

Audit of Government Recommendations for Local Action,
A Better Education for Children in Care, Social Exclusion Unit Report

Recommendation	Current Status	Action Required
Planning		
1. Use the Integrated children's System (ICS) to improve the use of management information to assess likely future placement needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIN Assessment forms based on the ICS currently being piloted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ICS bases forms to be developed • Develop CLA procurement strategy • Implementation of HOST will provide this functionality
2. Develop regional and local placement forums to plan for and meet the requirements of all children in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption consortium meet regularly. • Fostering consortium planned 1st meet in Jan 05. • Childcare Planning Panel meeting fortnightly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued membership of consortia. • Continue to monitor activity of the Childcare Planning Panel.
3. Develop the use of managed vacancies over the longer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal systems in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify options for developing the use of managed vacancies within existing budgetary constraints
4. Develop contingency plans before a child is taken into care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW's are asked to present cases to Child Care Panel prior to accommodating unless in an emergency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish protocol for inter-agency meetings for children whereby accommodation may be a consideration • Similarly procedures to be put into place whereby a Family Group conference is considered • Procedures to ensure that all children who have a core assessment also have a care plan in place which is reviewed
5. Ensure that initial and subsequent reviews cases more frequently when children are placed outside the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All CLA reviews are held on time • It is expected that all placement moves are discussed with the Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) to determine whether more frequent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IROs to continue tracking cases

	reviews are required	
<p>6. More effective Personal Education Plans (PEPs)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For pre-school children, social workers should liaise with a named contact at their nursery over completion of the PEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training continues to be given to pre-school staff on procedures for meeting the needs of children in this group. Staff are more aware that partnership working with colleagues from Social Care is necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to provide training for pre-school staff on meeting the needs of looked after children and the importance of completing the PEP. New Structure of Children’s Services will enhance joint working Development of Children’s Centre Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set an individual educational target for each child, ensuring that targets are appropriate and sufficiently challenging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training continues to be given to pre-school staff on procedures for meeting the needs of children in this group Inclusive within revised PEP forms IRO dedicated to development of PEPs audits all review paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the Practitioner training programme which includes courses which have units on how to meet the needs of looked after children. We need to ensure there is a system in place which notifies Early Years Advisory staff of CLA and their pre-school placement so that contact can be made to ensure the educational needs of the children are being met IRO dedicated to development of PEPs to continue to monitor PEPs Induction for new staff to include work around PEPs workshops on a rolling programme PEPs to be chaired by Practice Leaders or IRO dedicated to development of PEPs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in the PEP any Individual Education Plan (IEP), statement of special educational needs (SEN), and any reviews of the SEN statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive within revised PEP forms • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs audits all review paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs to continue to monitor PEPs • Induction for new staff to include work around PEPs workshops on a rolling programme • PEPs to be chaired by Practice Leaders or IRO dedicated to development of PEPs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of PEPs to plan school transitions, and should specify any additional support needed for a successful transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive within revised PEP forms • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs audits all review paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs to continue to monitor PEPs • Induction for new staff to include work around PEPs workshops on a rolling programme • PEPs to be chaired by Practice Leaders or IRO dedicated to development of PEPs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult young people about their preferred out of school activities, and record their views in the PEP alongside agreed action and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive within revised PEP forms • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs audits all review paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs to continue to monitor PEPs • Induction for new staff to include work around PEPs workshops on a rolling programme • PEPs to be chaired by Practice Leaders or IRO dedicated to development of PEPs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a child with a history of poor attendance changes school, local schools records in tackling truancy should be taken into account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a looked after child who has a history of poor attendance changes school, the EWO from the previous school should inform the allocated EWO immediately and a plan put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEWO to ensure this happens.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Foundation Stage Profile to inform pre-school PEPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a system of formative assessment, the Foundation Stage Profile is an appropriate tool to use to support the children's educational progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote the use of the Foundation Stage Profile in the maintained sector of education. • Continue to provide a robust training programme

Prioritising Children in Care		
7. Consider identifying a designated early years co-ordinator to liase between social workers, carers and pre-school providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be incorporated in the development of the Children's Centre Strategy
8. Consider using the Vulnerable Children's Grant, or other funding streams, to provide bursaries for children in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPSA funding was used to provide small bursaries to schools where CLA are placed to provide additional support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how resources for additional support can be attached to the PEP process
9. Consider whether alternative types of provision would be more appropriate in meeting the child's individual needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to have hierarchy of placement choice using in-house then pan-London contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop prevention and placement strategies. Develop family centre and parenting support in line with local identified needs building strong seamless links with pre school and early years services. Recruit greater cross section of community to foster care. Develop greater pool of family link carers and sitters and other options for respite care. Increase use of Family Group Conferences to determine what young people and their families want.
10. School admissions forums should aim to secure the agreement of schools to exceed their roll by one or two to accommodate children in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocol already exists for placement of vulnerable pupils (including LAC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing protocol will be reviewed in light of new advice from DfES on "Hard to place pupils".
11. Schools should review the workload of designated teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Workforce Remodelling programme requires schools to review the workload of all teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has a programme of briefings and training seminars in place for headteachers on workforce remodelling.
12. Governing Bodies should have an annual update on children's progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteachers report to governors on pupils progress, and for specific groups. The range of specific groups may not always include children looked after - especially when numbers may be very low . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice will be issued to governing bodies that they should consider appointing an LEA Governor as a designated governor and receive an annual report on the progress of children looked after (Summer 2005)
13. LEA Governors to act as 'designated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present LEA governors do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above

governors' in schools and nurseries	not have this specific c role. Some governing bodies may have attached this to the role of the SEN monitoring governing since it relates to individual needs. There has not been any specific national or local advice to schools that there should be a LEA governor designated with this role.	
14. Further education colleges should have a designated member of staff to advocate on behalf of young people in care or care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FE colleges do not come within the authority of the LEA. It is usual for the colleges to have a pastoral care arrangements in place for each student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice will be issued to FE colleges on this matter (April 2005)
15. The particular needs of children in care should be addressed in Youth Service Development Plans and other plans for out of school activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Statement of Corporate Parenting Principles has been include in the Youth Service Development Plan • A Youth Participation Worker has been appointed to develop opportunities for CLA including after-school and holiday provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue development of participation team. • Implementation of participation strategy • Promotion of activities for CLA
16. Ensure that carers are fully aware of and encouraged to access, local services for pre-school children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers have specific core training in education provision, curriculum and homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link carers into early year's services and schools named EWO for carers liaison and specific issues e.g. disruption. Regular forums for carers to discuss education issues.
17. Consider offering young people in care work placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Leaving Care Team Business Plan states 'Harrow Council will improve young people's opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of opportunities for Care Leavers • Development of links with Brent and Harrow Work Experience Consortium

	<p>for entering the world of employment by actively seeking work experience placements and encouraging all care leavers to have at least one supported transition into employment of their choice’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Connexions Personal Adviser is placed within the Leaving Care Team • Teenager 2 Work Scheme 	
18. Local authorities and health authorities to work together to introduce dedicated access routes to mental health services for children in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of CAMH Primary Mental Health workers who will have clear link Children Looked After and assist with access to CAMH services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMH Service in the process of clarifying their referral criteria • Health and LA to begin developing clear referral pathways • CAMHS Service being re-provided from April 2006
Support for children in care		
19. Ensure that every child in care has access to appropriate and up-to-date books toys and ICT equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers with Broadband Internet access rolled out to Foster carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of scheme
20. Local authorities developing school based therapeutic services should ensure they are accessible to children in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paediatric Therapy Services under review

<p>21. If a child does not have a school place, local authorities should make immediate alternative arrangements to provide full time education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA has protocol in place (see 10 above) for placement of vulnerable pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See 10 above.
<p>22. Those who fall behind need to be given additional support to catch up, which should be recorded in their PEP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEPs record all children’s educational needs including need for support to catch up • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs audits all review paperwork and holds a bursary to provide assistance for individual CLA • A teacher provides interim tuition for CLA out of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs to continue to monitor PEPs • The IRO for PEPs has access to a budget to assist with additional Educational resources for CLA, funded via the LPSA budget
<p>23. All children in care should have equal access and support wherever they are placed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing difficulties in provision of an equitable service to children placed some distance from Harrow • Increase use of advocates, participation officers and independent visitors. Develop procurement process that prioritises children’s needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the needs of children placed out of borough and develop services which can travel distances to meet the needs of this group • Develop forums and opportunity at all levels where young people can influence planning and decision of service delivery
<p>25. Business in the Community to engage businesses on raising awareness of the needs of children in care and increase involvements in their initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EBP and Work Experience Consortium support work with businesses to raise awareness of the needs of children in care. 	<p><i>See current position</i></p>

<p>26. Leaving care services need to work with local further and higher education institutions, the local LSC and Connexions partnerships to raise awareness of the specific needs of care leavers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Connexions PA is a key link with external agencies and institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development of support to Care Leavers
<p>27. Develop a variety of employment and work experience placements for young people in care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All young people in Harrow have entitlement to work experience during KS4 and the Work Experience Consortium has procedures to note specific individual needs and contexts when matching placements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See current position.
<p>Advocacy and appeals</p>		
<p>28. Exclusion procedures should be explained to carers and social workers, and unfair exclusions appealed as appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of Exclusion Procedure available to Carers and Social Workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to be provided to carers and social workers as part of the annual training programme
<p>29. All local authorities must have a policy of appealing negative decisions on admissions, unless the child does not wish to appeal</p>	<p>Children's Services will appeal against such decisions made by LEA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of guidance for Social Workers
<p>30. Children must be consulted about their education, and their views acted upon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive within revised PEP forms IRO dedicated to development of PEPs audits all review paperwork Method for informing review of YP's views agreed if CLA cannot attend for any reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IRO dedicated to development of PEPs to continue to monitor PEPs Induction for new staff to include work around PEPs workshops on a rolling programme PEPs to be chaired by Practice Leaders or IRO dedicated to development of PEPs Continued development of Viewpoint system

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRO dedicated to development of PEPs will visit YP of reviews she chairs if they cannot attend • Viewpoint purchased to enable children and young people to contribute their views electronically 	
31. Advocacy services for children in care should ensure that education issues are included within the scope of their work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 11 advocates have been appointed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is being planned for the incoming advocates which will cover education • Supervision to include educational needs of CLA
<i>Training and support for social workers, carers and teachers</i>		
32. Multi agency training, to involve children and young people who are or have been in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not in place at the moment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings planned with Training and Development Unit
33. Specific training for different groups of staff such as designated teachers, carers and social workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and briefing sessions have been held for social workers and managers. CCP and PEP training planned and in the training calendar • Conference held in February for all these groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of training for key groups within annual training programme.
34. As part of their initial assessment, foster carers should be assessed on their ability to support a child's education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the assessment carers own educational background and achievement is assessed. Careful scrutiny of carers attitude to education and their ability to assist with home work undertaken this is then examined in panel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continued attendance on training on education and assessment of education support provided to young people as part of their review.

35. Consider shadowing between education and social care workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures within Children’s Services facilitate opportunities for networking and joint working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of IPAD (Individual Performance Appraisal and Development) Interview will address individual development needs of staff.
Information		
36. Monitor the number of children in care changing schools as a result of care placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Management Information Systems do not record this information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This functionality is included in HOST
37. Use Foundation Stage Profile date to monitor and improve the quality of services for pre-school children in care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a system of formative assessment, the Foundation Stage Profile is an appropriate tool to use to support the children’s educational progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote the use of the Foundation Stage Profile in the maintained sector of education. Continue to provide a robust training programme
38. Collect information on individual educational targets and use this to inform the development of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information currently collected from a variety of sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HOST will provide additional functionality and will be linked to the Education SIMS/EMS system to provide more information. PEPS to be rigorously implemented and used to inform individual and general decision making.
39. Harmonise and simplify data collection systems within local authorities as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple systems in use at present time including CARES, Tracker, and manual spreadsheets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of HOST will provide a single system and will form the basis of the Integrated Children’s System The development of the Electronic Social care Record will be one of the early projects of the Business Transformation Partnership