

# **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE**

## **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2016 – 2018**

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## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Hackney's Vision</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Sufficiency - National and Local Context</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Profile of Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Hackney</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Current Placement Mix</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Placement Costs</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>How Hackney will meet the Sufficiency Duty</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Appendix A - Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Appendix B – Supporting Data Tables</b>	<b>51</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 All Local Authorities (LAs) are required to take steps to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for children in care within their local area. In 2010, the 'Statutory Guidance for the Sufficiency Duty' was issued<sup>1</sup>. The guidance is explicit in placing a duty on LAs to act strategically to address gaps in provision by ensuring that they include, in relevant commissioning strategies, their plans for meeting the sufficiency duty.
- 1.2 The Children Act 2004 defines sufficiency as "*a whole system approach which delivers early intervention and preventative work to help support children and their families where possible, as well as providing better services for children if they do become looked after. For those who are looked after, LAs and partners should seek to secure a number of providers and a range of services, with the aim of meeting the wide-ranging needs of looked after children and young people within their local area.*"
- 1.3 The aim of this strategy is to set out how Hackney intends to meet the placement needs of current and future looked after children and care leavers, supporting positive outcomes through understanding their needs and current provision, and identify measures that need to be put in place to ensure that there is an appropriate range of provision to meet future projected need. The strategy outlines the current looked after children profile and placement mix and concludes by highlighting key areas of focus and challenges in achieving sufficiency before setting out a range of actions to address these (Appendix A).
- 1.4 The scope of this strategy is not restricted to just making good quality placements; the intention is to capture the range of activity across Children and Young People's Services (CYPS), including a clear focus on supporting families to stay together, wherever it is safe to do so, therefore minimising the need for children to come into care, or supporting reunification with their families.
- 1.5 This approach is consistent with our belief that children are best cared for within their families wherever this can be safely achieved and that investing in providing services that are able to promote change within families is frequently more effective and efficient than removing children and placing them in alternative care. CYPS are currently delivering and continuing to develop and enhance early help and preventative services that aim to reduce the numbers of children and young people entering into care.
- 1.6 We recognise that working in partnership is vital to support our looked after children and young people in each aspect of their life. Particularly relevant to this strategy is our partnership with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (NLAFC). This is an arrangement between 6 north London boroughs: Camden, Barnet, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, and Islington. Five of the boroughs have been working together in an adoption consortium since 2003, with Hackney joining the partnership in 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/273812/sufficiency\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance\\_on\\_securing\\_sufficient\\_accommodation\\_for\\_looked\\_after\\_children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/273812/sufficiency_-_statutory_guidance_on_securing_sufficient_accommodation_for_looked_after_children.pdf)

1.7 This arrangement is very beneficial to all the boroughs involved. We benefit from joint recruitment of foster carers and adopters with increased capacity for targeted recruitment for specialist carers and specific children, centralised training for staff, adopters and foster carers, joint commissioning of services which is effective and provides financial savings for all boroughs and access to shared placements across each borough for looked after children and young people.

1.8 The strategy is set within the context of national policy, legislation and guidance and addresses the needs of children and young people from birth to the age of 21 (or 25 where children's services continue to have statutory responsibility). The following primary legislation governs our commissioning in relation to looked after children:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children 2010
- Guidance on the Provision of Accommodation for 16 & 17 year old young people who be homeless and/or require accommodation 2010
- Care Planning Review and Regulations 2010
- Promoting the Educational Achievements of Looked After Children: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2010
- The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012
- Children and Family Act 2014

1.5 Locally, the strategy is informed by Children and Young People's Services key priorities<sup>2</sup>, which are to:

- Continue to invest in the workforce across Children and Young People's Services, recruiting people of the highest calibre, supporting their development and progression, and promoting leadership at all levels.
- Focus on safeguarding adolescents in different contexts within and outside the home, including in their peer group relationships, school environments and the community.
- Ensure resources for looked after children are used efficiently and targeted effectively including working with other local authorities, for example through the North London Children's Efficiency Programme (related to placements for looked after children) and the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium.

2.4 The strategy is further aligned with priorities set out in: Hackney Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 18<sup>3</sup>; the Corporate Parenting Strategy (2016); the Hackney Promise to Children and Young People in Care (2015); the Fostering Recruitment and Retention Strategy (2015); and Hackney's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Hackney Children and Young People's Service Bi-annual Report to Members, January 2016

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/Hackney-A-Place-for-Everyone-Corporate-Plan.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/City-and-Hackney-health-and-wellbeing-2014.pdf>

## 2. Hackney's Vision

- 2.1 Our vision is to ensure that Hackney has sufficient high quality placements and accommodation options that meet the needs of all looked after children and care leavers, safeguarding them from harm and supporting them in achieving the best possible outcomes whilst ensuring the best use of available resources.
- 2.2 We continually strive to improve practice in respect of care planning to ensure that it can be said, with confidence, which children need to come into care and identify the arrangements that will best improve children's outcomes if they do enter the care system.
- 2.3 In achieving this vision, we seek to support the resilience of families and reduce the need for children and young people to enter into care. We have a range of family support services and clinical interventions that provide a high quality support offer for families in Hackney, complementing the core social work offer and additionally providing targeted support to families at risk of escalating into statutory services and those stepping down from Children's Social Care (CSC).
- 2.4 Children and young people will only become looked after when this is genuinely the best or only option to safeguard or promote their health and wellbeing. Care should provide a safe and positive experience for all children and one that preserves and promotes their identity, culture and religion. We will consistently provide high quality placements and/or support packages which take account of the child or young person's wishes and feelings, are outcome focussed and meet their need whilst being cost effective.
- 2.5 Wherever possible, we endeavour to find the right placement the first time through robust care planning and matching processes to support placement stability and will, unless the needs of the child are of a highly specialist nature or there are legitimate safeguarding reasons for making a placement at a greater distance, try to accommodate the child as close to home as possible. When a decision is made to place a child or young person outside of Hackney, we are committed to giving high priority to meeting any consequential needs arising for the child or young person and, as with all placements, to closely monitor the quality and impact of the care and support they receive.
- 2.6 We will provide placements that can prepare children and young people for their transition to a permanent family environment or adulthood with confidence, a strong sense of self-worth, and the skills and abilities to thrive.
- 2.7 Wherever possible, we will return children to their birth families or support them living with extended family or other people they have an established connection with where this is consistent with the needs and wishes of the child.
- 2.8 To support Hackney in achieving its vision, the objectives of the strategy are to:
  - Safely manage the number of children coming into care, ensuring that the needs of children and young people are met through the continued delivery, review and development of preventative family support services and ensuring that children only come into care where this is in their best interests.

- Ensure that looked after children are progressed through the care system without unnecessary delay and can achieve timely and appropriate reunification with their families, or permanent alternative placements (for example, through adoption, long-term fostering or special guardianship) wherever this is possible.
- Provide and commission the right mix of high quality placements (including through the development of existing partnerships and increased use of in-house provision) to meet identified needs of looked after children and care leavers as cost effectively as possible.
- Secure placement stability and improve outcomes for children and young people through strengthening: matching processes; placement planning; quality assurance processes; support available for carers (including foster carers, special guardians, adopters); and professional development opportunities for foster carers.
- Support children and young people in care to make a successful transition into adulthood through the provision of high quality leaving care services which support care leavers to find and maintain suitable accommodation arrangements that meet their needs and provide them with independent living skills.
- Strengthen the involvement of children, young people, families, carers and professionals in the design, delivery and evaluation of placement provision.

### 3. Sufficiency - National and Local Context

#### *National Context*

- 3.1 The number of looked after children across England has increased steadily over the past seven years and it is now higher than at any point since 1985. Statistics taken from the 2015 Department for Education (DfE) Statistical First Release<sup>5</sup> on children looked after in England (including adoption and care leavers) show that there were 69,540 looked after children in England at 31 March 2015, an increase of 1% compared to 31 March 2014 and an increase of 6% compared to 31 March 2011.

**Table 1: Number of children looked after in England at 31 March 2011 - 2015**

Number of children looked after at 31 March 2010 to 2014 Year ending 31 March	Number of looked after children
2011	65,510
2012	67,070
2013	68,060
2014	68,800
2015	69,540

- 3.2 There has been a fall in the last two years in the numbers of 1 to 4 year olds looked after (at 31 March) reflecting higher numbers ceasing to be looked after (around 8,500 each year) than starting to be looked after (just under 6,000 each year). Locally, this trend has been replicated with a 4% decrease in the number of children within this age range being looked after (at year end) between 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2015.
- 3.3 For children aged 10 years and older there has been a rise nationally in the numbers starting to be looked after, with 12,120 starting in 2013, increasing to 13,870 in 2015 (14%). In Hackney, the percentage of children aged 10 years and older entering care increased by 8% between 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2015.
- 3.4 In 2015, 52,050 (75%) of the 69,540 children looked after nationally at 31 March, were cared for in a foster placement. This represents an increase of 8% since 2011. The number of children placed with their parents has also risen in 2015; this is a reversal of previous downward trends. The number of children placed for adoption at 31 March 2015 had fallen for the first time since 2011, a trend which has also been reflected locally.
- 3.5 Data on care leavers shows that nationally, in 2015, 21,010 (81%) former care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 were in accommodation classed as suitable; a further 1,840 (7%) were in accommodation judged to be unsuitable. In Hackney, 89% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation and 43% were living within the borough.
- 3.6 Nationally, of the 3,230 children who ceased to be looked after in a foster placement on their 18th birthday during the year ending 31 March 2015, who were eligible for care leaver support, 1,560 (48%) remained with their former foster carers three months

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/464756/SFR34\\_2015\\_Text.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464756/SFR34_2015_Text.pdf)

after their 18th birthday<sup>6</sup>. This information is not comparable with figures for 18 year olds published in last year's Statistical First Release due to changes to methodology.

3.7 Taking into consideration the rise in the looked after children and care leaver population, the availability of sufficient placements remains a national issue, especially given the significant challenges around the recruitment and retention of foster carers. In June 2015, The Fostering Network estimated that UK fostering services needed to recruit a further 8,370 foster families within the year to meet the rising demand<sup>7</sup>.

3.8 National developments that have informed this strategy include:

- The Southwark Judgement (2011) which led to the acceptance of young people aged 16 and 17 with housing needs as being looked after if they chose to be so. This has contributed to a significant increase both nationally and locally in young people aged 16 and 17 entering care since 2010/11.
- Following the implementation of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act which came into force on 3 December 2012, children on remand are now considered to be 'looked after'. In addition to the financial impact on councils, there is a need to ensure there are sufficient placements available for these vulnerable, and often high risk young people who are eligible for leaving care services.
- In May 2013, the government launched guidance<sup>8</sup> on 'staying put' and a new duty was imposed (in part 5 Welfare of Children (98) of the Children and Families Act 2014) which requires local authorities in England to facilitate, monitor and support staying put arrangements for fostered young people until they reach the age of 21, where this is what they and their foster carers want, unless the local authority consider that the staying put arrangement is not consistent with the welfare of the young person.
- The Government's focus on care leavers was evidenced by the cross-departmental 'Care Leaver Strategy', published in October 2013<sup>9</sup>. One of the core aims of the strategy was to ensure that support for care leavers is embedded in all relevant departmental policies. The Government reaffirmed their ongoing commitment to improving the day to day experiences of young people leaving care in a progress review of the strategy in October 2014<sup>10</sup>.
- The Children and Families Act 2014 came into force in April 2014 and covers a range of areas. Its provisions on adoption complement the Family Justice Review and are designed to increase the number of children placed in adoptive families and also the speed within which this achieved. The Coalition Government outlined a series of measures all intended to transform the current system including: implementing the introduction of a 26 week time limit for care proceedings; a shorter adopters' assessment period; and a concurrent planning requirement. These reforms will require significant service reshaping by all local authorities.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/464756/SFR34\\_2015\\_Text.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464756/SFR34_2015_Text.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/news/2015/thousands-new-foster-families-needed-in-2015>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/201015/Staying\\_Put\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/201015/Staying_Put_Guidance.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/266484/Care\\_Leaver\\_Strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266484/Care_Leaver_Strategy.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/368235/Care\\_Leavers\\_Strategy\\_update.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368235/Care_Leavers_Strategy_update.pdf)

- There has been an increased understanding of the responses necessary to meet the needs of complex vulnerable adolescents including the Government focus on child sexual exploitation<sup>11</sup> and children that go missing from home and care. New statutory guidance on missing children was issued in January 2014<sup>12</sup> and there were revisions to the Ofsted single inspection framework which now contains more explicit performance measures in relation to children who go missing from home and care.
- Amendments to the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010<sup>13</sup> came into effect in January 2014 and introduced a new definition of ‘at a distance’ – this now covers a placement outside of both the local authority area and any adjoining local authority which poses a challenge to local authorities in terms of ensuring the availability of sufficient placements.
- The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015<sup>14</sup> were published on 4 March 2015 and came into effect on 1 April 2015. The regulations introduced a definition of long-term fostering as an arrangement made by the responsible authority for the child to be placed with a foster carer where: the child’s plan for permanence is foster care; the foster carer has agreed to act as the child’s foster parent until the child ceases to be looked after; and the responsible authority has confirmed the nature of the arrangement to the foster carer, parent and child, and any reference to the responsible authority placing the child in such a placement includes, where the child is already placed with the foster carer, leaving the child with the foster carer in a long-term foster placement.
- Nationally, the number of looked after unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) decreased from just under 4,000 at 31 March 2009 to around 2000 at 31 March 2013 but has been increasing steadily since. At 31 March 2015, there were 2630 looked after UASC nationally. The rise in numbers of UASC has, and may continue to have a direct impact on the rising number of looked after children both nationally and locally. Ensuring access to sufficient accommodation for this vulnerable group of children needs to be a key consideration moving forwards<sup>15</sup>.

### *Local Context*

3.9 Hackney is a densely populated inner London borough with 263,200 residents and a relatively young population. The highest proportion (44,700 children and young people) are aged 5-19 years old and the number of children and young people is forecast to rise by 7% over the next five years<sup>16</sup> and is likely to exceed 300,000 by 2027.

<sup>11</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/408604/2903652\\_RotherhamResponse\\_acc2.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408604/2903652_RotherhamResponse_acc2.pdf)

<sup>12</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/307867/Statutory\\_Guidance\\_-\\_Missing\\_from\\_care\\_3.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3.pdf)

<sup>13</sup><https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/care%20planning%20placements%20and%20case%20review%20regulations%20england%202010.pdf>

<sup>14</sup>[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/495/pdfs/uksi\\_20150495\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/495/pdfs/uksi_20150495_en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/464756/SFR34\\_2015\\_Text.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464756/SFR34_2015_Text.pdf)

<sup>16</sup>Information provided by Hackney Public Health Service.

- 3.10 One of the contributing factors to the high number of 5 – 19 year olds is the high birth rate in the Charedi (Orthodox Jewish) community where more than half of the population are under 16 years of age. Local calculations suggest that one in five of Hackney's young people belong to the Charedi community<sup>17</sup>.
- 3.11 Hackney is ethnically diverse with fewer than 40% of 5-19 year olds identifying as White. After White British (27%), the next most common specific ethnic group in Hackney's children and young people is Black African (16%). One in five of Hackney's children and young people (aged 3-15) report that English is an additional language to them, and Turkish is the most common first language after English. However, three quarters of children who have English as an additional language are still reported to speak English well or very well.
- 3.12 Hackney is the 11<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority<sup>18</sup> in England (of 326 local authorities). One quarter of all people live in houses classified as overcrowded which is greater than the London average. The rate of family homelessness is increasing faster in Hackney than across London or England and now stands at 6.5 homeless families per 1,000 households.
- 3.13 The Child Wellbeing Index covers a range of domains, including deprivation. The index was last produced in 2009 (drawing on data from 2005) and it ranked Hackney as 352<sup>nd</sup> with only two local authorities scoring lower. While Hackney fared better in education, the environment and health and disability, it performed worst at material wellbeing, housing, crime and Children in Need.
- 3.14 While the proportion of children living in poverty has fallen from 49% to 30% (2007 to 2012), this is still above the London average of 24% and almost two-thirds greater than the national rate of 19%. This places Hackney 10<sup>th</sup> in the ranking of local authorities with the highest proportion of children living in income deprivation.
- 3.15 The correlation between child poverty, poor outcomes and children coming into care is well established and whilst Hackney continue to have lower numbers of children in care per 10,000 population under age 18 than our statistical neighbours (other local authorities with similar profiles), it is expected that as a result of national policy changes and increased financial pressures on families, the number of children in care may continue to increase and may not be totally offset by the range of preventative services.
- 3.16 There are a range of youth justice prevention and diversion services in place to support children and young people in Hackney at risk of, or involved in offending, to reach their full potential through engagement in a range of partnership activities that promote positive experiences in learning and strengthen family and community relationships.

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<sup>18</sup> Using the rank of the extent summary measure of deprivation

3.17 Additionally, Young Hackney supports children and young people aged 6 – 19 years old (and up to 25 if the young person has a special educational need or disability) through the provision of universal services such as youth clubs and sports and citizenship activities, as well as offering help for children and young people who need additional support. This early help offer is a fundamental part of the CYPS approach in preventing problems from escalating to the point where statutory intervention (e.g. social work) is required.

3.18 To support children and families to remain together, we have a range of family support services and clinical interventions which provide a high quality family support offer for families in Hackney. In addition to preventative services, there are a wide range of services in place to ensure that where children come into and leave care, they are fully supported.

The Early Help, Prevention and Family Support Services offered in Hackney include:

- Family Network Meetings (FNMs) aim to rapidly mobilise existing support networks in families to prevent family breakdown and enable children to remain living within their family networks by offering a flexible and swift response. FNMs are offered to all young people preparing to exit custody which has impacted on maximising family engagement ahead of release and reducing homelessness;
- *The Family Learning Intervention Programme (FLIP)* aims to deliver a tailored programme of interventions to enable young people to be cared for within families where this can be safely achieved, whether this is at home or in care. Interventions to be delivered through FLIP will include providing a tailored offer for young people and a potential foster carer to prepare the young person for a move into a stable foster placement, and empowering foster carers with the knowledge and skills needed to support a particular young person. In addition, the FLIP service will support young people and their existing foster carer where there is a risk of placement breakdown;
- A range of short and long-term therapeutic clinical interventions including attachment-focussed therapies, multi-family group therapy, and support to looked after children and care leavers;
- The Young Hackney offer of universal support which includes: support with employment and education; a range of participation programmes (including Youth Parliament); and sports and coaching opportunities; and
- Access to a Children’s Rights Officer, an Independent Visitors scheme, Hackney Gets Heard (Children in Care Council), and a comprehensive Leaving Care Service.

## **4. Profile of Looked after Children and Care Leavers in Hackney**

### *Number of children looked after*

4.1 At 31 March 2015 Hackney was responsible for looking after 345 children and young people, an increase of 28% compared to the same time in 2011. There has been a gradual increase in the number of looked after children from 320 in 2012 to 345 in 2015.

Key to understanding this rise is consideration of the profile of looked after children, including the age of children entering care and ages and reasons for leaving care.

Children looked after per 10,000 population aged under 18 at 31 March

	2013	2014	2015
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>59</b>
Statistical neighbour average	72	71	65

**Number of looked after children at 31 March**

	2013	2014	2015
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>345</b>
Statistical neighbour average	425	405	394

### *Age range of LAC*

4.2 The data below shows that a high percentage of children entering care in 2015 were 14 years of age and over (42%). This age group are associated with having the most complex needs. This significant factor will be taken into consideration when reviewing Hackney's current placement mix and placement commissioning requirements moving forwards. The number of over 16's and the percentage of this age group within the total number of children entering care accounts for a large proportion of the new admissions to care each year. There was a significant increase from 5 young people aged 16 and over entering care in 2010/11 (5% of the total number entering care), to the current position of 27%, which is largely attributable to the acceptance of young people with housing needs as being looked after (as per the Southwark Judgement) and the correlation with an increase in the use of Section 20 (Children Act 1989) accommodation. The increase in the number of young people over 16 entering care also has an impact on the numbers of care leavers when this cohort turn 18.

**Age breakdown of children entering care during the year ending 31 March, by age on starting**

Age	2013		2014		2015	
under 1 yr	24	14%	17	10%	25	15%
1 year	6	3%	6	4%	4	2%
2 year	10	6%	3	2%	6	4%
3 year	6	3%	3	2%	5	3%
4 year	5	3%	3	2%	3	2%
5 year	5	3%	6	4%	4	2%

6 year	6	3%	5	3%	2	1%
7 year	7	4%	7	4%	5	3%
8 year	4	2%	5	3%	2	1%
9 year	5	3%	8	5%	3	2%
10 year	6	3%	8	5%	8	5%
11 year	8	5%	5	3%	9	6%
12 year	6	3%	10	6%	6	4%
13 year	6	3%	6	4%	10	6%
14 year	11	6%	14	9%	11	7%
15 year	10	6%	15	9%	15	9%
16 year	28	16%	28	17%	26	16%
17 year	24	14%	14	9%	18	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>		<b>163</b>		<b>162</b>	
<b>Total statistical neighbour average</b>	<b>213</b>		<b>216</b>		<b>214</b>	

4.3 There has also been a recent trend in unaccompanied asylum seeking males aged 17 years presenting for services. In 2014/2015, 15 young people claiming to be unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) presented to Hackney CYPS or were dispersed for assessment by the Home Office rota held by the London Borough of Croydon. Of these, 13 were young men and most of these young people were aged between 16-18 years. At 31 March 2015, there were 15 looked after children recorded as UASC.

4.4 Since December 2012, all young people remanded to custody automatically become looked after children, and this has also had an impact on the number of young people entering care, particularly in the older age range. At 31 March 2015, 11 young people were looked after by virtue of remand.

4.5 The table below shows an age breakdown of the total number of looked after children at year end which also illustrates the impact of the number of 14 year olds and over on the total number of looked after children between 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2015 with this group accounting for 47% of all looked after children at year end.

**Age breakdown of total number of looked after children, at year ending 31 March**

Age	31 March 2013	31 March 2014	31 March 2015
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under 1 yr	18	6%	11	3%	17	5%
1 year	11	3%	11	3%	9	3%
2 year	13	4%	9	3%	10	3%
3 year	16	5%	9	3%	11	3%
4 year	6	2%	9	3%	8	2%
5 year	10	3%	9	3%	13	4%
6 year	11	3%	9	3%	6	2%
7 year	14	4%	10	3%	10	3%
8 year	12	4%	14	4%	10	3%
9 year	12	4%	17	5%	13	4%
10 year	9	3%	15	5%	19	6%
11 year	17	5%	14	4%	19	6%
12 year	17	5%	19	6%	16	5%
13 year	23	7%	22	7%	25	7%
14 year	21	7%	29	9%	26	8%
15 year	32	10%	25	8%	37	11%
16 year	39	12%	38	12%	33	10%
17 year	39	12%	59	18%	63	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>		<b>329</b>		<b>345</b>	
<b>Total statistical neighbour average</b>	<b>433</b>		<b>428</b>		<b>394</b>	

#### *Time in care and reasons for leaving*

4.6 The largest proportion of looked after children (31%) are in care for less than 1 year and this has remained consistent for the last 3 years. There has been an increase in the numbers looked after for 2 to 5 years between 2013 (16%) to 2015 (30%) whilst a steady decline of those looked after for 5 to 7 years over the same time period.

#### **Length of time Looked After (as at 31 March 2015)**

<b>Length of time in years (range)</b>	<b>Total number (2013)</b>	<b>Total number (2014)</b>	<b>Total number (2015)</b>

less than 1 yr	111	35%	106	32%	108	31%
1 < 2 years	66	21%	64	19%	59	17%
2 < 5 years	53	16%	78	24%	104	30%
5 < 7 years	25	8%	15	4%	16	5%
7 < 10 years	39	12%	45	14%	33	10%
10 < 16 years	22	7%	19	6%	22	6%
16+ yrs	4	1%	2	1%	3	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>320</b>		<b>329</b>		<b>345</b>	

- 4.7 A total of 161 children left care in 2014/15. Of these, 61 (38%) left care due to turning 18 and 53 (33%) returned home to live with parents, relatives or another person with parental responsibility. Within the year, 24 children and young people became subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) compared to 20 children and young people the previous year, a rise of 20%. Ten of the SGOs were granted to connected person carers. Nine Hackney children were adopted; a decrease from the 15 children adopted in 2013/14.
- 4.8 As at 31 March 2015, 14 children were placed with their adoptive family but an adoption order had not yet been granted. 11 children had a formal plan for adoption but had not yet been placed with an adoptive family. 8 children had potential plans for adoption whilst also having other parallel plans for permanency.
- 4.9 The increase in SGOs and the decline in adoptions align with national and regional trends which have been captured through analysis of the Adoption Leadership Board quarterly data returns.

### *Diversity of LAC*

#### **Ethnicity breakdown of looked after children, at 31 March 2015**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2014 statistical neighbour average</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Hackney 2011 census return</b>
White	100 (30%)	150 (37%)	97 (28%)	54.7%
Black or Black British	145 (43%)	146 (36%)	155 (45%)	23.1%
Asian or Asian British	15 (4%)	25 (6%)	19 (6%)	10.5%
Mixed	65 (19%)	73 (18%)	65 (19%)	6.4%
Other ethnic groups	10 (2%)	31 (8%)	8 (2%)	5.3%

Other (information refused or not yet obtained)	2 (0%)	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>345</b>	

\* Total under 18 population ethnicity breakdown from Hackney 2011 census return

- 4.10 When compared to the percentage ethnicity breakdown of the Hackney population taken from the 2011 census, there is clear disproportionality in the ethnic representation of the looked after children population compared to the general population. The Census return shows that white ethnicity makes up the highest proportion (55%) of Hackney's under 18 population with black/black British making up 23% (the second highest). When compared against the 2015 DfE SSDA903 data returns for children in care, 45% of looked after children were of black/black British ethnicity (the highest proportion), with the second highest proportion (28%) being of white ethnicity. This places particular importance on the role of placement matching for children and an emphasis on meeting children's cultural needs.
- 4.11 Much research has been undertaken about disproportionality in the ethnicity of looked after children in the care system in England compared to the general population and Hackney's looked after population follows the national pattern, but also has under-representation of children from white backgrounds.
- 4.12 There is a particularly low representation of children in care (5) from the Charedi Jewish community who make up approximately 20% of the borough's under 18 population overall and are classified as 'white'.

#### *Children and young people with disabilities and special educational needs*

- 4.13 The table below contains data on children and young people with 'Statements or Education, Health and Care Plans'. This data was provided by Hackney's Virtual School and is recorded in line with the requirements as set out in Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, '*Children and Young People in England with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities*'<sup>19</sup>.
- 4.14 The data shows that 24% of all looked after children are recorded as having a disability. In September 2015 the decision was taken to include children and young people with Statements or Education, Health and Care Plans where Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) is the primary need. This comes under the category of behavioral needs which is by far the largest group of children with an identified additional need at (13%).
- 4.15 The second highest category of disability is 'learning difficulties', with 5% of children and young people recorded under this category. To ensure the support offered to disabled children and young people remains of a high standard, Hackney's Disabled Children's Service has been fully integrated into the Special Educational Needs Service within the Hackney Learning Trust to advance the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms.

<sup>19</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

## Disabilities among looked after children as at 31<sup>st</sup> March

Type of primary disability	Total number (2013)	Total number (2014)	Total number (2015)
Autistic Disorder	4	4	8
Mobility	2	2	2
Behavioural	1	1	45
Communication	0	0	10
Other (DDA)	1	1	2
Incontinence	1	0	0
Learning Difficulties	1	1	17
Visual	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Total number of looked after children</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>345</b>

### Care Leavers

4.16 At March 31 2015, Hackney were responsible for supporting 144 care leavers, a very slight increase of one young person since last year. When looking at the profile of care leavers, the gender split is 53% male and 47% female. The ethnicity of care leavers is reflective of the looked after children profile with the highest proportion being of Black/Black British ethnicity and the second highest ethnic group being White. Within the current care leaver population, 5% are recorded to have a disability with the category of mobility containing the highest proportion of young people.

### Ethnicity breakdown of care leavers at 31 March

Ethnicity	2013/14	2014/15
Asian / Asian British	4 (3%)	3 (2%)
Black / Black British	66 (46%)	64 (45%)
Mixed	17 (12%)	13 (9%)
Other	7 (5%)	9 (6%)
White	49 (34%)	55 (38%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>144</b>

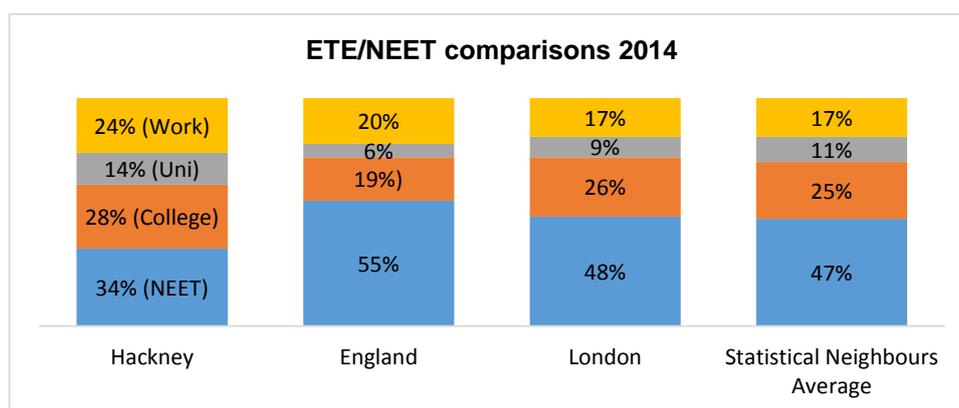
**Disabilities amongst care leavers at 31 March**

Disability	2013-14	2014-15
Behaviour	1 (14%)	1 (14%)
Learning Disability	1 (14%)	2 (29%)
Mobility	4 (56%)	3 (43%)
Vision	1 (14%)	1 (14%)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

*Education, employment and training*

4.17 The Virtual School ensures that young people who leave statutory care at the age of 18 receive good quality support and advice to ensure that they can continue with their education and training.

4.18 The graph below shows comparator data for all young people now aged 19, 20 and 21 who were looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday including some time after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday year ending 31 March 2014.



4.19 Hackney compares very favourably with the national picture with 34% of care leavers not in education, employment or training, compared with 55% of care leavers nationally. Hackney had more than twice the number of young people at university (14%) than the national average (6%) and is above the London (9%) and statistical neighbour averages (11%).

4.20 In summer 2015, the percentage of Hackney care leavers aged 18 and above engaged in education and training was 74%. This is well above the national average for care leavers. 35 young people were attending university which was 17% of the total cohort. This is almost three times the national average which is 6%.

## 5. Current Placement Mix

Number of looked after children by placement type, as at 31 March 2015

Placement type	Number of looked after children
Foster placement	235 (69%)
Connected Person Placement	29 (8%)
Placed for adoption	14 (4%)
Placement with parents	8 (2%)
Residential (children's homes)	11 (3%)
Secure unit	0 (0%)
Semi-independent	33 (10%)
Youth Offender Institution*	10 (3%)
Family Centre or Parent and Child Placement	4 (1%)
Residential school	1 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>

### *In-house fostering*

- 5.1 At 31 March 2015, there were 84 approved mainstream fostering households in Hackney (with a maximum capacity for approximately 138 placements) with 80 children in placement. Additionally 29 children and young people were placed with family and friends carers at 31 March 2015.
- 5.2 In April 2014, Hackney introduced a new fostering fees and allowances structure. The levels (1 – 3) are linked to competency and training undertaken and are reviewed and agreed annually at foster carer reviews. Level 1 is the status that most newly approved carers commence on, however, should the carer have previous experience, they may be considered as a Level 2 or 3 carer. The majority of our carers are Level 2, which is achieved within a carer's second or third year of fostering and is reached through a combination of experience and training undertaken. Level 3 carers must demonstrate an understanding child development and behavioural issues and undertake accredited training in a relevant area of child studies. At 31 March 2015, we had 5 Level 3 carers who are expected to provide placements for our most vulnerable children and young people.
- 5.3 Hackney has 8 households which exclusively provide short breaks and 8 mainstream households that also provide respite care. Over the year, in-house respite care has

been accessed 31 times (by 17 children) and in-house short break provision has been accessed 82 times (by 9 children).

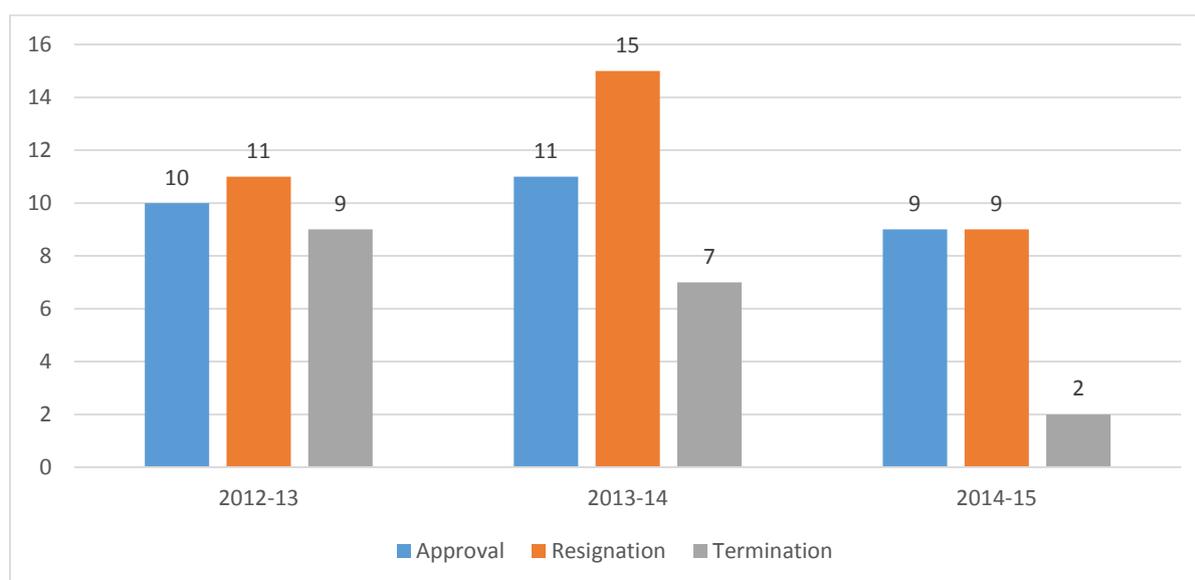
5.4 The average vacancy rate for mainstream fostering households throughout the year was 15% which equates to 13 fostering households having vacancies at any one time.

5.5 The profile of Hackney foster carers (Appendix B) is well aligned with our looked after children profile in relation to ethnicity and religion. The majority of our carers are Christian (45%), the second highest percentage are agnostic (24%) and the third are of the Islam faith (9%). Ethnically, the highest percentage of our carers are Black or Black British (57%), with the second highest being mixed White (24%). The age of our foster carers varies from 27 to 80 years old, with the highest percentage of carers being between the ages of 41 – 60 (67%).

5.6 In 2014/15, 9 new fostering households were approved, the same number as in the previous year, however 11 households ceased to foster (through resignation or termination) which resulted in a net loss of 2 fostering households. The number ceasing to foster each year since 2013 has been higher than the number of approvals.

5.7 Where possible and in the child's best interests, 'connected person' placements will be sought for children and young people. Connected person placements enable children and young people to be cared for by a familiar person/s which can often be a good choice for the child and support placement stability. Connected person carers will be approved at the Fostering Panel and will receive the same level of training and support as mainstream foster carers. Hackney are looking to increase the number of connected person placements over time. Between 31 March 2014 and 31 March 2015, 12 connected person carers were approved for a total of 16 children and young people.

**Approvals, resignations and terminations of foster carers at 31 March**



5.8 Reasons cited for resignations include: three carers offering permanence through adoption and special guardianship; carers relocating; changes in personal circumstances and difficulties balancing work with fostering. Reasons for terminations

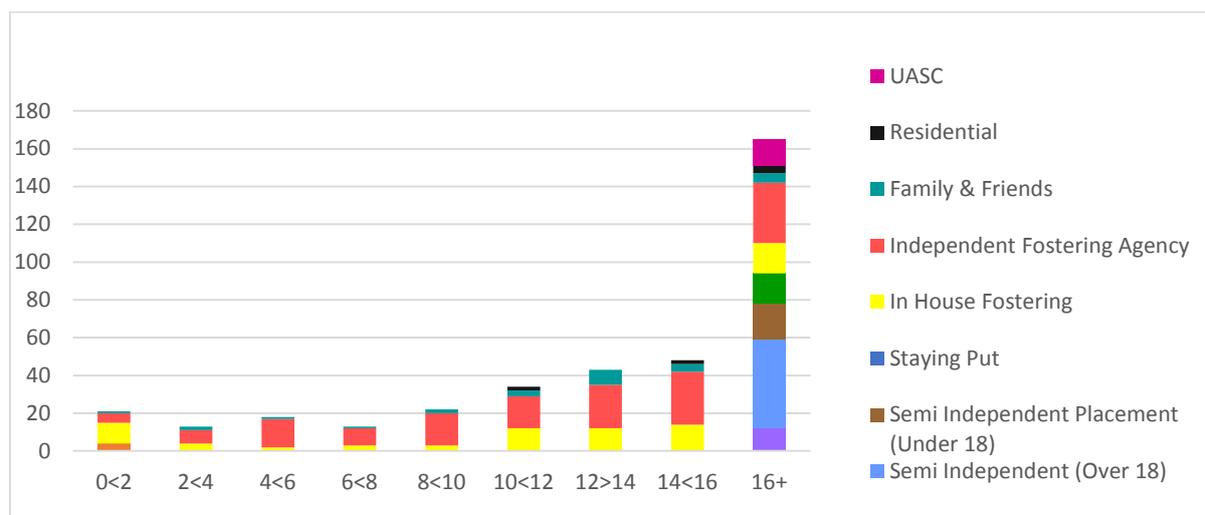
have included: outcomes of allegations; change in living circumstances that do not align with policy; and lack of engagement with the service.

- 5.9 Nationally, it has been reported that approximately 12% of foster carers leave their service per year for a number of reasons and this is a factor that has been considered in our recruitment and retention strategy.
- 5.10 Hackney is committed to maximising the use of in-house foster carers as they provide placements that are significantly lower in cost compared to those provided by Independent Fostering Agencies, this includes a commitment to work with existing foster carers to develop capacity around emergency 'out of hours' placements.
- 5.11 Controlling the overall cost of care placements enables better investment in early help and prevention services and services that can support placement stability.
- 5.12 Hackney has set a target to recruit 15 – 20 new mainstream fostering households per year over the next three years and has developed a range of initiatives to support increased recruitment and retention including: the development of a fostering marketing post; a financial recruitment incentive for staff and foster carers; enhanced training opportunities; and a financial reward scheme.
- 5.13 As part of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium Hackney works with member Boroughs to recruit foster carers who can provide more specialist placements. Hackney also has access to a shared pool of available in-house carers from the consortium boroughs. This pooling of spare capacity constitutes efficiency savings across all member boroughs.
- 5.14 Hackney's foster carers have benefited from our inclusion in the 'Head Heart Hands' social pedagogy programme. Social pedagogy is an academic discipline that draws on core theories from education, sociology, psychology and philosophy. It is concerned with wellbeing, learning and growth. This was a 3 year project to evaluate the impact of a social pedagogic approach to foster care and was run in conjunction with the Fostering Network and five other sites across the country and ended in December 2015, but much work has taken place to ensure social pedagogic developments in Hackney are sustained beyond this date, including plans to run accredited in-house training for those foster carers who were not part of the initial programme, to ensure all our in-house foster carers are trained in social pedagogic principles.

#### *Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)*

- 5.15 In common with other London local authorities, Hackney continues to be reliant on IFAs to provide services for many of its looked after children.

## Headcount by placement and age at year ending 31 March 2015



5.16 At 31 March 2015, 155 children were in fostering placements provided by IFAs. From the graph above, it can be seen that IFA placements are being used across all age ranges, although slightly less in the 0 – 4 year old category.

5.17 IFAs are used for various reasons including: a decrease in numbers of in-house carers since 2012/13; where there is a need to place a child out of borough due to high risks; and where in-house provision cannot accommodate emergency requests.

5.18 The fostering recruitment and retention strategy sets out how the service aims to increase recruitment to meet these areas of need in-house (for example, working with existing foster carers and recruiting new foster carers to develop in-house capacity for the provision of emergency 'out of hours' placements), however, as with other London boroughs, this remains an area of considerable challenge and we will need to work with the IFA market to ensure there is sufficient choice and quality of placements to meet the needs of our children and young people as it is expected our looked after children population will continue to rise.

5.19 To supplement in-house fostering provision Hackney subscribes to a Pan London select list of Independent Fostering Agencies as well a sub-regional select list which Hackney manages with other members of the North London Children's Efficiency Programme. Both select lists offer a wide choice of service provision and, in contrast to a locally managed procurement arrangement, this regional and sub-regional arrangement enables stronger negotiations resulting in competitive placement fees as well as shared quality assurance arrangements.

### *Residential Provision*

5.20 Hackney has a relatively small number of children in residential placements (children's homes), with approximately 15 children living in residential placements at any one time in 2014/15 (13 children were in residential placements at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015).

- 5.21 The use of residential placements is partially linked to the number of older young people coming into care, some with very concerning behaviour who struggle to adapt to living in an alternative family environment and for whom it is very difficult to find the right accommodation. Residential placements are also used for younger children where they have very complex emotional and behavioural needs.
- 5.22 Hackney has a lower proportion of young people in residential care than the national average due to a deliberate strategy to only use residential care where we cannot offer a placement in a family setting.
- 5.23 Hackney aims to only place children and young people in residential provisions that have been graded as 'good' or "outstanding" by Ofsted.
- 5.24 Hackney aims for most children and young people to live in a family setting and will only make a placement in a children's home or residential school where this is in the child's best interest. Placements are made in a residential setting for children and young people who require a consistent structure and routine, emotional containment and planned effective responses to their more complex behaviours and emotions.
- 5.25 Where a residential placement is considered the 'best fit' for a young person, the service aims to move them on as soon as is viable and when it is in the child's interests to do so, through careful care planning with a long-term ambition for family life (at home or within a foster placement) or supported semi-independent living. Robust and focussed plans to achieve the exit strategy for children in residential care are challenged and tracked through the Care Planning Panel.
- 5.26 Children and young people with the most complex needs are placed in provisions with integrated therapeutic approaches and interventions. Children and young people whose educational needs cannot be met in a mainstream provision are usually placed in residential schools.
- 5.27 Hackney does not have any in-house residential care provision; all placements are externally commissioned and the use of residential care remains an area of challenge, with costs exceeding the available budget year on year. The introduction of the living wage from April 2016 will impact on the overall cost of residential care placements over the next few years as many providers will struggle to absorb these costs within their own budgets. However, management of some of these placements has been assisted considerably by the joint funding arrangements in place for children and young people with special educational needs (for this cohort of children, placements are jointly funded by Children's Social Care and Hackney Learning Trust).
- 5.28 The decision to contribute to the funding of residential placements is ratified at the Complex Needs Panel and there is a joint approach to the placement commissioning process with the Placement Management Unit and Hackney Learning Trust working together to ensure that the most appropriate placements are identified that will meet both the care and educational needs of these children and young people.

- 5.29 However, for children and young people with identified health needs who are placed in residential care provisions there is currently no agreement in place for financial contributions from Health and these additional costs are currently met by Children's Social Care. This is an issue that will need to be addressed in order to ensure there is ownership across all services for the care of looked after children with the most complex and challenging needs.
- 5.30 The quality assurance and contract management of residential care is managed within the Placement Management Unit and London Councils (for provisions that contracted through the London Care Placements Select List).
- 5.31 With the NLCEP boroughs, Hackney continues to look for ways to innovate and re-design service delivery to achieve higher quality, improved outcomes and better value for money. In relation to the delivery of residential care provision, Hackney has, as part of the NLCEP, submitted successful bids to the DfE Innovation Fund. The funds have been used to develop residential care provisions that meet the increasing demand for specialist services for children and young people on the edge of care or who are at risk of child sexual exploitation

#### *Secure Accommodation*

- 5.32 In 2014/15, two young people were placed in secure accommodation on welfare grounds, both of whom had very complex needs and were placed in secure accommodation for their own safety and to reduce the risk of them absconding. The service has been affected by the national shortage of sufficient secure accommodation options, having failed to source provision on a number of occasions when the need for this was identified. On several occasions this has led to young people remaining in police cells overnight post-charge. This issue has been raised at a national level.

#### *Semi-Independent Accommodation*

- 5.33 At 31 March 2015, 30 looked after young people and 130 care leavers were living in semi-independent accommodation. Housing continues to be a significant issue for young people who are leaving or have left care, as access to social housing stock is limited and finding affordable rental accommodation on the open market is challenging for many young people.
- 5.34 Semi-independent accommodation placements are commissioned from a combination of block contracts and spot purchasing. The block contracts are with social housing landlords who provide 147 in-borough semi-independent units for young people aged 16-24; these units are accessed by both Housing and CSC. The contract management and quality assurance responsibility for the block contract sits with Adults Services.
- 5.35 Additional placements are spot purchased from private sector providers for a variety of reasons; when it is not safe for a young person to be placed in-borough, when there are no available units within the block contract or when a young person's needs are too complex or specialist to be managed by the block contract. Placements are also

spot purchased when it is not appropriate for 16/17 year olds to live alongside older young people or in mixed gender accommodation.

- 5.36 Due to the varying needs of young people, there is currently an over-dependency on spot purchasing which makes it difficult to manage the market to ensure security of supply at the right time, right price and the right quality. Ensuring consistency in quality and service delivery amongst all semi-independent providers is particularly challenging because, unlike other placements such as foster care and residential children’s homes, semi-independent accommodation is not regulated under the Care Standards Act 2000 and as a result is not inspected by Ofsted.
- 5.37 There is an increasing demand for semi-independent accommodation as Hackney’s LAC population get older and begin leaving care. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 there were 96 16/17 year olds looked after, compared to 70 on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. Additionally, the number of young people coming into care at the age of 16/17 has averaged at 47 per year over the last 3 years; with most preferring to be placed in semi-independent accommodation instead of foster care.
- 5.38 Placements for looked after children and care leavers remain a high spend area therefore, Hackney continues to look for ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of placements to ensure they are achieving the best outcomes for children and young people. A multi-supplier framework agreement will be implemented by the end of 16/17; it is hoped that this procurement method will ensure all providers of semi-independent accommodation deliver their services according to a high standard thus achieving value for money.
- 5.39 CSC will continue to use the social housing block contracts and will work with commissioners from Adults Services to ensure current and future contracts are aligned with the standards set out in the new framework agreement.

*Staying Put*

- 5.40 As at 31 March 2015, 14 young people were living in ‘staying put’ arrangements, a 56% increase compared to 9 young people at the end of March 2014. An age breakdown of these young people is included below.

<b>Age (years)</b>	<b>Number of young people in Staying Put arrangements (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015)</b>
18	7
19	4
20	3
21	0

<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>
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### *Parent and Child Placements*

- 5.41 Hackney commissions a small number of parent and child foster placements and placements in family residential assessment centres for parents who need extra support to care for their children or where there is a need for an assessment of their ability to safely care for their child. Most of these placements are court directed or commissioned as part of the pre-proceedings process; it is therefore difficult to predict future demand, however, whilst these placements remain comparatively smaller in number, there is a notable increase in demand.
- 5.42 Due to the specialist nature of these placements most have not come from Hackney's in-house provision or within the NLAFC pool of foster carers. When commissioned externally in 15/16, the weekly cost of these placements were up to £1,800 a parent and child foster placement and £3,000 for a family residential assessment centre placement. To control the impact on the placement commissioning budget, there is a need to recruit and develop more in-house foster carers who can offer lower cost parent and child places.

### *Adoption and Permanence*

- 5.43 Wherever permanence is decided to be in the best interests of a child or young person the following permanence options can be considered: adoption; Special Guardianship Orders; Child Arrangement Orders; and long-term fostering. Where possible, and in the best interests of the child, Hackney endeavour to support family arrangements where parental responsibility can be shared. Where this is not suitable and will not meet the child's needs, adoption may be proposed as the best permanence option for the child.
- 5.44 Between 31 March 2014 and 31 March 2015, 24 Hackney children left care through Special Guardianship Orders being granted (10 of the SGOs were granted to 'connected person' carers), 15 children were matched with long-term foster carers through Care Planning Panel and 9 children were adopted.
- 5.45 To support adopters and special guardians, a comprehensive package of post permanency support is available through Hackney's Post Permanence Service. Further support and training is accessible through the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium.
- 5.46 Ten adoptive families were recruited in 2014/15. Recruiting the right adopters for children remains a challenge for all local authorities and the situation in Hackney is no different. Considerable efforts have been made to attract prospective adopters to Hackney through advertising/marketing, increased activity through the consortium, and building partnerships with private organisations. Our profiles of children are carefully designed, up to date and use good quality DVDs. Responses to requests for

information about children are made in a timely way, and the matching process is reviewed to be the most effective for each individual child.

5.47 Hackney is a member of the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington) which benefits from joint recruitment of adopters with increased capacity for targeted recruitment for specific children, centralised training for staff, adopters and foster carers and joint commissioning of services which is effective and provides financial savings for all boroughs.

### *Placement Location*

#### **Placement location of looked after children, as at 31 March 2015**

<b>Placement location</b>	<b>Number of looked after children</b>
Hackney	67 (19%)
Neighbouring local authority	81 (23%)
Non Neighbouring London Local Authority	116 (34%)
Neighbouring County Local Authority	55 (16%)
Non Neighbouring Local Authority	26 (8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>

5.48 Of the 345 children looked after by Hackney at 31 March 2015, 67 (19%) were placed in Hackney, this can be broken down into the following placements.

Parents or other person with parental responsibility	6 (9%)
Own Provision by LA	49 (73%)
Private provision	12 (18%)

5.49 There were 81 children (23%) placed in neighbouring local authorities at 31 March 2015 (Waltham Forest, Newham, Haringey, Islington, Tower Hamlets or City) and 116 (34%) children were placed within non-neighbouring London boroughs. In total, 264 (76%) of our children and young people were placed within London, however, when applying the government definition of distant placements (children and young people placed in non-neighbouring local authorities), 197 (58%) of our children and young people are considered to be placed at a distance.

5.50 Amendments to the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010<sup>20</sup> came into effect in January 2014 and introduced a new definition of 'at a distance' which covers placements outside of both the local authority area and any adjoining local authority.

<sup>20</sup><https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/care%20planning%20placements%20and%20case%20review%20regulations%20england%202010.pdf>

5.51 In London this means that a placement in a local authority that is not far in distance from Hackney and is easy to travel to, may now be classified as ‘at a distance’ because it is in a non-neighbouring authority. Under this definition, the majority of our looked after children are classified as being ‘at a distance’. They are mostly placed in other London local authorities or local authorities adjoining London, such as Essex, Kent and Hertfordshire. These figures are consistent with other London boroughs.

5.52 The current placement location profile of Hackney’s looked after children has been a key consideration in developing this strategy and future plans regarding commissioning semi-independent accommodation. It has also influenced the current foster carer recruitment drive that aims to recruit more in-house foster carers in Hackney and the surrounding area. There will always be situations where it is appropriate and necessary to place some looked after children outside of their local area and potentially at a distance due to safeguarding considerations, for example related to gang involvement, child sexual exploitation or risks from family members. The range of placement options available will continue to be developed to ensure we can best match a child’s needs to the most appropriate placement.

**Placement Stability**

5.53 Proper assessment of a child’s needs and a sufficient choice of placements to meet the varied and specific needs of different children are essential if stable placements are to be achieved. Inappropriate placements tend to break down and lead to frequent moves. In the table below, a lower score is indicative of good performance. Performance against this indicator is lower than previous years and comparable with the national average. The indicator is also favourable when compared to statistical neighbours, however, strengthening placement stability remains a core focus for Hackney.

**% of looked after children with three or more placements in one year**

	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Statistical neighbours	12%	14%	10%
England	11%	11%	10%

5.34 The percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in one year during 2014/15 is a reduction in comparison with last year’s performance at 12%. This is largely attributable to the change in criteria as previously, when a child returned from a missing episode this was classified as a new placement, even if a child returned to the same placement, however, these incidences are no longer included in this indicator. The national and statistical neighbour averages have also decreased in 2014/15 as a result of this change to the indicator.

**Percentages of looked after children aged under 16 looked after continuously for at least 2½ years who have been living in the same placement for at least 2 years** (or placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with previous placement lasting for at least 2 years) as at 31 March

	2013	2014	2015
<b>Hackney</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>61%</b>
Statistical neighbours	69%	68%	66.5%
England	67%	67%	68%

5.35 This indicator demonstrates the long-term stability for children and a higher score is indicative of good performance. Instability for children is associated with poor outcomes, often disrupting children’s education, their access to services and threatening friendships established in a previous placement or school. It is important that placements are sufficiently matched to children’s needs, are of sufficient quality, and are well supported, if placement breakdown is to be prevented.

5.36 A new methodology was introduced for this indicator in 2014/15. This was not consistently applied across all local authorities, which has caused discrepancies in the data that was published for 2014/15. There have been major swings in this indicator in our statistical neighbour authorities between 2013/14 and 2014/15. We are working to apply the new methodology and associated placement codes in Hackney. When adjusted to match the previous methodology, Hackney’s performance would have been several percentage points higher. This does still indicate a slight decline in performance from the previous year which requires careful analysis, monitoring and planning to support improved performance moving forwards.

5.37 Most placement moves are carefully planned, with the majority of children continuing to reside in their new placement more than 12 months after the move. This provides evidence of well thought through care planning and good support for placements. We do however have a small cohort of older young people with very complex needs and behaviours for whom it is very difficult to achieve stability. As the proportion of looked after children over 14 years of age it is likely that achieving high levels of placement stability will become more challenging.

## 6. Placement Cost

6.1 The direct cost of an in-house placement is less than half that of an IFA placement. However, there are additional costs to running an in-house fostering function including service costs such as: recruitment; training; social work support to foster carers; and placement management. Depending on the number of in-house foster placements over which the fixed cost of running the service is spread, this adds approximately another £300 to the weekly cost.

<b>Placement Type</b>	<b>Average weekly cost as at 31 July 2013 (£)</b>	<b>Average weekly cost as at 31 July 2015 (£)</b>	<b>% Increase over 2 Years</b>
Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA)	806	813	1%
In-House Foster Care	363	365	1%
Connected Persons	198	271	37%
Residential Care	2,632	3,262	24%
Semi-Independent (Under 18's)	650	684	5%

- 6.2 The direct cost of an in-house placement has remained stable even after the introduction from 2014/15 of a reward based on experience in order to retain and attract foster carers. This is primarily because it replaced ad hoc benefits paid to carers previously.
- 6.3 The cost of connected person placements has increased significantly over the last two years. The key reason for this is the impact of the Tower Hamlets judgement, a ruling that requires local authorities to treat in-house carers and connected person carers on an equivalent basis.
- 6.4 Residential costs have also increased per placement as the level of support required for the highest needs children has increased. Semi-independent placements, while cheaper than residential placements are only 16% less expensive than IFA placements.

#### Comparative analysis of actual spend in the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years

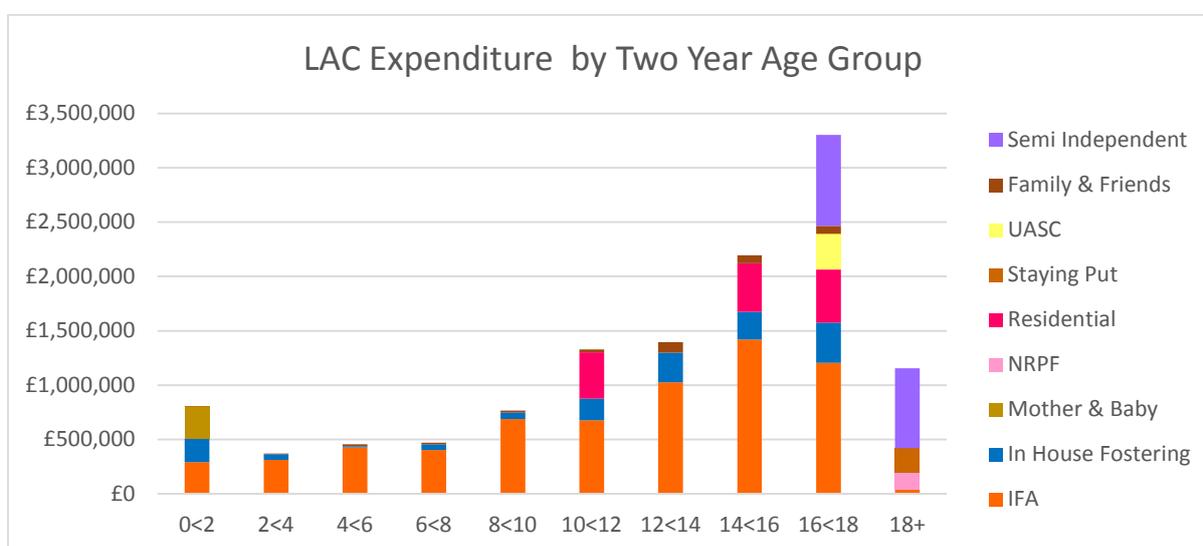
<b>Looked After Children</b>	<b>2013/14</b>		<b>2014/15 Forecast</b>		<b>Difference</b>	
<b>Placement activity</b>	Final Volume Placements	Final Outturn (£)	Volume Placements	Final Outturn (£)	Volume Placements	Outturn (£)
In-house Foster Care	92.28	1,720,785	76.86	1,818,091	-15.42	97,306
Independent Foster Carers	144.1	6,030,459	153.07	6,459,836	8.97	429,377
Connected Persons	28.48	500,975	26.86	467,609	-1.62	-33,366
Residential Care Placements	14.39	1,936,053	15.07	2,305,912	0.68	369,859

Semi Independent (<18)	33.07	1,221,946	30.87	1,099,288	-0.80	-122,658
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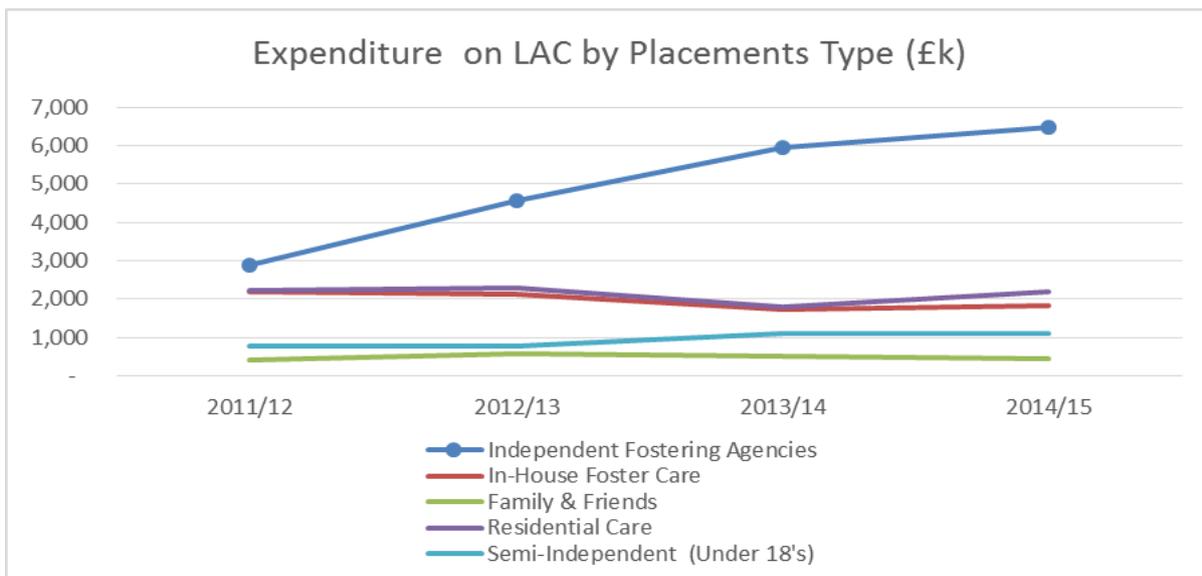
Leaving Care	2013/14		2014/15 Forecast Outturn		Difference	
Placement activity	Final Volume Placements	Final Outturn (£)	Volume Placements	Final Outturn (£)	Volume Placements	Outturn (£)
Semi Independent (18+)	61.2	871,536	87.72	1,455,161	26.52	583,625
Staying Put	11.5	180,314	13.92	181,298	2.42	984
Former Relevant UASCs	20.0	352,334	20.42	316,708	0.42	-35,626

6.5 The 16<18 category shows by far the highest level of spend across all placements. This is due to over £1.5m spent on fostering placements combined with significant semi-independent and residential expenditure on placements for the age group and support of UASC and young people through semi-independent provision in this bracket (although these costs are reclaimed by the council).

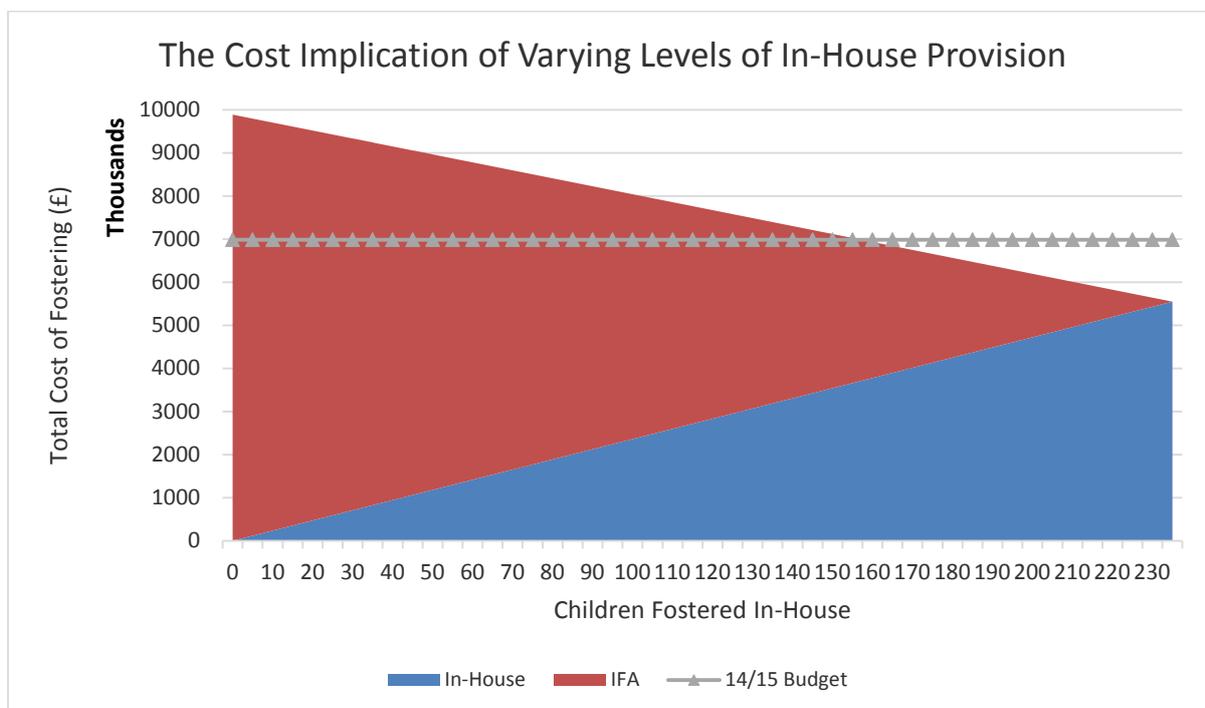
6.6 The next most costly category is 14<16 with broadly similar fostering and residential expenditure to 16<18 but without expenditure on semi-independent placements. The 10<12, 12<14 and 18+ bands all contain expenditure between £1m and £1.5m, with the under-10 bands all containing expenditure under £1m.



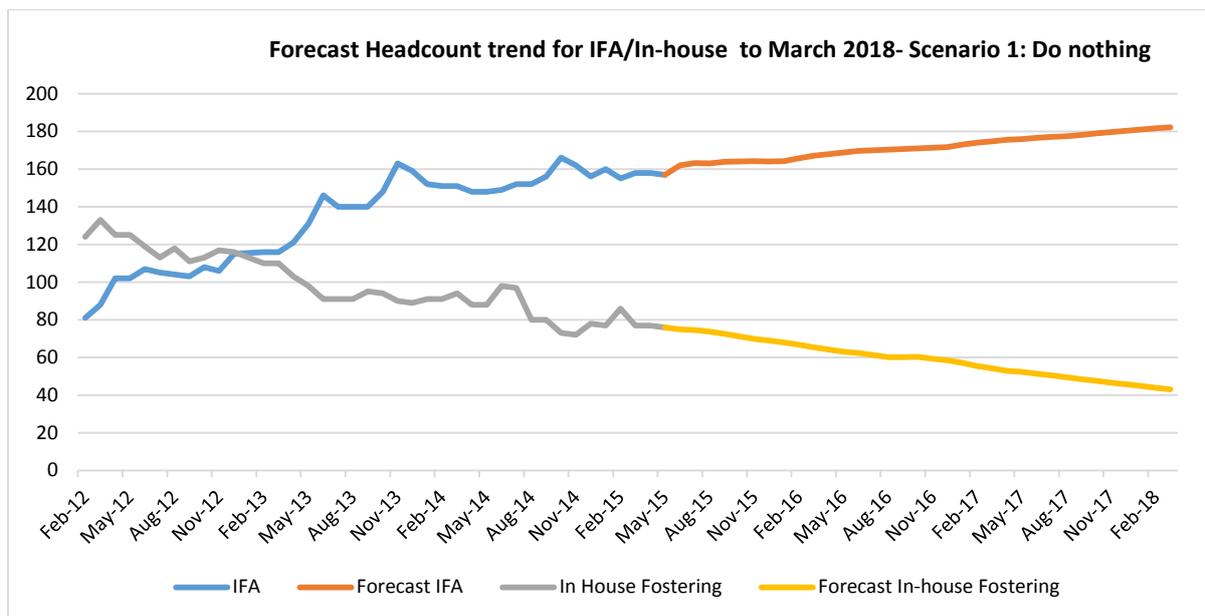
6.7 Expenditure for placement types over the last four years is shown below. The rise in the use of IFAs has been a significant factor in the incurred overspend against the actual budget for 2014/15.



6.8 The graph below shows the total expenditure to accommodate a varying proportion of children in-house assuming current average costs and a constant overall level of fostering placements. With no in-house placements at all, expenditure would stand at almost £10m. With all placements in-house, the cost would be reduced to under £6m. In addition to the costs shown in the chart, it is estimated that the in-house function costs an additional £1.3 including all front line and support costs.



6.9 The monthly movement in headcount is shown in the chart below up until the end of 2014/15. Thereafter the trend projection is shown until March 2018 when there would be 182 IFA placements and 43 in-house placements.



This would increase the expenditure as follows, by £428k in 2017/18.

	2014/15 Outturn	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Forecast
In-house	1,818,091	1,607,820	1,406,128	1,204,211
IFA	6,475,897	6,867,857	7,194,287	7,518,078
<b>Total Fostering Service</b>	<b>8,293,988</b>	<b>8,475,677</b>	<b>8,600,415</b>	<b>8,722,289</b>

6.10 We have set a target of recruiting 15 – 20 mainstream fostering households per year and if this resulted in an equal decline in IFA placements and there were no departures of existing in-house foster carers, the Fostering Service is calculated to be on budget by January 2018. Two alternative targets are to:

- Increase number of in house placements available to 100 by 31 March 2016 / 125 by March 2017 / 150 by March 2018.
- Number of children to be placed in house to 110 by March 2016, 140 by March 17, and 160 by March 18.

6.11 This is equivalent to increasing the number of in-house placements by the following amount each year.

New Placement Target	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Target 1	20	25	25
Target 2	30	30	20

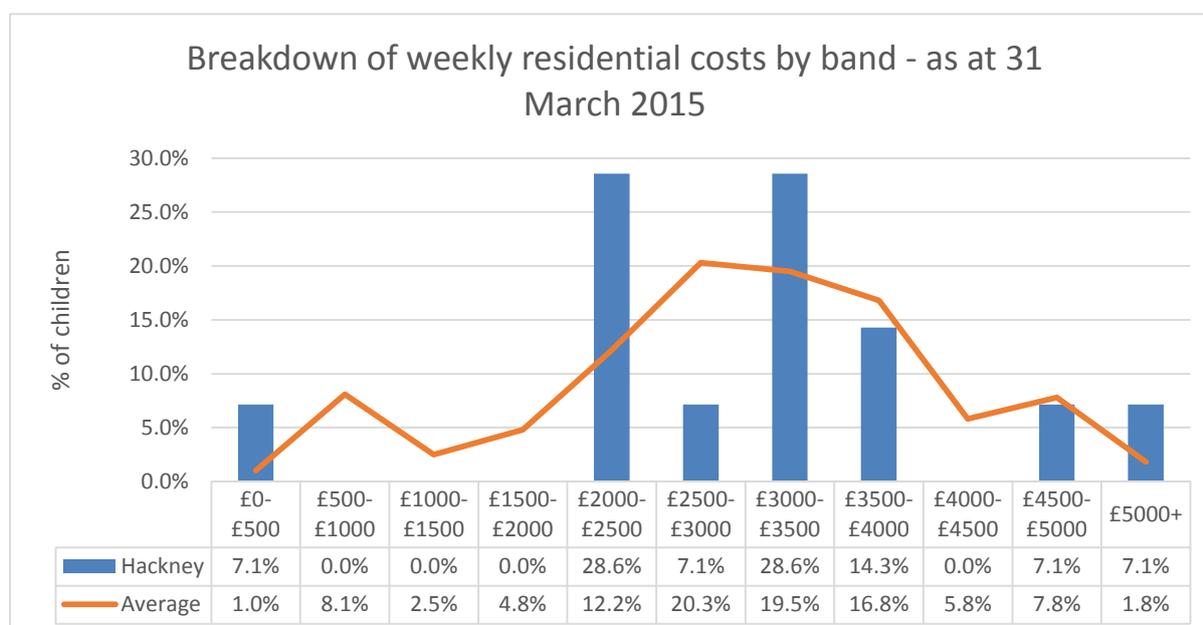
6.12 This would have the following financial impact, with savings compared to 2014/15 expenditure growing in each year as the total number of in-house carer’s increases.

Saving in Year (£)	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Target 1	233,587	759,158	1,343,126
Target 2	350,381	1,051,142	1,635,110

6.13 We have also set a target to recruit or train more 'level 3' carers who can accommodate the most vulnerable children with complex needs (for example young people vulnerable to child sexual exploitation/offending/going missing/on remand). A target of increasing the number by 5 per year would have the following financial impact assuming each trained carer increases the in-house provision by 1 and reduces IFA provision by 1.

Saving in Year (£)	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Level 3 Recruitment Target	58,397	175,190	291,984

6.14 Despite a relatively small number of residential placements, the average residential placement costs nearly £170k per year. The below graph shows the breakdown of residential placement costs within Hackney compared to the average of Hackney's statistical neighbours. The two most expensive placements cost £528k combined so there is a strong financial case for attempting to prevent cases from escalating to this level of need. Were the level of need of these two cases to reduce to £4k per week, a saving of £110k would be generated. For the financial year 2015/16, it is expected that approximately £348,000 will be paid for 'parent and child' placements. The use of these placements has increased steadily since 31 March 2014 and has a significant financial impact as placements require highly skilled carers or residential placements to meet the needs of both the parent and child.



#### Effect of FLIP on Residential Provision

6.15 As part of the effort towards sufficiency of placement provision in Hackney, the Family Learning Intervention Programme (FLIP) has been piloted as a preventative measure

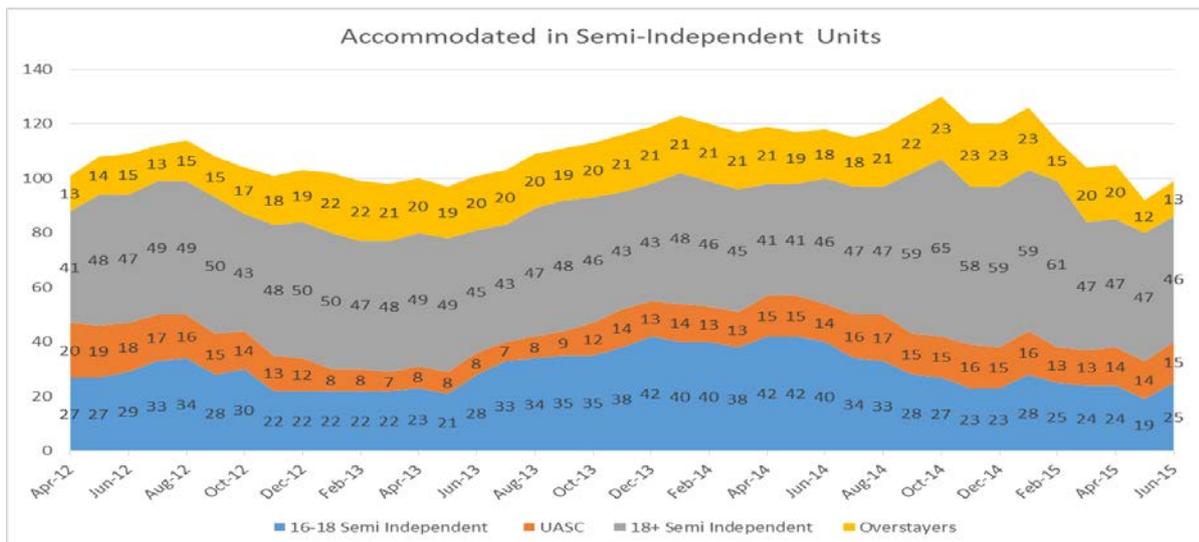
aimed both at children on the edge of care and limiting the support needs of children who are already looked after. This project is supported through the DfE Innovation Programme.

- 6.16 A key part of the sustainability model for FLIP is the effect on ‘de-escalating’ cases away from higher needs residential care. In some cases the resilience of young people and their families on the edge of high-cost residential care will be stronger for longer, which will also derive a saving.
- 6.17 On average, eleven residential placements are made per year. Assuming that one of these residential placements is averted per year and this placement would have been long-term, while the another 3 are delayed by 6 months, the saving to the Council would be £550k in 2017/18. This saving would first have to be off-set against the cost of running FLIP once funding from the DfE has ceased and any additional savings could off-set the overspend in the service.
- 6.18 The effects of FLIP are not just constrained to savings in residential care, they may also be seen if interventions lead to more stable placements for the child and a lesser need for complex IFA placements if children are able to stay in the care of their parents or in-house carers.

Projected Savings - Residential Avoidance / Delay	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Scenario 1 (1 averted per year, others 1 month delay)	142,000	275,000	375,000
Scenario 2 (1 averted per year, others 6 month delay)	275,000	450,000	550,000

#### *Semi-Independent Accommodation*

- 6.19 Of those young people accommodated in over-18 placements, all but the minority with ‘staying put’ arrangements are in semi-independent accommodation. In addition to over-18 placements, looked after children are also placed in this type of accommodation in the over-16 category, funded through the separate 16-18 semi-independent budget and as UASCs. All boroughs can claim £71 per day from the Home Office for each supported day of a UASC. When a UASC reaches 18, the Home Office only provides financial support for each young person (over 18) over and above a threshold of 25 at a reduced rate of £150 per week. The Council currently supports fewer young people than this threshold and so does not receive a financial contribution.
- 6.20 The chart below shows all those accommodated in semi-independent units excluding those accommodated through a separate block contract where Housing Benefit covers the accommodation cost in full.



6.21 At 31 March 2015, there were 47 standard, 18+ semi-independent placements, 20 former UASCs who were in semi-independent placements but had no recourse to public funds and 14 young people were in 'staying put' arrangements where fostering placements have continued beyond 18. Those care leavers that do not have immigration issues will have recourse to public funds, entitling them to Housing Benefit. Ordinarily Housing Benefit should cover the accommodation cost as special entitlements allow care leavers to claim a Local Housing Allowances 1 bedroom rate, which is higher than the shared rate that they would otherwise be eligible for in shared accommodation.

6.22 The average costs below show the average cost per week per young person including accommodation and support hours, but excluding any impact of Housing Benefit.

	Average Cost per week (£)
<18 Semi Independent	650
18+ Semi Independent	466
Former Relevant Asylum Seekers	295
Staying Put	289

6.23 The reason Former Relevant Asylum Seekers appear cheaper than other semi-independent placements is that typically their support needs are much lower than other care leavers. However, if the average Housing Benefit rate is applied to those with recourse to public funds, the average weekly cost is reduced to £279. In practice, not all of those eligible for Housing Benefit actually claim it (for a variety of reasons) and where the Council continues to provide support, it pays the difference. In other cases, the Housing Benefit rate does not fully cover the rental payments. Work is actively

ongoing within CYPS to ensure that where young people are eligible for benefits, they are being supported to claim these.

- 6.24 Staying put placements are made up predominantly of in-house placements but also some IFA placements. The Council offers support for the continuation of foster placements up to the age of 21. Care leavers living with their foster carer are also eligible for Housing Benefit and this should off-set accommodation cost.
- 6.25 In 2014/15, the Council spent £1.953m on over-18 placements against a budget of £821k (a 137% overspend).

## 7. How Hackney will meet its Sufficiency Duty

- 7.1 While future numbers of looked after children are hard to predict, particularly when the impact of new drivers is yet to be fully realised, it is anticipated the number of looked after children will continue to slowly rise over the next 3 years and will not be completely offset by the increased range of preventative support services available. Additionally, the population of children and young people in Hackney is expected to increase by 7% over the next 5 years. The number of care leavers is also expected to increase in line with the highest proportion of children entering care being 16 years and over.
- 7.2 The following table sets out predictions for the numbers of children in care at year end and is based on the 3% average annual increase between 2011 and 2015.

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Estimated LAC Population	355	366	377

- 7.3 While this predicted increase is relatively small, the evolving demographic of the looked after children population will require new commissioning solutions to ensure that Hackney can continue to meet its sufficiency duty.

### *Future areas of focus and challenge*

- 7.4 Based on the profile of looked after children, care leavers and a review of current placement provision, there are a number of challenges faced by local authority and key areas of focus for the over the 2016 – 2018 period. Particular challenges and areas of focus include:
- Maintaining the effectiveness of, and developing the quick response, early help and preventative services that support children, young people and families in the face of government spending cuts.
  - Lack of living space in the London Borough of Hackney and the evolving population and the need to increase capacity of sufficient placement options

within Hackney and neighbouring authorities to enable more looked after children, young people and care leavers to be placed in or moved back into the local area.

- Ensuring a sufficient choice of placements for the increasing cohort of adolescents who have high complex needs including; those at risk of offending and criminal exploitation, those experiencing or at risk of exploitation including CSE; those requiring parent and child placements; and unaccompanied asylum seeking children.
- Recruiting and retaining skilled high calibre in-house foster carers who we know can develop the capacity to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people, including short break and respite carers.
- Ensuring a sufficient choice of secure and high support residential placements when needed.
- Strengthening partnership working to ensure equal access to specialist placements, including the St Christopher's Safe Steps provision and North London Children's Efficiency Programme (NLCEP) residential provision.
- Challenge of peer on peer exploitation and the need to be creative with placement selection and location.
- Providing a consistent supply of external high quality semi-independent placement options for looked after young people and care leavers that are robustly quality assured (particularly as this market is not regulated by Ofsted) to ensure complex, and high support needs are met and outcomes are achieved whilst providing value for money.
- Strengthening placement stability for all children, young people and care leavers.
- Appropriate levels of support being in place for homeless 16 and 17 year olds to ensure that those young people who choose to be supported as Children in Need rather than looked after children have their needs appropriately met.
- Effectively managing transitions of children and young people from high support placements into new placements/high support semi-independent accommodation.
- Support for young people who move on from semi-independence and have needs that fall beneath the threshold for Adult Social Care.

7.5 The Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan (Appendix A) has been developed to address the strategy's overall objectives (pg. 4) and the above challenges.

7.6 The Placement Improvement and Fostering Recruitment Board will monitor progress against actions on a quarterly basis. The strategy will be updated on an annual basis to reflect changes in needs and respond to emerging policy initiatives. An update will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Officers Group and Corporate Parenting Board annually.

## Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan (Appendix A)

Objective	Action	Key Deliverables	Date	Lead
Safely manage the number of children coming into care, ensuring that the needs of children and young people are met through the continued delivery, review and development of preventative family support services and ensuring that children only come into care where this is in their best interests.	Development of an 'Edge of Care' strategy that clearly sets out how Hackney will try to minimise the need for children to become looked after by supporting families to stay together and further services will be developed in relation to our work with children at risk of coming into care (including support for young people who return home).	Strategy to be written and implemented.  Deliverables in the strategy to be regularly monitored by senior management.	September 2016  Quarterly	S,CP&L  S,CP&L
	Develop learning from the 'family coach' programme and embed within CYPS.	Development and implementation of a family support 'pathway'.	September 2016	A,A&FS/YH
	Undertake awareness raising activities to ensure that all practitioners are fully aware of the wide range of Young Hackney, family support, edge of care services and clinical interventions available.	Learning Bulletin articles on range of family support services available.	Six Monthly	S,CP&L
		Lunchtime seminars on Young Hackney, family support services and clinical interventions to increase knowledge amongst practitioners.  Young Hackney, family support, edge of care, and clinical services to attend all service meetings on a regular basis.	Six Monthly  Six Monthly	S,CP&L  A,A&FS/YH
	Maximise impact of the 'Expanded Troubled Families Programme' to continue work with families with multiple needs.	Quarterly reports prepared for 'troubled families steering group' to monitor progress of the programme.	Each Quarter	A,A&FS

		1,338 families to be worked with in 2015/16	April 2016	A,A&FS
		3,720 families to be worked with over a 5 year period (target subject to change).	September 2020	A,A&FS
	Review of family support / Young Hackney services to ensure services remain aligned with the level of need.	Annual reporting process of monitoring all contacts/signposting through FAST to be developed to enable robust tracking and effectiveness of the early help offer and inform future areas for development.  Young Hackney to develop non-statutory reporting capability to enable stronger oversight of: the number of young people subject to early help interventions; referral sources; and the measure of progress across the dimension of need.	March 2017  March 2017	A,A&FS  YH
	Full implementation of Family Learning Intervention Programme (FLIP) as a preventative model supporting adolescents on the edge of care and their families.	Evaluation report to be written on year 1 performance against targets.  Undertaking preventative work with 45 young people.  Undertake 25 residential based interventions with families.	September 2016  April 2016  April 2016	S,CP&L  S,CP&L  S,CP&L
	Expansion of Social Work in Schools Project to provide further family intervention to children and families at	Full evaluation of year 1 performance against objectives (including outlining the number of children prevented from	April 2016	S,CP&L /CIN

	the earliest stage of difficulties to prevent children needing to be protected through statutory processes or becoming looked after.	coming into care) and setting targets for the number of families to be worked with in year 2.  Expansion into additional schools.	September 2016	CIN
Ensure that looked after children are progressed through the care system without unnecessary delay and can achieve timely and appropriate reunification with their families, or permanent alternative placements.	Continued support for practitioners in development of enhanced report writing and assessment skills to ensure all care plans for children are robust, evidence based, analytical, and informed by research to support prompt and appropriate decision making.	Consultation with practitioners to ascertain what training they would find useful and incorporating into CYPS training programme/Write it Right.  Regular audit programme will address the written quality of care planning documentation and good practice or areas for development will inform service planning.	September 2016  Monthly	S,CP&L  S,CP&L
	Raise awareness with new and existing foster carers around permanence options including long-term fostering, special guardianship and adoption.	Fostering Support Units to be trained on permanence options to support conversations with foster carers around alternative care options.  Programme of foster carer training to be delivered on permanence options.	September 2016  September 2016	S,CP&L  S,CP&L
	Targeted recruitment of adopters to match needs of children waiting and working with current adopters to raise awareness of children waiting.	Development and implementation of North London Adoption and Consortium new joint recruitment resource.	April 2016	CIN
		Workshops delivered to existing adopters who are waiting for children.	September 2016	CIN

		Topics to include: sibling groups; ethnicity; and disability.		
	Review of support available for permanence options.	Support offer to adopters and other permanent carers to be clearly defined.	September 2016	CIN
		Revise 'connected persons' care policy to outline permanence options, support available and share with carers.	June 2016	S,CP&L
Secure placement stability and improve outcomes for children and young people through strengthening: matching processes; placement planning; quality assurance processes; support available for carers (including foster carers, special guardians, adopters) to enable them to fully meet the needs of our children and young people; and professional development opportunities for foster carers.	Implement revised placement planning process that: develops the strength of information; better informs decision making on placement types; and enhances matching and placement stability.	Enhanced placement plan template implemented.	April 2016	S,CP&L
		Placement planning policy to be revised and implemented.	April 2016	S,CP&L
		Training delivered on placement planning process to support practitioners embed into practice.	April / May 2016	S,CP&L
		Six monthly review of new process through feedback from practitioners, families and children. Learning to be used to refine where necessary.	October 2016	S,CP&L
		Revised 'disruption meeting' process to be implemented.	May 2016	S,CP&L
		Robust system developed and implemented to track placement breakdowns and enable analysis of trends and themes to support future planning.	April 2016	PMU

<p>Promote placement stability through strengthening working relationships between the Placement Management Unit, Fostering Support Units, IROs, practitioners and external providers to ensure a child focused approach to placement finding and matching.</p>	<p>Regular audits to review the placement planning and matching process to assess if plans are sufficiently child focussed.</p>	Quarterly	S,CP&L
	<p>Clear process developed to ensure IRO/SWU feedback is regularly provided to PMU/FSU regarding stability of placement following LAC/foster carer review.</p>	September 2016	S,CP&L
	<p>Review of all long-term fostering placements to ensure formal matching has taken place at Care Planning Panel.</p>	April 2016	PMU
	<p>Review of clinical support offer to children and carers (informed by annual return from CORC) to support placement stability where need is identified.</p>	April 2017	S,CP&L/A,A&FS
	<p>Placement stability analysis to be undertaken to inform a 'Placement Stability Strategy'.</p>	May 2016	S,CP&L
	<p>Development of a Placement Planning Steering Group to focus on enhancing placement stability.</p>	May 2016	S,CP&L
	<p>Placement Stability Strategy to be developed and implemented.</p>	September 2016	S,CP&L

		<p>Scope the development of the Young Hackney offer to provide outreach support to young people in care where their placement may be at risk of disruption to promote stability.</p> <p>Implementation of weekend 'drop-in' sessions at the Forest Road Hub to provide additional support young people.</p>	<p>September 2016</p> <p>August 2016</p>	<p>YH</p> <p>YH/LC</p>
	<p>Strengthen information sharing procedures with other local authorities to ensure that (where Hackney children are placed out of borough) relevant safeguarding issues are highlighted in a timely way and addressed promptly ensuring the child's safety and contributing to placement stability.</p>	<p>Out of borough information sharing process/protocol to be reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose.</p>	<p>June 2016</p>	<p>S,CP&amp;L / PMU</p>
	<p>Enhance support available to in-house foster carers to support placement stability.</p>	<p>Establish out of hours support line for foster carers.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the Empower Family Worker (who can work with foster carers around child sexual exploitation) through an article in the foster carer newsletter and presentation at relevant forums.</p>	<p>June 2016</p> <p>April 2016</p>	<p>S,CP&amp;L</p> <p>S,CP&amp;L</p>
<p>Provide and commission the right</p>	<p>Undertake re-modelling of the Placement Management Unit to ensure</p>	<p>Recruitment to new business model to be fully implemented.</p>	<p>August 2016</p>	<p>PMU</p>

<p>mix of high quality placements (including through the development of existing partnerships and increased use of in-house provision) to meet identified needs of looked after children and care leavers as cost effectively as possible.</p>	<p>most effective business model is in place to enhance service delivery.</p>			
	<p>Recruit mainstream foster carers to provide placements for our looked after children with a focus on recruiting carers within Hackney or surrounding areas to increase sufficiency within the borough.</p>	<p>Recruit 15 – 20 mainstream households per year.</p>	April 2017	FRU
		<p>Number of children placed with in-house carers to increase by 20%.</p>	April 2017	FSU
	<p>Recruit / develop a range specialist foster carers to meet the needs of our children and young people.</p>	<p>Recruit/develop two ‘parent and child’ foster carers per year.</p>	April 2017	FRU
		<p>Recruit/develop two ‘teenage’ foster carers per year.</p>	April 2017	FRU
		<p>Recruit/develop two respite carers per year per year.</p>	April 2017	FRU
		<p>Work with existing foster carers to develop in-house capacity, increasing the provision of emergency ‘out of hours’ placements.</p>	April 2017	FSU
	<p>Focus on retention of foster carers through the provision of strong support and development of enhanced professional development opportunities.</p>	<p>Develop and implement accredited Social Pedagogy training.</p>	April 2017	S,CP&L
<p>Development of the Advanced Study Programme for foster carers.</p>		April 2016	S,CP&L	
<p>Implement the Fostering Ambassadors Scheme.</p>		June 2016	FRU	
		April 2017	FSU	

		<p>Increase the number of 'level 2' carers by 5 per year.</p> <p>Increase the number of 'level 3' carers by 3 per year.</p> <p>Train 50 foster carers on outcomes/learning from the first year of FLIP.</p>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>April 2017</p>	<p>FSU</p> <p>S,CP&amp;L</p>
	Place more looked after children, young people and care leavers within the borough where safe to do so.	<p>Target commissioning to increase sufficient choice of externally sourced placements in the borough for looked after young people and care leaver's.</p> <p>Number of looked after children, young people and care leavers placed within the borough to increase year on year.</p>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>April 2017</p>	<p>PMU</p> <p>PMU</p>
	Ensure that Connected Person Placements are fully considered, explored and supported where appropriate.	Increase the number of family care arrangements made each year.	April 2017	PMU/CIN/S,C P&L
	Ensure robust tracking of all UASC to capture trends and inform placement planning requirements.	<p>Review current UASC recording and tracking mechanisms to ensure these are fit for purpose.</p> <p>Review quarterly UASC data monitoring in-house to capture trends and support in predicting future placement needs for this cohort (to be reported at the Placement Improvement Board).</p>	<p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p>	<p>S,CP&amp;L/A,A&amp;FS/PMU</p> <p>S,CP&amp;L/A,A&amp;FS/PMU</p>

	Explore and implement new placement/accommodation options that support achieving a wider sufficiency of available placements for children, young people and care leavers.	Supported Lodgings scheme to be scoped and proposal developed to see if implementation would be beneficial.  Increase the number of young people in staying put arrangements by 50%.  Engagement and consultation with the market to ensure externally commissioned provision continues to meet the needs of children and young people.  Strengthen framework of secure accommodation providers to ensure a wider range of options are available to meet the needs of our children and young people.	June 2016  April 2017  Ongoing  April 2017	PMU/ S,CP&L  PMU/FSU  PMU  PMU
	Implementation of multi-supplier framework agreement to provide a range of high quality semi-independent accommodation.	Implementation of framework agreement.  Implementation of Quality Assurance process to review effectiveness of new provision.	April 2017  April 2017	PMU  PMU
	Implement a robust placement quality assurance framework to ensure all commissioned placements and accommodation meet the required quality standards.	Framework to be implemented.	April 2016	PMU

	ICT development work to be undertaken to strengthen data reporting and inform placement planning/forecasting.	Mosaic Development Group to develop availability and accuracy of statistics on a range of child and carer functions including: disability; sibling groups; foster carer ethnicity; and foster carer levels as this is vital in informing commissioning with reports to be available on a regular basis.	September 2016	S,CP&L
	Enhanced partnership working to strengthen placement provision (including with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium / North London Children's Efficiency Programme and London Councils).	Actively contribute to, and use the consortium fostering vacancy pool to ensure placements in consortium are considered before commissioning externally.  Contribute to consortium specialist fostering schemes.  Actively contribute to the re-contracting of regional and sub-regional select-lists / framework agreements.  Work with the NLCEP boroughs to develop specialist residential provisions using DfE awarded innovation funding.	Monthly  As necessary  Ongoing  Ongoing	PMU  FRU  PMU  PMU, S,CP&L
Support children and young people in care to make a successful transition into adulthood through the provision of high	Help young people aged 16 and over prepare for adulthood and move positively to independence.	Leaving Care Taskforce in place to review Leaving Care Service and develop specialist support for care leavers.	September 2016	LC

quality leaving care services which support care leavers to find and maintain suitable accommodation arrangements that meet their needs.		Monthly Panel to quality assure Pathway Plans and track post 18 plans where care leavers have additional support needs. To also ensure care leavers aged 20+ will be able to maintain their own accommodation by their 21 <sup>st</sup> birthday.	Monthly	PMU/LC
		Implementation of a multi-supplier Framework Agreement for Semi-Independent accommodation for care leavers.	April 2017	PMU
		Develop online, and/or procured resource for looked after young people and care leavers regarding accommodation options and how to access benefits to support with the cost of living.	September 2016	S,CP&L/LC
		Deliver training to young people on how to access universal credits.	September 2016	S,CP&L
	Current process for transfer of responsibility from children's to adult services to be reviewed to ensure it is in line with requirements set out in the Care Act 2014.	Transition to Adulthood Panel to undertake review and revise process accordingly.	September 2016	LC
Develop ways to strengthen the participation of	Regular consultation with children in care, care leavers, families, carers and professionals to ensure their views are	The Hackney Gets Heard (Children in Care Council) 'Promise to Looked After	April 2016	S,CP&L/YH

children and young people, families, carers and professionals in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.	fully heard and incorporated into service developments.	<p>Children' to be fully incorporated into the Corporate Parenting Strategy.</p> <p>Learning from family feedback and complaints to be reviewed quarterly and themes for development to be raised and incorporated into service development.</p> <p>Review current family feedback surveys for: families; children in care; and care leavers to see if the questions remain relevant or require updates.</p> <p>Foster carer exit interview process to be strengthened to ensure learning is fully integrated into strengthening service provision.</p> <p>Revised process to be implemented to ensure IRO feedback is being captured and information from foster carer reviews and looked after children reviews is being used to inform service development.</p>	<p>Quarterly</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p>	<p>S,CP&amp;L</p> <p>S,CP&amp;L/YH</p> <p>S,CP&amp;L</p> <p>S,CP&amp;L</p>
	Involve young people in the re-procurement of supported accommodation services.	<p>Consultation with young people regarding existing and proposed semi-independent placement provision.</p> <p>Involve young people in the quality assurance of new semi-independent accommodation services through youth-</p>	<p>June 2016</p> <p>After April 2017</p>	<p>PMU/YH</p> <p>PMU</p>

		led inspections and inclusion of a robust complaints and feedback process.		
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## Appendix B

Table 1 – Age of foster carers at March 31 2015

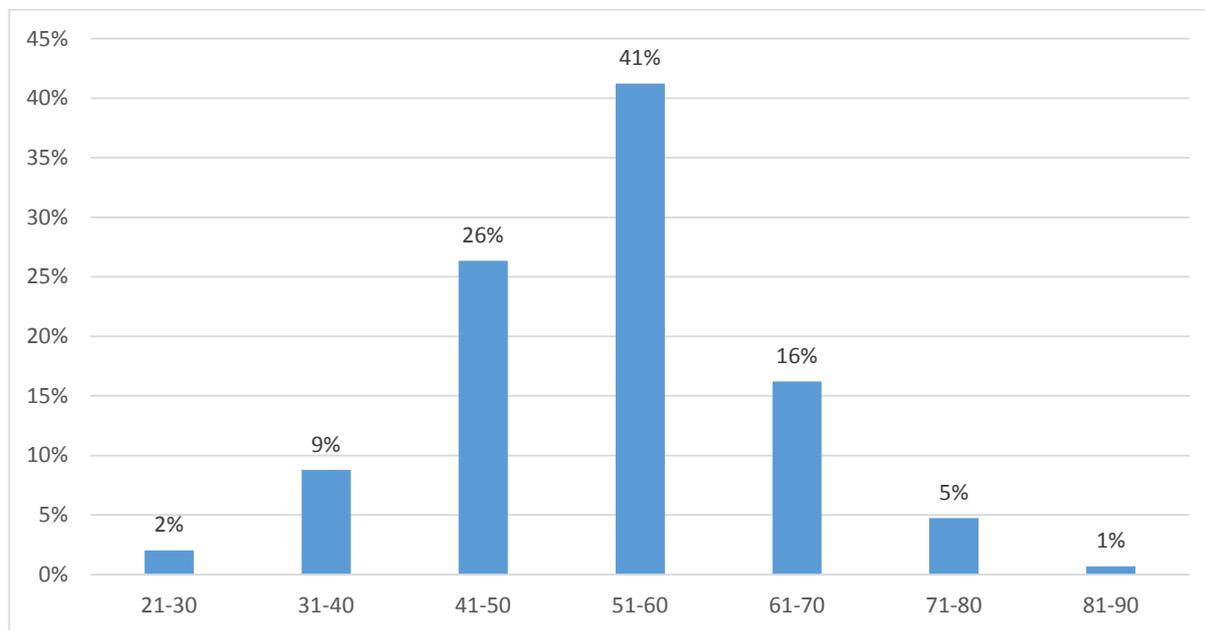


Table 2 – Approval, resignation and termination of foster carers at March 31 2015

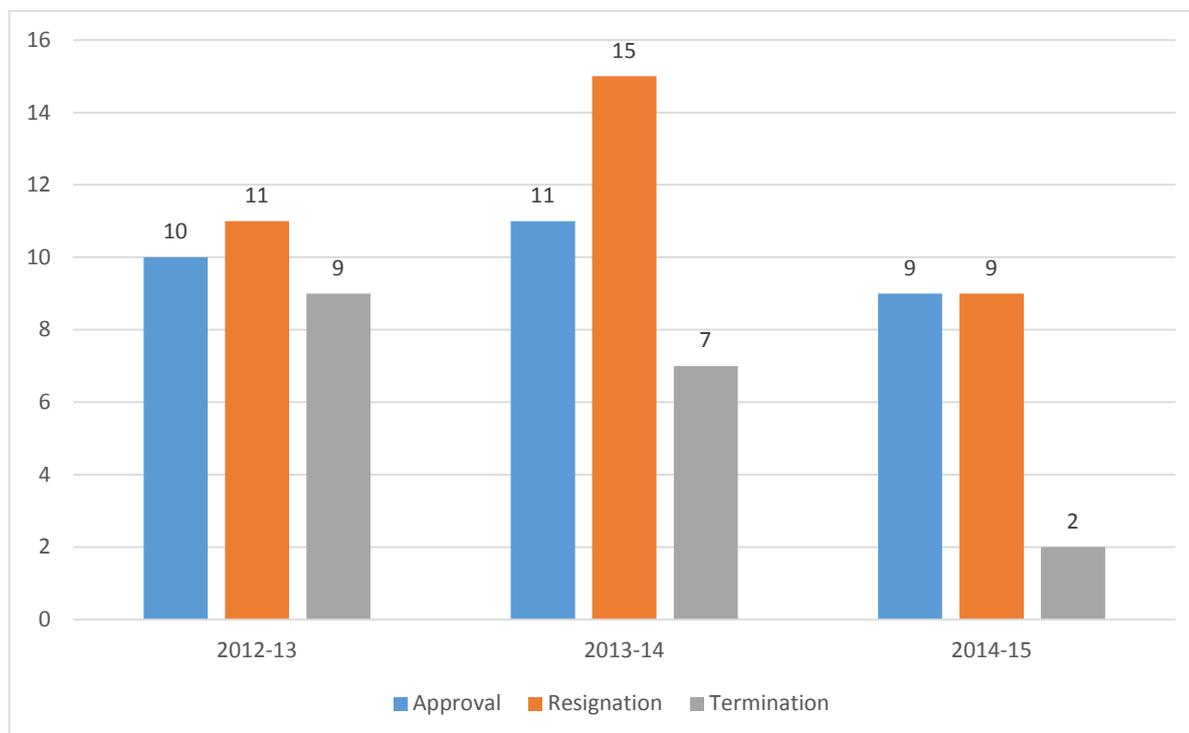


Table 3– Religious breakdown of foster carers at March 31 2015

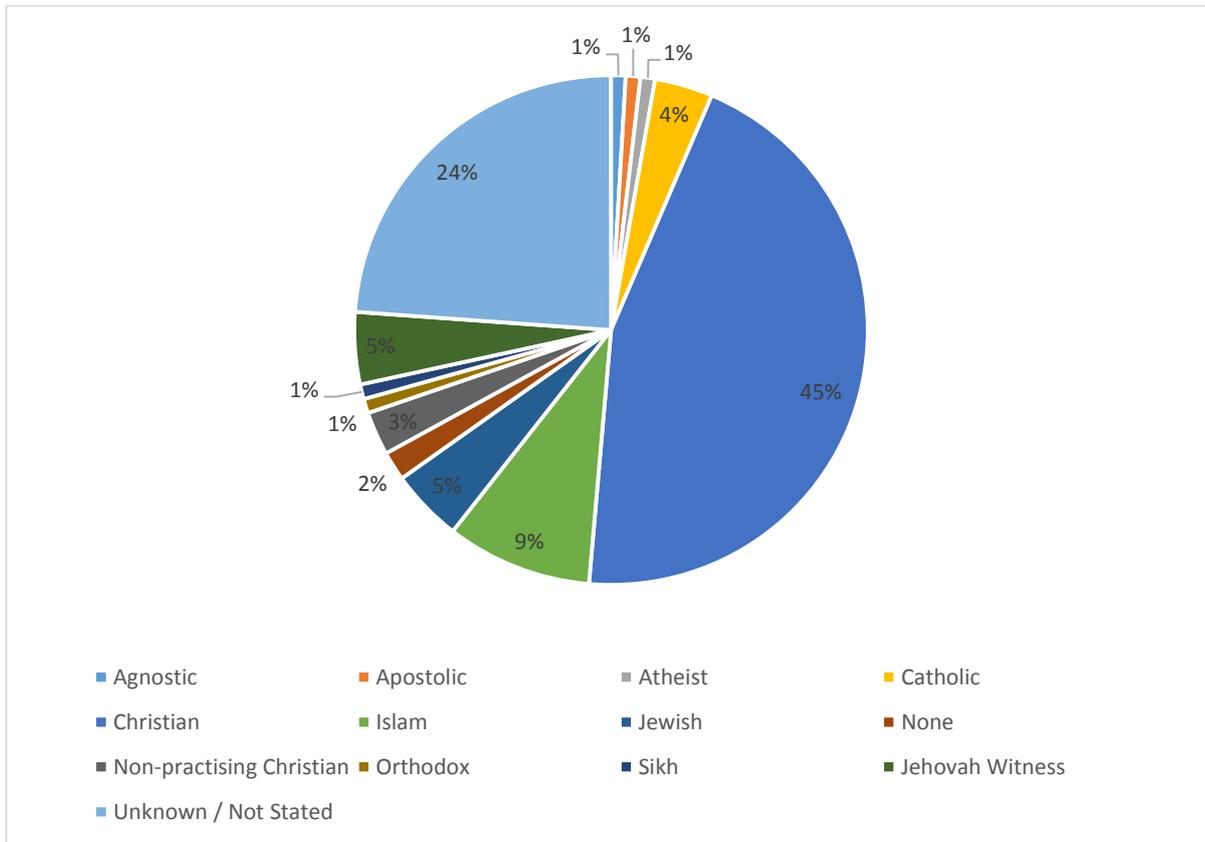


Table 4 – Ethnicity breakdown of foster carers at 31 March 2015

