

Appendix 1

London Borough of Havering adoption performance analysis

The attached performance analysis has been prepared by Adopt London East following a review of information provided to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB)

The analysis relates to performance in 2019/20

Numbers of children adopted

Adopt London East became operational on 1st October 2020. Q 1 and 2 are therefore pre operational go-live and Q 3 and 4 post go-live. Most Regional Adoption Agencies experienced a dip in performance both pre and post go live, Child placements in Havering also declined on the previous year in terms of numbers of placements.

		2019/20 Q1	2019/20 Q2	2019/20 Q3	2019/20 Q4	Total 2019/20
Number of...	Adoption orders	2	3	4	2	11
	Placements	2	1	0	1	4
	Matches	2	1	0	1	4
	Placement orders	1	0	0	1	2
	Best interest decisions	0	1	0	4	5
	Foster for adoption	0	0	0	0	0
	Changes of Plan	1	0	0	0	1

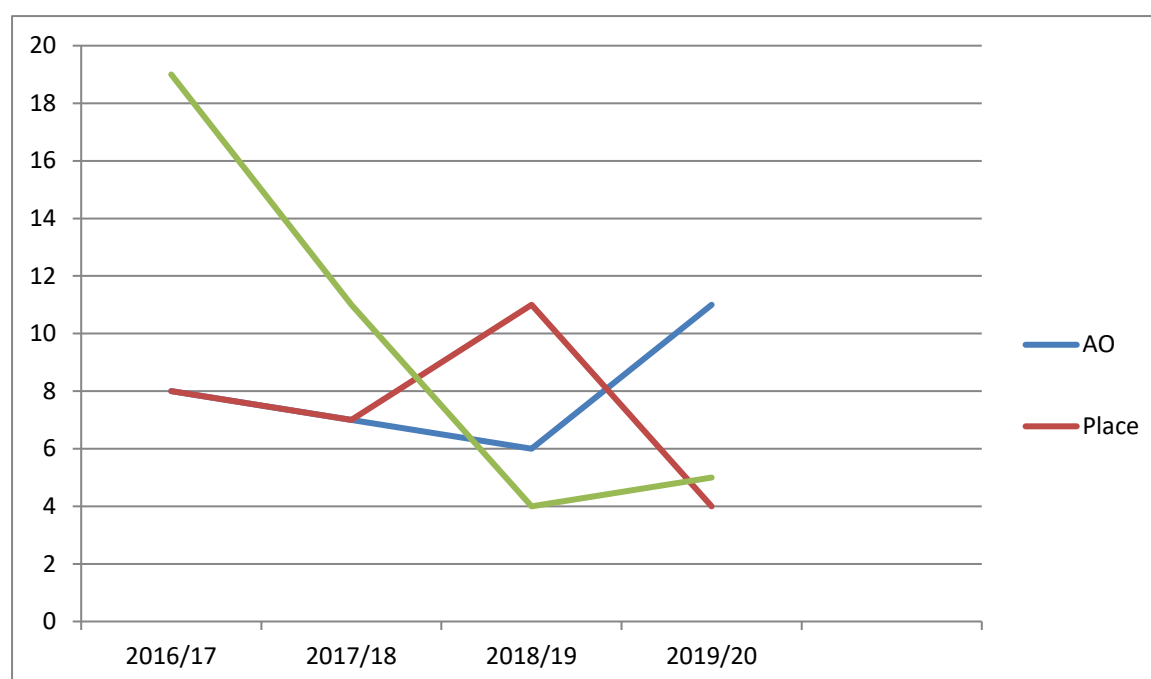
Adoption orders were granted on 11 children and a further 4 children were placed for adoption. The higher number of adoption orders reflects the higher number of placements made in 2018/19. The number of children placed was subject to a decline. This predominantly reflects a decline in the number of children with a decision that adoption is in their best interest. Forecasts indicate an increase in the number of placements in Q 1 and 2 of 2020/21

The chart below shows trend information in respect of numbers of adoption orders, placements and decisions that adoption is in the best interests of the child (BID).

In common with most Local Authorities the numbers of children in the adoption system are small and subject to a high level of fluctuation. The numbers of children about whom a best interest decision was made peaked in 2016/17 and 2018/19 followed by an increase in numbers placed in 2017/18 and 2018/19 this would have been expected as a higher number of children had been identified as needing a placement. The numbers with a BID decreased thereafter. The numbers placed decreased in 2019/20 following the peak in 2017/18. A decrease in numbers would have been expected as the numbers with a BID and therefore requiring an adoptive placement decreased. Although numbers of children with a BID remained low in 2019/20 4 of the 5 children received a best interest decision in January or February 2020 indicating an increase in numbers of children available for adoption

Although not contained within this review of 2019/20 adoption activity, the number of BID's and placements is predicted to rise in 2020/21

Adoption orders, placements and Best interest decisions



Timeliness of adoption

The average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family for children adopted increased in the last 12 months from a three year average of 516 days to 705 days. This remains above the nationally set target of 426 days. Havering has a commitment to adoption for all children for whom it is in their best interest and the high annual figure was strongly affected by the successful placement of an older boy from a BME background with developmental delay and behavioural difficulties. This child waited 1,944 days.

The average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match to an adoptive family remained relatively stable with a three year average of 315 days

and 551 days over the last 12 months. This is above the nationally set target of 121 days and again was strongly affected by the placement of the child discussed above.

The percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving with their adoptive family remained stable with a 41% 3 year average and 40% in the last 12 months. This indicates a continued commitment to timeliness despite the impact of a small number of children who wait longer due to their complex needs

Indicator	2017 – 2020	Last 12 months
A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family	516 days	705 days
A2: Average time between an LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family	315 days	551 days
A3: Children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)	16 (41%)	8 (40%)

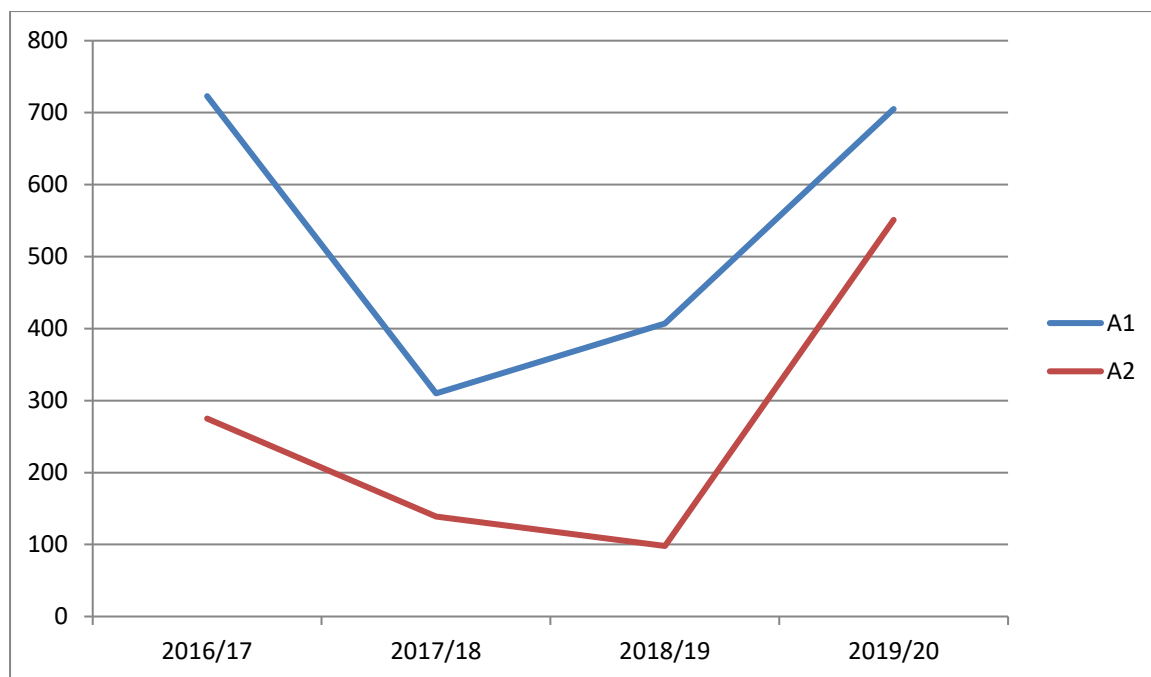
Breakdown of A1 and A2 indicators by year.

The scorecard indicator is calculated on a three year rolling average. The annual breakdown below shows the volatility of timeliness in adoptive placements. One placement which takes a long time will have a considerable impact on the overall figure due to the small numbers of children placed.

Social work system efficiencies are shown most clearly in the A1 indicator; average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family. Adoption system efficiencies are shown most clearly in the A2 indicator which plots the average time from receiving permission to place from the court and matching to an adoptive family, although placement times may also be affected disproportionately by a lengthy search for a harder to place child.

The flux in both indicators reflects complexities in individual cases. It is not possible to identify trend information due to the small number of children placed for adoption in Havering and the complex needs of many of the children.

Systems improvements have however been made. Case tracking is robust and ALE representatives attend all placement planning and tracking meetings. Children's social workers in Havering and in ALE work closely together to coordinate family finding and ensure any delay is kept to a minimum.



Characteristics of children

11 children were adopted in the last 12 months. Only 1 has a placement order and is waiting to be adopted. No child has been waiting for 18 months or over since becoming looked after.

Just under half of children adopted (5 of 11) were under 5. The one child waiting is under 5. Children over 5 are deemed to be harder to place. The proportion of children placed over 5 is higher in Havering than in other London Boroughs and this indicates a continued commitment to place children for adoption.

4 of 11 children adopted are female. The one child waiting to be adopted is female. Male children especially older male children are typically harder to place than female but Havering continues to have good success in placing male children.

The proportion of children who are classed as BME is low in comparison to other East London Boroughs, only 1 child adopted was classed as is the one child waiting. Children from BME backgrounds typically wait longer. No adopted or waiting child is categorised as disabled. 7 children have been adopted as part of a sibling group. Currently no children in sibling groups are waiting.

Harder to place children include children over 5, of BME heritage, disabled and requiring adoption in a sibling group. The majority of Havering's children are defined as harder to place. 8 of the 11 children placed were in a harder to place category. The child waiting is also in a harder to place category.

As harder to place children by definition wait longer Havering's performance in terms of timeliness is at least partially explained by the LA commitment to place all children who would benefit from adoption.

	Under 5	5 and over	female	male	BME	Disabled	Sibling group	Harder to place
Adopted last 12 months	5	6	4	7	1	0	7	8
Waiting with PO	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Waiting at least 18 months since BLA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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