

Corporate Parenting Service

Jacinta Kane – Assistant Director Corporate Parenting
Children's Services February 2024



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

- Performance Scorecard
- CLA reviews, dental and health, 20+ miles away, Missing children
- Placement Sufficiency

| Ref No | Indicator Description | Statistical Neighbour Average 2021/22 | England average 2021/22 | Harrow 2020-21 | Harrow 2021-22 | Harrow 2022-23 | Harrow target 2022/23 | Harrow Q1 2023-24 | Harrow Q2 2023-24 |
|--------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Number of current CLA at end of quarter | Not Applicable | Not Applicable | 182 | 188 | 179 | N/A | 192 | 191 |
| 2 | Number of current Care Leavers at end of quarter | Not Published | Not Published | 183 | 189 | 186 | N/A | 185 | 187 |
| 3 | Rate of CLA per 10,000 children aged under 18 | 42.7 | 70.0 | 30.0 | 31.5 | 29.8 | | 32.0 | 31.8 |
| 4 | Timeliness of Reviews of Looked After Children | Not Published | Not Published | 97.1 | 89.8 | 68.8 | 95% | 94.6 (174/184) | 90 (162/180) |
| 5 | % of CLA with 3 or more placements | 10.0 | 9.0 | 10.0 | 13.8 | 9.5 | Q1 - 2.5% Q2 - 5% Q3 - 7.5% Q4 - 10% | 1 (2/192) | 2.6 (5/191) |
| 6 | % of CLA looked after for 2.5+ years and in the same placement for 2 years | 69.5 | 70.0 | 81.0 | 68.4 | 66.7 | 70% | 69.2 (27/39) | 82.1 (32/39) |
| 7 | % of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (19 - 21 year olds) | 86.4 | 88.0 | 82.1 | 89.9 | 90.1 | 90% | 96.6 (28/29) | 96.8 (61/63) |
| 8 | % of Care Leavers not in education, employment or training (19 - 21 year olds) | 35.0 | 38.0 | 40.0 | 27.6 | 28.2 | 35% | 34.5 (10/29) | 34.9 (22/63) |
| 9 | % of CLA who are looked after 1 yr + with up to date Dental Checks (rolling year) | 75.0 | 70.0 | 73.0 | 91.5 | 91.1 | 90% | 82.1 (92/112) | 83.3 (90/108) |
| 10 | % of CLA who are looked after 1 yr + with up to date Health Checks (rolling year) | 93.0 | 89.0 | 99.0 | 99.1 | 91.1 | 95% | 91.1 (102/112) | 90.7 (98/108) |
| 11 | % of children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted | 9.0 | 10.0 | 4.3 | 3.8 | 3.5 | N/A | 4.8 (1/21) | 3.8 (2/53) |
| 12 | % Children who ceased to be looked due to a Special Guardianship Order | 10.0 | 13.0 | 19.1 | 14.3 | 8.8 | N/A | 9.5 (2/21) | 3.8 (2/53) |
| 13 | % of CLA placed more than 20 miles away from home (snapshot) | 21.0 | 16.0 | 20.0 | 16.0 | 16.2 | 20% | 20.5 (31/151) | 18.5 (27/146) |
| 14 | % of all CLA (current and ceased) with at least 1 missing episode in year | 13.0 | 11.0 | 9.0 | 8.8 | 8.2 | Q1 - 2.5% Q2 - 5% Q3 - 7.5% Q4 - 10% | 7.5 (16/213) | 8.6 (21/244) |

- Q2 Performance : 90% of all CLA had reviews in timescale (162/180 children)
- This is not a KPI that is published, however Harrow's target is 95% of all reviews are within timescale
- Usual timescales are within 1 month of when child first enters care, a second review within 3 months, and within 6 months thereafter
- CLA reviews are chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (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.
- A total of 18 reviews were late in Q2. The majority of reviews were held within 2 weeks of being due, with 1 CLA review recorded as late – but 1st review was carried out by another LA. There was therefore minimal drift or impact on care planning or timeliness for children
- As an additional safeguard, IROs hold “midpoint” reviews with social workers to ensure actions and updates are completed between the usual 6 month review cycle.

- Q2 Performance: 83.3% of all CLA have up to date dental checks (90/108 children)
- This is better than the statistical neighbour average of 75% and England average of 70%
- Our primary challenge is around teenagers refusing to see a dentist, and work is being carried out by social workers to encourage attendance
- A further 5 children are open to CYADS team and have specialist dentists to meet their needs
- However, our target is for at least 90% of all CLA to have an up to date dental check

- CLA health team will be providing a separate and detailed report at the panel re: Health Checks, challenges and progress made
- We have worked creatively with nurse colleagues to explain the purpose of the medical and to provide reassurance to young people who have been uncertain and unwilling to meet with nursing staff.
- Currently 10 children have not had a medical within the last 12 months.

Placed 20+ miles away

- For Q2, we had a decrease in the numbers of children placed 20+ miles away
- There are 29 children placed 20+ miles away from their home address in Harrow
- 2 children have been placed with early permanence foster carers – and will be adopted
- 1 child is in a Young Offenders Institute
- As requested in the October 2023 meeting, a break down long term vs short term placements 20+ miles away is provided below:

| Placement | Number | Percentage % |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Long term placement | 23 | 85% |
| Short term placement | 4 | 15% |

- Q2 performance: 8.6% of CLA have had a missing episode (16/244 children)
- This is a cumulative indicator, so we anticipate the % will continue to increase slightly by end of Q4.
- 13% is the statistical neighbour average for children who have one or more missing episodes, and 11% is the national average for children with one or more missing incidents
- Any missing incident can indicate a child is at risk of harm, so each missing child is reviewed weekly with police and senior social care managers, as well as independent return home interviews being offered.
- Strategy meetings with the police and multiagency network are held to find children and prevent further missing incidents, to identify and address safeguarding risks, including proactive measures such as Child Abduction Warning Notices, phone tracking, and national alerts
- Children who might be at risk of harm while missing from care are also subject to MACE panel (multiagency child exploitation panel) arrangements
- Further detail on how we safeguard and prevent missing episodes will be shared by Donna Kitchen in her presentation.

Across England, placement sufficiency is one of the biggest challenges facing local authority children's services.

Harrow's current **Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2019-2024**, will be reviewed and refreshed this year.

While we have been successful in keeping numbers of children requiring accommodation low compared to SN and national averages, through early intervention with families and our Keeping Families Together Service, placement sufficiency continues to be a challenge.

Change in Ofsted Regulations – from Dec 2023 providers of semi-independent placements have started to be visited by inspectors as part of the new framework

Growing complexity of need and ASD – there is a national increase in children presenting with complex and acute needs, and behaviours that challenge, particularly children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Sibling groups and parent and child placements – placements for 2+ children or placements with parents continue to be a challenge due to housing and shortage of spare rooms for foster carers within London

Rising costs from providers being passed onto LA's – as the cost of living, in particular wages, utilities and housing costs rise, the costs are being passed on to local authorities and placement costs are increasing, compounded by cost of Ofsted registration for semi-independent providers

Commissioning Alliance

Harrow is an active partner of the CA, working with other London boroughs to improve quality of provision in the market and keep costs down via the dynamic purchasing portal, and scoping of options to pilot residential provisions in-house

Housing First

Partnered with Centrepoin and Housing to provide intensive, relationship-based support for 5 Harrow care leavers with complex needs and high risk of homelessness. To commence in December 2023. Projected to result in c.£156-£208k savings per year

Fostering Recruitment and Retention Hub (DfE Funded)

Partnership with WLA boroughs to improve recruitment and retention on “in-house” foster carers and to compete effectively with IFAs

Keeping Families Together, Kinship Care and Family Group Conferences

Harrow is effective at keeping numbers of children coming into care low, and supporting families with family based alternatives to children becoming looked-after.



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