

Appendix F

How living in temporary accommodation affects children and young people – Draft recommendations

The Children and Young People Select Committee recommends:

1. That the Housing Department collects data on types of placements, numbers of children, ethnic profiles which they update at reasonable intervals and make available on request to relevant Members/ Committees
2. That the Housing Department responds swiftly and thoroughly to enquiries from Members, officers outside the Department and other stakeholders, including schools, Citizen's Advice Bureaux etc.
3. That the Homelessness Reduction team seeks to identify early where children are more likely to be evicted and a Liaison Officer be appointed to work with Children's Social Care and Housing to facilitate joint preventative work where a potential eviction is anticipated to lead to a child being referred to CSC.
4. That
 - a. prior to placing tenants, properties are inspected in person by or on behalf of Lewisham Council, with a written condition report and photos; and
 - b. no family be placed in unsatisfactory accommodation. When deciding whether a property is satisfactory, due regard should be given to
 - i. the fabric of the building – including a range of qualities such as state of repair, natural light, space
 - ii. the appropriateness of the other residents and building users.
5. That all reasonable steps be taken to avoid placing
 - a. families with children under 18
 - b. 16 & 17 year olds
 - c. Care leaversin nightly paid accommodation with shared amenities.
6. That clear and accessible information be provided to all households on their rights, pathways for resolving issues with temporary accommodation, the location of local amenities such as the GP, dentist, shops, library, together with regularly updated advice on the anticipated length of stay so families can make informed decisions around school placements.
7. That communication with service users be more open and a culture that builds trust, transparency and information-sharing be encouraged. This includes seeking and recording feedback from service users which is then acted upon, and service users kept informed, where appropriate.
8. That placing a family in temporary accommodation outside the borough should not contain an assumption in advance as to the location of their settled/ permanent accommodation.