

Hammersmith & Fulham **Looked After Children** **and Care Leavers** **Strategy: 2019 – 2022**

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1. PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

We want children and young people in our care and those who have left care to have the same care and experiences that a child or young person would ordinarily have from their parent. Our strategic vision is that children in our care and Care Leavers are safe, healthy and succeed. Caring for Looked After Children is one of the most important functions of the Council.

The Council's strategic vision has been informed by the needs and views of our Looked After Children and Care Leavers, statutory requirements and policy guidance, the Council's priorities and commitments identified from inspections and reviews, and research evidence on effective practice.

1.1 The Council's Priorities and Commitments

- Doing things with residents, not to them
- Building shared prosperity
- Taking pride in Hammersmith & Fulham
- Creating a compassionate council
- Being ruthlessly financially

1.2 The Council's Corporate Parenting Duties and Responsibilities

Corporate Parenting refers to the collective responsibility of the Council to provide the best care and protection for children and young people who are 'looked after', that is, who are in public care. Effective corporate parenting requires the commitment from all Council employees and elected Members and an authority wide approach. These responsibilities for local authorities were first laid out in the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and reinforced in the Children and Young People's Act 2008 and most recently in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

1.3 Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out seven Corporate Parenting principles that all Councils must adhere to for Looked After Children and Care Leavers to ensure that their needs are met, and life chances promoted. All local authorities in England must, in carrying out functions in relation to Looked After Children, have regard to the need:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

1.4 The Children and Families Act (2014)

The Children and Families Act (2014) provides important guidance to commissioners on placements of Looked After Children with prospective adopters and on promoting the educational achievement of all Looked After Children.

1.5 Hammersmith and Fulham Pledge to Looked After Children

The Council considers its parenting role very seriously and will give Looked After Children and Care Leavers the highest priority. We will test ourselves by asking, 'would this be good enough for my child?'. We will make sure that we respond to each child as an individual and take into account their views, feelings, experiences and differing circumstances. We will check we are doing everything we can for Looked After Children by listening to their views individually and as a group through the 'Looked After Children Council'. The Pledge contains 11 key commitments and the full outline can be found in the appendix section.

1.6 Hammersmith and Fulham Care Leavers Offer

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 local authorities are required to publish their local offer of support and services for Care Leavers. The Council has agreed a local offer to help Care Leavers transition to successful and independent adult lives. The full outline of the local offer can be found in the local offer document and the [Council's website](#).

1.7 Views of Children and Young People

Our children and young people have shared with the Corporate Parenting Board that:

- when foster care placements are positive, they feel safe, supported and cared for
- professionals involved in their lives have supported them with their aspirations for the future
- relationships with professionals are positive when they feel genuinely cared for and held in mind.

And they would want us to:

- ensure that communication from professionals is consistent and transparent
- support them to build positive relationships with foster carers from the beginning by being transparent about rules and ensuring everyone is given clear information about each other
- provide more information about allowances, entitlements and further sources of support for their future

1.8 Priorities Identified from External Inspections, Reviews and Research

The Ofsted inspection of children services in January 2016 identified the areas of practice needing improvements as care plans for Looked After Children, pathway plans for Care Leavers and apprenticeship opportunities for Care Leavers.

The Ofsted focussed visit (inspection) of the Care Leaver service in September 2018 identified the practice areas needing improvement were: the consistency in the quality of pathway plans, involvement of Care Leavers in service improvement, apprenticeships/job opportunities through corporate parenting initiatives and an action-orientated, outcome-focused improvement plan for the service.

The Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service in December 2018 identified timeliness of initial health assessment for Looked After Children as an area for improvement.

The Commissioner stability index (2018) reported a high rate of instability for Looked After Children, nationally. This includes placement moves, changes in school and changes in social worker. Children who are older, enter care in early adolescence, or with additional needs were found to be at higher risk of experiencing instability.

‘Where there is instability, relationships with trusted adults and other children suffer, succeeding at school becomes more difficult and vulnerability increases. This leads some children to fall through the gaps – vulnerable to exclusion, exploitation and abuse’

2.0. OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS

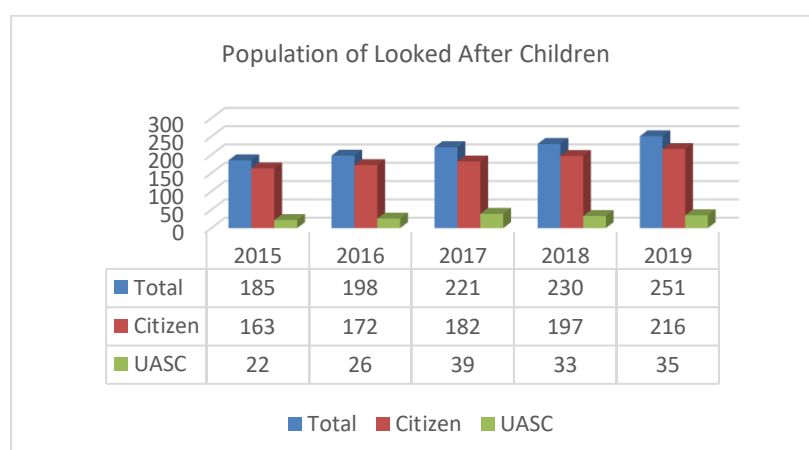
- i. Improve and strengthen and the effectiveness of the Corporate Parenting Board and the Council’s corporate parenting role
- ii. Strengthen the voice of children and young people in how we involve them in making decisions about them and developing services
- iii. Improve the timeliness of permanency planning and support for children and young people
- iv. Continue to improve education outcomes and achievements for children and young people
- v. Ensure that our children and young people are healthy and receive timely health assessment and support

3.0 PROFILE OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS (2015 – 2018)

The number of Looked After Children in Hammersmith and Fulham has varied over the last 4 years with a decrease from 204 (2014) to 185 (2015) and a gradual increase since then to 230 (2018). The number of citizen children rose from 182 (2017) to 197 (2018) and UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children) fell from 39 to 33 during the same period.

The number of Looked After Children as a proportion of the population aged under 18 in Hammersmith and Fulham was 64 per 10,000 population, as at 31st March 2018, an increase from 63 per 10,000 in 2017. This is higher than the statistical neighbour average of 52 per 10,000 in 2018, which was an increase from 51 per 10,000 in 2017; but the same as the national rate, 64 per 10,000 in 2018, which was up from 62 per 10,000 in 2017.

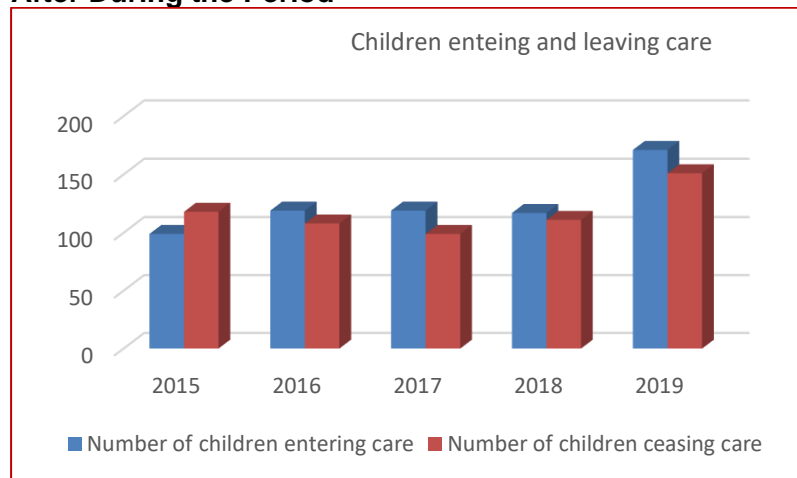
Population of Looked After Children



Under the new national transfer scheme introduced in July 2016 by the Home Office local authorities are expected to take at any one-time UASC equivalent to 0.07% of their child population – equal to 25 children in Hammersmith and Fulham. The

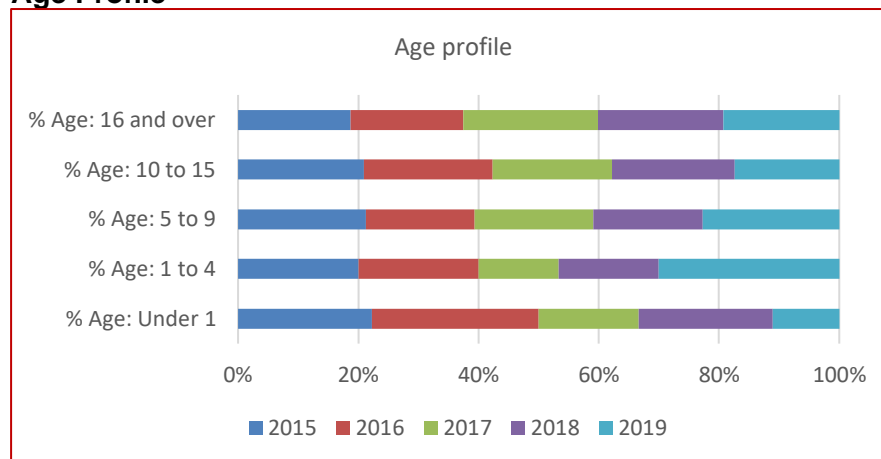
Council committed to care for children entering UK under the Dubs Amendment and has so far taken 15 children.

Children Who Became Looked After and Children Who Ceased to be Looked After During the Period



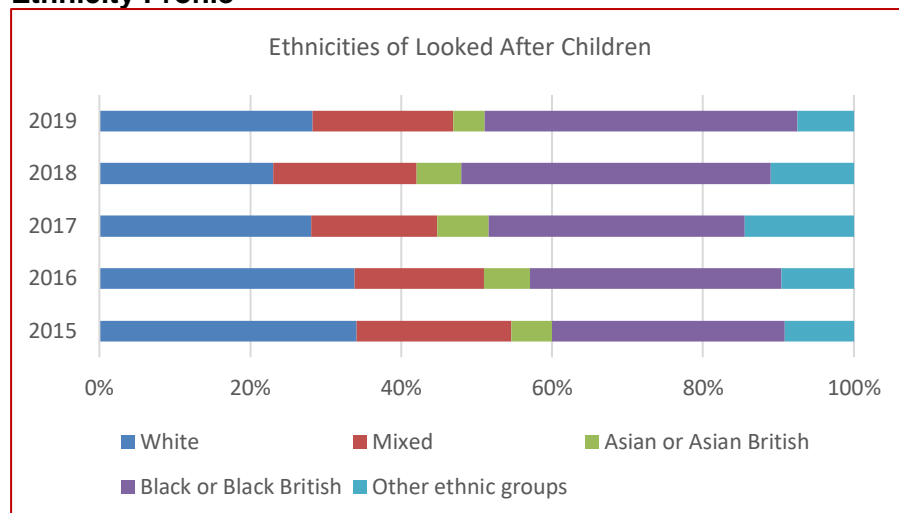
The Council works extensively with families and partners to ensure that wherever possible families are supported to safely care for their children at home. Children come into care when remaining at home would continue to expose them to significant risks of harm. We have services and systems including Family Assist and the Edge of Care Panel that to ensure that when children come into care if it right for them, and there are no other safe options. Family Assist work with adolescents exposed to high risks or beyond parental control to minimise their likelihood of coming into care while the Edge of Care Panel is a multiagency panel that reviews support and interventions to ensure that children at risk of coming into care have the support they need at home or at an alternative home outside the family, where necessary.

Age Profile



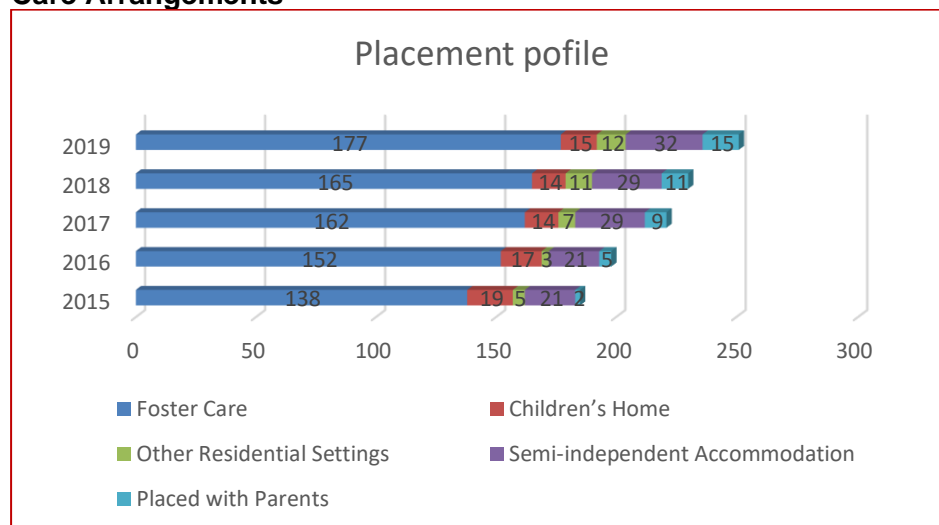
Majority of UASC (about 85%) come to the UK and enter care when they are 14 years and above. The Council has made commitment to commitment to taking more asylum-seeking children under the Dubs.

Ethnicity Profile



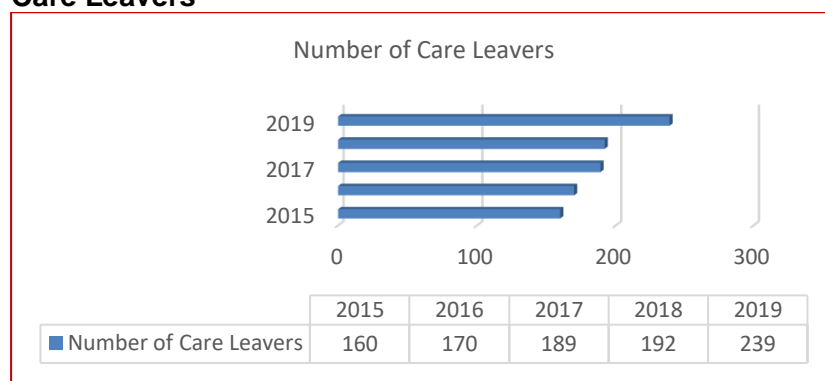
Children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicities constitute a high proportion of our Looked After Children population. The percentage of children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicities decreased from 77 percent in 2018 to 73 percent in 2019.

Care Arrangements



The Council ensures that children and young people are in the most appropriate placement that can give them the right care. Majority of our children and young people are cared for in family settings. For some children and young people foster care cannot meet their complex needs, and they are placed in children homes or residential care homes. Young people who are at the stage of preparation towards independent living are placed in semi-independent accommodation, where they are supported in their transition to independent living.

Care Leavers



At the end of March 2018 there were 192 Care Leavers compared to 189 in 2017. The increase in Care Leaver population links to a developing trend in relation to older young people with complex needs coming into care along with an increase in the overall numbers of unaccompanied minors aged 16 and above. As at 31st March 2018, we had 33 UASC Looked After Children, a decrease from 39 at 31st March 2017.

4.0. PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS

The last Ofsted inspection of Children Services in January 2016 rated the Council's services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers as good. Adoption and Fostering services were rated as outstanding.

An Ofsted focussed visit (part of the inspection framework) of the Care Leaver service in September 2018 found that 'Care Leavers in Hammersmith and Fulham receive effective support that helps many of them to achieve good outcomes'. And that 'senior managers continue to be clearly focused on sustaining and improving outcomes, are aware of the areas for improvements, and highly skilled workers are persistent in engaging effectively with Care Leavers'.

The Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service in December 2018 found that the service is generally effective in identifying, assessing, and meeting the needs of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities

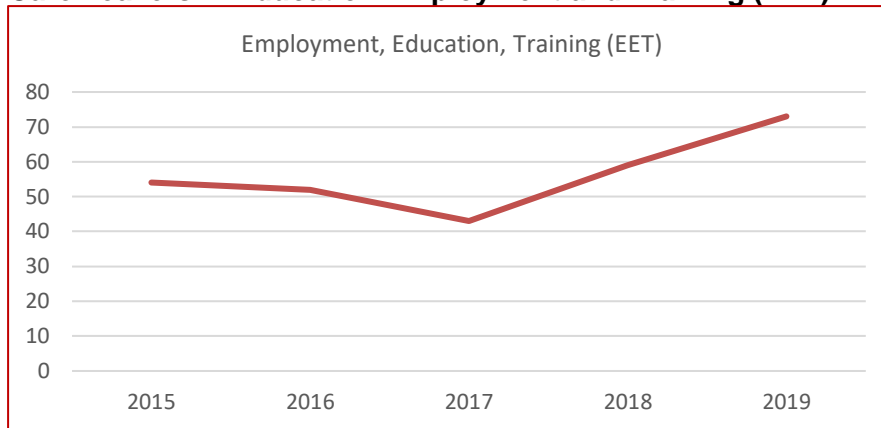
4.1. Education and Achievement

The Children's Act (2004) places a duty on all local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children. The local authority promotes and support the education and achievement of Looked After Children and Care Leavers through the Virtual School. The Virtual School has a head teacher and advisory teachers who champion the attainment and achievement of our Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Every looked after child has an allocated Virtual School Advisory Teacher and all Care Leavers have access to an Education Development Worker and an Education, Employment, and Training Advisor.

Attendance and exclusions

There is sustained effort from the Virtual School to ensure improve attendance of our children and young people. The attendance figures for the last 5 years have averaged 93 percent and no child in care has been permanently excluded during the same period. A key pressure going forward however, is the number of UASCs coming into care in year 11 without a school place. We now have a dedicated UASC teacher within the Virtual School who is providing weekly ESOL classes to those young people who are awaiting a school place.

Care Leavers in Education Employment and Training (EET)



The percentage of our Care Leavers in education, employment and training is increasing. The Virtual School has put in place a number of strategies to support more young people into education, employment and training.

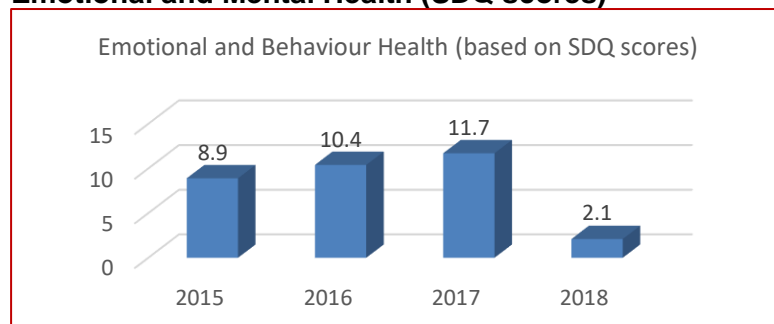
4.2. Health

Local authorities have a statutory duty to carry out health assessments for every child in their care so that they can give appropriate support and ensure that children in their care achieve good health outcomes. The assessments for children over 5 years old are done once a year while that for those under 5 years are done every 6 months.

Two Nurses - a named nurse and a specialist nurse – and a multi-disciplinary borough-based Looked After Children Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) team, are co-located with the Looked After Children and Care Leavers service. The co-location enables effective consultation and discussion in relation to the health of Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

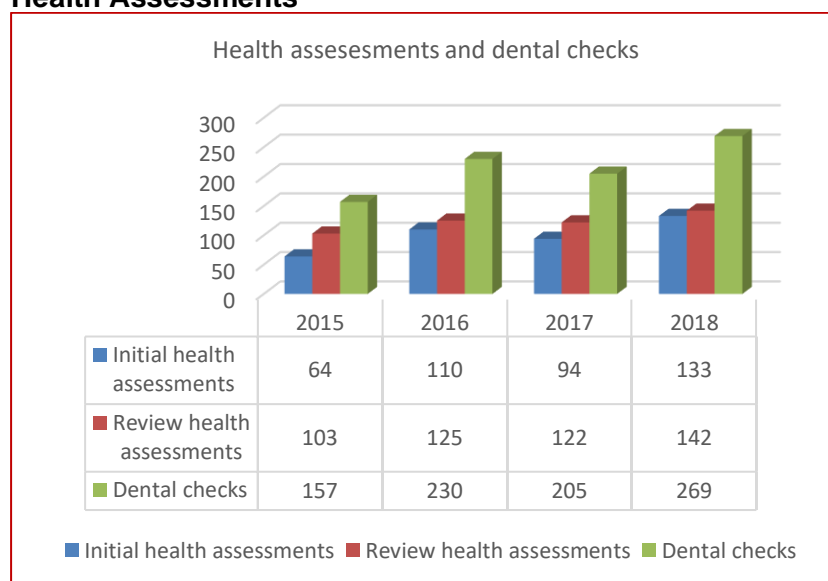
We have a Clinical Team consisting of systemic psychotherapists and clinical psychologists offer clinical consultations to social workers and the professional network around the child, reflective case discussions, workshops and direct clinical work with children, young people and families and their social workers and/or parent/carers. Over the last year, the team supported about 40 young people's care through clinical consultations, attending and supporting network meetings, and some direct work with the young people and their carers, residential staff and/or parents when required.

Emotional and Mental Health (SDQ scores)



Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a screening tool for assessing and reviewing the mental wellbeing of children and young people. Average score of 0-15 indicate normal range (good mental wellbeing) while a score of 16 – 40 raises concern for the mental wellbeing of the child. The above scores show that the mental wellbeing of our children and young people continues to remain within the normal range and has improved.

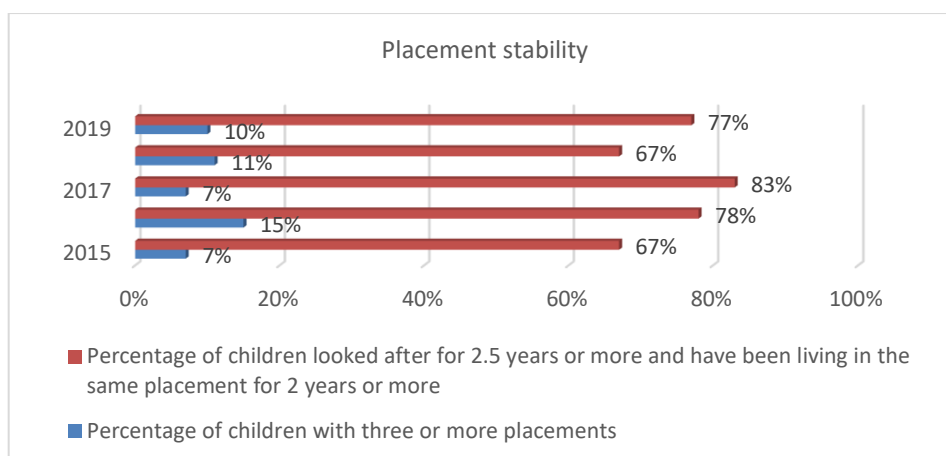
Health Assessments



The data shows improvement in health assessments and dentals – many of our children and young people are having health assessments and dental checks. This will help us to better understand their health needs and give them the right health support.

4.3. Stability and Permanence

'Where there is instability, relationships with trusted adults and other children suffer, succeeding at school becomes more difficult and vulnerability increases. This leads some children to fall through the gaps – vulnerable to exclusion, exploitation and abuse' (Children's Commissioner's Stability Index, 2018). We ensure that all looked after children have a permanence plan within 4 months of coming into care and that we support foster carers and placement providers to safely care for children and young people.



In 2018, 10% (23 children) of Looked After Children experienced three or more placement moves during the year, which is in line with the national average rate of 10%. Likewise, there has been an improvement in the percentage of under 16s remaining in the same placement for at least 2 years, from 63 percent in 2018 to 77 percent in 2019, which further shows on-going progress in achieving placement stability and relationships for children and young people.

Staying Put Arrangements

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of Care Leavers in Staying Put	-	-	32%	22%

Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation	83	83	81	89
Number of Evictions	0	0	0	0

We have not had any Care Leaver evicted from their accommodation over the past 5 years. We work with colleagues in the Housing Department and placement providers to ensure that Care Leavers who need support with maintaining their tenancies and placements are identified and supported early. We promote and support young people who want to continue living with their carers after their 18th birthday to do so under the Staying Put arrangement. All our Care Leavers, except for the very few who are in prison custody, are in suitable accommodation. We work closely with the Youth Offending Service to ensure that Care Leavers are settled in suitable accommodation upon their release from custody.

LAC ASSIST Service

The LAC Assist team aims to increase placement stability, support a reduction in increased placement costs, increase opportunities to reunify children with their families when it is safe to do so, increase successful transition to independence, sustain lower cost placements and reduce tenancy breakdown. Its priorities include working with children and young people who have experienced placement breakdowns or are at risk of placement breakdowns, those in or at risk of moving to high cost placements, children who could potentially return home to live with their birth families, and Care Leavers who are not making sufficient progress to enable

them to move to independent living in final stage accommodation. The team provides intensive support which mirrors that provided by the Family Assist model which was highly praised by Ofsted inspectors. The service commenced in April 2017 and has so far achieved significant placement and accommodation stability, and reduction in placement cost.

4.4. Safety

Local authorities have a duty to ensure that Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe. We have a commitment to ensure that our children and young people are cared for by carers who have been approved as capable and placement providers (Independent Fostering Agencies and Children's Homes) that have been rated by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding. Our Placements and Commissioning Services have a robust quality assurance and monitoring framework that ensure that children and young people are safe and receive the right support from their carers and placement providers.

Missing/Exploitation/Offending

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Percentage of children with missing from care episode	10% (29)	11% (34)	10% (30)	7% (24)
Missing incidents during the year	110	100	125	96
Average number of missing incidents per looked after child who went missing	4	3	4	4
Number of children who went missing more than once during the year	18	19	15	14
Percentage of Looked After Children involved with Youth Justice System (offending)	6	9	5	0

Care Leavers Contact – not in touch

	2016	2017	2018
Percentage of Care Leavers not in touch	8	8	7

We are in touch with all our Care Leavers who want to receive support from the Council and have written to all Care Leavers not currently in touch to make them aware of our offer for Care Leavers should they want to receive support from the Council.

4.5. Placement Type and Location

The Council actively seeks to reduce the number of children placed outside London where appropriate and has been successful in reducing the distance of placements as evidenced in the tables below. However, the limited availability of foster carers in London means that some children are placed outside London. This cohort includes children who are placed in special educational boarding schools or specialist residential care; with extended family members or adopters; and those placed at a distance to effectively protect them, such as young people identified to be at risk of gang affiliation or criminal and child sexual exploitation. The majority of children and young people are placed in the Council's own provision. This ensures strong oversight and quality assurance of where children and young people live.

Provider of Placements

	2015	2016	2017	2018
% Own provision (by the Local Authority)	37	54	65	72
% Other Local Authority provision	6	x	x	-
% Private provision	46	28	23	17
% Voluntary/third sector provision	7	13	8	4
% Parents or other person with parental responsibility	x	x	x	5

Location of Placements

	2015	2016	2017	2018
% 20 miles or less: All placements (not published in 2016-17)	69	68	-	75
% Over 20 miles: All placements (not published in 2016-17)	17	16	-	11
% Not recorded or not known (not published in 2016-17)	17	16	-	14

5.0. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT AND OUTCOME FRAMEWORK (2019 – 2022)

Priority areas	Objectives (what we want to achieve)	Key results (how we will we achieve the objectives)	To be led by	Critical indicators
Children and young people at the edge of care	Children and young people are supported to remain safely at home	Family Group Conferences (FGC) are used to explore wider family support and agree family support and safety plans	FGC Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of FGCs • Timeliness of PLOs • PLOs vs Care Proceedings • Adolescent entries into care • Percentage of Looked After Children returning and remaining home
		Public Law Outline (PLO) is used effectively to engage families in intensive pre-proceedings work	Head of Family Support & Child Protection	
		Adolescents with complex needs and those at risk of coming into care are supported to remain safely at home	Head of Family Assist	
		Children and young people in care who can return and remain safely at home with their parents are supported to do so	Head of Looked After Children & Care Leavers	
Permanence	Early and timely permanence for children and young people	Children have permanence plan within 4 months of coming into care	IRO manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with permanence place after 2nd review • Number of children in connected persons' placement • Placement stability
		FGCs are used to explore and find connected persons' placements for children	FGC Lead	
		Children with adoption plans are placed within the required scorecard timescales	Head of Adoption & Fostering	
		There are sufficient quality foster carers for children with diverse and complex needs	Head of Adoption & Fostering	

		Care Leavers are in suitable accommodation and able to maintain their tenancies	Head of Looked After Children & Care Leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of children in approved long-term foster placements within 2 years of coming into care • Adoption scorecard performance • Inhouse vs IFA placements • Care Leavers in suitable accommodation
		Young people are prepared to live successful independent adult lives		
Education and Achievement	Children and young people engage in education, employment and training	Children and young people achieve good standard of education	Head of Virtual School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainments • Quality and timeliness of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) • School attendance levels • Percentage of Care Leavers in education, employment & training • Apprenticeships for Care Leavers within the Council
		Children and young have the right education and training support		
		Children and young people attend good schools		
		Young people are supported into employment and training		
		Young people have access to apprenticeships within the Council	Corporate Parenting Board	
Corporate Parenting and Participation	The Council fulfils its Corporate Parenting role effectively	All Council departments and Councillors understand their corporate parenting role	AD Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of CPB meetings • Published Care Leavers offer • Published Looked After Children offer • Annual achievement event • Appointment of Participation Officer • Establishment of Care Leavers Advisory Council • Looked After Children Council
		The Council has an agreed offer for Care Leavers and Looked After Children		
		Corporate Parenting Board scrutinises services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers		
	Children and young people are involved in decision making and service development	Achievements of children and young people are celebrated	Head of Virtual School	
		Looked After Children and Care Leavers can scrutinise services and contribute to development of effective services		
		Children and young people are involved and consulted in planning and decisions making for them	Head of Looked After Children & Care Leavers	

		Looked After Children and Care Leavers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in reviews (Looked After Children; Pathway Planning; Personal Education Plans) • Quality and Timeliness of updating plans (Pathway Plans, Care Plans)
		Establish a Care Leavers hub		
Health and Wellbeing	Children and young people are healthy and receive timely health assessment and support	Children and young people have good mental and physical health	Head of Looked After Children & Care Leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of health assessments • Dental checks • SDQ completion rates • Access to CAMHS • Rate/number of Health Passports
		Health needs of children and young people are identified early and receive the right support		
		Children and young people live healthy lifestyles		
		Care Leavers are aware of and understand their health histories		
Safety	Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe and able enjoy their childhood and transition to adulthood	Improved oversight and support for children at risk of going missing and exposed to exploitation	Head of Looked After Children & Care Leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management plans & grab packs • Notifications on out of borough placements • Return home interviews • Number of Looked After Children and Care Leavers offending • Children placed in good/outstanding homes • Children placed in registered vs unregistered homes
		Vulnerable children and young people at risk of exploitation or involvement in the criminal justice system are identified early and supported	Head of Youth Offending Service	
		Children and young people are cared for in safe homes and accommodation	Head of Adoption & Fostering; Head of Placements	
		Promote safer uses of social media and new digital tools	Head of Virtual School/Head of Adoption & Fostering	

6.0. IMPLEMENTING AND TAKING THE STRATEGY FORWARD – ACCOUNTABILITY, GOVERNANCE, AND OVERSIGHT

6.1. Corporate Parenting Board

The Corporate Parenting Board provides oversight of the progress of the Council's Looked After Children and Care Leavers and has a key role in monitoring and challenging how the Council discharges its Corporate Parenting responsibilities. The board meets quarterly and regularly meets with children and young people to listen to their views, seek feedback from them and review all strategies and activities relating to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

6.2. Children, Education, and Public Accounts Committee (CEPAC)

CEPAC contributes to monitoring the quality and effectiveness of services, by scrutinising and reviewing the annual report on services and outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. A report on the work of the Fostering and Adoption Service is also presented annually. Other relevant performance indicators are reported regularly to the Lead Member for Children at Cabinet.

6.3. Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The LSCB has a significant role in ensuring that all agencies within the local authority work effectively together to keep Looked After Children safe and promote their wellbeing. It monitors and scrutinises performance information and annual reports relating to Looked After Children.

6.4. Children in Care Council (CiCC)

The CiCC explore how the Council meets its corporate parenting duties and commitments, and challenges and work together with the Corporate Parenting Board to review their care and experiences.

6.5. Care Leavers Advisory Group

The Care Leavers Advisory Group is similar to the CiCC and made of Care Leavers. The group work together with the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure that the Council meets its corporate parenting duties and commitments, and effectively respond to issues that our Care Leavers face.

6.6. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)

IROs scrutinise practice, plans and arrangements for Looked After Children to ensure that their individual needs are met and that each child's wishes and feelings are given full consideration. They ensure that the Council fulfils its corporate parent duties and commitments to all children in the Council's care. Every child in care has an allocated IRO.

6.7. Ofsted and other regulatory bodies

Ofsted inspections of local authorities' children services have a specific focus on evaluating how effectively local authorities meet their corporate parenting duties and commitments to children in their care and Care Leavers. Ofsted and the CQC inspection of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability services also consider how local authorities identify and meet the needs of children including Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The Council's services for children are inspected in some form annually by Ofsted.

Appendix 1

Hammersmith and Fulham Council's Pledge to Our Looked After Children

Hammersmith and Fulham Council makes the following Pledge to all children and young people placed in our care:

- 1. As a child in care you will have a named social worker and, where necessary, an independent visitor allocated to you, who will:**
 - visit you regularly and keep you up to date
 - arrive on time and make the visit as natural as possible so that it does not feel like an interview
 - spend time with you on your own away from where you are living and, with your consent, make sure that your room is suitable. they will do this every time they visit.
 - be interested in and remember days that are important to you, such as birthdays, religious and cultural events, and other significant occasions.

We promise that you will be told if you are getting a new social worker as soon as we know and we expect your old social worker to say a proper good bye to you. We also expect your new social worker to introduce themselves to you properly.

- 2. As a child in care, you will have your circumstances reviewed by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who will make sure your care plans are right and our promises to you are kept.** The independent reviewing officer will:
 - ask your opinions at every review
 - make sure that you are being cared for properly
 - make sure that plans are made with you, are right for you and are carried out
- 3. As a child in care, you have the right to be involved in planning for and making decisions about your life:**
 - when you come into care you will receive information about being in care from your social worker.
 - we will make every effort to minimise disruption if we have to change your living arrangements
 - you will have the chance to get involved in meetings and other forums, such as the "Children in Care Council" so that we can hear your opinions.
 - your views will be sought and, with your permission, read out at meetings you cannot attend or do not want to attend.
 - an adult of your choice can attend meetings and speak on your behalf, if you wish, so that you have some extra support and help.
- 4. As a child in care we will make sure that you are safe by:**
 - making sure that, if you feel unsafe, you know who to turn to and you are listened to
 - listening to you about what makes you feel safer
 - making sure that you are being cared for properly
 - making sure that all places to live have been checked and are safe before you move into them
 - taking action to protect you if you feel unsafe
- 5. As a child in care, you will be given support to achieve the best possible education by:**

- having access to a computer and internet at home
 - having support if you are behind with your school or college work
 - being cared for by people who will support you through your education, no matter how old you are
 - being supported and encouraged to look for work, training, or higher education through the support of the virtual school and careers advice
- 6. As a child in care we will encourage you and support you to continue your hobbies and interests that you had when you lived at home, or explore how to take up new ones**
- 7. As a child in care, you will be encouraged to take part in leisure activities that you want to attend by:**
- finding out what activities or facilities are available near where you live or go to school
 - talking with you about what you want to do and planning for this at your reviews
 - giving you free access to local leisure centre facilities
- 8. As a child in care, you will have contact with siblings and family members:**
- if it is safe, if you want to and if you feel ok about it
 - where this is not possible an independent visitor will come and see you instead
- 9. As a child in care, you will be encouraged to be healthy by:**
- having a healthy diet and being encouraged to take part in physical exercise
 - having a regular health check up every year
 - ensuring that any medical needs you might have are properly looked at and planned for with you
 - being given health advice and information from the looked after children nurse
 - making sure that you live in a healthy environment
- 10. As a child in care (under 18) you will not have to move into semi-independent or independent accommodation until you are ready:**
- an assessment will take place before you move to make sure you can live with less support from the council
 - you will, however, still have lots of support and help with living, budgeting and household skills, if you want it
 - we will make sure that, when your plan is to leave care, the Care Leavers team still visits you
- 11. As a child in care, you will be encouraged to know your rights and entitlements, so that you can take part fully in your care arrangements:**
- we will make sure that we give you details of the Children's Advocate, Participate Officer, and your Independent Reviewing Officer
 - we will not make any decisions about your care and where you live without first discussing this with you and seeking your views and agreement, where this does not interfere with your safety
 - if you disagree with any care plans then we will make sure that you can contact the children's advocate or your Independent Reviewing Officer before the plans happen.