 6

- 25% (1/4) are predicted to meet expected standards in Maths, Writing and Reading. The England average for CLA across all 3 subjects is 66%.

Performance is monitored via bimonthly monitoring meetings and termly PEPs. Pupils needing additional support are identified early for interventions e.g 1-1 tuition.

End of Key Stage Four- Early Predictions



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Year 11	At least 1 GCSE Pass (Grades 1 -9)	8 or more GCSEs Grades 4 or above
Whole Cohort	60% (9/15)	20% (3/15)
In Care 1 Year Plus	46% (6/13)	23% (3/13)

- Over half the Year 11 cohort are expected to achieve at least 1 or more GCSE passes.
- Under a quarter of students, in care 1 year plus will achieve at least 8 good GCSEs.
- Approximately 7 students are struggling with engagement, their attendance is currently below 90%.

Autumn Term Attendance



Whole School Attendance. 101 Students. 4 children are not on roll.

- 57% (55/97) of students have 90% attendance or better.
- 15% (15/97) of students have 100% attendance.
- 35% (34/97) have poor attendance i.e less than 90%
- 13% (13/97) have less than 50% attendance.

Children in Care 1 Year Plus. 72 students. 2 children are not roll.

- 61% (43/70) of students have 90% attendance or better.
- 19% (13/70) of students have 100% attendance.
- 27% (19/70) have poor attendance i.e less than 90%
- 9 % (6/70) have less than 50% attendance.

Harrow Virtual School tracks and monitors the attendance of CLA on a daily basis. We partner with an organisation who contacts schools every day to confirm that the child has arrived at school on time.

The Virtual School (VS) attendance officer receives and responds to this information and any anomalies in attendance, is communicated to social workers, carers and other key professionals in good time

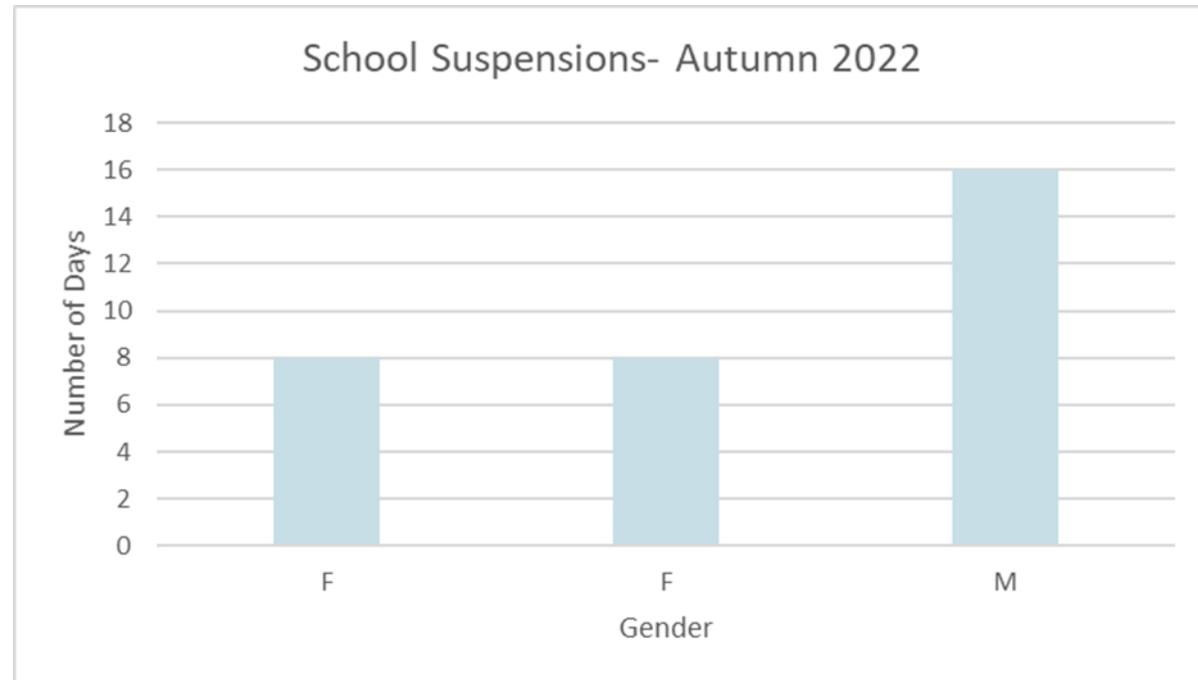
Pupils who are emotionally- based school avoiders are also supported by professionals in the Virtual School to include learning mentors, educational and clinical psychologists. Key assessments are conducted in a timely manner so a planned programme of support can be put in place early.

School Suspensions



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- Three pupils received a fixed-term suspension last term.
- 2 girls were suspended and 1 boy who was suspended for twice the number of days than each girl was.
- The children attend different schools and are in Years 9 -11.



Case Study One



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Year	M/F	Social / education background	Main concerns	Interventions	Outcomes
9	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She has been in care for 10 years and lives with her brother in a long-term foster placement. Currently working at age expected across all subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 internal exclusions plus a 5 day suspension in the Autumn Term. Challenges with behaviour started within the last year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School put weekly counselling sessions in place. She attended the Virtual School Arvon 5 day residential in Yorkshire and engaged well. During her PEP she was encouraged to share what support was needed to improve her behaviours. She contributed to her learning and behaviour targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a vast improvement in her behaviour at school; PEP targets have been met She continues to make good progress in her learning and is predicted to achieve Grade 9's across the board in her GCSEs.

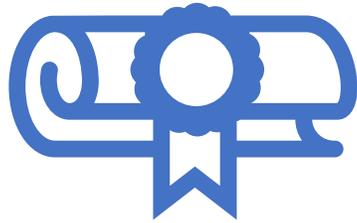
Case Study Two



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Year	M / F	Social / education background	Main concerns	Intervention	Outcomes
7	M	He had been In care for 2 years and is part of a large sibling group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level behaviour concerns. No suspensions. • He had challenges with communication and interaction with both teachers and peers. • His school permanently excluded him in Autumn 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He went to the Primary PRU. • A referral was made to Virtual School EP for an assessment. The EP report recommended strategies for both at home and at school. • 1:1 tuition for writing was put in place; • Mentor support in place to support with peer relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met expected SAT levels in Reading and Maths • Successful transition to a mainstream secondary school. • Developed good relationships with members of school staff.

Good news...



One student in Year 12 re-sat her English Language GCSE last November and obtained a Grade 4!



Personal Education Plan (PEP) returns remain at 100% and children continue to meet their learning targets.

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Children's and Young People Services IRO Annual Report

1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

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.

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The IRO's primary focus is to quality assure the care planning and review process for each child to ensure his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration.

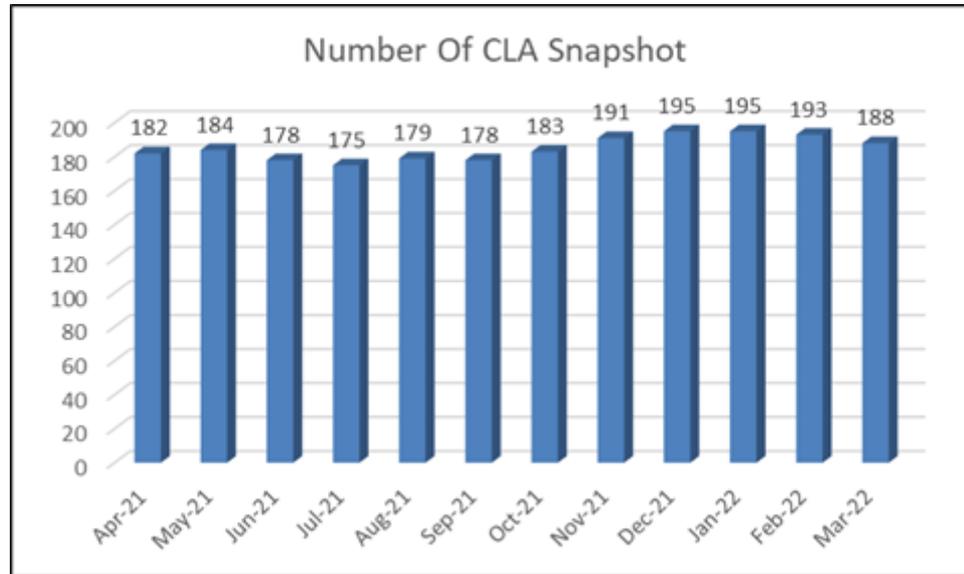
The IRO ensures there is an independent support/challenge to ensure that children live in a loving home, and have positive long term relationships.

Key Messages

The Looked After population for 2021/2022 has ranged from 182 to 188. IRO caseloads have remained within the recommended case load of no more than 70 young people as stipulated in statutory guidance.

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A total of 548 Reviews were Chaired by IROs in the year ending 31st March 2022. During this year there was an increase in young people who started to be Looked After were aged at 16 plus (37.2%). This is a higher percentage from last year where 26.5% of young people coming into care were over the age of 16.



- 23 Looked After Reviews concerned children and young people with a disability. A large majority of these children are placed in long term residential boarding school provision. The complex needs of these children require increased time required to elicit the wishes and feelings of a child.
- In terms of permanency outcomes during 2021/2022, 32.1% of children and young people returned home to live with parents or relatives; 2.3% left care to live with a person outside of immediate family, and 3.8% were adopted. This shows a higher figure compared to the period 2020/2021 with 28.8% of children and young people returning to live with parents or relatives and 1% adopted.

In the period 2021/2022, most children have achieved permanency through a return home to live with their parents (32.1%).

The profile in terms of children leaving care as at 31st March 2022:

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- 32.1% Returned home to live with parents
- 13.2% Moved into Independent Living
- 14.2% Special Guardianship Order granted
- 3.8% Adopted
- 1.9% Sentenced to Custody
- 1.9% Transferred to Adult Social Care

Young people's involvement in Reviews

IRO's encourage and support young people to be actively involved in their review including a role in part chairing or setting their own agenda

38 In the period 76% of children and young people over the age of 4 participated in their review during the period. This includes attending or contributing to their Review

Less than 6% of children and young people did not participate in their Review for the year ending 31st March 2022 (either not attending or conveying their views)

Monitoring, identifying good practice, problem resolution and escalation

There continues to be a process in place to highlight good practice and to identify and resolve practice issues through monitoring and dispute resolution:

- 40
- 86.5% of children and young people had up to date Health Assessments
 - 70% of children and young people had a Permanency Plan in place by their second review.
 - 78% of children and young people had up to date Personal Education Plans in place at the time of their review.

Throughout the year Dispute Resolution Protocols were raised and 100% resolved at Stage 1 & 2 between IRO, Team Manager/QA Manager.

Annual work programme for April 2023 – March 2024

- Maintaining standards of good quality IRO reports and recommendations which are SMART
- To continue to monitor Health Assessments/SDQ's
- To continue to monitor the quality of Personal Education Plans
- To continue to monitor Care Planning and escalate through the Dispute Resolution Protocol and Care Planning Group
- To continue to see children/young people face to face, in placement; via WhatsApp video calls, phone calls; to continue to operate a Hybrid model for some Child Looked After reviews held in Children's Centres in the community

Overview and Summary

Using a hybrid model for the child/young persons' review; Teams, and having face to face reviews has worked well during this business cycle. Children and young people, parents and other agencies all have engaged contributed effectively to the CLA review process to ensure the best planning for the child.

The effective IRO service has enabled the LA to achieve improved outcomes for children, and the IRO service continues to provide independent scrutiny to ensure that care planning for looked after children progresses in a timely manner. The review process ensures we hear the voice of the child, and there is regular/formal there is consideration of their physical/emotional health needs, education, stability of their home and where possible maintaining contact with their family.

Harrow Children Looked After Health Service Corporate Parenting Panel January 2023

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Christine Nichols – Named Nurse for Children Looked After Harrow

Agenda Item 11
Pages 43 to 58

KPI's for Harrow CLA June – August 2022

Month	Target for IHA 100% CNWL within 20 days of child becoming CLA	Target for RHA 100% CNWL within 6/12 months
June	100%	100%
July	100%	100%
August	100%	100%

Exception reporting excludes:

- requests and consent not made available within 3 days for IHA's and within 3 months for RHA's,
- CLA who do not attend or refuse appointments given or are missing
- CLA placed out of Harrow who depend upon another provider to offer an appointment.

Other Service Specification Requirements

The CLA team also assist the London Borough of Harrow to:

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- Record and report dates of dental checks following health assessment
- To update immunisation status of each CLA following health assessment where possible
- GP Registration
- Record and report dates of Optician Checks

Initial Health Assessments Completed

Month 2022	Total Due	IHA completed within 20 days (percentage / number)	IHA completed outside of timescale (percentage / number)	IHA not yet completed (percentage / number)
September	15	87% (13)	13% (2)	% (0)
October	13	69% (9)	31% (4)	% (0)
November	9	44% (4)	56% (5)	% (0)
December	4	75% (3)	25% (1)	% (0)

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Time scales from CYP identified as CLA to completion of IHA

Total Number of CYP = **41**

- within 20 days - **29**
- between day 21- 30 - **6**
- between day 31- 40 - **5**
- day 41+ (includes not yet seen) - **1**

Reasons for Late Completion of IHAs

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Summary of reasons for late IHA's	No of requests received	Late requests for IHA to CLA team	Carer Declined / Cancelled Appointment	DNA / WNB	Referral / Consent issues	Refusal by Young person	OoB placement	Place ment move	Young Person in Hospital
September	15	5	3	2	1				
October	13	7	2				2		
November	9	7	2		1				
December	4	2	1	2	1				

Themes for Late Completion of IHAs

- **The most significant reason is late requests***
21/41 (51%) of requests for IHA were received outside timescales. 13 of the 21 late requests were seen in timescales.

No of requests received within

Day 4-5 – 9

Day 6-10 - 9

Day 11-20 - 2

Day 21-40 - 1

- **Other reasons are unpredictable eg DNAs etc**
- *** (late referrals and late consents)**

Review Health Assessments Completed

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Month 2022	Total Due	RHA completed within timescale (percentage / number)	RHA completed outside of timescale (percentage / number)	RHA not yet completed (percentage / number)
September	12	75% (9)	25% (3)	0% (0)
October	11	91% (10)	9% (1)	0% (0)
November	18	83% (15)	0% (0)	17% (3)
December	10	90% (9)	90% (1)	0% (0)

Time scales from CYP identified as CLA to completion of RHA

Total Number of CYP = 51

Number seen:

within statutory timescales – 43

late - between day 1-10 – 3

late - between day 11-20 – 0

late – between day 21-30 – 2

late – 31+ days plus (includes not yet seen) - 3

Reasons for completing RHA late

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Summary of reasons for late RHA's	No of requests received	Late requests for RHA	Carer Declined / Cancelled Appointment	DNA / WNB	Referral / Consent issues	Refusal by Young person	OoB placement	Placement move	Young Person in Hospital
September	12	9	4		2	1	1		
October	11	3	1				2		
November	18	4			2		4		1
December	10	3	5				1		

Themes for Late Completion of RHAs

- Factors contributing to completing RHA's outside of timescale are Out of Borough LAC teams experiencing capacity issues, late requests and appointments declined or DNA'd.
- 19/51 (37%) requests for RHA were received outside timescales. 17 out of the 19 late requests were completed in timescales.

Late requests received within:

Weeks 12-10 - 15

Weeks 6-9 – 0

Weeks 8-2 - 3

1 Week or less – 1

- Other reasons are unpredictable eg sickness etc

Comparison with other areas

NWL

	Target	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
% of IHA's completed within timescale (excl. exceptions) - (based on Reports/Health)	95%	28%	34%	44%	36%
% of RHA's completed within timescale (excl. exceptions) - (based on Reports/Health recommendations)	95%	58%	71%	73%	69%

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Harrow

	Target	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
% of IHA's completed within timescale (excl. exceptions) - (based on Reports/Health recommendations)	95%	17%	25%	53%	64%
% of RHA's completed within timescale (excl. exceptions) - (based on Reports/Health recommendations)	95%	64%	67%	58%	82%

Work Undertaken to Improve Late IHAs/RHAs

- **Fortnightly meetings with LA colleagues to improve late requests.**
- **Liaison with Senior Managers / Team Managers.**
- **Offer of additional flexible appointments eg Saturday clinics.**
- **Reminder telephone calls to carers / young people regarding appointment times.**

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New Processes / Developments

- **Currently reviewing the client Health Assessment Leaflet and updating the information.**

Case Study

- **BACKGROUND**

- Young person aged 16year old, female.
- She had adverse childhood experiences.
- Young person at risk of CSE and CCE.
- Young person believed to be using drugs.
- She was non -compliant with services that are available to her including CAMHS.
- Young person has trust issues with professionals from previous experiences.
- Frequent missing episodes.
- She is now pregnant.

- **CLA NURSE INTERVENTION**

- Young person came for her RHA assessment with CLA Nurse when she was 20 weeks pregnant.
- CLA Nurse took time to explore how continued risk taking behaviour could potentially lead to her loosing the right the right of taking carer of her baby.
- CLA Nurse discussed health promotion topics such as healthy eating, exercise, smoking, drug use, mental health while pregnant and after baby.
- She was also encouraged to attend her antenatal appointments.

Case Study Cont'd

OUTCOME:

- She is attending her antenatal appointments.
- She has stopped smoking cannabis and other drugs since contact.
- She has been testing clear of substances when she goes for her antenatal blood test with the midwives.
- CLA Nurse liaised with the Health Visitors in the area she was placed.
- Young person is receiving targeted antenatal support.
- She is now attending her CAMHS appointments and has been started on medication.
- The young person is no longer going missing.
- She is keeping herself safe and attending all her appointments.
- The young person has started preparing for the arrival of her baby.
- She calls CLA Nurse with any health related concerns.

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Voice of the Child

- *Carer – All aspects of health and development covered in an appropriate and professional manner. No concerns raised. Child doing well. Very friendly health assessor. Lovely to meet.*
- *Young Person – the health assessment was done really well. The questions were great too. I felt very comfortable answering them.*
- *Young Person – Very Good.*
- *Young Person – Fine.*
- *Carer – More detailed than before, focusing on the child, I felt i could ask for help and advice if needed.*
- *Young Person – My health assessment went very well today.*
- *Young Person – The appointment was ok, it went well.*

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