



CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE AGENDA

| | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 7.00 pm | Thursday 30 September 2021 | Hybrid Meeting Town Hall |
|---------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|

Members 8: Quorum 4

COUNCILLORS:

Judith Holt (Chairman)
Robby Misir (Vice-Chair)
Sally Miller

Tele Lawal
Carol Smith
Gillian Ford

Tony Durdin
Reg Whitney

CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

Statutory Members representing the Churches

Lynne Bennett, Church of
England
Jack How, Roman Catholic
Church

Statutory Members representing parent governors

Julie Lamb, Special Schools
Kathy Freeman, Primary
Schools

Non-voting members representing local teacher unions and professional associations:
Ian Rusha (NEU)

For information about the meeting please contact:

**Taiwo Adeoye - 021708 433079
taiwo.adeoye@onesource.co.uk.**

Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:-

- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.

What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny sub-committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

The sub-committees have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns to the public.

The sub-committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations. These are considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and if approved, submitted for a response to Council, Cabinet and other relevant bodies.

Sub-Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research or undertaking site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Sub-Committee that created it and will often suggest recommendations for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to pass to the Council's Executive.

Terms of Reference

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- Pupil and Student Services (including the Youth Service)
- Children's Social Services
- Safeguarding
- Adult Education
- Councillor Calls for Action
- Social Inclusion

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



AGENDA ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) - receive.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

4 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 6 July 2021 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION - QUARTER ONE (Pages 9 - 26)

Report attached.

6 ADOPT LONDON EAST ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 27 - 60)

Report attached

7 SCHOOL QUALITY ASSURANCE UPDATE (Pages 61 - 82)

Report attached.

Andrew Beesley
Head of Democratic Services

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Council Chamber Town Hall
6 July 2021 (7.00 - 8.30 pm)**

Present: Councillors Judith Holt (Chairman), Robby Misir (Vice-Chair), Carol Smith, Gillian Ford, Tony Durdin, Tele Lawal and Reg Whitney

Non-voting Member: Ian Rusha

Apologies for absence were received from, Councillor Sally Miller BCAC, Lynne Bennett, Jack How, Julie Lamb and Kathy Freeman

The Chairman advised those present of action to be taken in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building becoming necessary

54 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There was no disclosures of interest at the meeting.

55 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

56 CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

The Sub-Committee noted the content of its annual report and agreed for it to be submitted to full Council.

57 MAY 2021 OFSTED VISIT FEEDBACK

The Sub-Committee was presented with an overview of the findings from the Ofsted Focused Visit in May 2021 and an outline of next steps.

It was explained that the inspection visit was undertaken remotely in line with Ofsted's phased approach to restarting inspection activity, the Local Authority was given notice of the visit ten working days in advance.

The report outlined that the visit considered the nine key decision making points throughout a child's social care journey from the front door through to legal proceedings and leaving care. The visit also considered how the service have safeguarded vulnerable children during the Covid-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on how education was prioritised and promoted. It was noted that Ofsted acknowledged the significant impact that Covid-19 has had on the borough and staff, noting the high infection and death rate and how services have had to adapt to respond.

The findings noted that strong, timely corporate and political support for children's services has enabled leaders to mitigate some of the impact of the pandemic. The report stated that Inspectors found that strengthened partnership arrangements are enabling a proactive and collaborative effort to support the most vulnerable families at a time of increased demand.

Members were informed that there were no priority actions identified during the visit which would have indicated concerns requiring an immediate response.

There was progress noted by Ofsted against the recommendations from the last inspection in 2018. These included the improved effectiveness of the quality assurance framework, strengthened partner agency attendance at strategy meetings and the effective and timely decision making within the MASH. The letter also highlights the proactive approach by the social workers in the children with disabilities service and the 'dedicated and knowledgeable' leaving care service.

The Sub-Committee was informed that in relation to schools, it was highlighted that leaders have built positive relationships with schools and have collaborated well to manage the increase in applications for elective home education. It was noted that children in care routinely continue to attend the same school, minimising the disruption in their lives. It was stated that going forward, the service need to ensure that there are consistent and effective feedback mechanisms to schools following the receipt of referrals and interventions ending. Members were informed that work to develop this is already underway.

It was noted that Inspectors recognised that social care leaders have an accurate understanding of children's services and have maintained a focus on improving services to better safeguard children and to improve their outcomes. Leaders know that there is more to do to ensure consistency in the quality of assessments, plans and supervision and how these are recorded.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the letter from Ofsted provided the following three areas of improvement for the service to build on going forward. These are the quality of analysis within assessments, rationales for decisions to step-down to early help services and the quality of supervision.

Officers response to the recommendations and findings from the visit forms part of the ongoing improvement activity. This is managed operationally by the Children's Services Improvement Board with oversight provided quarterly at the multi-agency Executive Board of which the Chief Executive, Lead Member and Council Leader are members.

In response to Ofsted, the priority of the service over the next three months is recruitment and retention, to ensure a permanent and skilled workforce is in place. It was explained that in order to achieve the necessary consistency in quality of practice needed to progress to the next stage of our improvement journey, stability in the workforce is essential.

The report informed that Ofsted do not provide a grading following a focused visit, however the findings of the visit are taken into account when planning the next inspection visit.

In response to Members, it was explained that officers were working on an improvement plan that would be presented to the sub-committee.

On the Covid Impact Topic Group, a Member asked about the status of the group. It was suggested that the Topic review was an important piece of work that needs to be engaged in.

Members were informed that the service self-evaluation had already identified issues raised by Ofsted. Officers stated that a revised self-evaluation will be presented to the sub-committee in the autumn.

Members noted the content of the report.

58 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION - QUARTER 4

The report and presentation before the Sub-Committee updated on the Quarter Four 2020/21 performance information.

The report outlined that all six of the indicators have been given a Red Amber Green status; RAG status – one rated Green and two rated Amber and three indicators rated Red.

The presentation outlined the following highlights:

It was explained that the percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) cases with supervision in the last three months of the year ended at 100%. Regular monitoring at weekly performance meetings has led to sustained improvement in this area and from April, performance will be measured against the new supervision standard, which is a two monthly cycle for LAC and Children in Need (CIN) cases, and monthly for Child Protection cases. It was explained that a priority for 2021/22 would be to achieve further improvement in the quality and consistency of supervision.

It was noted that the percentage of contacts progressing to Early Help was down compared to the previous quarter but has increased when compared to the same point in the previous year. Members were informed that an Early Help worker is based in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to support and improve the identification of cases that would benefit from Early Help intervention, whether by the Early Help Service or universal services.

In addition it was stated that the Head of Service for MASH, Early Intervention and Edge of Care is working closely with the Performance Team to improve the way in which Early Help activity is captured and reported.

The percentage of LAC with an up to date pathway plan in place was reported to have dipped slightly in the final quarter of the year. This was attributed to capacity issues, as there were a high number of vacancies within intensive supervision and surveillance (ISS) during the period. The presentation outlined that the equivalent indicator for over 18 year olds (which was highlighted as below target last quarter) has also improved significantly. In addition to the timeliness of plans, it was mentioned that young people need to be engaged with the pathway planning process and their voice evident, and this remains an on-going priority for the service in 2021/22.

The following areas of improvement were outlined:

The percentage of LAC aged under 16 who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years and living in the same placement for at least 2 years have remained relatively stable throughout 2020/21, but was lower than previous years and now below the London average. It was explained that the quality, sufficiency and stability of placements for children in care is a priority for the service over the coming year. It was stated that challenges relating to availability and choice of placements have been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the council is not alone in this experience. The proportion of children with three or more placement moves has decreased compared to last year which is positive; however we know that too many young people still experience placement breakdowns and there is more to do. A high proportion of the children in our care are teenagers, many of whom have experienced trauma and display challenging behaviours, and we require skilled and dedicated carers to provide a home for these children. In response, we delivered a ten week training programme for foster carers alongside their supervising social worker - facilitated by a systemic family therapist - providing strategies and exploring new ways for carers to relate to their foster child. A Placement Stability Panel has been in place since December 2020, alongside a New to Care and Edge of Care Panel. These are both chaired by the Head of Quality Assurance with the view that a child's plan is scrutinised at the point of coming in to care and then again if they move to a second placement within 12 months.

The percentage of former relevant young people at age 18-21 who are in education, employment or training (EET) has reduced compared to the

previous quarter. It was explained that Covid-19 has been an adverse effect on many of the young adults especially those working in retail, hospitality, health and hair and beauty. It was stated that there is a greater focus within pathway plans on EET and outcomes are being closely monitored in supervision with multiple strategies being implemented to ensure that young people do not drop out of education due to the increasing challenge of Covid-19 restrictions and have an impact on their emotional and psychological wellbeing. A number of Care Leavers have been offered opportunities and it is anticipated that with the Cocoon now being partially open, some face to face meetings would be supported, giving confidence to care leavers to consider all of the options and opportunities within EET. The Leaving Care service also continues to liaise with the Virtual School in order to target support to sustain EET prior to young people turning 18.

The percentage of Educational Health Care assessments completed within 20 weeks was below target at the end of the March 2021. The main factor contributing to the dip in performance (to 48%, from 53% in Q3) has been capacity, with one case officer absent due to sickness, and the impact of additional work and training required to implement the new Liquidlogic EHC module.

The latest published data (from the annual SEN2 statutory return, released in May 2021 and covering January 2020 to January 2021) shows that nationally, the rate of EHC plans issued within 20 weeks was 58%, which was down slightly from 60.4% in 2019. It was reported that Havering's performance for the same period was 60.8%, meaning the council remain above the national average and similar to the London average of 61.8%.

The Sub-Committee noted the contents of the report and presentation.

It was agreed that members of the sub-committee suggest which performance indicators it would like to consider for monitoring and scrutiny during 2021/22 and inform the Chairman in 14 days.

60 ADULT EDUCATION OUTCOMES UPDATES

The Sub-Committee received an update on Havering Adult College that included performance outcomes for 2019/20 2020.

It was explained that the council delivers adult and community learning (ACL) through the Havering Adult College. The college receives two direct grants to fund its operation, one from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and one from the General London Authority (GLA) that enables the service to deliver a range of courses aimed at learners aged 19+ who can be resident in the borough, or attend from outside of the borough.

The report outlined the following In-Year Outcomes for Learners and Impact of, and response to, COVID-19:

1. 2041 learners recruited during 2019-20, retention was excellent at 95%, with overall achievement also excellent at 96.97%.
2. For skills-based (accredited) courses, retention was excellent at 92%, and achievement was particularly excellent at 95.98%.
3. For community learning (non-accredited) courses, retention was very good at 97%, with achievement remaining excellent at 97%. Retention on community learning courses can often be more challenging, especially as in some cases, learners are able to access the provision for free, thus mitigating any financial commitment to the course in a minority of cases. That fact notwithstanding, the achievement rate details the successful achievement of their learning aims prior to leaving the course, which could also account for a drop off in their commitment to attending.
4. All withdrawn learners are followed up as part of the college's robust quality assurance and improvement infrastructure, and reasons are recorded for the early departure.
5. The overall impact of COVID-19 did see an in-year transition to blended learning (incorporating on-site and remote learning). Learners benefitted from the swift actions of the leadership team to support their successes, although a reduction in later in-year enrolments was felt.
6. It remains anticipated that the academic year 20-21 would continue to see the impact of the pandemic, with fewer adult learners feeling inclined to enrol on adult learning programmes, or – where they wish to – to be satisfied with online learning, given the wider social benefits of in-class learning. A more accurate final picture can be drawn at the close of the academic year.

In response to the digital skills programmes the Sub-Committee was informed that the digital production programme is undertaken from the new studio based at the Barking and Dagenham College.

The Sub-Committee noted the update.

61 INTEGRATED ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING SERVICE (IASS) UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received an update report on Integrated Adolescent Safeguarding Service (IASS). It was mentioned that the service was formed in response to the Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy with the aims to better identify and support children and young people vulnerable to exploitation.

The report outlined that since February 2020, the service have continued to drive forward the adolescent safeguarding strategy with a committed focus on the following four priority areas:

1. Reviewing and updating operational arrangements for exploitation and missing to make sure the service have in place the right protocols and procedures for management oversight, joint analysis, planning tools, meetings and for our early intervention offer. It was mentioned that the service have updated the IASS Outcomes and presented it to the Havering Safeguarding Children Partnership.
2. Developing the Multi-disciplinary Integrated Adolescent Safeguarding Service (IASS) bringing together Youth Services, Youth Offending, Virtual School, Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing coordination, clinical health posts and analysis of data to enable earlier identification of children vulnerable to criminal exploitation and serious group violence. Teams are in place and service modelling work has commenced.
3. Take collective responsibility to join up data analysis and information sharing to enable an integrated offer of early intervention and support that will prevent young people from harm, exploitation, and involvement in serious violence.
4. Create innovative training and development opportunities to build capacity across the partnership for early intervention and adolescent safeguarding – based in new practice approaches for professionals to improve their work with young people. Case formulation support and case-shadowing opportunities in place. Risk Identification Tool workshops delivered. Early discussion has taken place to review IASS position at the front door within Children's Services.

The report outlined that the current and future priorities for the IASS are to continue to progress work across the four priority areas as well as reviewing exploitation protocol, embedding a restorative and trauma-informed practice model and developing a communications plan and a workforce development strategy.

- A data analyst is working to improve Havering data sets with regards to the profile of young people and their presenting needs and concerns and streamline operational risk management processes to clearly identify young people of concern.
- A key area of work continues to be our action on disproportionality and building on the forthcoming opportunity for independent scrutiny of HSCP to ensure partnership commitment to anti-racism and

tackling disproportionality and ensuring proportionate safe pathways for young people in Havering.

- A proposal for audit of our safeguarding work with young people has been progressed via the tenacious leadership of the data and performance lead.
- Quality Assurance work continues to drive performance and improve practice.

A Member of the sub-committee suggested that there should be a Pledge to support the strategy.

The Sub-Committee also requested that the report from the Independent scrutiny of HSCP be presented to Members on completion.

The Sun-Committee noted the update.

Chairman



CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

| | |
|---|---|
| Subject Heading: | Quarter 1 performance information |
| SLT Lead: | Jane West, Chief Operating Officer |
| Report Author and contact details: | Lucy Goodfellow, Policy and Performance Business Partner (Children, Adults and Health) (x4492) |
| Policy context: | The report sets out Quarter 1 performance relevant to the Children and Learning Sub-Committee |
| Financial summary: | <p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However adverse performance against some performance indicators may have financial implications for the Council.</p> <p>All service directorates are required to achieve their performance targets within approved budgets. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is actively monitoring and managing resources to remain within budgets, although several service areas, including Children's Services, continue to experience financial pressure from demand led services.</p> |

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering
Places making Havering

[X]
[]

SUMMARY

This report supplements the presentation attached as **Appendix 1**, which sets out the Council's performance within the remit of the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee for Quarter 1 (April to June 2021).

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee:

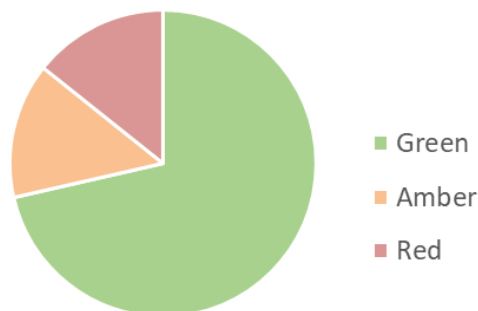
- notes the contents of the report and presentation and makes any recommendations as appropriate.

REPORT DETAIL

1. The report and attached presentation provide an overview of the Council's performance against the 13 performance indicators that have been selected for monitoring by the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee in 2021/22. The presentation, attached at Appendix 1, highlights areas of strong performance and potential areas for improvement.
2. Tolerances around targets have been agreed for 2021/22 performance reporting and performance against each performance indicator has therefore been classified as follows:
 - **Red** = outside of the quarterly target and outside of the agreed target tolerance, or 'off track'
 - **Amber** = outside of the quarterly target, but within the agreed target tolerance
 - **Green** = on or better than the quarterly target, or 'on track'
3. Where performance is rated as '**Red**', '**Corrective Action**' is included in the report. This highlights what action the Council will take to improve performance.

4. Also included in the report are Direction of Travel (DoT) columns, which compare:
 - Short-term performance – with the previous quarter (Quarter 4, 2020/21)
 - Long-term performance – with the same time the previous year (Quarter 1, 2020/21)
5. A green arrow (↑) means performance is better and a red arrow (↓) means performance is worse. An amber arrow (→) means that performance has remained the same.
6. In total, 13 performance indicators have been selected for the sub-committee to monitor and all 13 are available for reporting this quarter. Seven indicators have also been assigned a RAG status.

Quarter 1 Indicator Summary



In summary, of the 7 indicators:

5 (72%) have a status of Green

1 (14%) has a status of Amber

1 (14%) has a status of Red

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However adverse performance against some performance indicators may have financial implications for the Council.

All service directorates are required to achieve their performance targets within approved budgets. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is actively monitoring and managing resources to remain within budgets, although several service areas continue to experience significant financial pressures in relation to a number of demand led services, such as Children's Services. SLT officers are focused upon controlling expenditure within approved directorate budgets and within the total General Fund budget through delivery of savings plans and mitigation plans to address new pressures that are arising within the year.

Legal implications and risks:

Whilst reporting on performance is not a statutory requirement, it is considered best practice to regularly review the Council's progress.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no HR implications or risks arising from this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

Equality and social cohesion implications could potentially arise if performance against the following indicators currently rated as Red does not improve:

- % of looked after children who ceased to be looked after as a result of permanency (Adoption and Special Guardianship Order)

The attached presentation provides further detail on steps that will be taken to improve performance and mitigate these potential inequalities.

Appendix 1: Quarter 1 Children and Learning Performance Presentation 2021/22

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Havering

LONDON BOROUGH

Quarter 1 Performance Report 2021/22

Children and Learning O&S Sub-Committee

30 September 2021

About the Children and Learning O&S Sub-Committee Performance Report

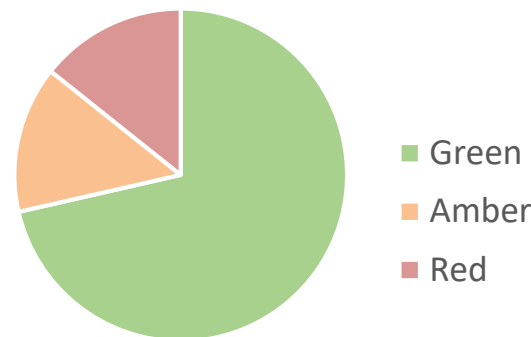
- Overview of the Council's performance against the indicators selected by the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- The report identifies where the Council is performing well (**Green**), within target tolerance (**Amber**) and not so well (**Red**).
- Where the RAG rating is '**Red**', '**Corrective Action**' is included in the presentation. This highlights what action the Council will take to improve performance.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND LEARNING INDICATORS

- 13 Performance Indicators are reported to the Children and Learning Overview & Scrutiny sub-committee
- Performance data is available for all 13 indicators this quarter
- 7 of the indicators have been given a RAG status

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Quarter 1 Indicator Summary



In summary, of the 7 indicators:
5 (72%) have a status of **Green**
1 (14%) has a status of **Amber**
1 (14%) has a status of **Red**

Quarter 1 Performance – Primary Education

| Indicator and Description | Value | Tolerance | 2021/22 Annual Target | 2021/22 Q1 Performance | | Short Term DOT against Q4 2020/21 | | Long Term DOT against Q1 2020/21 |
|---|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| % of providers judged to be Good or Outstanding by OFSTED | Higher is better | +/-4% | 96.0% | 96.7% (GREEN) | → | 96.7% | → | 96.7% |
| % of pupils attending a Good or Outstanding provider | Higher is better | +/-4% | 97.0% | 97.4% (GREEN) | → | 97.4% | → | 97.4% |
| Permanent exclusion rate* (annual) | Lower is better | Not set | Not set | 0.0% (2020/21 AY) | → | 0.0% (2020/21 AY) | → | 0.0% (2019/20 AY) |
| Fixed term exclusion rate* (annual) | Lower is better | Not set | Not set | 0.5% (2020/21 AY) | → | 0.5% (2020/21 AY) | ↑ | 0.61% (2019/20 AY) |
| One or more fixed term exclusion rate* (annual) | Lower is better | Not set | Not set | 0.27% (2020/21 AY) | → | 0.27% (2020/21 AY) | ↑ | 0.30% (2019/20 AY) |

*2020/21 Academic Year figures are provisional and based on local data. Published data for this period will be available in Summer 2022.

Quarter 1 Performance – Secondary Education

| Indicator and Description | Value | Tolerance | 2021/22 Annual Target | 2021/22 Q1 Performance | Short Term DOT against Q4 2020/21 | | Long Term DOT against Q1 2020/21 | |
|---|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| % of providers judged to be Good or Outstanding by OFSTED | Higher is better | +/-6% | 77.0% | 77.8% (GREEN) | → | 77.8% | → | 77.8% |
| % of pupils attending a Good or Outstanding provider | Higher is better | +/-6% | 85.0% | 85.4% (GREEN) | → | 85.4% | → | 85.4% |
| Permanent exclusion rate* (annual) | Lower is better | Not set | Not set | 0.00% (2020/21 AY) | → | 0.00% (2020/21 AY) | ↑ | 0.02% (2019/20 AY) |
| Fixed term exclusion rate* (annual) | Lower is better | Not set | Not set | 2.89% (2020/21 AY) | → | 2.89% (2020/21 AY) | ↑ | 3.64% (2019/20 AY) |
| One or more fixed term exclusion rate* (annual) | Lower is better | Not set | Not set | 1.41% (2020/21 AY) | → | 1.41% (2020/21 AY) | ↑ | 2.38% (2019/20 AY) |

*2020/21 Academic Year figures are provisional and based on local data. Published data for this period will be available in Summer 2022.

Quarter 1 Performance – Children’s Services

| Indicator and Description | Value | Tolerance | 2021/22 Annual Target | 2021/22 Q1 Performance | Short Term DOT against Q4 2020/21 | | Long Term DOT against Q1 2020/21 | |
|--|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|
| % of looked after children aged under 16 who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years and living in the same placement for at least 2 years* | Higher is better | +/-10% | 65% | 60% (AMBER) | ↑ | 57.5% | ↑ | 57.9% |
| % of looked after children who ceased to be looked after as a result of permanency (Adoption and Special Guardianship Order) | Higher is better | +/-10% | 14% | 11.5% (RED) | ↑ | 10.8% | ↑ | 3.6% |
| % of looked after children with 2+ changes of social worker in the last 12 months | Lower is better | +/-5% | 15% | 10.9% (GREEN) | ↑ | 13.0% | ↓ | 5.7% |

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*Also includes children who are placed for adoption and whose adoptive placement together with their previous placement last for at least 2 years

Highlights

The Academic Year 2019/20 saw 9 inspections in Havering schools between September 2019 and March 2020, before the first COVID-19 lockdown halted the schools inspection framework. All seven primary schools that were inspected retained their 'Good' outcomes and the two secondary academies inspected improved from 'Requires improvement' to 'Good'. This resulted in Havering's overall **percentage of providers judged to be Good or Outstanding by OFSTED** increasing by 2 percentage points, which is 5.2 percentage points above the national figure. Since then, Ofsted has only undertaken monitoring visits, resulting in percentages remaining unchanged.

The **rates of both fixed term and permanent exclusions** in Havering have remained well below the rates for England as a whole - both for primary and secondary phases - based on the latest available published data. There were four permanent exclusions from secondary schools in the academic year 2019/2020; however, due to the Inclusions Service working very closely with Havering head teachers, and following a new roll out of the Inclusions policy, there have been no permanent exclusions in Havering's primary or secondary schools for academic year 2020/2021.

Although there have been significant challenges with head teachers wishing to permanently exclude, the Inclusions policy has been designed with extra measures put in place to support schools to find alternatives to fixed term and permanent exclusions.

Highlights (contd.)

The **percentage of looked after children with 2 or more changes of social worker in the last 12 months** is within target as at the end of the quarter. Since the start of the pandemic, Havering like many other LAs, has seen an increased turnover of social work staff, which particularly impacted on social worker changes for looked after children during the fourth quarter of 2020/21. There are still a number of vacant posts in the long term teams and staff recruitment and retention remains a high priority for the service in 2021/22. Actions that have been taken to date include a review of pay rates to ensure Havering remains competitive; faster turnaround times for interviews when locum CVs come in (due to the increasingly competitive market); further expansion of the 'grown your own' ASYE programme; and working with colleagues in Communications to explore how 'Choose Havering' could be used as an external branding for recruitment purposes.

The service has also launched a robust permanent recruitment campaign and over the longer term, there are plans to look more broadly at pay, terms and conditions and career progression for the social work workforce to ensure that Havering is presented as an employer of choice for the profession.

Improvements Required

The **percentage of looked after children aged under 16 who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years and living in the same placement for at least 2 years** remained relatively stable throughout 2020/21 but was lower than in previous years and remains below the London average (currently 67%). We have seen an improvement during the first quarter of 2021/22, and performance is currently within the accepted tolerance level. A number of initiatives have been implemented over the last year with the aim of improving placement stability for looked after children. In addition to the systemic training offer that was developed for carers with adolescents, fortnightly placement stability meetings are taking place to consider all children and young people who are moving to their second placement. This is to identify individual triggers and patterns at an early stage and provide a robust approach to support, before challenges are experienced. A weekly 'high concern' discussion also takes place within ISS, with similar aims but discussing the most complex cases and how to best support these children and their carers. We have seen an increase during the first quarter of the year in the percentage of children who have had 3 or more placements in the last 12 months and an analysis of this cohort of children and young people will be undertaken to better understand this trend.

The **percentage of looked after children who ceased to be looked after as a result of permanency (Adoption and Special Guardianship Order)** is below target at the end of the first quarter, with 2 Adoption Orders and 1 Special Guardianship Order granted in April to June. The primary cause of delay in adoption orders throughout the Covid-19 pandemic has been delays in court processes and Adopt London East (ALE) continues to work with courts to progress and chase Adoption Order hearings. The number of children with a placement order for adoption has traditionally been small in Havering but increased from two in 2019/20, to seven in 2020/21. This will result in an increase in Adoption Orders following matching, placement and adoption court processes. Timescales for conversion from placement order to adoption vary according to complexity, so the impact of this upturn in adoption orders may not be felt until later in 2021/22 or into 2022/23.

Improvements Required (contd.)

It is always difficult to project the number of SGOs that are likely to be made in any year, as this is heavily influenced by court outcomes and family engagement with the process. The ultimate aim of care proceedings is to secure permanency for children and the best option, if safe, is usually for return to the parent/s. However there are sometimes last minute changes in court to the order or outcome being sought and parallel plans to place children with other family members under an SGO are then pursued. The number of cases within the court arena generally reduced during Covid-19; however, the SGO team continues to work with private and public law cases to support permanency within the family.

Any questions?





CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:**Adopt London East Annual Report****SLT Lead:**

Robert South

Report Author and contact details:

Sue May; Head of Service Adopt London East. Sue.may@haverling.gov.uk

Policy context:**This report provides the Annual Report of Havering hosted Adopt London East****Financial summary:**

The service is financially self-sufficient and funded through joint arrangements with each partner Local Authority. There are no direct financial implications for consideration within this report.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Communities making Havering | [x] |
| Places making Havering | [] |
| Opportunities making Havering | [x] |
| Connections making Havering | [x] |

SUMMARY

Adopt London East was formed in response to a 2015 government directive to all Local Authorities to streamline adoption services through the development of regional arrangements by 2020. Adopt London East is a regional adoption agency, hosted by Havering; providing adoption services for Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham. The agency works in close collaboration with Adopt London North, South and West. Together these agencies provide services for 24 London Local Authorities. The majority of the remaining London Authorities joined a regional agency hosted by Coram BAAF

This report fulfils the statutory requirements to report to the executive body on an annual basis. It provides information on Adopt London East business, performance, successes and challenges in 2020/2

Adopt London East has been successful in increasing overall numbers of children placed for adoption and in improving timeliness of placement. This success has been in sharp contrast to a decline in overall numbers nationally. The number of matches per Local Authority in Adopt London East was significantly higher than matches in all other London RAAs.

Adopter recruitment suffered a small downturn following the transition period. Covid restrictions added further challenge to recruitment and assessment work. We have worked hard to address challenges and the numbers of adopters approved and in assessment has grown steadily since

The number of families supported by Adopt London East has grown markedly. Adopters express a high level of satisfaction with the service. Partnerships with other organisations including 'We are Family' an adopter peer led organisation has helped us to deliver on-line support creatively.

Havering led on the Adopt London response to Covid. Supported by a substantial grant we engaged with 13 different providers who offered support to adoptive families and families with a Special Guardianship Order. Support included a help-line, therapeutic interventions, training and group work. An independent evaluation of the service rated it as outstanding. The recent government paper comments positively on our work in partnership.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee members is asked to receive and endorse the report.

REPORT DETAIL

Background Information

All adoption agencies are required to provide an annual report to their governing bodies. Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA's) must provide a report to their partnership board and to elected members in all partnership Local Authorities. The report is the second Annual Report of Adopt London East and provides information on service development and performance in 2020/21. Appendix 1 attached to the report provides information on adoption performance in Havering throughout 2020/21 based on the Adoption and Special Guardian Leadership Board (ASGLB) data returns.

The partnership agreement includes

- Budget setting and monitoring
- Staffing
- Data sharing and GDPR
- Contracting and commissioning
- Dispute resolution
- Renewal and termination of the agreement
- Insurance and limitations to liability
- Governance

The detailed partnership agreement was signed by each Local Authority DCS prior to service go-live under powers delegated following Cabinet approval for the Adopt London East Business case.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

The initial service budget was approved by Havering Cabinet on 16th January 2019. The full budget and individual partner contributions were subsequently approved by all partner cabinets.

The partnership agreement signed by all Local Authorities includes the mechanism for annual and in-year review of the budget.

Overview of the budget is undertaken on a quarterly basis through the partnership board.

There are currently no identified risks in respect of this budget

Legal implications and risks:

There are no apparent legal implications in noting the Report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

A full consultation exercise was undertaken under TUPE regulations between May 2019 and July 2019. All adoption staff eligible to transfer under TUPE regulations successfully transferred on 1st October.

Informal consultations with staff have continued and all minor teething problems (for example ICT issues) have been resolved in cooperation. Periodic meetings are held with TU representatives whenever requested.

No outstanding issues have been identified

Equalities implications and risks:

An Equalities and Health impact assessment was undertaken prior to the presentation of the Cabinet report as presented on 16th January 2019. This considered all equality dimensions. As Adopt London East has been developed to improve the service offered to our adoptive families and widen opportunities to adopt: the assessment was largely positive. Where any potential issues were identified measures were put in place.

The primary potential issue was in respect of distance from service delivery, which may impact on adoptive families less able to travel through differing ability, childcare or financial issues. This was resolved through an ongoing commitment to local delivery of services.



Adopt London East Annual Report April 2020 to March 2021

Background information

The Department for Education (DfE) paper, Regionalizing Adoption proposed the move to Regional Adoption Agencies [RAA] in order to:

- Speed up matching.
- Improve adopter recruitment and adoption support.
- Reduce costs.
- Improve the life chances of vulnerable children.

All Local Authorities must join a Regional Adoption Agency by April 2020. Feedback from Regional Adoption Agencies in operation for a year or more is positive. Adopters report on improved services and staff on improved job satisfaction. Ofsted reports on Local Authorities with adoption services delivered regionally have been universally positive.

The government continues to drive forward with the structural reform programme regarding regionalising adoption and all but a handful of authorities are either in a live Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) or in an RAA which will go live by October 2020. The government have noted the significant progress in cutting the time children wait to be placed with their adoptive parents and this is a positive outcome for children. However, both the number of registrations of interest and approved adopters nationally, regionally and locally within East London have fallen in recent years. An increase in expressions of interest has been sustained since the service went live last October and we anticipate this will increase the number of adopters approved in 2020/21

The adoption functions of Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham were delegated on the 1st October 2019 to the London Borough of Havering within terms drawn up in a detailed partnership agreement. Adopt London East (ALE) formally commenced operational activity on this date.

Adopt London East works in close collaboration with the 'Adopt London' adoption agencies who provide services for 23 Local Authorities in total. In this way we are able to develop a London wide profile, develop economies of scale and share best practice.

Outcomes

Adopt London East is committed to improving outcomes for children for whom the plan is adoption through:

- Increase in the percentage of children adopted from care
- Improved timescales for placing children with adoptive families
- Fewer adoption placement disruptions
- More children placed in an early permanence placement



- Reduction in the number of children for whom the permanence plan has changed from adoption
- Improved timescales for adopter assessments
- Higher conversion rate from enquiry to approval
- Fewer prospective adopter approvals rescinded
- More timely matching of approved adopters

Scope of service

Adopt London East has responsibility for all adoption led services:

- Recruitment and assessment of adopters.
- Family finding and matching
- Adoption support.

Responsibility for the child remains with the Local Authority. The Local Authority will therefore remain responsible for the child's progress through the court system and for final decisions in respect of care and adoption planning.

Adopt London East has a responsibility for support to Local Authority social workers including dissemination of information on regulation and best practice

Design Principles

The Board agreed the following design principles

- Local delivery - Responsive to the needs of the community
- Close relationships with children's social workers
- Economies of scale
- Cross local authority working
- Innovation and service improvement
- Evolving service design – one size may not fit all
- Provide value for money
- Service informed through the voice of adoptive families

Adopter Voice

Adopters in East London contribute to service development through the Adopt London commissioning arrangements with 'We are Family', a London wide peer-led organisation delivering support to adopters.

The voice of our adopted children was captured through a partnership with 'Body and Soul'. We plan to re-commission this service in 2021/22



Service development post go-live

Governance

All service functions and relationships are detailed within the partnership agreement. The agreement includes:

- Governance
- Finances and Budget setting
- Data sharing agreement
- Dispute resolution
- Termination of agreement

The Ale Partnership board has met on 4 occasions in 2020/21.

The partnership board comprises of ADCS or their representatives with delegation of authority. These members have responsibility for all partnership decisions

Service delivery

The central head office is in Havering but staff also have a local base in each Local Authority. In this way we aim to ensure that the existing close working and supportive relationships with children's social work staff and partner agencies remain absolutely central to our practice.

Throughout 2020/21 due to Covid restrictions all staff have primarily worked from home. Adopt London East has followed national and local guidance and as such working practices have adapted to periods of lockdown and easement. The service has continued to provide all services and to undertake face to face work where necessary and safe to do so. Working from home has proven to be highly efficient and where it benefits the service, workers will continue to be able to home work. Plans are in place for a partial return to face to face staff meetings in 2021 following further easement of restrictions.

Adopt London East and the Havering Liquidlogic support team worked jointly on a project to develop Liquidlogic capacity to operate an adoption file system. This work identified that the Havering Liquidlogic LCS system was unable to host easily retrievable and secure adoption files. A solution has been identified and a workspace purchased. Further work is ongoing to develop appropriate pathways and generate forms. Family finding and adoption support case files are currently held on a secure drive. Recruitment and Assessment files are now held on Liquidlogic.

We also have agreements in place that locally based adoption staff will continue to be able to access LA systems. The practicalities of access have proven challenging but work is underway to resolve this

Although services are delivered locally we are also able to work together to develop a more responsive service. This helps us to recruit more adopters to meet our children's identified needs and to provide better support through a core offer delivered by the adoption support workers in partnership with local agencies.

The central ALE panel was developed in phase 2 of go-live. In-house panels have been in operation since by the end of May 2020. Two panel chairs ensure panels are able to meet



every 2 weeks in order to support timeliness. The panel makes recommendations in respect of both adopter approval and child matches. Decisions in respect of child matches continue to be made by the Agency Decision Maker in the LA with responsibility for the child. The ALE HOS acts as ADM for decisions in respect of approval of adopters.

The panel has met virtually since commencement of operation. This has provided some benefits for panel members and adopters alike in terms of ease of attendance. All but one prospective couple responded positively about the virtual experience. Decisions regarding continuation of virtual or direct panels will be made in line with easement of regulations and consideration of the costs and benefits.

Staffing

Adopt London East has permanent managers in all posts and has only one agency worker covering maternity leave. Three posts are vacant. Two have been successfully recruited to and the third will be re-advertised as soon as possible. A further agency or seconded worker will be required to cover maternity leave.

Service demand has been high and three additional posts were created within budget in 2020/21.

- Stage 1 recruitment and assessment coordinator – to ensure a speedy response to all enquirers and efficient transition through the early stages of assessment
- Family finding social worker – to assist in response to an increasing volume of work. We have been unable to recruit to this post to date
- Contact coordinator – to assist in response to increasing demand for this work

All staff have responded positively to the challenge of working from home during Covid restrictions. All staff had previously been issued with portable tablets and headphones to assist in home working. Risk assessments have been used to ensure individual staff needs are met. Social work is a face to face activity and although many meetings were held virtually, where necessary and safe to do so direct visits have continued to take place. Some workers are now partially office based in order to ensure letterbox contact continues. This service was placed on temporary hold during full lockdown. All visits including office visits are subject to individual risk assessment.

We have learned a lot during this period of enforced remote working and will continue to undertake many functions remotely where it is efficient to do so without detriment to the quality of service provided.

Work was undertaken with the senior leadership team, the management team and with all staff to establish the vision and values of Adopt London East. We have worked to maintain this whilst working remotely.

Ongoing development work has continued with all staff regarding the importance of relationships as we build the Adopt London East profile within all Local Authorities, working in a culture of high support and high challenge. Remote visits have taken the place of direct office bases but have worked well



Weekly remote team meetings and fortnightly service meetings have ensured we maintain a clear service focus and provide mutual support. We provide space for informal conversations, mirroring 'coffee break' spaces as far as possible. At times of challenge other means of coming together have been used.

Sadly one valued social worker in the family finding team died in January following a brief battle with Covid. She has been sorely missed by all. Additional support was offered to all staff. The strength of the service was reflected in the ways in which all supported each other and also ensured her work was completed in her memory.

Business and Service support

Adopt London East has three Business Support Officers (BSO's) who provide a dedicated service. The BSO's are line managed within Havering Business support teams.

ICT and systems development

All staff have use of a Havering supplied laptop and mobile phone. Laptops have Skype and Teams connectivity and mobile headsets.

Social work staff also need access to constituent Local Authority ICT systems in order to access information for the purposes of family finding and adoption support. This has proven to be challenging. Interim arrangements are in place in all LA's and more permanent solutions are in development.

The migration of casework data onto Liquid Logic (LL) was hampered by challenges in system development. Development work was complicated by an incomplete transfer from the development team to the permanent LL support team. Recruitment and Assessment files are completed and uploaded. It was essential to develop a new pathway for family finding and adoption support files. Work on adoption support files has nearly concluded. The family finding work involves a restructure of the Havering pathway and is being managed through a task and finish group chaired by the ALE HOS.

Service accessibility

Adopters, prospective adopters, birth families and professionals may access the service through the Adopt London website, by email or by telephone. The duty telephone is staffed by Business Support Officers (BSO's) between 9 and 5 each weekday. The BSO's have been trained in telephone response. Each team operates a duty response system and calls forwarded from BSO's are usually answered quickly. A high turn-over and vacancy rate within the BSO service has impacted on our response rates and also on social work staff who answer calls in the absence of the BSO. Work is ongoing to resolve this.

Adoption Panel

Adoption panels initially remained in Local Authority in order to allow other aspects of the service to bed in prior to go-live of panels. Adopt London East panels became operational on 27th May 2020. All panel members also attended webinar training prior to panel. This included an overview of Adopt London East, updates on regulation and best practice and a welcome from the panel chairs.

Two highly experienced panel chairs have been recruited together with a central list of panel members. Panel member expertise includes adoption experienced social workers, adopters,



care leavers and professionals from a range of backgrounds. Two panels operate per month with additional panels where necessary. Panels are currently held virtually. Panel papers are sent securely through egress.

Medical advisors provide advice to panel on their own children either in writing or directly to panel.

Legal advice to panel is provided by the Havering legal team though legal advice in respect of an individual child's care plan remains with the Local Authority.

Partnership work

Adopt London East coordinated a London wide group of virtual school heads, teachers and therapeutic service providers aiming to promote a pan London approach to trauma informed schools. This has encouraged conversations and supported development of professional networks. A Pan London virtual training session with Louise Bomber an expert in the field was attended by over 100 professionals.

It has proven difficult to engage with the CCG's at a strategic level during times of Covid but positive operational service relationships have developed. The panel advisor has positive relationships with all designated Doctors and individual social workers have developed positive working relationships with providers. A more strategic approach will bring dividends and will be followed when capacity allows.

We have commissioned Cornerstone, an adopter led organisation to provide a specialist virtual reality tool to assist in one to one support and training for our adopters.

We have also commissioned PAC-UK to provide a helpline and one to one counselling. This service is also available to birth families. We plan to re-commission the birth family support service as a pan London service in 2021/22

All Inter-country adoption assessments are undertaken by 'Inter Country Adoption'. This commissioned service provides specific expertise and value for money in provision of a highly complex area of adoption work. Some post assessment work remains in-house.

We work closely with We are Family, an adopter led support group providing support to families across London. We are Family have adapted to Covid requirements through development of an online webinar and podcast based service. Adopt London has partially funded these highly successful initiatives. We also work in partnership with New Family Social who support LGBTQ adopters.

Adopt London HOS meet with the Voluntary sector stakeholder group on a quarterly basis. We also purchase bespoke therapeutic provision through use of the Adoption Support Fund. This work is commissioned from a range of registered adoption support providers.

A separate sub group considers the means to promote adopter sufficiency.

Covid fund response

The DfE funded Adoption Support Fund was extended in 2020 to allow regional adoption agencies to provide enhanced support to adoptive families and those caring for children on a Special Guardianship Order. In total Adopt London had £800,000 in funds to provide a flexible and immediate response. Special Guardians are supported by individual Local



Authorities in all but one of the RAAs. We worked closely with our LA partners to ensure we provided comprehensive support for all our families.

We commissioned services from 13 agencies. These included:

- Helpline
- Brief interventions
- Counselling and support
- Practical support for special guardians
- Direct support for adoptive children and teens
- Training and group support

The four Adopt London head of service worked jointly with all Voluntary sector partners to provide an innovative and flexible service whereby adopters accessing the helpline could be referred onto a number of differing interventions on the basis of an immediate assessment of need.

Feedback in respect of these services was extremely positive. An evaluation of this approach was undertaken by Hugh Thornberry, a renowned expert in adoption in the UK. Hugh reflected the positive experience of our adoptive families and also the added value felt by our voluntary sector partners in this permissive approach.

This work was fed into the DfE review of the Adoption Support Fund and was commented on positively. We hope this will inform decisions as to how to allocate funds in the future.

Performance information 2020/21

Best Interest/SJOBPA decision



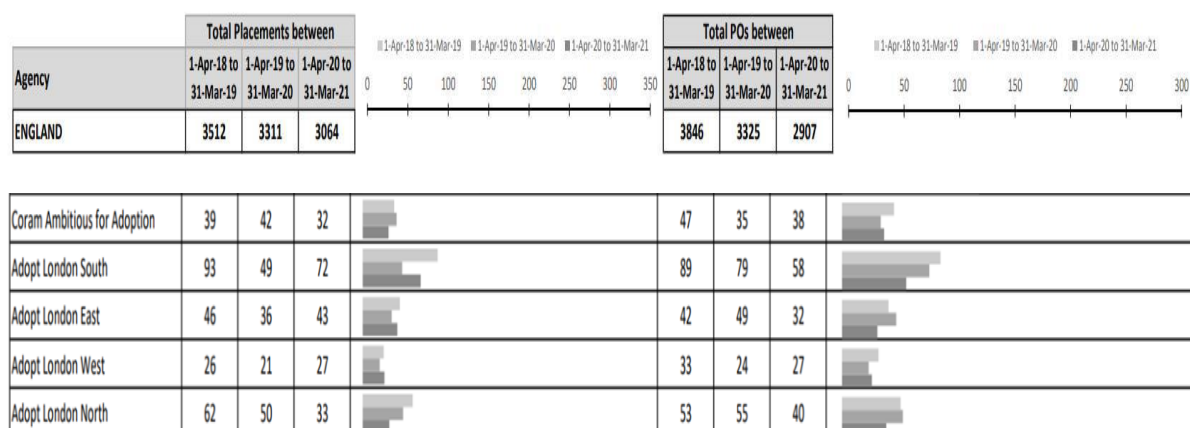
The number of decisions made in each Local Authority by the Agency Decision Maker that a child should be placed for adoption (SHOBPA) have decreased overall over the last three years in all London RAA's. Three of the five (including ALE) saw an increase in 2019/20 and



subsequent decrease. It may be that Covid regulations impacted on the LA's ability to progress cases. The decline in numbers echoes the England figures.

In all cases the number of SHOBPA decisions per 10,000 of the population is lower than the England average (London LA's typically place more children in extended family placements under a Special Guardianship Order). ALE has roughly the same percentage of children placed as all other London RAAs except ALW where the placement rate is considerably lower.

Placement orders and children placed



Placement orders are granted by the court during care proceedings following review of the ADM decision that the child should be placed for adoption. Care proceedings are complex and not all children with an agency decision will be granted a placement order, however the number of placement orders made roughly mirrors the number of SHOBPA decisions made as would be expected.

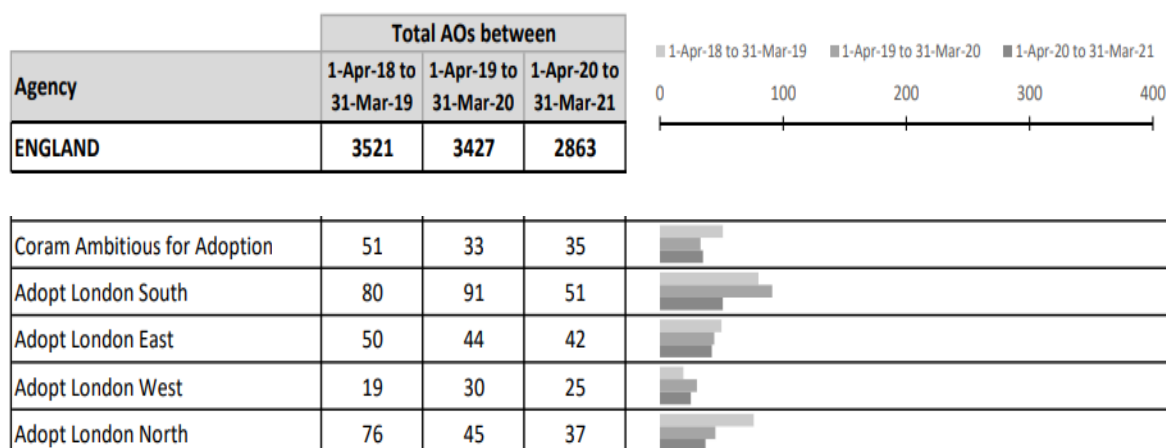
The overall number of adoptive placements made in England has decreased over the course of the last 3 years. All Adopt London agencies went live in mid-2019/20 and the number of placements made dipped as a result of the transition. Adopt London East and West have both placed numbers comparable to 2018/19 in 2020/21 all other services have seen a significant reduction.

Overall numbers placed across each RAA vary considerably and are largely dependent on the number of LA's the RAA serves. ALE performance equates to an average of 11 placements per LA. The other RAA's average is considerably lower and ranges from 3.5 to 8 placements per LA

| RAA | Number placed | Number of LA's | Average per LA |
|----------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Coram | 32 | 9 | 3.5 |
| AL South | 72 | 9 | 8 |
| AL East | 43 | 4 | 11 |
| AL West | 27 | 4 | 7 |
| AL North | 33 | 6 | 5.5 |



Adoption Orders

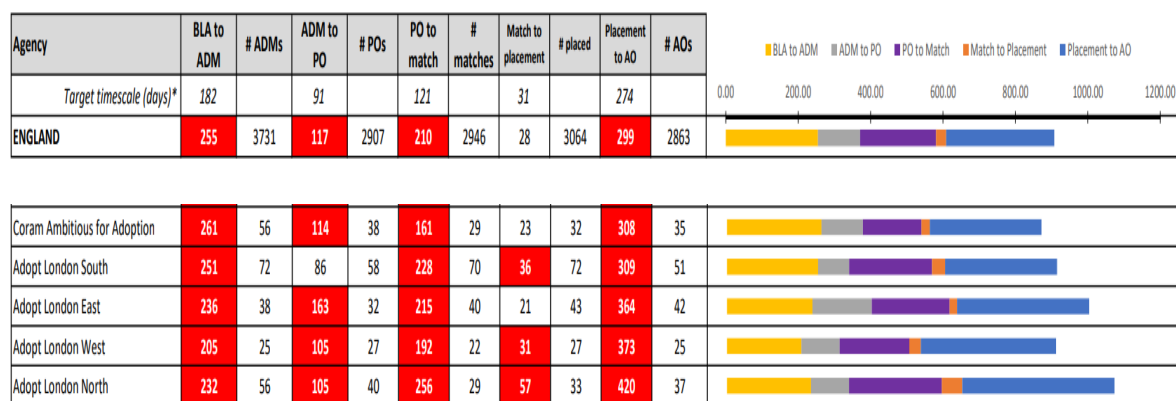


The number of adoption orders granted in each year will follow the number of placements made.

The England numbers have shown a steady decline in reflection of the reduction in placements made. The decline steepened in 2020/21 at least partially due to delays in court following Covid restrictions.

Numbers across London have also declined. The decline in ALE is not as steep as elsewhere following concerted work with the East London Courts.

Childs journey timescales



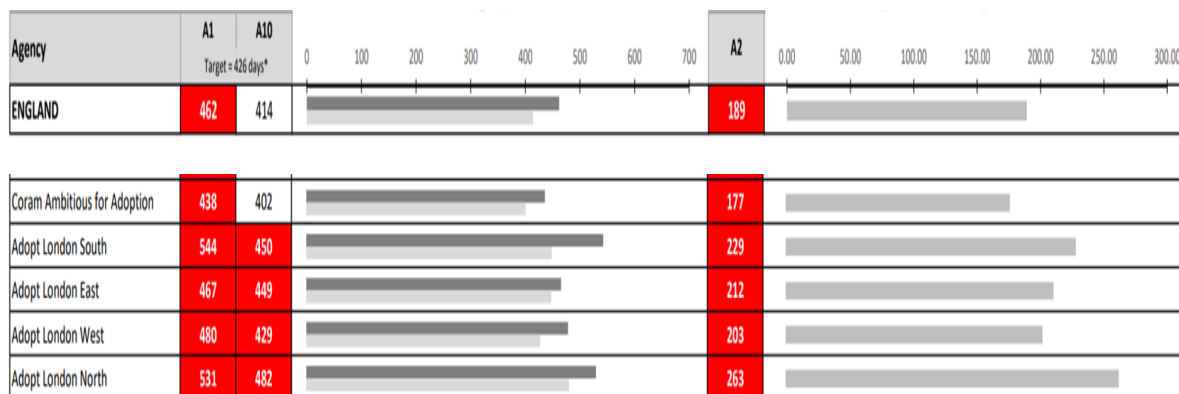
Timescales for each individual child will vary considerably and a lengthy journey to adoption for a single child will impact on overall figures.

As can be seen most government set targets are not met by any RAA.

ALE achieves the set targets in timescales from match to place and performs better than England average and London RAAs in this field. Overall however ALE timescales are higher than England averages. Timescale delays are most marked in the early stages of decision making and in the time taken from placement to adoption order. Timescales here are affected by complexity of adoption cases and in court delays. We are working with LA's and courts to ensure delays are kept to a minimum.

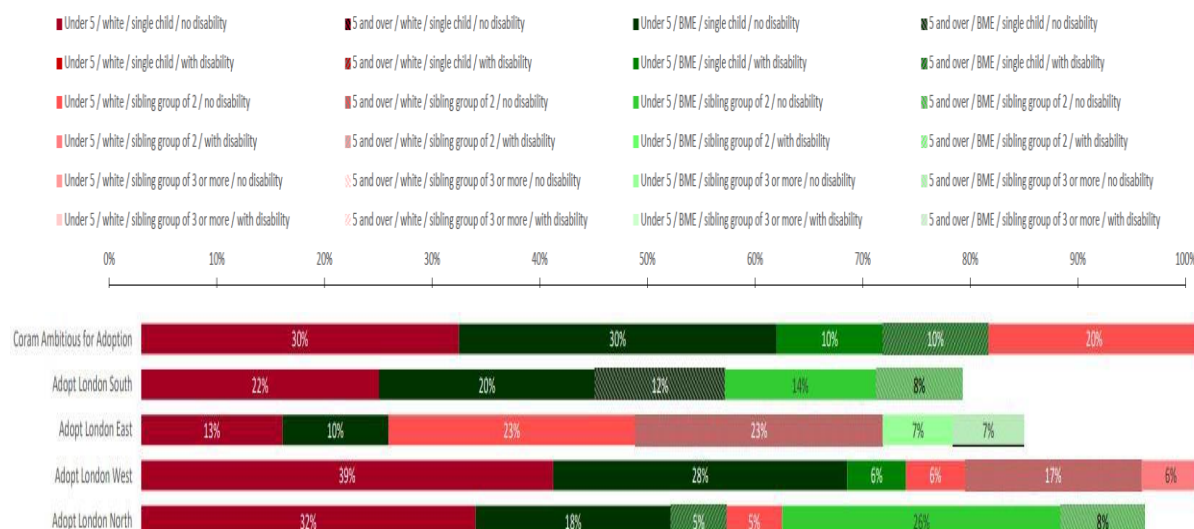


Adoption Scorecard indicators – Reflecting 3 year average, all figures based on completed adoptions



The three year average figures form part of the Adoption Scorecard. The scorecard provides a means of comparing performance across England. ALE is performing roughly in line with England and London averages. This reflects positively on the service as ALE LA's have a significantly larger percentage of children with complexity in need of placement.

Characteristics of children waiting at the close of 2020/21



Typically white British children aged under 5 are deemed to be the easiest children to place. Timescales for all harder to place children are usually longer. London has higher rates of harder to place children than England averages. Even within London averages ALE children are most likely to be in the harder to place category. Only 13% of our children are deemed easy to place. All other London areas operate within a range closer to the England average (between 24% and 39%).

Newham and Tower Hamlets have some of the highest incidences of poverty in the UK. All LA's with the exception of Havering have significantly higher number of children from BME backgrounds including 60% of children in Newham and 50% in Tower Hamlets. 60% of all children waiting for a placement in ALE are children in sibling groups. Of these 14% are in a sibling group of 3 or more.



Analysis of Adopt London East

Outstanding adopters meet the needs of our children

Adopter approvals – historical performance analysis across each Local Authority

| LA | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Newham | 3 | 1 | 6 | 4 | |
| Tower Hamlets | 5 | 7 | 10 | 4 | |
| Havering | 7 | 9 | 8 | 4 | |
| LBBB | 3 | 3 | 12 | 6 | |
| Total | 18 | 20 | 36 | 18 | 19 |

The numbers of adopters approved varies considerably across all LA's. Numbers approved in 2019/20 declined to 2016/17 levels as is consistent with all RAAs in their year of go-live. The general pattern of adopter approval prior to this decline was an increasing pattern from 18 in 16/17 to 36 in 18/19

Please note that as all adopters approved in 20/21 were approved in ALE there is no breakdown by LA

ALE service modelling was based on a commitment to improving on 17/18 figures of 20 approvals per year.

In 2020/21 ALE achieved the results below

- Number adopters approved last year in total = 19
- Number of adopters matched last year in total = 14

| Stage | Number | Comment |
|--|--------|--|
| Enquiries | 8 | Initial Enquiries Completed April 21 |
| Stage 1 | 42 | Stage 1 Assessments |
| Stage 2 | 37 | Stage 2 assessments |
| Approved in ALE and waiting for placements | 9 | |
| Approved pre-ALE and waiting for match | 4 | All have been subject to review by HOS |

Other assessments



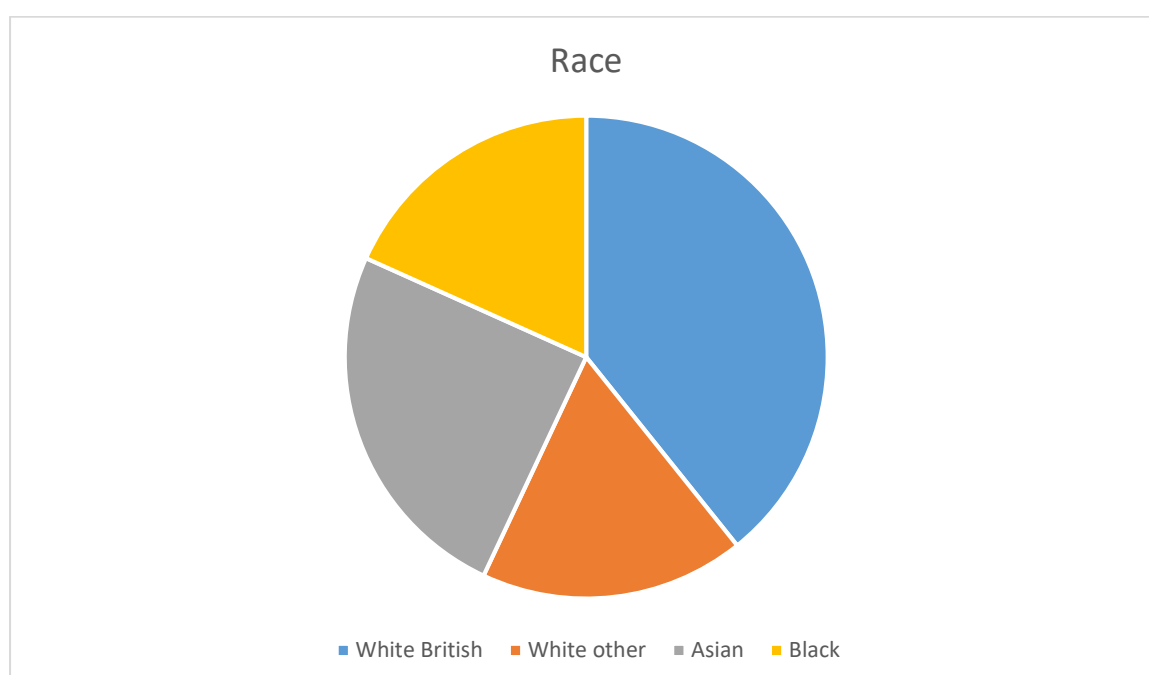
| Type | Number | Comment |
|--------------------------------|--------|--|
| Step parent (family) adoptions | 38 | 6 were passed from LA's |
| Inter-country | 15 | 5 in court 1 CP concerns 3 complex cases – all related to children being brought into the country without following regulation |

Characteristics of prospective adopters

We work hard to engage with our local communities, especially our black communities as black children often wait the longest for placement

Factors such as lower average pay and poorer housing opportunities can impact on adopter availability from our black communities. Covid has also disproportionately affected our less financially secure communities; prospective adopters from these communities are more likely to have lost employment or decreased hours/income. We continue to work creatively to extend opportunities wherever necessary.

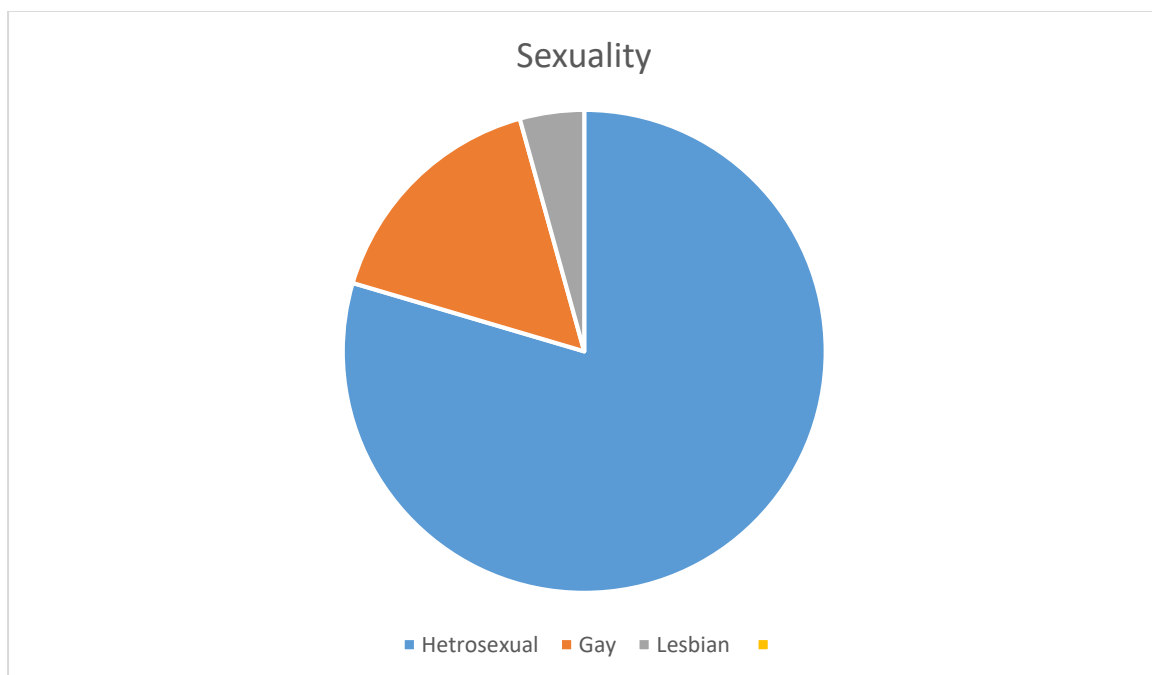
Characteristics of all prospective adopters





Although White British adopters continue to be the largest single group, a wider span of adopter applications has resulted in greater diversity. Last year 69% of prospective adopters were White British: this has decreased to 39% in one year. The percentage identifying as Black has increased from 7% to 39% in the same timescale. This also only captures individual characteristics of each applicant. Many applications are from couples with diversity.

There is an oversupply of adopters from Asian communities nationally as Asian children are often cared for within family and community networks. We work with prospective Asian adopters to ensure they are able to accept a diverse range of children.



Heterosexual adopters remain the majority but increasing numbers of gay and lesbian people apply. The number of Gay men applying has increased from 9% to 15% and lesbian applicants have increased from 6% to 8%. We continue to ensure we have a presence in pride events and work with the specialist support group New Family Social to raise awareness of our offer.

Summary

Adopter approvals have taken longer to turn the curve than placements made. The reasons for this are varied

- The lead in time for adopter approval is lengthy and the amount of other work especially in private adoptions and complex inter-country work which sits outside the IAC contract has increased.
- Initial uncertainties following Covid restrictions resulted in a decrease in adopter applications
- Covid restrictions had a disproportionate impact on adopter approval timescales due to lengthy delays in medical assessments and in checks from overseas. This had a greater impact in ALE as we actively promote applications from our incoming communities



ALE achieved 19 adoptions in 2020/21. This still placed ALE as one of the higher achieving RAA's in 2020/21.

Campaigns have been successful and the new National 'you can adopt' campaign which launched on 16th September has brought more interest.

We continue to face a number of challenges in improving our adopter approval rate but are progressing with a clear action plan as detailed below

| Challenge | Description | Action |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Staffing | High vacancy rate 3 agency workers failed to meet standards One successful applicant not progressed due to poor reference Capability issues | Continued attempts to recruit both to permanent and interim positions One permanent staff member recruited – commenced in November Further staff member recruited – to commence in July 2021 |
| Early stage processes | Inefficient early stage processes Back log of enquiries | Review of processes Initial enquiry coordinator post created Worker in place since early December New processes and close monitoring Improvements across the board |
| Enquirer suitability | Enquirers unsuitable to adopt Adopter offer gap See below for National availability | Improved website information Information evenings and meet the adopter evenings Counsel out at initial enquiry or initial visit Development of a self-select adopter readiness tool using the website (in progress) |
| Service capacity | Insufficient staffing to allocate all assessments | Development of ISW role Recruitment of flexible workforce of ISW's |
| Covid related issues | Medicals International certificate of good conduct – police do not take fingerprints Health and safety visits – adopter approval to visit Inability to undertake direct training Virtual Panel cannot hear all cases | GP's undertaking virtual medicals Use of specialist agency – adopter funded A challenge in a small number of cases Development and delivery of virtual preparation and training sessions Use of Covid regulations for straight to ADM approval. Now ceased |



| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Private adoptions | 38 families awaiting assessment (highest in London) 4 allocated | Urgent allocations to be made Letter to all others to state will not be allocating until at least April 2022 – information about other options |
| Inter-country adoptions | 15 cases – some highly complex Court delays | ICA contract – for assessments Continue to undertake supervision and Annex A Some further work contracted out |

Timely matching of children with outstanding adopters

Placements made – Historical performance analysis across each Local Authority

| LA | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Newham | 10 | 27 | 5 | 10 | 14 |
| Tower Hamlets | 8 | 19 | 10 | 7 | 14 |
| Havering | 8 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 4 |
| LBBB | 15 | 13 | 21 | 8 | 13 |
| Total | 41 | 66 | 47 | 29 | 44 |

Placement orders

| LA | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Newham | 24 | 18 | 11 | 12 | 8 |
| Tower Hamlets | 21 | 9 | 12 | 11 | 11 |
| Havering | 7 | 15 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| LBBB | 13 | 21 | 16 | 13 | 6 |
| Total | 65 | 63 | 41 | 38 | 32 |

The numbers of placement orders and placements made varies considerably from year to year and across each Local Authority. A down turn was noted in 2019/20 as is consistent with all RAA's in the year of go-live.

Most LA's saw an increased number of placements made in 20/21 with the exception of Havering where relatively few placement orders had been made. 7 placement orders were made in Havering in 202/21 and an upturn in placements made is expected in 21/22.



The number of placement orders made reduced considerably in 2 LA's, increased in 1 and remained consistent in one. The national background rate is of a reduction in placement orders.

Family Finding workload breakdown on 31st March 2021

The chart below details a snapshot of the workload of the family finding team at the end of the 20/21 financial year.

| | Placed for Adoption | Matched not yet placed | Linked not yet matched | Family finding post PO | Post ADM no PO | Early Monitoring | Total Children in tracking | Children in EP prior to formal matching |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Newham | 14 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 14 | 2 |
| Havering | 4 | 2 | | 3 | 7 | 2 | 9 | |
| Tower Hamlets | 14 | | 3 | 9 | 19 | 12 | 25 | |
| LBBB | 13 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 18 | |
| total | 45 | 5 | 9 | 21 | 36 | 26 | 66 | 2 |

Newham, Tower Hamlets and LBBB continue to have a remarkable degree of consistency in terms of placements made. Havering has traditionally had a lower level of demand and only 4 placements were made in 2020/21. A further 14 are either linked or matched and awaiting placement. Numbers in this cohort are fairly consistent across all Local Authorities. Numbers in Tower Hamlets in pre PO stages remain comparatively high and this requires further exploration.

Placement statistics

44 matches were made in 2020/21 with an additional three children placed in early permanence placements but not yet matched. A total of 10 children were placed through early permanence. This is the highest performance per number of Local Authorities in London by a considerable margin.

Each Local Authority has a lead worker but workers are also paired to ensure cover for each Local Authority at all times and to allow a more flexible response in times of higher demand. Tower Hamlets and Newham are paired as are LBBB and Havering.

All workers attend placement planning and tracking meetings, offer support and guidance to children's social work staff and give additional support to complete paperwork and drive progress where necessary

One Advanced practitioner takes lead responsibility for relinquished children and early permanence.

It was agreed in the Board meeting in November 2020 that a further temporary position could be created. A further vacancy was created through the sad death of a worker; Anne Fitzgerald in January. A further temporary vacancy was created due to a worker going on early maternity leave. Two workers are currently providing cover for a team of five. The service has continued to provide

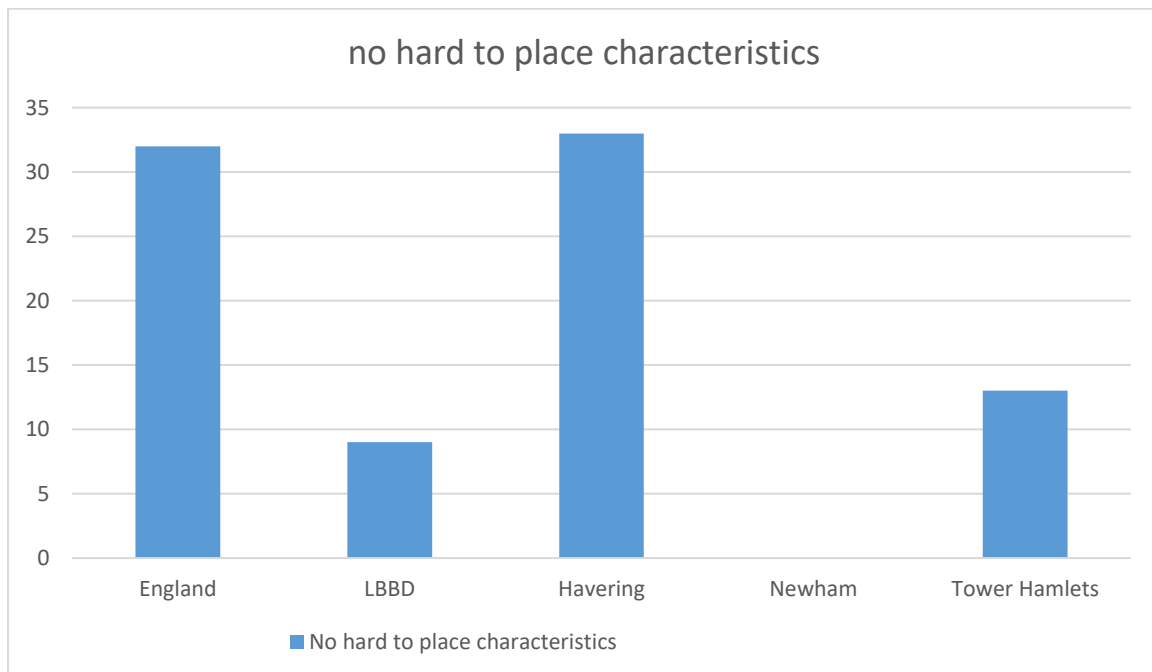


support for all children requiring a match but has temporarily ceased direct attendance at legal and permanency planning meetings.

The service has advertised permanent and temporary posts and has found it difficult to recruit to these posts. We have successfully recruited to one post and are offering a secondment opportunity for the temporary post. A further advert has gone out.

Children in active family finding

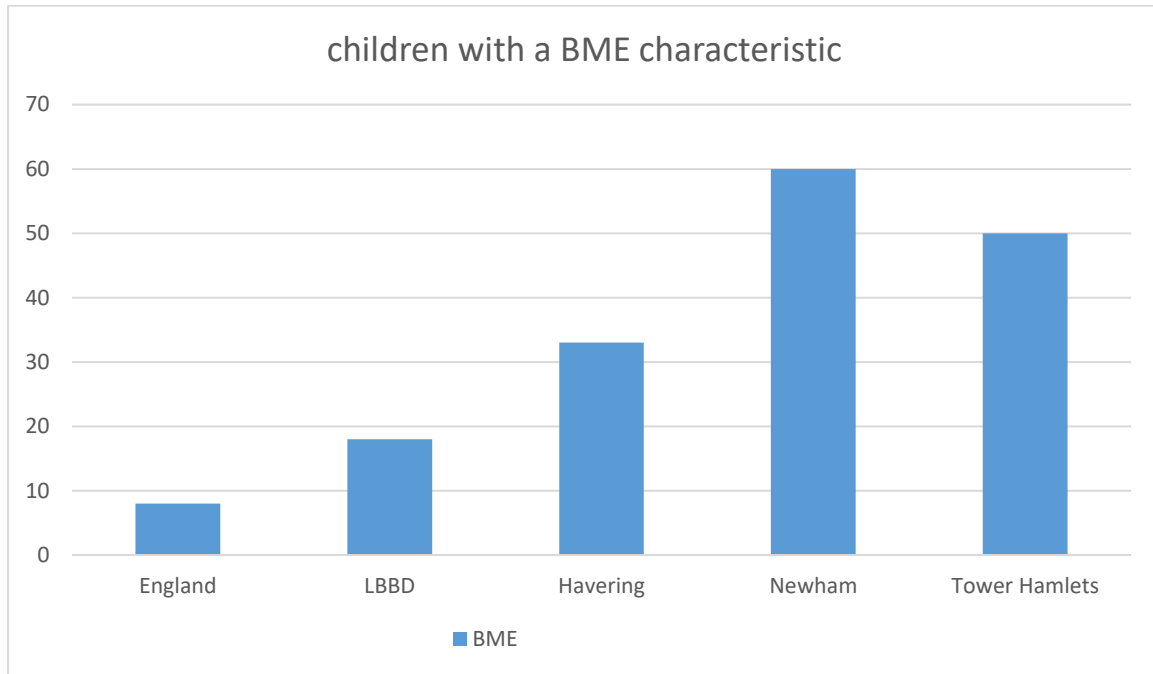
Percentage of children in active family finding at 31st March 2021 who were categorised as having no hard to place characteristics



On average in England 32% of children have no hard to place characteristics. These children are usually placed more quickly than children deemed harder to place. Only Havering equals this percentage. All other Local Authorities have much lower numbers of children ranging from 13% in Tower Hamlets to no children in Newham



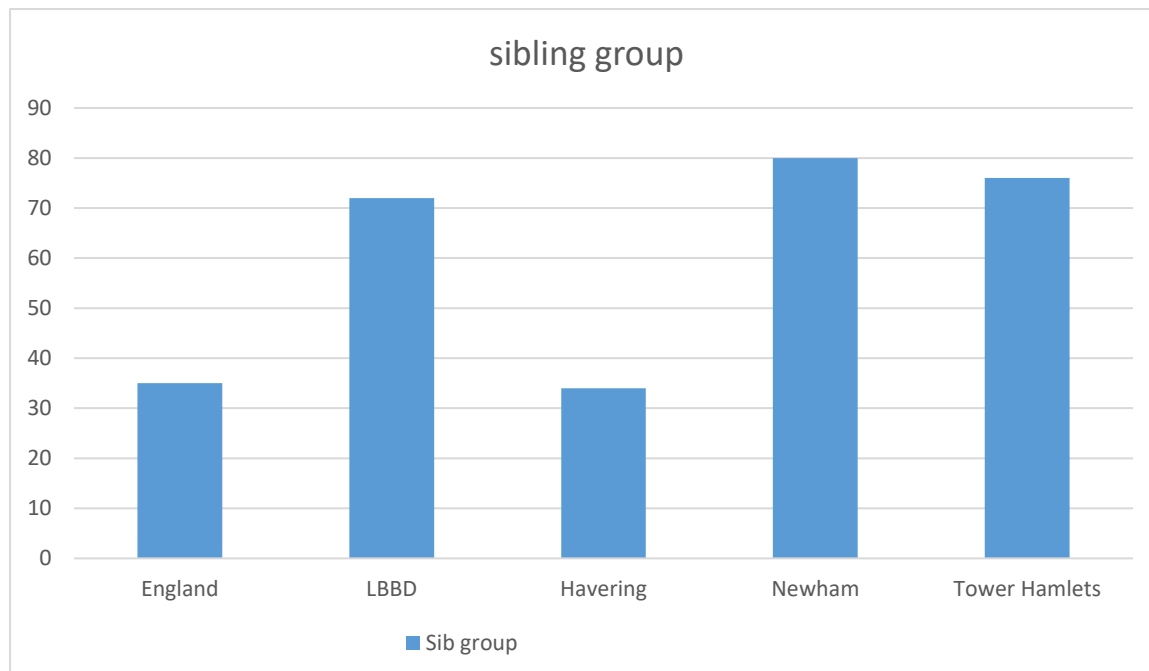
Percentage of children in active family finding on 31st March 2021 from a BME background



Children from a BME family are often harder to place. Adopt London works with all BME communities to promote adoption and a number of successful campaigns have increased the number of applications considerably. The England average of 8% of children waiting is much lower than averages from all ALE Local Authorities. In Newham 60% of all children waiting are from a BME heritage.



Percentage of children waiting at 31st March 2021 who are part of a sibling group



The number of children waiting to be placed in a sibling group in Havering reflects the England average. In all other Local Authorities up to 70% of children waiting are in a sibling group.

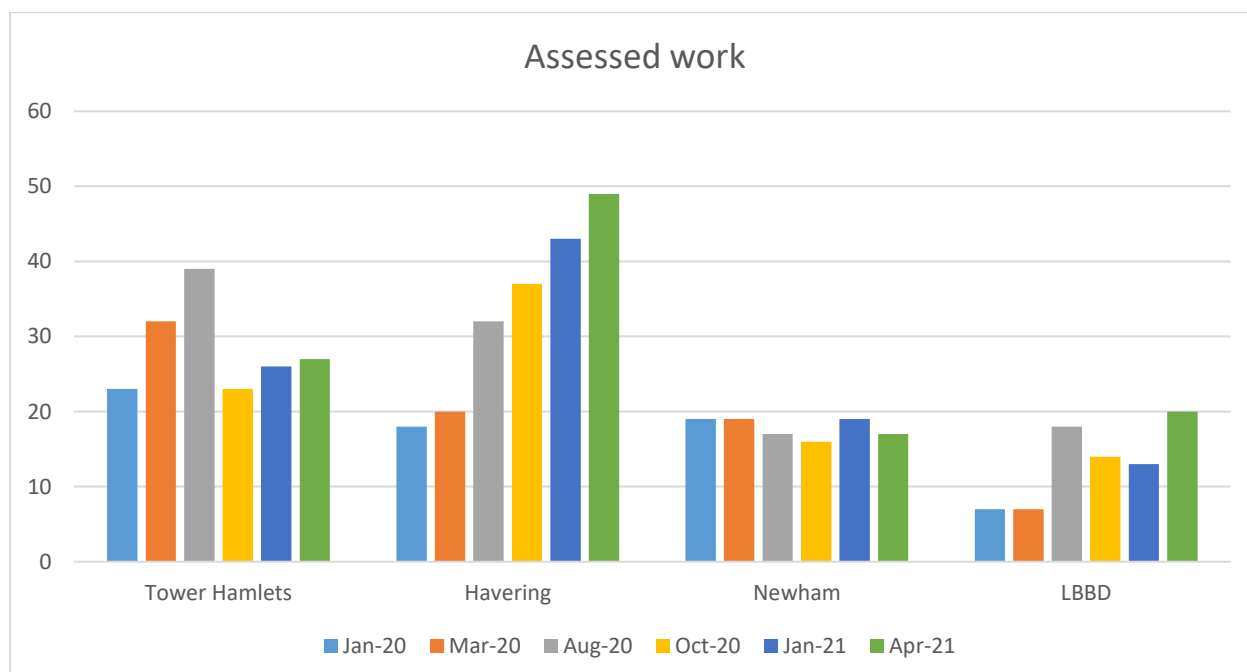
Service Plan

| Development area | Action | Comment | Progress |
|------------------|--|---|--|
| Staffing | Full staffing. Back fill for maternity leave Staffing insufficient to meet demand | Increase in core staffing from 4 to 5 workers achieved in budget Difficulty in recruitment | 3 permanent staff 1 post temporarily covered for maternity leave 1 post remains vacant |
| LA relationships | Locally based staff Agree strategic and operational leads in all LA's Develop positive working relationships | Covid restrictions resulted in WFH for most staff Relationship building through online platforms | Development of pairing system to allow for named worker support with flexible response |



| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Access to LA records | Identify solutions to access LA records on read only basis to ensure information flow is seamless | This has proven difficult Further work ongoing | Access in place in 2 LA's and partial access in one other |
| Protocols | Protocols developed and shared with LA services | High staff turnover – to review and re-issue | Further protocols to be developed Operational sub group of the Board to be developed |
| Relinquished babies And Early permanence | AP to take lead role in development and delivery | | Lead role progressing EP increasing to 10% |
| Tracker | Develop effective tracker ASGLB compliant | System glitches | Completed – to further review |

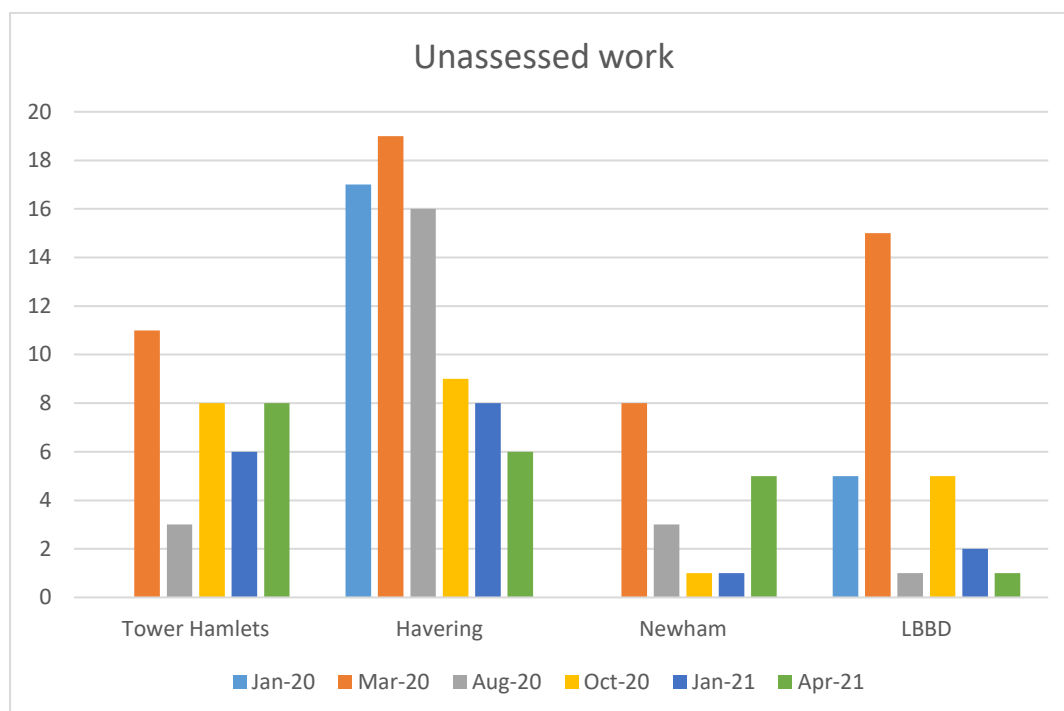
Adoptive families are supported to achieve happiness and the best outcomes



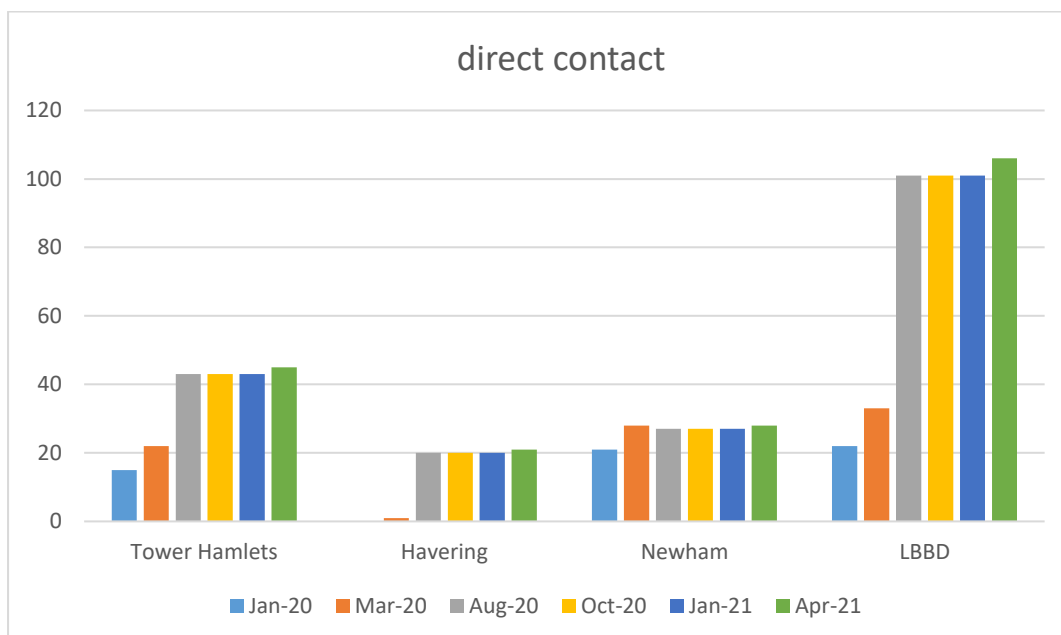
With the exception of Havering, assessed adoption support work has begun to stabilise although overall assessed work continues to increase. There are a larger number of adoptive families living in Havering and entitled to a service. Many were not recruited in



Havering and therefore were previously unaware of their entitlement. As can be seen below this increase in demand in Havering initially resulted in an increase in unassessed work being held prior to assessment. This has now been addressed



A low number of cases will continue to be held as unassessed work. 5 cases are awaiting adoption support (down from 9 cases in January); 15 adopted adults are also receiving support. A further cohort of adopters receive one off advice and support through the duty system and are not included in these figures. Other adopters may access our universal services provided through PAC-UK, 'We are Family', Adopter Hub and National Association of Therapeutic Parents.



As can be seen supported direct contact has stabilised. We are now confident that we have identified all families in need of support. Some direct contact was supported during the summer months but almost all supported direct work has been undertaken virtually this year. Direct work plans have resumed in line with government guidance.

LBBD traditionally supported all direct contact. Direct supported contact will be subject to continuous review with the aim of preparing families to meet safely without support wherever possible.

Overview

Although numbers of adopters being offered a service has stabilised, demand for adoption support continues to rise. We continue to support adopters to access other support services such as those provided by We are Family and the Adopter Hub in order to ring-fence support services for those families most in need. Our duty service provides an immediate source of support for our adoptive families prior to allocation and following completion of allocated work.

Most families receiving direct support from ALE have high levels of need. ALE social workers work in partnership with workers from a range of organisations to support children on the edge of care and in need of safeguarding. In many cases ALE social workers take a lead role in provision of direct support. Levels of need have increased through

- the impact of Covid,
- post Lockdown reintegration into education
- community issues (including county lines)
- impact on mental health



Service plan

| Development area | Action | Comment | Progress |
|---|--|---|--|
| Staffing | Temporary cover for maternity leave | Workload high and resources must be restricted | Fully staffed |
| ASF | <p>Ensure compliance with new ASF requirements</p> <p>All providers to be subject to compliance checks</p> <p>Annual returns to be signed off by lead finance officer</p> <p>Historical issues to be addressed in LA</p> | Some challenge with historical returns | <p>All new contracts issued only after compliance</p> <p>Annual return ready to complete</p> |
| Adopter led support | <p>Liaise with existing peer support networks</p> <p>Work with WAF Pan London</p> | <p>Formal consultation with adopters through WAF</p> <p>Links and relationships in Local area made and maintained</p> | WAF offer well established |
| Develop immediate access service | Duty system to be developed | Managed by TM with close oversight | System developed and operating well High levels of customer satisfaction |
| Develop core offer | <p>80% direct work to be assessed</p> <p>Improve early offer to all adopters</p> | <p>Develop structure for planned interventions</p> <p>Some commissioned services offer direct access</p> <p>Improved working with peer support networks</p> | Some delay in assessments due to staffing challenges |
| Develop core adopted adult/birth family offer | <p>Develop protocol for clarity of role</p> <p>Develop effective commissioned offer</p> | This aspect of work has been delayed due to pressure on the adoption support offer | Commissioning of pan London birth family service being led by ALS |



| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | | Birth family support undertaken wherever possible | |
| Improve partnership offer | Develop effective working relationships with key partners Undertake joint delivery/programmes where appropriate | Challenge with health services due to differing CCG's | Training for Virtual schools and LAC designated teachers Pan London Local operational networks developing |
| Review commissioned services | Review and develop effective commissioning strategy | Pan London approach wherever possible commencing with Adopted adult and birth family services | Delay in Adopted adult services – Pan London Southwark commissioning service lead |

Adopter consultation

Adopt London services work closely with We are Family an adopter led peer support organization.

All adopters and prospective adopters are invited to enroll with We are Family (WAF) at the point they enter stage 2 assessment. Take up of the service is high. During Covid restrictions WAF re-modelled their service to a more centralized webinar and podcast based model with presentations from a number of expert speakers. This work was funded by Covid funds, charitable funding streams and Adopt London.

WAF conducted consultation with their members on their needs during Covid lockdown. This informed our spending priorities. Further consultation is now built into our annual cycle.

Adopt London also sent out adopter consultation questionnaires to all adopters on approval and to all adopters on our newsletter list regarding our support to them.

We have had some teething problems with staffing in the adopter recruitment team and as a result although most comments were positive we also recognized we needed to ensure consistency of approach

Overall comments were positive and included the following

- Overall, we found the experience straightforward. Built a very good rapport with our social worker. Had no issues speaking to anyone. No issues with Zoom meetings or skype. We were well informed about all stages of the Assessment and what was expected. The information days were informative. Our experience of the process has been positive overall



- We felt that our assessment was very thorough + professional and that xx had really prepared for each session.
- xx was able to explore our backgrounds and difficult topics whilst making us feel at ease and confident in our application. Whenever xx left, we always felt positive and looking forward to our next session with her.

Comments suggesting improvements included the following

'After this prep course I think you should help people set up a what's app group so people can keep in contact after prep course. We did this on my recommendation after the previous prep course & we still communicate nearly a year later.'

- Since Covid restrictions Preparation groups operate online and include as homework small group discussions with the participants on subjects delivered in podcast form. WhatsApp groups facilitate this process and are now an integral part of the offer

'I would suggest that after the prep course that for stage 2 you work out all the prior dates and times in advance between SW and potential adoptee'.

- It is a service expectation that work is structured in this way. We have ensured all social workers whether employed or Independent assessing social workers understand this expectation

'I think you should very seriously consider & put in place a buddying up process. So all potential adopters would buddy up with a person who has already adopted through you so all the basic questions they have could be answered. '

- We work in partnership with We are Family who now offer a range of forums for adopter to adopter communication and support

'Very long. Communication with the social worker was chaotic, what made us very anxious and insecure with the whole progress . Assessment with (team manager) was great, excellent communication and guidance for the preparation for the Panel day.'

- These individual issues have been addressed

We received only 7 responses to the questionnaire in respect of adoption support. All seven were highly positive. Comments included

- In the short time that we've known xx, she quickly had a clear understanding of what our Son is like, which is such a relief.
- She is incredibly efficient in getting her work done.
- xx has helped us in contacting the school which has helped move them along in their complacency.
- Xx (manager) who was the first person to contact us was very supportive.



- xx was available when we needed her, reminded us of what needed doing and in what order and responded to us, quickly going to find information and get back to us with it much faster than we expected.

One adoptive couple whilst praising the service also made some suggestions for improvement as below

'One thing that would be positive for future adopters is to have a rough guide of the approximate foreseeable costs of adoption right from the outset to the final costs of ordering certificates. Though we knew that some of them would be coming, we were still surprised by some of the costs. It would be a way to improve the information given to adopters'.

- The offer varies from Local Authority to Local Authority. We plan to work on clarifying the offer in partnership

'We would have loved to have had more opportunities to talk to current adopters during training days as, when this did happen, there was a really nice balance of being able to have trainers/social worker's professional responses to questions alongside an adopters' more personal take on it. It also gives prospective adopters an opportunity to ask questions in a way they might not when talking to adopters in a social setting.'

- This couple undertook training commissioned from Barnardos in the previous LA model of practice. Training has since been delivered by ALE. We have delivered training remotely since Covid restrictions commenced. Training sessions include an adopter led session and a session with contributions from a birth mother. Training will continue to be subject to review.

Complaints and compliments

The service has had two complaints in 2020/21. Both complaints were from prospective adoptive parents. One complaint was in respect of a decision not to proceed following receipt of statutory checks. The other was in respect of timescales for approval. Both complaints were resolved in stage 1.

Some lessons were learned as a result of these complaints. We have improved our information giving re time-scales and provide more clear information following a decision not to proceed on other options available.

The service has received numerous informal compliments and has logged numerous compliments from adopters, birth families and professionals.

In addition to the compliments noted in adopter feedback compliments include:

Adopter on direct support: Thank you so much for your time and support today. We really appreciated having you there

Adoption panel members: The panel members wished me to pass on that they felt your presentation of your case at panel today was "excellent".

LA Team Manager: I would like to compliment (worker) for her amazing partnership work and supporting us today with a very complicated COVID-19 situation. (the worker) is



amazing, she is such a hard worker, she is driving things forward and I could not be happier to have such member in our extended partnership team.

LA Social worker: (worker) is always supportive, positive, quick to find solutions and moving things quickly and providing high quality work.

Summary of current achievements

Adopt London East has been operational for 18 months. 12 of these months have been in Covid related lockdown. Despite this much has been achieved:

- The highest rate of children placed in all London RAA's
- Adopter approval in line with or higher than all London RAA's
- A large increase in the percentage of black and LGBT adopters
- A new adopter support offer both locally and pan London
- A Covid support offer independently evaluated as outstanding and praised by the DfE
- Rapid response to Covid including quick development of online training and support
- A productive partnership with We are Family delivering webinars and podcasts as well as direct support
- A clear and positive website showcasing our work

Future challenges

The service is still new and has primarily operated within Covid related restrictions. These restrictions have affected the service, partners and our adoptive families.

Infrastructure development

Certain aspects of infrastructure development have been delayed and a primary focus in 2021/22 will be in this field. Development areas include:

- A Liquidlogic based software tool for use across the service
- An ASF supplier accreditation tool
- Digital read only access to LA files to ensure easy transfer of information
- Improved financial reporting systems through separation of cost centres
- Pan London commissioning of a birth parent service
- Improvements to the website including a readiness tool for prospective adopters and adopter led access to services
- Consolidation of new ways of working post Covid restrictions

Adopter approval

Due to the long lead in time and the impact of Covid restrictions: adopter approval has taken longer to turn the curve than other sectors. Approvals have begun to increase and 21/22 will see increased numbers of adopters improved. Development areas include:

- Higher ratio of adopter applications from target groups such as black adopters
- Increase in applications from adopters able to care for more hard to place children
- Increase in the number of adopters willing to consider early permanence
- Improvement in timeliness in all aspects of the approval process



Family finding

Family finding continued throughout restrictions and the number of children placed increased. Development areas include:

- Production of further tools to assist LA social workers to understand adoption and adoption processes
- Streamlining processes to ensure each LA has the same offer and best practice is shared
- Further embedding the Beth Neil approach to introductions
- Increase in the use of in-house adopters

Adopter support

Prior to the development of ALE the adoption support offer was underdeveloped. Many adopters were not aware of the offer available. The support offer is now much more readily available and demand for services is high. The offer has been streamlined with an immediate duty offer triaging into a social work allocated offer. Development areas include:

- Improved management of the ASF offer through dedicated administrative support
- Improved management of direct contact through review of contracts and safe transition to adopter led contacts where safe to do so
- Further development of the partnership with We are Family and other local peer led adopter support groups
- Improved adopted adult and birth family support through re-negotiated contracts and focussed support

Financial statement

| Category of Expenditure | 20-21 Budget | Actual Expenditure 2020/21 | Variance 2020/21 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Staffing Costs | 1,161,566.80 | 1,161,567 | 0 |
| Agency Staffing | 282,421.03 | 282,421 | 0 |
| Other Staff Costs | 69,370.12 | 69,370 | 0 |
| Travel/Transport | 2,805.12 | 2,805 | 0 |
| Office Expenses | 39,749.13 | 39,749 | 0 |
| Premises Related Costs | 944.55 | 945 | 0 |
| Commissioned Services | 102,634.32 | 102,634 | 0 |



| | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------|
| Communication/Publicity/Market Engagement | 169.59 | 170 | 0 |
| Internal Recharges | 42,772.06 | 42,772 | 0 |
| Total Expenditure | 1,702,433 | 1,702,432 | 0 |

| Category of Income | 20-21 Budget | Actual Income 2020/210 | Variance 2020/21 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| DFE Income carried-forward from 18/19 | -48,931 | -48,931 | 0 |
| LA Contributions: | | | 0 |
| LB Barking & Dagenham | -463,041 | -463,041 | 0 |
| LB Newham | -479,690 | -479,690 | 0 |
| LB Tower Hamlets | -337,051 | -337,051 | 0 |
| LB Havering | -373,720.00 | -373,720.00 | 0 |
| Total Income | -1,702,433 | -1,702,433 | 0 |

Net Expenditure 20/21

| | Adjusted Budget 20-21 | Actuals 2020/21 | Variance 2019/20 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Net Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Sue May

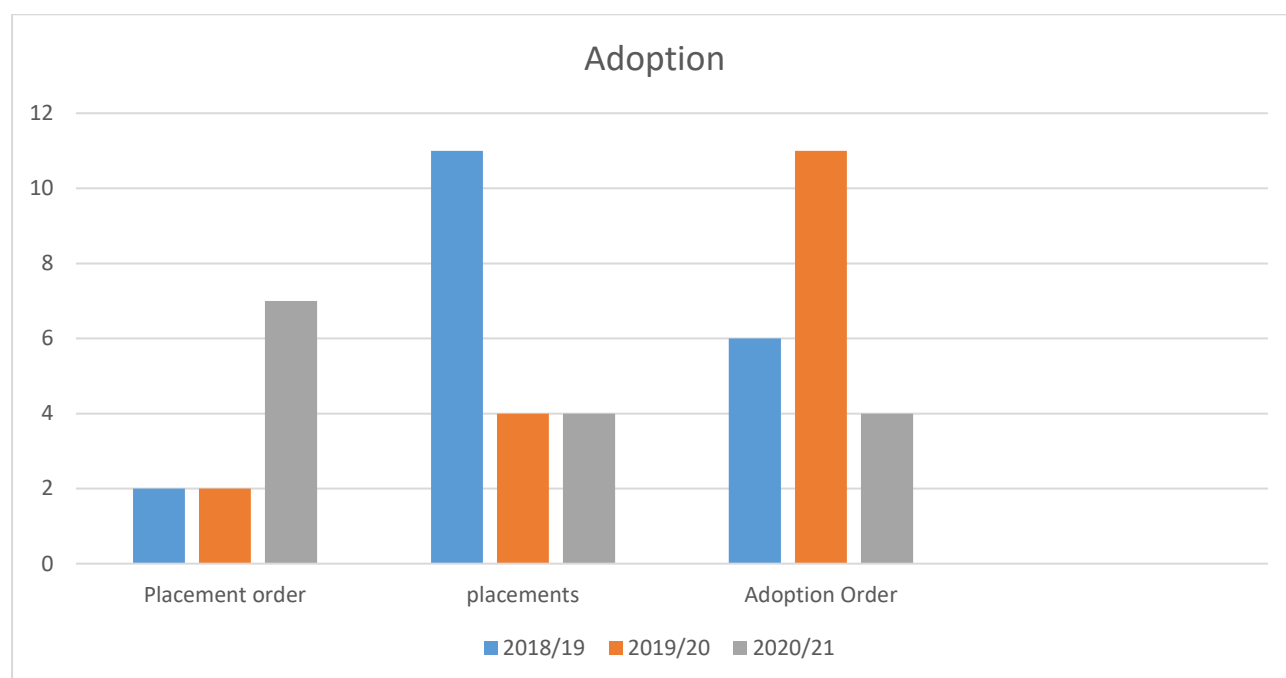
HOS Adopt London East

1st September 2021

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Adopt London East Annual Report

Havering Performance report

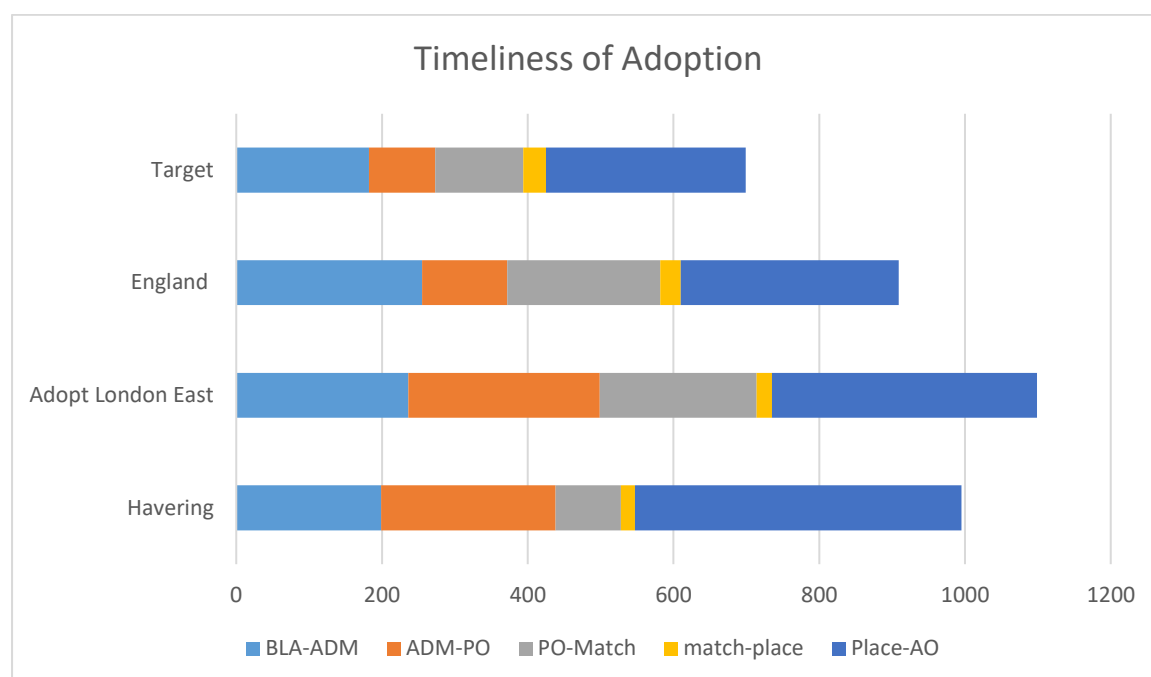


A placement order is made by court when a decision is made that adoption is in the best interest of the child. This allows the Local Authority to place for adoption. As can be seen the number of placement orders increased from 2 to 7 in 2020/21. This will result in an increase in adoptions in 2021/22.

The number of placements made has decreased in 2019/20 and 2020/21 this reflects the number of children available for adoption.

Children cannot be adopted until at least 16 weeks after placement. In practice adoption usually takes longer as court processes must be followed. The number of children adopted increased in 2019/20 following the increase in placements made in 2018/19. The number then fell in 2020/21 as fewer children were made subject of a placement order and placed.

Timeliness of adoption



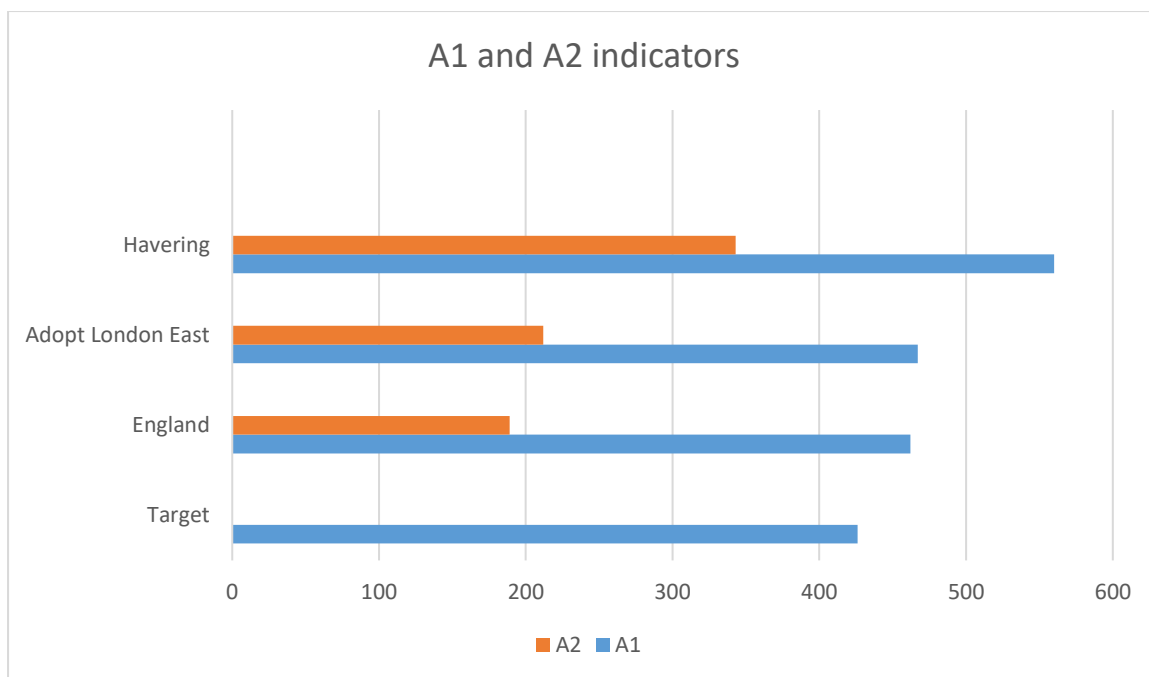
Adoption timeliness is subject to DfE set targets for timeliness. These are measured from when a child becomes looked after through a series of stages as described below

- becomes looked after (BLA)
- The date a decision is made by the agency that adoption is in the child's best interest (ADM)
- The date a placement order is made (PO)
- The date a child is matched to prospective adopters (Match)
- The date a child is placed with the adopters (Place)
- The date an adoption order is granted (AO)

As can be seen above targets set are not usually met by RAA's and Local Authorities. England averages are considerably higher than targets set.

Havering performance is only slightly worse than the target and lower than the England average in BLA to ADM decision. This is indicative of good pro-active social work. There were considerable delays in ADM decision to placement order due to complications in court processes in 2 of the cases. Timeliness in placement order to match is and in match to place is better than both the target and England average. This is indicative of good partnership working between social work teams in Havering and Adopt London East. Once placed, Havering children have waited the longest to be formally adopted. This is reflective of lengthier court times in East London which have been addressed by joint work with the courts and by some complexity in process.

The number of days represented at the end of the yellow line indicates overall timeliness for placement of children. Children in Havering are placed quicker than Adopt London East and England averages.



These indicators are reported nationally and reflect a three year rolling average

A1 timeliness from BLA to place for adoption

A2 Timeliness from placement order to match

Performance in Havering in 2020/21 has improved considerably on the A1 3 year average, from 560 days to 448. This reflects improved timeliness through working in partnership.

There is no target for the A2 indicator. Havering's performance in placement order to match has also improved from a 3 years rolling average of 343 days to 90 days, lower than the DfE set target and England averages.

Sue May

HOS Adopt London East

21st September 2021

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CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

30 SEPTEMBER 2021

| | |
|---|---|
| Subject Heading: | School Quality Assurance Update |
| SLT Lead: | Robert South, Director of Children's Services |
| Report Author and contact details: | Trevor Cook, Assistant Director – Education Services; 01708 431250; trevor.cook@havering.gov.uk |
| Policy context: | Education |
| Financial summary: | None immediately arising from this report |

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Communities making Havering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Places making Havering | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Opportunities making Havering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Connections making Havering | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the OSSC with an overview of the statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority (LA) with regard to ensuring education excellence.

The London Borough of Havering recognises and respects the diverse educational landscape and models of governance that now exist within the borough, which currently include:

- a range of early years settings;
- infant, junior, primary, secondary, tertiary and special provisions;
- LA-maintained, academies, free-schools, stand-alone/local/national MATs, federations and faith schools.

The LA also appreciates that additional quality assurance processes are likely to be taking place right across the sector (eg Ofsted, the Regional Schools' Commissioner, MATs) and therefore we are keen to ensure that our own quality assurance processes are proportionate, work in synergy with other regulators, and minimise any burden of duplication.

Whilst acknowledging the above, however, The Education Act 2011 reiterates the role of LAs in relation to all children and young people under the following 3 headings:

- champions of vulnerable children and young people;
- ensuring fair access to services; and
- ensuring educational excellence.

There is an expectation in the 2010 white paper that LAs retain a 'strong strategic role as champions for parents and families, for vulnerable pupils and of educational excellence' regardless of the school's organisation or governance arrangements. Moreover, the 2011 Act did not repeal any LA legal duties and powers set out in the Education Act 1996, the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, the Education & Inspections Act 2006 and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children & Learning Act 2009.

In keeping with these principles, the Childcare Act 2006 outlines the LA's statutory requirements with specific regard to early childhood. The Act states that an English LA must 'improve the well-being of young children in their area' and 'reduce inequalities between young children in their area'. This includes young children's 'physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation.'

The duties and related powers of the LA with regard to settings, schools and colleges in the area are set out in the London Borough of Havering Quality Assurance Framework: Education Providers (attached as an Appendix).

Havering LA therefore provides challenge and support through direct provision or brokerage where needed to all providers in order to improve educational performance. We do this by having specific objectives and principles which are clear, risk-based and proportionate. We are committed to working, wherever possible, in partnership with providers.

All our quality assurance processes are compatible with our statutory responsibilities and are aligned with the latest DfE Schools Causing Concern guidance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the OSSC are asked to note the content of the report.

REPORT DETAIL

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to quality assure all educational provision, irrespective of governance arrangements. The LA operates a flexible programme of quality assurance, proportionate to the quality of provision within any given institution. The LA reserves the right to exercise its powers flexibly and with discretion, depending on changing circumstances and the picture emerging from a wide range of evidence.

Desktop Risk Assessment

A desktop risk assessment is applied to all provisions to determine the extent of quality assurance scrutiny, based on a range of factors including:

- Outcomes (standards and progress) in statutory tests or examinations, including trajectory / direction of travel
- Other data (eg attendance; persistent absence; exclusions; financial management, etc)
- Previous Ofsted and likely proximity to next inspection
- Trajectory / direction of travel in relation to outcomes
- Local Intelligence (eg quality of leadership and governance; complaints; safeguarding concerns, admissions and popularity; financial management, record with vulnerable children, etc)

Quality Assurance Visit(s)

All schools, irrespective of governance, are entitled to receive an on-site QA visit with an experienced and qualified Quality Assurance Inspector from the LA, once each year (academic cycle). The LA is, however, mindful of the extent of scrutiny

and accountability currently within the system (eg Ofsted, HMI, RSC, MAT quality assurance, etc). With this in mind, the following alternatives may be adopted via consultation between the LA and school(s):

- The LA will not undertake a full QA visit within 6 months of an Ofsted inspection, to any school receiving a Good or Outstanding judgement.
- The LA is willing to consider a request from a MAT or a Federation to 'quality assure' the MAT/Federation's own quality assurance processes (this is likely to include joint on-site visits and discussions about each school in the MAT/Federation).
- If the desktop risk assessment identifies minimal risk, the LA will be happy to accept any credible and comprehensive QA report undertaken by another source (eg DfE; independent audit, etc).

Following the above process, the LA will assign its own categorisation to the school or academy. From this, the LA may determine that a maintained school should receive additional quality assurance visits over the course of the year if the desktop risk assessment and QA visit do not in themselves provide reliable evidence that the school will be Good or Outstanding if inspected immediately.

Where there are concerns around an academy, free school or MAT, the LA has a duty to relay its concerns to the RSC who are the regulator responsible for provision outside of the maintained sector. It is the RSC who then holds the responsibility to exercise its own powers of intervention as appropriate. The LA has no intervention powers over academies except for safeguarding or equalities reasons, or if statutory processes are being breached.

A summary of the QA process is shown in the diagram below;

Risk Assessment & Categorisation

SMG
Achievement
Trajectory
Last Ofsted

Behaviour and Attendance
Local Intelligence
Staffing / Curriculum / L&M
Safeguarding & Well-Being

Annual QA Visit

Is the Provider 'Causing Concern'?

Yes

No

For Maintained Schools...

Standard Response:

Review and/or 'Deep Dive' interventions
Monitoring Board/Progress Review Meetings
QA Visits as necessary

Discretionary Response:

Consider Statutory Powers of intervention:

- Letter of Concern
- Formal Warning Notice
- Financial Notice of Concern
- IEB / SMB / additional governors
- Academisation
- Executive Leadership
- Referral to Ofsted / DfE
- Closure

For Academies / Free Schools...

Standard Response:

Report concerns to RSC
Offer or Commission LA support

Commission Support

External Brokerage
Enter School Partnership
HES Traded

Commission Support

External Brokerage
Lead School Partnership
HES Traded

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no direct financial implications from this report, as it is for information only. However, the teams responsible for undertaking the quality assurance functions identified above are funded from DfE grants and core Council funding.

Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications in noting the content of this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no direct human resources implications from this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

There are no direct equalities implications from this report, and an Equalities Assessment has not been completed as this report is for information only.

**London Borough of Havering
Quality Assurance Framework:
Education Providers**

Children's Services Directorate

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1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The London Borough of Havering recognises and respects the diverse educational landscape and models of governance that now exist within the borough, which currently include:
- a range of early years settings;
 - infant, junior, primary, secondary, tertiary and special provisions;
 - LA-maintained, academies, free-schools, stand-alone/local/national MATs, federations and faith schools.
- 1.2 The Local Authority also appreciates that additional quality assurance processes are likely to be taking place right across the sector (eg Ofsted, the Regional Schools' Commissioner, MATs) and therefore we are keen to ensure that our own quality assurance processes are proportionate, work in synergy with other regulators, and minimise any burden of duplication.
- 1.3 Whilst acknowledging the above, however, The Education Act 2011 reiterates the role of Local Authorities (LAs) in relation to all children and young people under the following 3 headings:
- champions of vulnerable children and young people;
 - ensuring fair access to services; and
 - ensuring educational excellence.
- 1.4 There is an expectation in the 2010 white paper that LAs retain a 'strong strategic role as champions for parents and families, for vulnerable pupils and of educational excellence' regardless of the school's organisation or governance arrangements. Moreover, the 2011 Act did not repeal any LA legal duties and powers set out in the Education Act 1996, the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, the Education & Inspections Act 2006 and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children & Learning Act 2009. In keeping with these principles, the Childcare Act 2006 outlines the LA's statutory requirements with specific regard to early childhood. The Act states that an English LA must 'improve the well-being of young children in their area' and 'reduce inequalities between young children in their area'. This includes young children's 'physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation.'
- 1.5 The duties and related powers of the LA with regard to settings, schools and colleges in the area are set out below. However, in summary, LAs remain responsible for 'secur(ing) efficient primary and secondary education ... (and) promot(ing) high standards in primary and secondary education ... (to) meet the needs of the population in their area'.
- 1.6 Havering LA therefore provides challenge and support through direct provision or brokerage where needed to all providers in order to improve educational performance. We do this by having specific objectives and principles which are clear, risk-based and proportionate. We are committed to working, wherever possible, in partnership with providers.
- 1.7 All our quality assurance processes are compatible with our statutory responsibilities and are aligned with the latest *Schools Causing Concern* guidance (DfE - currently February 2018).

2. Our Objectives

2.1 We are focused on four key objectives, which take account of the local and national context. These 4 objectives will ensure that our children and young people reach their potential and can lead successful lives in a highly competitive world. These objectives interrelate and are:

- all settings, schools, colleges are rated as 'Good' or better by the regulator, Ofsted;
- an increasing proportion of providers move to 'Outstanding';
- the progress and attainment of pupils and students at the foundation stage and all key stages is in the top quartile of performance against other English LAs; and
- the gap between 'vulnerable' pupils – for example, pupils entitled to free school meals and pupils with special educational needs – and all other pupils, is narrower than in the majority of English LAs and in the top quartile of performance.

3. Our Principles

3.1 It is crucial that, as a public and accountable body, we have clearly stated principles that guide the way we work and our relationship with all our providers. In Havering, these are that:

- practitioners are experts in self and collective improvement and in most circumstances should determine their own school improvement and support needs;
- we need to develop excellence through growing system leaders and identifying excellence in our providers, validating this and drawing upon it;
- the LA role ensures that all providers are subject to a robust LA quality assurance (QA) process, following the principles and activities outlined in this document;
- the focus of LA work is proportionate, delivering appropriate support and challenge to all schools (including academies), settings and colleges where the QA process has identified issues of concern;
- the LA will use its legal powers of intervention to act promptly in cases where a provider does not take, or intend to take, timely independent actions to improve; and
- the maintenance of high quality relationships and a wide range of collaboration mechanisms that have been established between providers, governing bodies, trusts, LA officers, members of the council and the Schools' Commissioner's Group remains paramount, and are key to ensuring the efficient and effective functioning of the education system in Havering in its continual drive for improvement.

4. Quality Assurance – Schools & Academies

4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to quality assure all educational provision, irrespective of governance arrangements. The LA operates a flexible programme of quality assurance, proportionate to the quality of provision within any given institution. **The Local Authority reserves the right to exercise its powers flexibly and with discretion, depending on changing circumstances and the picture emerging from a wide range of evidence. Our aim is to be proactive and intervene early – to avert and prevent failure - rather than act at the point where a provider has already failed.**

4.2 **Desktop Risk Assessment** - A desktop risk assessment is applied to all provisions to determine the extent of quality assurance scrutiny, based on a wide range of factors, including:

- Outcomes (attainment and progress) in statutory tests or examinations, including trajectory / direction of travel.
- Other data (eg attendance; persistent absence; exclusions; financial management).
- Previous Ofsted and likely proximity to next inspection.
- Local Intelligence (eg quality of leadership and governance; complaints; safeguarding concerns, admissions and popularity; financial management; record with vulnerable children; staffing turbulence; outcomes of audits, etc).

4.3 **Quality Assurance Visit(s)** - All schools, irrespective of governance, are entitled to receive an on-site visit from a Quality Assurance Inspector from the Local Authority, once each year (academic cycle). The LA is, however, mindful of the extent of scrutiny and accountability currently within the system (eg Ofsted, HMI, RSC, MAT QA, etc). With this in mind, the following alternatives may be adopted via consultation between the LA and school(s):

- The LA will not undertake a full QA visit within 6 months of an Ofsted inspection, to any school receiving a Good or Outstanding judgement.
- The LA is willing to consider a request from a MAT or a Federation to 'quality assure' the MAT / Federation's own quality assurance processes (this is likely to include joint on-site visit(s), the sharing of data and reports and discussions about each school/academy in the MAT or Federation). The process and timing of this will be flexible and designed to complement the MAT / Federation's own processes.
- If the desktop risk assessment identifies minimal risk, the LA may, in discussion with the provider, accept any credible and comprehensive QA report undertaken by another source (eg DfE; independent audit, etc).

Following the above process, the LA will assign its own categorisation to the school (see pages 10-11). From this, the Local Authority may determine that a maintained school should receive additional quality assurance visits over the course of the year if the desktop risk assessment and QA visit do not in themselves provide reliable evidence that the school will be Good or Outstanding if inspected immediately. Where there are concerns around an academy, free school or MAT, the Local Authority will also offer additional visits, but is also likely to relay its concerns to the RSC.

4.4 **In-School Reviews** - Following Quality Assurance meetings, it may be determined that a fuller review of provision is required to gain a clearer, more comprehensive picture and determine more specifically the strengths and areas for improvement. This would usually be undertaken before categorising a school as 'causing concern'. If the concerns pertain more specifically to leadership or governance, a Leadership Review or a Review of Governance may be commissioned. For academies, these will be advisory and not mandatory.

Reviews are designed to confirm progress and look at the main areas within the Ofsted schedule with a specific focus on the key issues for the provider. Where possible and relevant, the review team may include practitioners and experts drawn from across the directorate or from partner providers in relation to the key areas (for example SEN, governance, behaviour, Early Years or specific subject areas). The provider's leaders are also likely to take part in the review.

4.5 **Monitoring Board / Progress Review Meetings** - Any maintained schools categorised as 'at risk' of not achieving Good or better, will be subject to monthly or half-termly **Progress Review Meetings** (PRMs), chaired by a senior LA officer. Members of the provider's Senior Leadership Team, the Chair or Vice-Chair of Governors and other governors by invitation are expected to attend. If a school is already graded as Inadequate, a **Monitoring Board** will be established. These meetings will continue until sufficient improvement is evident. Progress Review Meetings and Monitoring Boards will also be offered free of charge to academies deemed to be 'at risk' but they will not be mandatory. The Local Authority is in any case likely to relay its concerns about academies, free schools or MATs to the RSC.

In summary, the purpose of PRMs / MBs is to:

- oversee implementation of the action plan to ensure rapid and sustained improvement;
- monitor progress of actions undertaken to ensure they have maximum impact;
- commission additional resources needed for rapid progress;
- monitor the impact of all brokered support, including partnership support;
- gather evidence of progress for Ofsted, HMI and LA monitoring purposes.

4.6 **Brokered Partnerships** - It may be that schools deemed to be 'at risk' will be partnered with another local successful school for a set period of time to engage school-to-school support. Where this is the case, an action plan is drawn up and specific objectives are established. Funding can be applied for and standard payments are available via an agreed tariff to facilitate release time as appropriate. The impact of the partnership is monitored through PRMs or MBs and evaluated at the end of the agreement. Partnerships are funded through school to school support and are therefore scrutinised through the Schools' Funding Forum.

4.7 **Statutory Powers of Intervention** - The Local Authority has a suite of intervention powers within maintained schools that it is able to use flexibly and at its discretion. These powers are set out in statute. The Local Authority and Secretary of State have the power to:

- require the governing body to enter into arrangements (eg federation or academisation)
- appoint additional governors
- appoint an Interim Executive Board (IEB)
- suspend the delegated authority for the governing body to manage a school's budget
- close a school

4.8 **Letters of Concern and/or Warning Notices** - The Local Authority has the power to issue a *Warning Notice* to any maintained school that is causing concern, detailing the reasons for the concern and the improvements required within a specific time frame. Warning Notices are copied to the RSC and to Ofsted. Where there are single issues or emerging concerns, the LA may send a *Letter of Concern* to the school to give notice of the issues and establish a dialogue, with the aim of addressing the issues early and avoiding formal intervention.

Note: The usual route when concerns emerge about an academy, free school or MAT, is to refer the concerns to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

(See pages 8-9 for Activity Matrices)

Primary & Special Schools – Activity Matrix

(LA-Maintained, Academy and Free Schools):

The following table shows the **general range of quality assurance activities for individual primary schools/academies**. The Local Authority reserves the right to apply discretion and flexibility to the application of the process and its powers and the timing and regularity of meetings.

| LA Category: Primary School / Academy | Desktop Risk- Assessment (see 4.2) | QA On-Site Visit (see 4.3) | Discretionary Further QA Visit(s) (see 4.3) | In-School Review (see 4.4) | MB or PRM (see 4.5) | Brokered Partnership: Lead (L) or Supported (S) (see 4.6) | Use of Statutory Powers (inc WN/LofC) (see 4.7/4.8) |
|---|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| 4 ↓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MB | ✓S | ✓ |
| 4 = | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MB | ✓S | ✓ |
| 4 ↑ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MB | ✓S | ✓ |
| Below Floor Standard | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MB | ✓S | ✓ |
| 3 ↓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | PRM | ✓S | ✓ |
| 3 = | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | PRM | ✓S | ✓ |
| 3 ↑ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | PRM | ✓S | ✓ |
| 2 ↓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | PRM | ✓S | ✓ |
| 2 = | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓L | ✓ |
| 2 ↑ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓L | ✓ |
| 1 ↓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓L | ✓ |
| 1 = | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓L | ✓ |
| 1 ↑ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓L | ✓ |

Key:

↑ performing above the current Ofsted grade.

= solidly maintaining / maintaining and on an upward trajectory to next grade.

↓ at risk of declining grade if inspected at this time, or failing to make any progress (if already grade 3/4).

↑↑ or ↓↓ on rare occasions, a provider is judged to be either improving or declining by more than one grade. Where this is the case, multiple direction arrows will be shown.

Secondary Schools & Colleges - Activity Matrix

(all Havering secondary schools are academies):

The following table shows the **general range of quality assurance activities for individual secondary academies**. The Local Authority reserves the right to apply discretion and flexibility in the application of the process and its powers (eg academies might wish to work with the LA so that it quality assures the QA processes of the MAT).

| LA Category: Secondary Academy | Desktop Risk- Assessment (see 4.2) | QA On-Site Visit(s) (see 4.3) | OR: Joint MAT / LA Collaboration (see 4.3) | MB or PRM (see 4.5) | Use of Statutory Powers for Academies (see 4.7/4.8) |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| 4 ↓ | ✓ | By negotiation | | MB - Optional | ✓ |
| 4 = | ✓ | By negotiation | | MB - Optional | ✓ |
| 4 ↑ | ✓ | By negotiation | | MB - Optional | ✓ |
| Below Floor Standard | ✓ | By negotiation | | MB - Optional | ✓ |
| 3 ↓ | ✓ | By negotiation | | PRM - Optional | ✓ |
| 3 = | ✓ | By negotiation | | PRM - Optional | ✓ |
| 3 ↑ | ✓ | By negotiation | | PRM - Optional | ✓ |
| 2 ↓ | ✓ | By negotiation | | PRM - Optional | ✓ |
| 2 = | ✓ | By negotiation | | | ✓ |
| 2 ↑ | ✓ | By negotiation | | | ✓ |
| 1 ↓ | ✓ | By negotiation | | | ✓ |
| 1 = | ✓ | By negotiation | | | ✓ |
| 1 ↑ | ✓ | By negotiation | | | ✓ |

Key:

↑ performing above the current Ofsted grade.

= solidly maintaining / maintaining and on an upward trajectory to next grade.

↓ at risk of declining grade if inspected at this time, or failing to make any progress (if already grade 3/4).

↑↑ or ↓↓ on rare occasions, a provider is judged to be either improving or declining by more than one grade. Where this is the case, multiple direction arrows will be shown.

5. Local Authority Categorisation

5.1 A wide range of evidence is used by the LA to determine a provider's categorisation. All aspects of provision are looked at and a judgement made with regards to the likely outcome of an Ofsted inspection, were the provider to be inspected 'at this time'. Providers and the LA review performance in line with all the key areas covered by the Ofsted framework. Regular review and completion of a self-evaluation summary by the school is strongly encouraged as the foundation of that process. The provider's designated category is written on the Quality Assurance Visit Report (or separately if no formal visit takes place).

5.2 The **key criteria** for categorisation are:

- attainment and progress of pupils, achieved since the last Ofsted, including the gap between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils;
- safeguarding; and
- leadership capacity for rapid improvement.

5.3 The **evidence base** used for categorisation is likely to include:

- trends over time and current achievement (progress and attainment) including groups;
- teaching and learning;
- leadership and management, including governance and the capacity for improvement;
- quality of the provider's curriculum and its wider provision;
- behaviour and safety and personal development and welfare;
- the effectiveness of inclusion practice and provision for pupils with SEND;
- the promotion of SMSC including British values;
- the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures;
- the effectiveness of the promotion of equality of opportunity / tackling discrimination.

5.4 Evidence for the above may be drawn from the following wide range of **sources**:

- analysis of the most recent test data linked to the longer-term trend of each provider's performance: ASP, IDSR, ALPs, LA data, Ofsted dashboard, the provider's own data;
- direct on-site observations, interviews or scrutiny;
- safeguarding information and parental perceptions and complaints;
- provider's website;
- provider's self-review;
- most recent Ofsted report – especially improvement issues and impact of actions;
- LA databases on finance, staffing, SEND, attendance, exclusions and pupil numbers;
- the governing body self-evaluation and governing body minutes;
- evidence from Progress Review Meetings and Monitoring Boards (where applicable);
- LA QA reports, any other LA, peer or external reports or reviews that may have been completed and made available (including feedback from the provider's commissioner);
- available data on staff turnover, relationships, quality of leadership and management, quality of teaching, school curriculum and school ethos;
- intelligence gleaned from the LA's multi-agency **Education Monitoring Group (EMG)**. This group meets half-termly and is chaired by the Assistant Director, Education.

Categorisation Key:

| Category | Existing Ofsted Grade | Description - If inspected at this time | LA Designation |
|-----------|---|---|-------------------------|
| 1↑ | 1 Outstanding | The provider would be solidly Outstanding and a system leader: sharing practice; offering significant partnership support to others not yet good or better. | System Leader |
| 1= | 1 Outstanding | The provider would be likely to remain Outstanding. | Potential System Leader |
| 1↓ | 1 Outstanding | The current Outstanding grade is at risk. The provider could be judged to be Good (or lower if specified). | Potential System Leader |
| 2↑ | 2 Good | The provider would be likely to be Outstanding. | Potential System Leader |
| 2= | 2 Good | The provider would be likely to remain Good. | Potential System Leader |
| 2↓ | 2 Good | The current Good grade is at risk. The provider could be judged to be Requires Improvement (or lower if specified). | School Causing Concern |
| 3↑ | 3 Requires Improvement | The provider would be likely to be Good or better. | School Causing Concern |
| 3= | 3 Requires Improvement | The provider would be likely to remain Requires Improvement, but is taking timely necessary actions. | School Causing Concern |
| 3↓ | 3 Requires Improvement | The current RI grade is at risk. The provider is not taking timely/necessary actions could be judged to be Inadequate (SW or SM). | School Causing Concern |
| 4↑ | 4 Serious Weaknesses Special Measures | The provider would be likely to be Requires Improvement or better. | School Causing Concern |
| 4= | 4 Serious Weaknesses | The provider is newly categorised as Serious Weaknesses and is taking necessary early steps <u>or</u> is in Special Measures but taking necessary actions. | School Causing Concern |
| 4↓ | 4 Special Measures | The provider is newly categorised as Special Measures <u>or</u> would likely remain Serious Weakness or Special Measures as not taking necessary action. | School Causing Concern |

6. Schools and Academies Causing Concern

- 6.1 Providers are deemed to be a 'School Causing Concern' if their current Ofsted grade is a 3 or a 4, or the current Local Authority categorisation is a 2↓, a 3 or a 4. This category includes providers in Ofsted categories, or that are subject to a formal warning or other statutory intervention, where there is evidence that:
- the standards of performance and/or progress of pupils are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so, unless the LA exercises its statutory powers;
 - the provider is failing to take timely and effective action to ensure the pupils receive a good education;
 - there has been a serious breakdown in the way that the provider is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, pupils' standards or performance (e.g. serious financial difficulties); or
 - safeguarding is not compliant with legal requirements, the safety of pupils or staff is threatened (whether by breakdown of discipline or otherwise).
- 6.2 Temporary factors which place the provider under strain and may lead to short term additional support will be noted and monitored. This should not affect a provider's category unless there is clear evidence of adverse effects (however, if the factor is such as that it is impacting and would threaten the grade in inspection, then it will be reflected in the change of category grade). Such features might be, for example:
- new Head/Principal/Manager or long-term absence of Head/Principal/Manager
 - other significant changes to leadership, including governance
 - substantial change in pupil numbers
 - substantial building works
 - significant staffing turbulence and/or recruitment issues

7. Monitoring Risk

- 7.1 The focus and level of support is designed to nurture independence and to build capacity, rather than to foster a culture of dependence. Co-ordination of support is the responsibility of the Local Authority Strategic Lead in conjunction with the provider's leadership. The effectiveness of the support should also be evaluated to ensure appropriate and cost-effective use of resources and to demonstrate that activities are having a meaningful and sustainable impact on standards and provision.
- 7.2 The LA will make use of any local and national initiatives/programmes available to support providers, with consultants from within or outside the LA being used to provide support - including National Leaders of Education (NLEs), Local Leaders of Education (LLEs), National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) and other providers, including academies. The Local Authority might also utilise the services offered by the *Havering Academy of Leadership* as part of its brokerage role.
- 7.3 The progress and performance of all providers is closely monitored by the multi-service **Education Monitoring Group (EMG)** at the Local Authority, which meets half-termly. This group also considers interventions.

8. Member Challenge and Scrutiny

- 8.1 The Lead Member, along with the Assistant Director, Education, holds Lead Member Progress Meetings with selected groups of providers. These may be related to Ofsted inspection outcomes or may have a thematic focus. The Lead Member will also make selected visits to providers along with the provider's Strategic Lead. Members generally are kept informed of the performance and key development areas for providers in their wards.
- 8.2 The LA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the responsibility and oversight for education improvement. It receives performance reports on all aspects of education performance as well as individual providers. Reports received by this committee include the categorisation of all providers and the progress or otherwise of all Schools Causing Concern, regardless of the governance arrangements. Headteachers and Chairs of Governors regularly report directly to this committee in order to consolidate the drive for improvement and effectiveness of our partnership working.
- 8.3 The Lead Member is informed of the progress of all providers, including Schools Causing Concern, through monthly reports and can be invited to attend the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Director of Children's Services also receives regular summary reports on the progress of all providers, including Schools Causing Concern from the Assistant Director, Education.

9. Quality Assurance - Early Years Settings

- 9.1 The purpose of Early Years Quality Assurance is two-fold. Firstly, to champion the right for all children and young people in Havering to attend a Good or Outstanding educational provision in order to secure high quality education and improved standards. Secondly, it is to meet the council's legal requirement to ensure that all Havering Childcare Providers deliver the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. The Childcare Act 2006 (Part 1, section 9, 2) makes it clear that 'The local authority must exercise their functions with a view to securing that the provider of the childcare meets any requirements imposed on him by the arrangements'. The 'arrangements' are defined as ensuring that childcare providers meet their legal duty to ensure that they are fully compliant with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in respect to:
- the learning and development requirements (that) are given legal force by an Order³ made under section 39(1a) of the Childcare Act 2006;
 - the safeguarding and welfare requirements (that) are given legal force by Regulations⁴ made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006 (*Statutory Framework for the EYFS, April 2017*).
- 9.2 All Ofsted registered Early Years settings offering childcare must adhere to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. Childcare can be delivered by Childminders, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings, school/academy nurseries and school/academy Reception classes.

- 9.3 Every PVI provider has an allocated Education Adviser who carries out three on-site Quality Assurance visits per year. Where practice is very good, it can be two visits. Each visit focuses separately on Safeguarding, Leadership and Management and the Learning and Development of children. Each provider receives a written report of the visit which includes recommendations to bring about improvement.
- 9.4 Childminders receive support visits if their Ofsted Inspection is due within 6-12 months, if they request a visit, or if concerns are raised. Childminders are also required to complete an annual comprehensive Safeguarding Audit and return it to the LA. Once received, the allocated Education Advisor provides individual feedback and recommendations to the Childminder.
- 9.5 All new Childminder and PVI businesses receive a Quality Assurance visit within 3 months of registering with Ofsted. This is to ensure that new providers are not left for up to 30 months without any monitoring of the quality of provision or standards of care (following registration, Ofsted carry out an Inspection visit within 30 months). Where any concerns are raised about a provider, a QA Adviser will arrange to visit the setting. In some cases, this can lead to a direct notification to Ofsted. Where concerns are raised about the attitude, behaviour or conduct of a member of staff at a setting, the Education Adviser contacts the Early Years QA Improvement Manager who informs the LADO immediately.
- 9.6 When any Early Years provider receives an Inadequate or Requires Improvement Ofsted grade, the Inadequate/RI Settings Procedure is followed. This procedure also applies to any setting identified as causing a concern, as well as Inadequate and RI settings:
- Education Adviser (EA) meets with setting managers/owners to agree priorities and draft a focused improvement plan. This must include key issues from the latest inspection and any other issues that have been raised. It must include opportunities for training and attendance at the next Managers' Briefing.
 - EA completes improvement plan and distributes to relevant parties. Progress against the plan is monitored.
 - EY Improvement Manager determines whether intensive support is appropriate.
 - Unannounced visits from an EA may be deemed necessary to an inadequate setting. Outcomes of visits determine whether OFSTED needs to be informed.
 - A 'settings causing concern' meeting will be held once every term to discuss the progress of such settings. All members of the EY team attend these meetings.
 - If at any point there are concerns that the actions are not being addressed - or any further concerns arise - the setting may be required to attend a meeting with Local Authority officers to discuss implications and expectations. The setting manager and owner will be informed that the LA will be notifying Ofsted and the reasons for this will be clearly explained.
 - It is expected that settings judged to be Inadequate or Requires Improvement make the necessary changes in order to secure a Good Ofsted outcome at the re-inspection 6 months later. However, in some cases, where rates of progress are not satisfactory, and/or there is no capacity to improve, a setting may be closed.
- 9.7 A 'Setting Causing Concern' is a setting which has been identified by the Local Authority during termly support visits. Concerns might be, for example: safeguarding, poor provision, lack of leadership capacity, inappropriate environment and resourcing, unsuitable equipment, ratios, new manager, high staff turnover, reluctance to engage and repeated visit cancellations at short notice.

9.8 At least once per term all Early Years Education Advisers attend the Settings Causing Concern meeting. Each relevant setting is discussed in detail and the following information is recorded:

- Date
- Name of provider
- Nature of the concerns
- Agreed Local Authority actions
- Name of the Education Adviser
- Developments and evaluation

Outcomes are followed up and recorded at the next meeting. The Settings Causing Concern procedure covers all settings where there are concerns, regardless of their Ofsted grading.

Note: 'The Early Years Safeguarding Strategy' articulates how the Early Years Quality Assurance Team (EYQA) supports providers in meeting their statutory duties. In addition, the strategy sets out the response of the EYQA team to allegations/enquiries about Safeguarding.

APPENDIX

Statutory Powers of Local Authorities Relating to Education and Intervention

The LA's legal powers and its duties relating to these powers take in community, foundation, trust, academy providers (including free school providers and university technical colleges), and sixth-form and further education colleges. These statutory powers/duties are set out in the following acts of parliament:

- Education Act, 1996: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/II/chapter/III/crossheading/general-functions>
- The Provider Standards and Framework Act, 1998: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/part/II/chapter/II>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/part/II/chapter/IV>
- The Education and Inspections Act, 2006: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/1>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/4>
- The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act, 2009: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/part/2>
- The Education Act, 2011: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/section/44>
- The Education and Adoption Bill 2015: http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/education_and_adoption.html
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>
- Childcare Act, 2006: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents>

The above references relate to the specific elements of each of the relevant Acts. LAs have a general duty relating to the provision, through settings, providers and colleges, to provide effective education in their area. The expectation remains that LAs undertake QA processes of their own design to risk-assess, and to ensure that they have the capacity to intervene – early if possible – where there is a risk of failure.

Where possible, the use of statutory intervention is discussed with head teachers and Chairs of Governors at face to face meetings prior to implementation before any interventions are taken. Whilst the LA wishes to work in close partnership with all providers, in exceptional circumstances, the LA may decide upon statutory interventions without the agreement of the provider.

All statutory powers of intervention are reviewed regularly by the LA through its EMG to ensure that improvements are rapid and sustainable. If this does not occur, further powers of intervention are taken to ensure rapid progress in the provider. The decision to invoke the LA and/or the Secretary of State's statutory powers of intervention is taken by the Group Director for Children's Services, following a full assessment of the provider's position by Assistant Director, Education, and recommendations through EMG involving senior LA improvement staff, the strategic finance lead, and Havering Governor Services.

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