

<b>CYP SELECT COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Corporate Parenting Annual Report		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	Item No.	7
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Assistant Director (Children's Social Care)		
<b>Class</b>		Date:	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2019

## 1 Purpose and summary of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of corporate parenting activity in Children's Social Care Service (CSC) between July 2018 and December 2018.

## 2 Recommendation/s

The Committee is recommended to note and comment on the report.

## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1 Good support for children who are looked after by the local authority contributes to four of the key priority outcomes of Lewisham's Corporate Strategy 2008-2020 which replaces the 2009 Community Strategy:

- **Open Lewisham** – Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.
- **Giving children and young people the best start in life** – every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential
- **Delivering and defending** – Health, Social Care and Support – ensuring everyone received the health, mental health, social care and support services they need
- **Building safer communities** – every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.

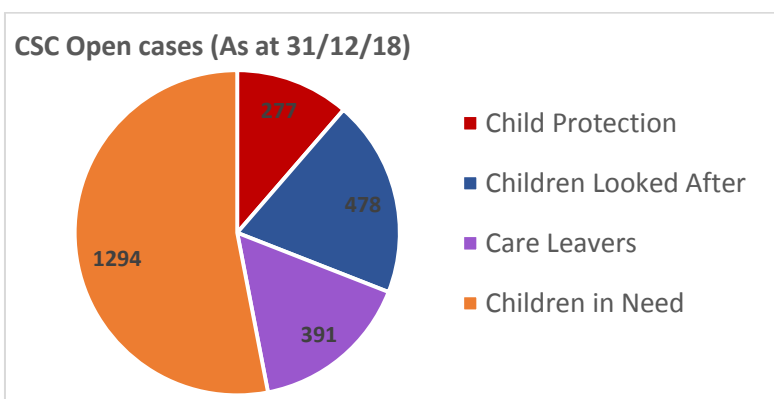
- 3.2 This also aligns with the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan 2018-21:

- children and young people have the best start in life and are protected from harm
- children and young people to have good physical and emotional health
- children and young people develop, achieve and are ready for adulthood

## 4 Introduction

4.1 In preparation for the forthcoming Ofsted inspection Children’s Social Care has been undertaking a comprehensive self-assessment of the service. The self-assessment scrutinised the quality and impact of practice over the last 6 months (July – December 2018). This report provides key performance information and draws out key learning themes from quality assurance audit and feedback activity, in relation to Children Looked After, Permanence Planning, Placements and Care Leavers. This information was shared with the Corporate Parenting Group on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

## 5 What are the experiences and progress of children in Lewisham’s care?



5.1 As at the end of December 2018, CSC were working with a total of 2,440 children and young people. 478 are children looked after, this includes 50 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. We have 391 Care Leavers, of which 52 were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

5.2 During Listening & Learning week (December 2018) of all the audits and observations undertaken, approximately **40% of practice was judged to be ‘good’, the remainder requires improvement to be good.** The activity in Listening & Learning week reached across the whole of CSC services, the table below sets out what we found to be our generic practice strengths and areas requiring improvement.

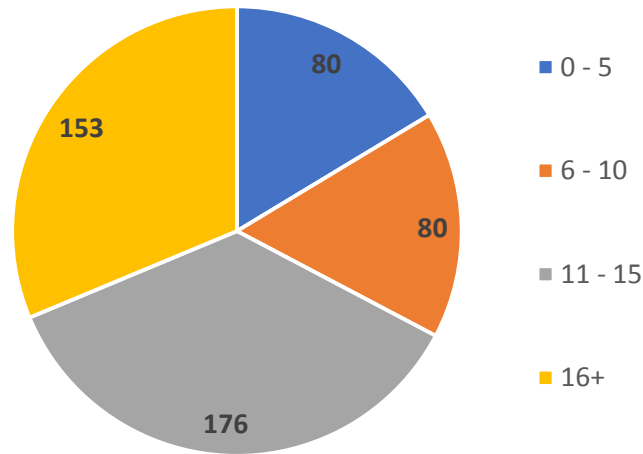
What is going well?	What are our areas for improvement?
<p>Social Workers know their children &amp; families well, they are committed, passionate, persistent and tenacious in getting families the right services.</p> <p>Practice is in the main culturally competent</p> <p>Some practice is respectful and empathetic, child focused, purposeful, thoughtful and creative.</p>	<p>We need to use less professional jargon when talking to families.</p> <p>Greater use of interpreters needs to occur to ensure the families understanding.</p> <p>The culture of practice needs to shift to manage risk more proportionately. There are threshold decisions to commence high level intervention where change could be achieved in lower intervention processes.</p> <p>Practice can be pre-occupied with processes, losing focus on the child and lacking clear purpose.</p>

<p>A survey of 34 parents and children receiving services gave a satisfaction rate average of 6.8 (score of 0-10 with 10 = high satisfaction)</p> <p>80% said they knew why CSC were involved. Communications with other partners, family relationships &amp; access to services improved. CSC helped families feel safer and parent better</p>	<p>Lower satisfaction comments related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families feeling ignored, unnoticed and not responded to urgently.</li> <li>• Service users were frustrated when social workers were away or difficult to contact,</li> <li>• Slow decisions.</li> <li>• Resources withheld.</li> </ul>
<p>Good direct work is happening with children and young people.</p>	<p>Visits need to consistently take place in time. Recording of visits require more detail.</p>
<p>Some examples of good partnership working</p>	<p>Multi-agency work needs stronger co-ordination, some practice is occurring in silo's</p>
<p>Practice is decisive when children are at risk of harm. Decision making is timely when risk is clear, rationale is provided for decisions.</p>	<p>Analysis and decision making needs to show clear rationale for thinking &amp; decisions. Better use of history is required in risk assessing. Decision making is pushed upwards, de-skilling frontline practitioners.</p>

## 6 Key Performance Information

Indicator	Monthly Performance										Target	Latest Benchmarking 2017				
	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18	Jul 18	Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Jan 19		Lew	SN Avg	Inner Lon	Eng	
No. of CLA as at (end of month)	485	492	487	490	483	486	488	489	489	489	→	No Target				
No. of CLA as at, rate per 10,000 population (end of month)	71.0	72.1	71.3	71.8	70.7	71.2	71.5	71.6	71.6	71.6	→	Under Review	71.0	63.4	58.0	64
No of children becoming CLA	16	27	18	16	18	20	16	16	9	12	↓	No Target				
No. of children ceased to be CLA	15	17	24	8	16	15	9	13	16	6	→	No Target				
% of CLA who had a visit within the last 6 weeks	90.5%	89.4%	92.0%	93.3%	88.6%	89.7%	87.1%	85.3%	48.5%	92.2%	→	90.0%				
% of CLA cases reviewed within timescale	92.6%	98.4%	99.2%	96.6%	100.0%	100.0%	99.1%	95.1%	91%	85%	↓	95.0%				
% Initial Health Assessments in time	46.7%	75.0%	68.2%	53.8%	44.4%	60.0%	62.5%	75.0%	70%	88%	↑	95.0%				
% Health Assessments up to date	89.8%	90.9%	90.4%	91.0%	94.7%	93.3%	95.0%	96%	97%	98%	↑	95.0%				
% Dental Assessments up to date	82.0%	79.6%	77.7%	75.1%	72.8%	69.2%	63.0%	58%	53%	47%	↓	85.0%				
Immunisations	64%	63%	63%	63%	62%	60%	58%	58%	58%	57%	→	87%				
% of Eligible CLA with a Personal Education Plan	53.6%	56.2%	58.0%	62.8%	63.4%	57.2%	64.3%	72.2%	72%	66%	↑	90.0%				
% of long term CLA placements stable for at least 2 years (NI63)	75.2%	76.8%	76.4%	77.8%	76.6%	72.7%	75.9%	77.1%	76.8%	77.5%	→	75.0%	77%	68%	68%	70%
% of CLA who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months	10.1%	10.4%	10.9%	9.8%	10.1%	10.3%	15.4%	9.8%	10.4%	9.6%	→	10.0%	10%	11%	11%	10%

Children looked after by age range (Nov 18)

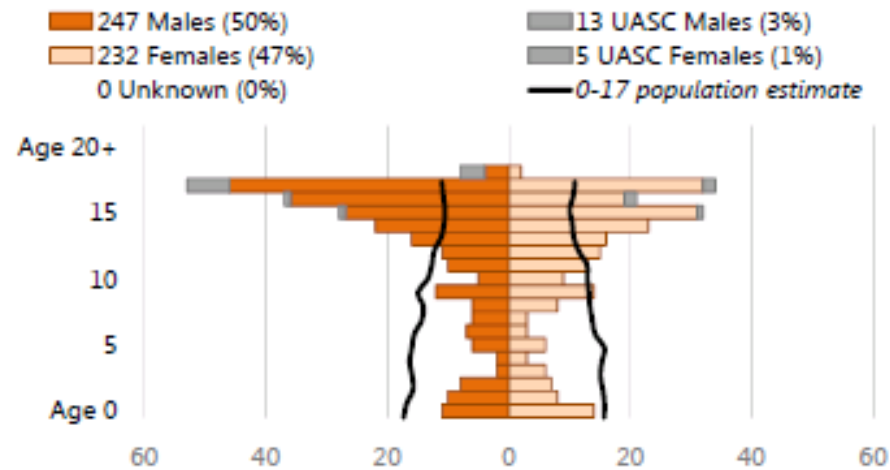


Ethnic background

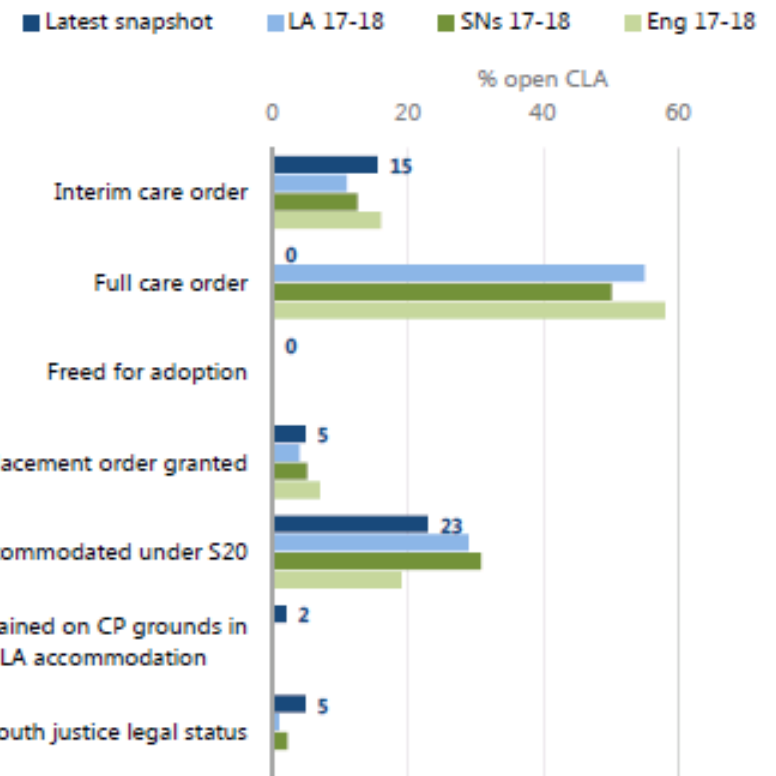
	All CLA	Not UASC	UASC
White	30%	30%	22%
Mixed	23%	24%	0%
Asian or Asian British	4%	4%	6%
Black or black British	37%	37%	39%
Other ethnic group	6%	5%	33%
Not stated	0%	0%	0%
Not recorded	0%	0%	0%

53 children (11%) with a disability

Age and gender



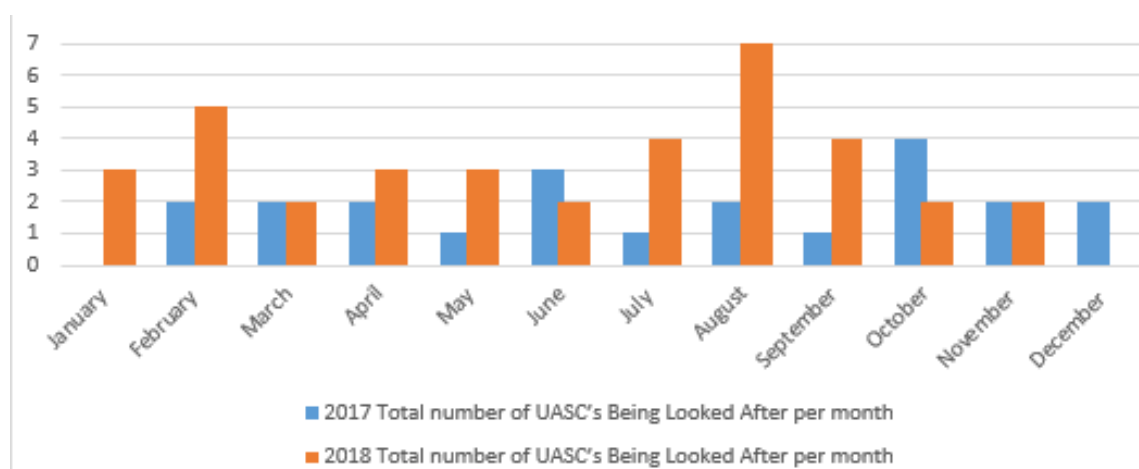
Comparing legal status of open CLA (snapshot)



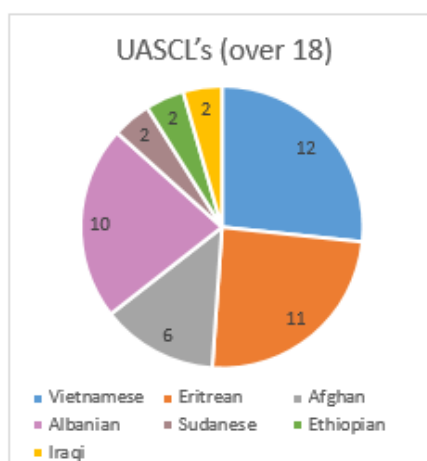
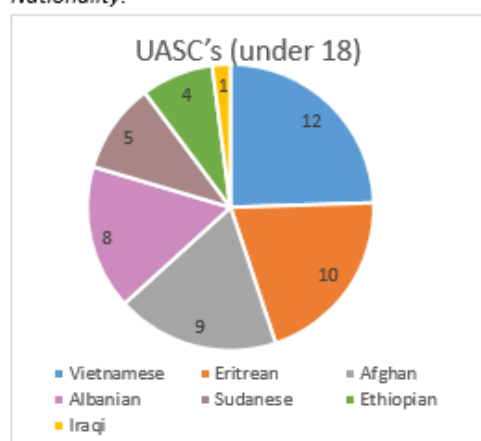
## 7 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Minors (UASC)

7.1 An unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) is child/young person (u18) seeking asylum and have no supporting adult taking responsibility for them. The Local Authority has a duty to assess and provide services, the young person will continue to be eligible for services where they are granted refugee status, humanitarian protection or unaccompanied asylum seeking children leave to remain, which may continue up to their 18th birthday. Young people presenting as UASC are assessed by a social worker in the Assessment Service and then transferred to the Children Looked After & Care Leaver Service.

7.2 **Lewisham is currently caring for a total of 50 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and 52 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Care Leavers (UASCL).** This is the equates to 10% of the overall CLA population. Total UASC's who were referred and became looked after by Lewisham Children services since 2017: **Total 2017 = 22. Average 1.8pcm. Total 2018 = 39. Average 3pcm**



Total number of UASC's and UASCL's according to Nationality:



Accommodation UASC's	Total	Inside Lewisham	Outside Lewisham	Accommodation UASCL's	

Fostering Placement	23	20	3	Staying Put	13
Agency Fostering (IFA)	12	3	19	Supported Lodgings	6
Semi-independent	13	10	3	Semi-independent	12
Supported Lodgings	1	0	0	Temp. Accommodation	1/2 (TBC)
Missing	1	0	0	Missing	3
				Training Flats	1

## 8 Education, Training & Employment-The Virtual School

8.1 Lewisham Virtual School is the key statutory service for ensuring the best possible outcomes for the education of CLA. The team leads on education to ensure that all professionals in the team around the child are working together in the best interests of the student. The service runs for early years to the end of KS5 and supports social workers to ensure an effective transition into care leaving services. The virtual school focuses on metacognition, ensuring our young people are ready to learn and employs a multi-disciplinary team based on an extended school model, including teachers, clinical and educational psychologists, specialist mentors and family therapists. The team use trauma-informed practice to address the individual barriers to learning and develop individual learning plans for each student.

2016-2018 Lewisham CLA (%)	Reading			Writing			Maths			RWM		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
<b>KS1 Met Standard</b>	78	71	<b>100</b>	67	50	<b>80</b>	56	57	<b>80</b>	56	43	<b>80</b>
<b>KS2 Met Standard</b>	54	67	<b>58</b>	85	73	<b>68</b>	62	67	<b>58</b>	38	53	<b>53</b>

KEY STAGE 4 2016-2018	5+ good GCSE passes including maths & English		
	2016	2017	2018
Lewisham CLA (%)	16	20	<b>26</b>

Fixed Term Exclusions CLA	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% days lost to FTE			
Number of days lost to FTE			

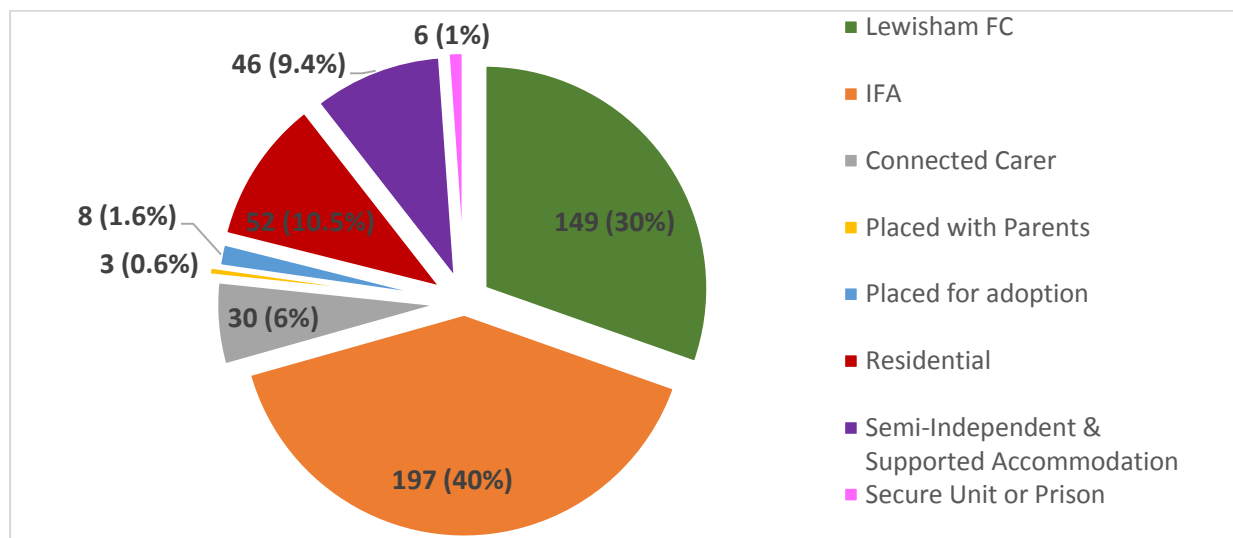
### Attendance CLA (2018-19)

Overall attendance	<b>93%*</b>
Authorised absence	<b>4%*</b>
Unauthorised absence	<b>3%*</b>

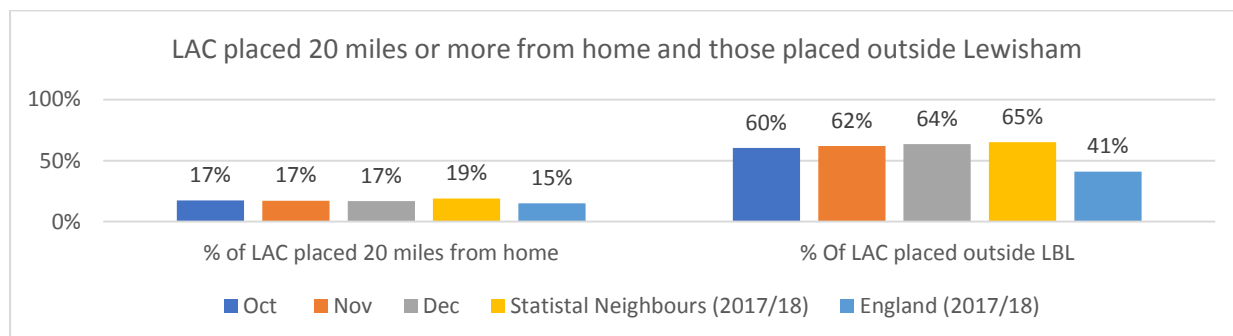
## 9 Placements

9.1 There is a dedicated placements team which consists of a team manager, two social workers and four placements officers. This team is responsible for sourcing and setting up contracts for placements including in-house fostering, Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) Residential, SEND, Welfare Secure and Outreach / Outward-bound provisions. In 2018 decision has been made to align placement finding with the commissioning function. The benefits of bringing these services together aims to manage the provider market and ensure that there are effective and efficient external placement contracts.

9.2 Looked After Children's Placements (Q3 18/19)



NB: Residential also includes Semi-independent placements for 16/17 year olds.



## 10 Foster Carers

10.1 Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on Local Authorities to secure sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of children in their care. To meet this duty Lewisham has a Sufficiency Strategy which is currently being updated for 2019 – 2020.

10.2 Currently there are three teams in the service; Fostering Support and Development Teams 1 & 2 and Special Guardianship Assessment Team. A new Recruitment and Assessment team is currently in formation. The Specialist Fostering Service will be rolled out from April 2019, focusing specifically on developing Specialist Carers, Post SGO support, Supported Lodgings and Staying Put Schemes to improve our offer of suitable local foster placements for complex and hard to place young people. In addition the SGO support scheme will assist and support foster carers to consider SGO for long term settled foster children while the Supported Lodging and Staying Put scheme will recruit, support and coordinate bespoke provision for young people in transition. The service aims to achieve 200 fostering households, a net increase of 80 additional carers within the next 3 years so Lewisham has significantly more in-house fostering placements.

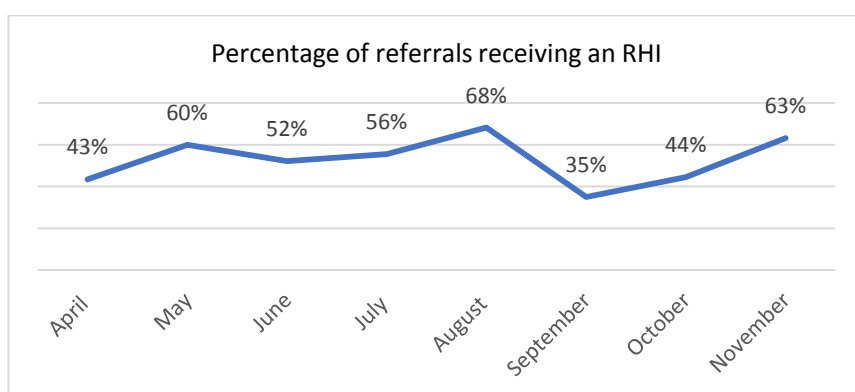




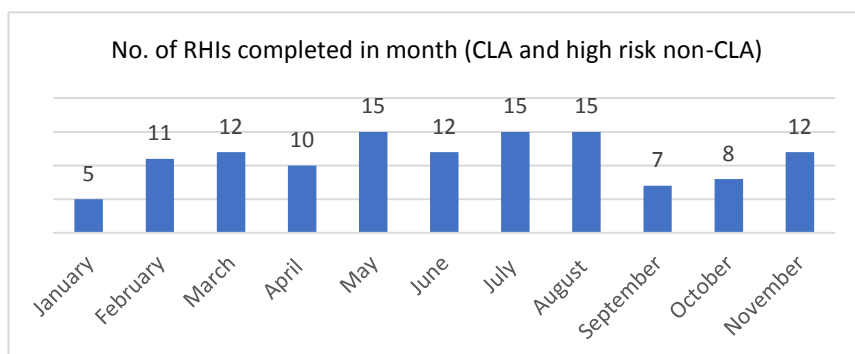
No of CLA - Missing from placement	46	48	45	49	49	54	53	49
No of missing episodes for CLA	122	140	123	156	129	139	144	118

12.1 The last Missing and Exploitation report covered May – July 18, the next report is due in January 2019.

12.2 The team supporting social workers with sexual exploitation (CSE) and missing episodes is situated within the Assessment Service and provides guidance to social workers, works with young people, represents CSC on multi-agency panels and tracks cases to ensure that that essential safeguarding activities are taking place. Lewisham holds a weekly multi-agency MET (Missing, Exploited & Trafficked) Panel which reviews all young people vulnerable to CSE and those going missing. This includes input from CAMHS, Athena, Safer London and Compass who provide 1:1 support for the children identified as required. Return Home Interviews (RHIs) for CLA are carried out by St. Christopher's, an independent provider commissioned by Lewisham. The contract with St Christopher's ends on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, it is currently under review.

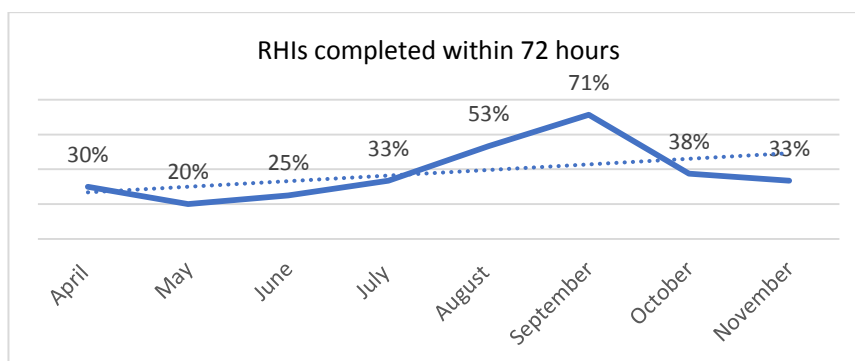


12.3 As well as completing RHIs, St. Christopher's are commissioned to provide additional support to missing young people and their families which aims to reduce repeat episodes, this includes one-to-one support and family mediation.



12.4 In 2018, the average number of RHIs completed per month is 12.

12.5 RHIs take an average of 5 hours to complete.



12.6 On average, 53% of referrals result in an RHI.

12.7 The most common reason for an RHI not being completed is the young person declining after being offered an interview. This happens in 20% of cases on average. The second most common reason is

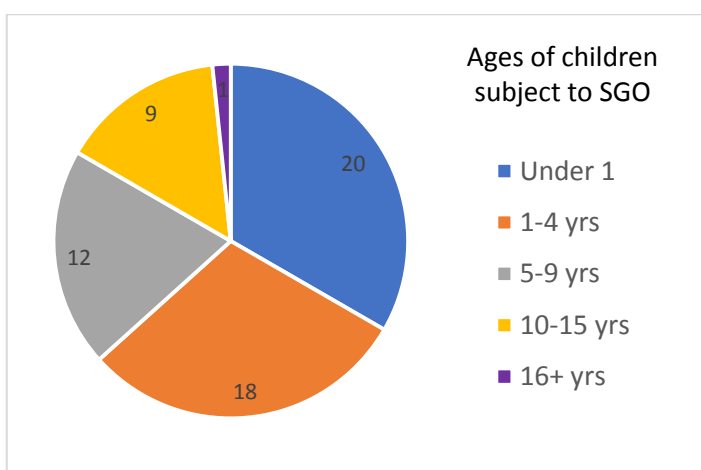
that the young person goes missing again, after the initial episode.

## 13 Permanence Planning

### 13.1 Special Guardianship

13.1.1 Lewisham's Connected Carer and Special Guardianship Team assess applicants who come forward, to see if they meet the requirements of the Special Guardianship regulations, in order that they can care for a child permanently. Assessments take around three months to complete but can be ended early if the initial viability assessment concludes they would not meet the requirements of a Special Guardianship Order (SGO). **The total number of children subject to SGO in April - November 2018 is 15**

July 18 – Nov 18	No.
No. negative SGO assessments:	8
No. positive SGO assessments:	14
No. assessments filed in court/panel:	44
<b>No of children where the permanence plan of SGO is/was considered.</b>	<b>53</b>
No of SGO granted	8



### 13.2 Adoption

13.2.1 When adoption is the care plan for the child, the Adoption and Adoption Support teams' role is finding and supporting stable and secure adoption placements for children where the identified plan is adoption. The team progress a range of different ways to promote adoption and permanence for children including concurrent placements, Fostering for Adoption and the 'Foster to Adopt' programme.

April - December 2018	Total			Aged 0-2	Aged 2-3	Aged 3+	
No. of children waiting by time & age	15			6	2	7	
Timeliness between Placement Order to matching child and prospective adopter.	Within 2 months	2-6 months	6 months +	Average	Highest	Lowest	

	3	2	10	148 days	283 days	NA
Matching to placement				40 days	223 days	NA
Placement order to Adoption Order				761 days	1272 days	250 days

Adoption Performance Information	April 15 Mar 16	April 16 Mar 17	April 17 Mar 18	April 18 Dec 18
Number of Placement Orders	24	14	22	<b>19</b>
Number of Adoption Orders	36	16	16	<b>2</b>
Adoption orders, child placed with family who have been approved by Lewisham	27	13	9	<b>1</b>
Adoption orders, child placed with family who have been approved by another adoption agency (not Lewisham)	9	3	7	<b>1</b>

## 14 The Quality & Impact of Our Services-Key Issues from the Self-Assessment

14.1 This section of the report summaries the learning identified through a range of quality assurance activity that has taken place over the last 6 months. This includes audits, internal, external reviews and feedback for partners and children and families that use our services. The source of the information is referenced in italics. *NB. PI = Performance Information*

What is going well?	What are our areas for improvement?
<p><b>CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER</b></p> <p><i>IRO Annual Report 17/18:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>72% of Care Plans considered good standard.</li> <li>97% of cases monitoring did not require formal IRO escalation process. The majority of escalations are resolved at service level.</li> <li>76% of children / young people are satisfied with their care plan.</li> </ul> <p>Care Plans were reviewed on time and involved other professionals. Timely actions are being recorded at statutory CLA reviews by IROs. <i>(PI) Listening &amp; Learning week (Dec 18) A thematic Care Plan Audit was undertaken ( No. 25 cases)</i></p> <p>CLA are being visited regularly by their social workers. <i>(PI)</i></p> <p>Health assessments are up to date and held in time. <i>(PI)</i></p>	<p>The Council Corporate Parenting &amp; CLA strategy needs updating. The rate of children looked after is higher than statistical neighbours. Entries into care rate is comparable (2017/18 data), but the rate of care applications is high. Exits from care are lower than statistical neighbours. This suggests permanence planning needs more frequent reviewing and stronger management oversight.</p> <p>Dental checks and Initial Health Assessments need to reach targets <i>(PI)</i>. However some of these figures are effected by recording cycles. Business support systems for maintaining good recording need strengthening.</p> <p>SDQ scores need to be meaningfully used to inform care plans and compiled to inform strategic planning.</p> <p>More work needs to been done to strengthen the impact of the IRO role and the effectiveness of the IRO escalation process. <i>(IRO Annual Report 2017/18)</i></p> <p>64% of care plans graded as requiring improvement to be good. Plans need to be clearer, outcomes more evident &amp; different aspects of care</p>

<p>Staff 16 Ramadan boxes were distributed, to keep young people safe after breaking fasting.</p>	<p>plans i.e. health, education, permanence, placements more joined up. <i>Listening &amp; Learning week (Dec 18)</i></p> <p>There are some delays in citizenship / passport applications.</p> <p>Too many Social Work reports for CLA Reviews are not presented or delayed.</p> <p>Reasons for CLA requiring advocacy services relate to finance. E.g. late payments (<i>Commissioning Report to CPB Dec 18</i>)</p>
<p><b>UASC</b></p> <p>The UASC Project team started in Sept. The 18 month project is has 2 key components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Recruit of 20 new foster care placements</li> <li>2) Provide tailored support to UASCL</li> </ol> <p>My Foster Family are being commissioned to recruit 5 Muslim foster placements.</p> <p>Community Partnership building has been established with local and pan London refugee, migrant and asylum seeking services, to deliver the project and build resilience in the community.</p> <p>11 UASC's were accompanied to attend theatre performance 'Pizza Shop Heroes' with a group of former UASC on 3/12/18.</p>	<p>The specific nature of this area of work requires specialist knowledge. At present UASC are allocated across the CLA Service. A dedicated team needs to be developed to provide a service with specialist knowledge, to provide better services.</p> <p>At the foster carers forum (Oct 2018) concerns were raised about the reliability of age assessments, this is especially important for single carers.</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Virtual school (VS) holds real-time education data for CLA which is quality assured on a daily basis. There is swift notification to VS of children entering care</p> <p>2018 - Highest ever attendance of CLA, lowest ever fixed term exclusions. 0 permanent exclusions. All Lewisham schools have agreed not to permanently exclude CLA.</p> <p>Very low numbers of CLA Missing Education</p> <p>2018 High attainment at KS 1; at KS 2 for reading/writing/maths combined and at KS 4. 2019 - on course to meet 100 hour (by Y13) IAG target</p> <p>2019 - 16 Students are on course to begin university courses. This would represent Lewisham's highest ever cohort (there were 15 in 2018)</p>	<p>While performance has been improving on PEPs there is still more to do to reach targets consistently. 72% of PEP's are recorded. (PI)</p> <p>SEND - improve monitoring of CLA receiving SEND support below EHCP threshold</p> <p>Work towards 100% of KS4 cohort achieving some form accreditation- by identifying appropriate individual pathway.</p> <p>Improve impact of student voice in service design</p> <p>Improve links between Virtual School and YOS.</p>

<p>Lewisham is nationally recognised for outstanding impact of pupil premium (<i>peer challenge</i>)</p>	
<p><b>MISSING &amp; CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING</b>  <i>April 2018 review of commissioned RHI contract:</i></p> <p>Since April 2018 Lewisham service commissioners have worked with St. Christopher's to oversee improvements. Up until September 2018, this led to a steady increase in the number of RHIs completed, and those within 72 hours.</p> <p>St. Christopher's contributes information to the Serious Youth Violence (SYV) and Missing Exploited Trafficked (MET) panels. The Missing Co-ordinator in CSC and St. Christopher's Manager meet fortnightly to review young people have been offered a service.</p> <p>The recent government launch on violence reduction policy (MOPAC) led the introduction of the Rescue and Response Service. So far it presents as being an effective service for children involved in county lines and criminal exploitation.</p> <p>The CSE module in LCS was introduced (June 18) and includes a revised comprehensive CSE Risk Assessment. Training has been provided to social workers, this is expected to improve the recorded rates of CSE identification and safety planning.</p>	<p>A strategic approach to contextual safeguarding is required across the council and multi-agency partnership. Which includes the review and rationalisation of the MET and Violence Reduction panels.</p> <p>The RHI service is perceived not to be sufficiently responsive. On average, 40% of RHIs are carried out within 72 hours. The most common reason for a delay in an RHI being completed is the young person not attending pre-arranged appointments. September &amp; October saw performance on RHIs drop after a high number of referrals for repeat missing cases that had already been offered the service previously and declined. Engagement with this group is more difficult due to them going missing before an RHI can take place.</p> <p>More needs to be done to gather intelligence during RHIs for use in a strategic way, to build a local profile and inform our overall approach. Information sharing across boroughs is problematic, as well as knowing what all the agencies are doing needs improving.</p> <p>Review and updating of the joint Missing from Home and Care Protocol needs to take place.</p> <p>Children's and Adult Social Care need to develop safety planning for transition into adulthood.</p> <p>Future planning for young people leaving secure units should occur more and be anticipated earlier.</p>

**PERMANENCE PLANNING**

Permanence/adoption planning is being considered at an early stage. (Listening & Learning Week)

CLA plans evidenced some good life story work (Listening & Learning Week)

There have been no disruptions on adoptions over the last 10 years (PI)

The 2014-2017 DfE Adoption Scorecard (Mar 2018) confirmed Lewisham consistently performs above national average.

Prospective adopter applicants were fully prepared and aware of the applicant process on all occasions No.12 (Adoption Panel Report Sept 2018)

Over 90% of reports to Adoption Panel are of good quality. (Adoption Panel Report Sept 2018)

Since July the SGO team have been undertaking training and introducing new mechanisms to improve working relationships across the service and practice standards.

There are some delays in permanence planning & more life story work needs to be undertaken. (Listening & Learning Week)

Policies and procedures around permanency and matching need development, to enable more consistent approach and clear expectations. (IRO Annual Report 2017/18)

Performance on numbers of adoptions has fallen this year, largely due to contested hearings and a change in approach by the courts, this is a pattern across London. The drop of adoption orders is also believed to be as a result of more children being harder to place (PI & Management Oversight).

More work needs to be done to attract prospective adopters who are BME and who can care for children who are harder to place.

Assessment to panel approval for Adopters within 5 months of allocation was 50%. In last 9 months, due to staff shortages. The length of completed assessments was also longer for reasons including applicants' health issues, moving housing, outstanding DBS.

There is no effective module on LCS for recording Connected Carer & SGO assessment activity.

**PLACEMENTS & SUFFICIENCY**

Placement stability is high compared to statistical neighbours. (PI) & (Listening & Learning Week)

Foster to adopt placements are being used successfully. (Listening & Learning Week)

Foster Carer project groups have been set up jointly led and run by foster carers & supervising social workers to support to attract and retain good foster carers.

Timeliness of assessments of foster carers has improved in 2018, compared to 2017. (PI)

With additional support to existing foster carers, 115 households have increased capacity to look after more children. Currently there are 170 in-house, which equates to 35% of CLA as compared to 112 (24%) as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

There are a number of CLA who are in 'out of borough' placements. 61%. This is comparable with our statutory neighbours but still higher than we would like. 40% of those placed outside Lewisham are in neighbouring Boroughs. (PI) 34% of Lewisham CLA are placed with Lewisham carers. Compared to 39% in our statistical neighbours and 53% nationally. (PI)

A qualitative matching tool is needed to ensure placements options are well matched to CLA and to maintain good stability.

There are a number of carers in Lewisham choosing to work for IFA's. Lewisham needs to become the employer of choice for foster carers.

Support for Special Guardianship carers needs strengthening and payments need reviewing to ensure it does not act as a disincentive to foster carers who can provide permanent care.

<p><b>FOSTER CARERS</b>  <i>In October 2018 a foster carers forum was held and provided the following feedback:</i></p> <p>Some foster carers were positive about the support they receive from Lewisham and their supervising social workers (SSW).</p> <p>Foster carers are positive about being involved in recruitment</p>	<p>Some foster carers are dissatisfied with the level of support and are concerned about SSW workloads and not enough Personal Advisors.</p> <p>Morale was described as low partially due to staff turnover fostering. The relationship between carers and Lewisham CSC needs to be more collaborative.</p> <p>More information needs to be provided to foster carers when children are being placed with them, delegated authority needs further clarity. Messages and information given to foster carers needs to be more consistent, policies and procedures need to be written down and widely distributed.</p>
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## 14.2 What are the experiences of our care leavers?

14.2.1 Lewisham has statutory duties to provide a leaving care service to those young people aged 16-25 years who have been, or are, 'cared for' and who leave the care of the Local Authority. A care leaver is defined:

- Eligible: aged 16 or 17, are currently in care and have been cared for 13 weeks (or periods amounting to 13 weeks) which began after reaching aged 14 and must include at least one day whilst they were 16 or 17 years old.
- Relevant: no longer being cared for by the LA but were 'eligible' and will be 16 or 17 years old.
- Former relevant: is aged between 18 and 21 and before reaching 18 was a relevant or eligible. If at the age of 21, or before reaching the age of 25, they remain in full time education or training, then they will remain a former relevant young person until the end of the agreed programme of study.
- A qualifying care leaver is at least 16 years but under 21, was cared for prior to the making of a Special Guardianship Order which was in force when they reached 18 or, after reaching the age of 16 was still cared for, or was privately fostered and assessed to be in need.
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) receive the same support as a Care Leaver if the above criteria

14.2.2 Care leavers up to 21 are allocated a Personal Advisor (PA) in the Children Looked After & Leaving Care Service, and our local offer makes them aware they can return for support up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. In addition to the PA's a dedicated Careers Adviser sits in the service who provides 1:1 and targeted support, this additional focus is for all 18-25 year olds.

14.2.3 In response to feedback from Care Leavers, since December 2018, Lewisham has been planning the re-align the service to create a dedicated Leaving Care Service and UASC hub by February 2019. The Council has also identified a dedicated building which is currently under refurbishment to provide a dedicated location for the Care Leaving team and for young people to access services.



14.2.4 The I-Aspire programme that commenced in late 2018 delivered by DePaul UK, focuses on the 18-21 cohort but some young 16-17 year olds can be referred to undertake transition or preparation work and housing need support to improve tenancy stability. It can also offer some returning 21-25 year olds who are coming to the end of a custodial sentence or are young parents ready to re-enter job opportunities. It offers 1:1, personalised and assertive outreach over a 3 year period to care leavers to increase their prospects and access to training, education and employment.

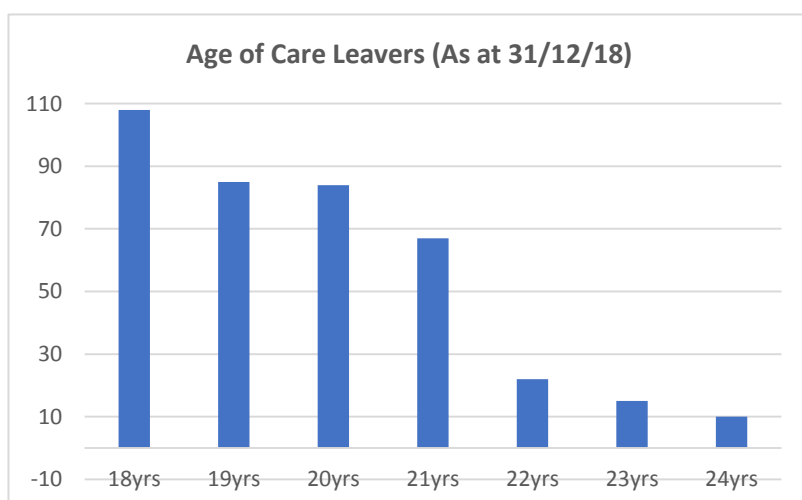
14.2.5 The Money House project helps prepare our care leavers for taking on their own tenancy in the future and focuses on areas around tenancy readiness, independence skills, budgeting support and when assessed as having these necessary skills, we aim to move our young people towards accommodation that best suits their needs.

14.2.6 The health needs of our care leavers are overseen by Child Health to when they become an adult. A number of our care leavers have low confidence. Work has commenced in the design of a new health and well-being tool that will help identify the right support to our young people and increase their resilience and improve their emotional well-being. For pregnant care leavers we have an arrangement with the Family Nurse Partnership and an enhanced health visitor service to work with our care leavers. We have a pre-birth process to ensure any need is met earlier and support can be provided. The Meliot Outreach service provides focused group work to care leavers, there's a Focused Attention to Babies (FAB) group and a Caring Father's project where we can signpost to.

14.3 Key performance indicators

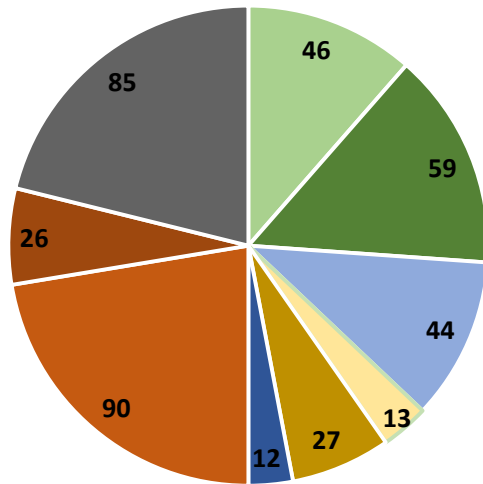
14.3.1 The Leaving Care service performance data is currently under review, as there are several areas of recording that need improving through practice and LCS re-design. E.g. Pathway plans are not currently recorded on LCS due to the poor form design. Subsequently this does not enable data collection. The re-design of LCS is scheduled for Jun- July 2019.

Indicator	Monthly Performance									
	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18	Jul 18	Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Jan 19
No. of care leavers age 18 – 24	325	330	340	347	359	369	326	380	392	396



14.3.2 Our numbers of care leavers have steadily increased over the last three years. These numbers are anticipated to increase further linked to the older age profile of our CLA with many now coming into care later and more specifically numbers of UASC and the extension of our duties contained in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

**Care Leavers: Education, Employment & Training  
(As at 31/1//18)**



- F/T Higher Education
- F/T Education
- F/T Training or employment
- P/T Education
- P/T Training or employment
- NEET due to illness or disability
- NEET for other reasons
- NEET due to pregnancy or parenting
- Not recorded

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
% of care leavers in suitable accommodation	82.2%	80.9%	78.8%	77.2%	74.9%	72.9%	71.5%	70.8%	74%	69%

*NB This data is currently under review for accuracy.*

What is going well?	What are our areas for improvement?
<p>Evidence of good and helpful 'Staying Put' placements in Pathway Plans (L&amp;L)</p> <p>PAs were described as knowing their young people, making positive interventions and being pro-active in their work with care leavers. (L&amp;L)</p> <p>Care Leavers have priority nomination to local housing &amp; Lewisham has 6 training flats to assist transitions into independence</p> <p>43 young people have already been identified for the I-Aspire programme.</p> <p>Council Tax exemption is available to all care leavers who live in Lewisham up to 25 years</p> <p>A good number of care leavers remain in a Staying Put and good arrangements are in place with the Supported Housing Pathway.</p> <p>Most of our care leavers are in suitable accommodation. The exceptions being those in custody and a small number who no longer engage with the service.</p>	<p>Performance data for our Care Leaver population needs significant improvement.</p> <p>Dedicated Care Leavers Service to be developed, with associated strategy and action plan to strengthen the strategic management of the service.</p> <p>Caseloads of PA's inhibits the ability to do good work. (L&amp;L)</p> <p>100% (No.9) pathway plans were graded at 'Requires Improvement' (L&amp;L) Pathway plans need to be reviewed more regularly &amp; SMART (L&amp;L) &amp; (PI)</p> <p>Increase management oversight on care leaver's cases evidencing better oversight and tracking of actions and management directions on files. (L&amp;L)</p> <p>More suitable accommodation options are required.</p> <p>Need to annually review the financial entitlements</p> <p>The Local Offer to Care Leavers needs stronger prominence and better publicity.</p>

A good number of care leavers are attending university & their outcomes are consistently high

The audits highlighted good engagement with other agencies and co-ordination of services

8 young ambassadors have been appointed who helped develop the Care Leaver Local Offer, are engaged in recruitment and training of Foster Carers.

65 (of 100) young people have completed the Money House Programme a simulated independent living programme  
*(Senior Management Report to CPB Dec 18)*

Offer for 21+ care leavers needs clearer definition on information and performance systems

Care leavers to have access to their full health histories / passports and can understand this with support from Child Health and their PA.

Strengthening transition pathways for vulnerable care leavers into adult services

Reduce the waiting lists for care leavers who require emotional wellbeing or mental health support.

We need to take a more strategic approach to the 189 Care Leavers who are in EET.

## 15 What are we doing to improve our services?

15.1 The following information has been extracted from the Children's Service Improvement Plan, highlighting the specific areas relating to Corporate Parenting

Area	Objectives	Activities	Timescale
<b>LEADERSHIP &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>	LCS case recording systems support good practice and underpin the practice framework	Comprehensive recording form re-design programme in place. CLA work commences Feb 2019 – July 201	Starts Feb 2019
	Performance information is available and routinely used by manager to manage services to ensure discipline in meeting practice standards e.g. visits	Performance clinics (monthly) introduced Senior Management performance scrutiny cycle introduced Performance Information strategy developed Performance data requirements across the service specified	July 2018 Nov 2018 Dec 2018 Dec 2018
	Threshold decision making is consistent, proportionate and provides clear rationale.	Access to Resource & Care - threshold decision making panel for issuing proceedings and for children becoming looked after.	Jan 2019 Feb 2019
	Interpreting services are easily available and provide a sufficiently skilled service.	Review of interpreting services	Q2 2019
<b>GENERIC PRACTICE</b>	Practice with families is respectful, purposeful, child focused and the family are fully engaged.  Risk is managed proportionately.	Introduce Signs of Safety Practice framework – emphasising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working 'with' families – keeping children safe in their family</li> <li>Strengthening analysis of risk</li> <li>Use of plain English</li> <li>Reduction of processes to enable focus on child</li> </ul>	Starts Jan 2019
	Practice is consistent across the teams. Social Workers have the knowledge, skills and tools to deliver to a good standard.	Practice standards and guidance to be developed for all core areas of practice	Start Feb 2019
		Training to be delivered on practice standards	Start Mar 2019
	Tri-X procedures for practice to be updated		
	Joint training & learning sessions to be established with key partners to build multi-agency collaborative practice.		Start Q1 2019/20

	There is sufficient specialist knowledge in CSC to work effectively with families where the Toxic Trio is a feature.	Proposal to be made for specialist social work posts for domestic violence and parental mental health  Specialist training to be provided & practice guidance issued.	Q1 2019/10
<b>Children Looked After</b>	Corporate Parenting duties are actively and fully exercised to ensure children in care in Lewisham receive good service, are kept safe and positive outcomes are actively promoted.	SOS practice framework to embed new ways of working  Strengthen the edge of care service – first response to provide intensive support to families in crisis  Refresh the Corporate Parenting Strategy to set out the plan for how we will improve care provided	Start Jan 19  Q1-2 2019  Q1 2019
	Reduce overall numbers and rate of CLA to be comparable with London Boroughs and statistical neighbours, ensure we have the right children in care and permanence plans are timely.	ARC panel – gateway to ensure constant thresholds applied to court applications and entries to care  Best Care panel – reviews high cost placements to ensure exit strategies are in place for family placements	Jan 19  Sep 19
	Corporate Parenting Group develops to further promote the role of Corporate Parenting across the council	Self assessment of CPG conducted (Jan-19) Develop draft work-plan of activities	Mar 2019
	Ensure all children who are not returning home fully understand their story	Life story work – workshops to increase and improve quality of practice	Started Q4 2018/19
<b>Permanence planning</b>	Strengthen permanence planning for Special Guardianship and maintain good adoption performance	Review Special Guardianship payments to ensure they do not act as a disincentive  Permanency panel refreshed to ensure children in care have timely permanence plans	Q1 2019  Jan 2019
	Support smooth transition to the South London Regional Adoption Agency	Formal TUPE consultation Work with Project Board (Southwark) for planning	Mar 2019 July 2019
<b>UASC</b>	UASC project to deliver on its two key aims	Agree contract for 'My Foster Family' to commission specialist recruitment service to source Muslim carers.	Mar 19
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of local services</li> <li>- Increasing no. of specialist foster carers for UASC</li> </ul>	Develop dedicated UASC hub team – to deliver specialist services	May 19

<b>Placements</b>	Sufficiency Strategy refreshed to improve the number and type of in-house foster cares in Lewisham. increase the number of in house foster carers	Strengthen support for carers to increase their capacity, promote placement stability & enable carers to manage more challenging placements	Q1 2019/20
		Advertising & recruitment campaign to increase the number of in house carers	Q1 2019
		Manage the market of external independent fostering agencies, semi-independent and residential accommodation providers for best value	Q1-2 2019
	Maintain good placement stability	Re-engage the Foster Cares association with the co-production of training, support and development of therapeutic foster care  Introduce improve matching processes when placing children with foster carers  Ensure all foster carers are quality assured annually.	Q1-2 2019  Q1 2019  Started Dec 2019
<b>Care Leavers</b>	Implement a dedicated Leaving Care service & UASC hub to improve standards of practice in: - Pathway Planning: supporting independence - Staying in touch - Improve numbers of care leavers who in EET - Suitable accommodation & staying put	Disaggregate Personal Advisors from the current CLA & Leaving Care Service to create a specialist Leaving Care team. Develop the I-aspire innovation programme, increasing referrals to work with Care Leavers who are NEET Redesign pathway plan format on LCS Review joint protocol with housing for care leaver accommodation	4 Mar 19  Mar–Sep 19  Jun 19 Apr 19
		Ensure the Local offer is well publicised and financial entitlements are clear.	Agree financial entitlements policy Develop communication strategy for Local offer – publish and promote
	Improve transitions to adult services	Develop closer working arrangements with adult services where vulnerable young people	May 19

## **16 Financial implications**

- 16.1 The Children and Young Peoples Service, currently has a net general fund budget of £54.7m. Of this £43.4m relates to Children's Social Care. The CSC budget is expected to overspend 2018/19 by £6.9m. The main drivers behind the overspend is demand and price.
- 16.2 For 2019/20 the CSC budget will be realigned to support the budget pressure, however the service will be required to meet savings of £1.550m 2019/20 and £1.350m 2020/21 -as agreed by full council.
- 16.3 This report is an activity update report and therefore doesn't have financial implications per se, Further reports will need to be presented to detail actions and strategy arising from this activity report. Financial Implications would need to be considered on the basis of each individual report.

## **17 Legal implications**

- 17.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

## **18. Equalities Implications**

- 18.1 Lewisham's Comprehensive Equalities Scheme (CES) 2016-2020 sets out the Council's strategic objectives with regard to improving the life chances and quality of life of Lewisham residents. The Equality Act 2010 provides the statutory framework for the CES.
- 18.2 By describing the work that the Council is undertaking to promote and safeguard the well being of vulnerable children in the borough, this report directly contributes to the following CES objectives:
- tackling discrimination, victimisation and harassment
  - improving access to services
  - closing the gap in outcomes
  - increasing participation and engagement

## **19 Environmental Implications**

- 19.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## **20 Background documents and originator**

If there are any queries on this report, please contact Lucie Heyes on 020 8314 8140.

