

Newham Sufficiency Strategy For Children Looked After and Care Leavers

2019-2022

“Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her.”
Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005)

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Document created	February 2019
Version 1.0	Draft circulated on 6 th February
Version 1.1	Draft issued for consultation (DMT, Heads of Service and Children in Care Council) on 14 th February 2019
Version 2.0	Draft for review by DMT on 15 th April 2019
Version 2.1	Legal comments incorporated 29 May 2019
Version 3.0	Results of engagement and action plan incorporated June and July 2019
Version 4.0	Final draft – 2018-2019 data updates; adoption data; health data – immunisations etc...

Content

Executive Summary	4
1 Introduction	6
1.1 National and local drivers	6
1.2 Vision and Principles	7
2 Achievements since the last Sufficiency Strategy	8
2.1 What Children and Young People said... and what We did	8
3 Profile of our children looked after and care leavers.....	9
3.1 Overview of Newham	9
3.2 Number of children looked after needing homes.....	10
3.3 Volume of Placements throughout the year	12
3.4 Age profile	13
3.5 Ethnicity	14
3.6 Gender	15
3.7 Care Leavers.....	15
4 Children and Young People Requiring Specialist Provision.....	16
4.1 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	16
4.2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).....	17
4.3 Complex needs of our children looked after.....	17
5 Review of Current Provision and Market Analysis	18
5.1 Placement Type	19
5.2 Placement Costs	25
5.3 Average Weekly Cost per child.....	26
5.4 Newham Cost Comparison with London Average Weekly Cost.....	26
6 Priorities for 2019-2022.....	28
6.1 Priority 1: Improve services to support children, prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children to return to their families.....	28
6.2 Priority 2: Recruit more Newham foster carer households and adopters	29
6.3 Priority 3: Maximise the effective use of Newham foster carers	29
6.4 Priority 4: Develop an improved accommodation and support pathway for care leavers.....	30
6.5 Priority 5: Improve the commissioning of specialist therapeutic placements including use of sub-regional arrangements.....	31
6.6 Priority 6: Engage better with the market and improve shaping	31
6.7 Priority 7: Make better use of data and management information systems to inform commissioning decisions	32
6.8 Priority 8: Improve our Make the best use of our resources	33
6.9 Priority 9: Develop a range of high quality placements and offer more choice in our placement provision.....	33
7 Measuring success: outcomes and key performance indicators.....	35
7.1 Looked after children receive a good education	35
7.2 Placements are local	37
7.3 Placements are stable	37
7.4 Looked after children are healthy and emotionally resilient.....	38
8 Monitoring this strategy	39
Appendix 1: Action Plan to deliver the strategy 2019-2022.....	40
Appendix 2: Working together to address safeguarding issues affecting our children and young people	54

Tables

Table 1: Rate of Referrals to Newham Social Care per 10,000 population, Newham and England, 2014/15 to 2018-2019	10
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Table 2: Age profile of Newham Children Looked After throughout the year 2018-2019 compared to the Newham 0-18 population overall.....	13
Table 3: Newham Care leavers by Level of Risk, July 2019	15
Table 4: Age of care leavers July 2019.....	16
Table 5: Total number of UASC in Newham 2013-2018 (at 31 st March each year)	17
Table 6: Use of Placements at 31 st March 2018 and 2019.....	19
Table 7: Looked after children placements in foster care by type of foster carer placement 2015 to 2019 at 31 st March each year	20
Table 8: Care leavers Accommodation type at July 2019	25
Table 9: Newham Council Placement Budget and Spend in 2018-2019	25
Table 10: Newham Council Average Weekly Cost per placement per child (excludes UASC)	26
Table 11: Estimated Savings from Newham's lower average weekly cost 2017-2018	27
Table 12: 2019-2022 Priorities for Children in Council Members	33
Table 13: Academic achievement of children looked after, Newham, statistical neighbours and England.....	36
Table 14: The percentage of children looked after at 31 March placed outside LA boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live.....	37
Table 15: % of children looked after with 3 or more placements in the past 12 months (at 31 st March each year)	37
Table 16: Average Score for CLA with whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire was carried out.....	38
Table 17: Children continuously looked after for 12 months at 31 March each year	39

Figures

Figure 1: Rate of Children Looked After - 2013-2019	11
Figure 2: Snapshot data of Children Looked After with Trend line to 2022.....	12
Figure 3: Total Number of placements and children throughout each year	12
Figure 4: Age Profile of Children Looked After throughout the years 2008-9 to 2018-19.....	13
Figure 5: Ethnicity of Children Looked After throughout the year 2018-2019 compared with all Newham under 18s, 2019	14
Figure 6: Ethnicity of Children Looked After in Newham, 2009 to 2019	15
Figure 7: Age of Newham foster carers	20
Figure 8: Average Weekly Cost of External Residential Provision for 32 London Boroughs 2017-2018.....	27

Executive Summary

This Sufficiency Strategy sets out how Newham will ensure that the right care, accommodation and support services are available for children looked after and care leavers. Our overall aim is to ensure that we achieve the best outcomes for our children and young people working across the Council and with partners. The national and local drivers underpinning this strategy are the Children Act 1989 and the Newham Corporate Plan 2019-2020 where the first priority (Bright Futures) is to support children and young people’s aspirations, keeping them safe and removing barriers to success.

At 31st March 2019, there were 378 Newham children looked after and young people. The profile of our children looked after based on those in care throughout 2018-2019 or at 31st March 2019 shows that:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56% boys • 39% aged 10-15 • 27% of Black or Black British background • 10% Unaccompanied asylum seeking children • 15% with disabilities • 82 per cent live within 20 miles of Newham • 20% come into care through police protection powers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% in foster care • 12% in children’s homes • 88 per cent had their annual health assessment • 5% left care through adoption • 11% moved more than 3 times in the last year • 70% in education employment or training • 62 at university – 11 per cent overall in higher education
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Our rate of children looked after is lower than the average for our statistical neighbours and England as a whole. We are offering more support to enable children to remain safely at home or to return home when it is in their best interests. Targeted early help work through the Keeping Safe programme will identify children at high risk of exclusion due to exploitation risks. These children tend to be boys from Black and from White backgrounds and the project will support them and their families.

Some of our children have greater needs than others. An analysis of referral information shows that 17 per cent of children referred for placements were at high risk of gang behaviour, 12 per cent at risk of running away usually with concerns about their exploitation. Newham Council is working with partners, providers and our sub-regional neighbouring authorities to increase the range of high quality placement options for all our children including those with complex needs. In particular, more emergency provision, more provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities, children with mental health difficulties and for young people aged 16 and over to prepare them for adulthood.

Our priority areas over the next three years are to:

1. Improve services to support children, prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children to return to their families
2. Recruit more Newham foster carer households and adopters
3. Maximise the effective use of Newham foster carers
4. Develop an improved accommodation and support pathway for care leavers
5. Improve the commissioning of specialist and therapeutic placements, including the use of sub-regional arrangements
6. Engage better with the market and improve shaping
7. Make better use of data and management information systems to inform commissioning decisions
8. Make the best use of our resources

9. Develop a range of high quality placements and offer more choice in our placement provision

A Sufficiency Working Group has been set up and will be chaired jointly by the Director of Operations and the Assistant Director of Commissioning. This group will monitor and track the progress of this strategy.

1 Introduction

This strategy sets out how Newham will provide and commission the right care and support for children looked after and care leavers that best meets their needs.

It covers the period 2019-2022 and complements the new offer for Edge of Care and the Corporate Parenting Charter. In turn these feed into and inform the overarching Corporate Parenting strategy for children looked after. The strategy is informed by the findings and analysis of need and by what our children looked after and care leavers have told us.

A child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

- Gets accommodation under section 20 Children Act 1989 from the local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.
- Is subject to a care order (to put the child into the care of the local authority)
- Is subject to a placement order (to put the child up for adoption)

Young people can also be accommodated under section 17 of the Act in some rare cases of 16 and 17 year olds who need accommodation but do not want to be in care.

Performance data is based on the annual March 31st snapshot data and information on young people and their placements throughout each financial year.

1.1 National and local drivers

Section 22G of The Children Act 1989 requires councils to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, accommodation for children looked after in their local area which meets the needs of those children. Councils need to consider their strategy for securing the range of accommodation capable of meeting different needs.

This requirement is informed by research which has identified that local placements generally produce better outcomes for children looked after, whether provided by the local authority or the voluntary or private sector. Although the duty is focused on improving outcomes and providing accommodation to meet the needs of children looked after, the guidance is clear that a key part of this is taking earlier preventative action so that fewer children enter care. As such the scope of this strategy includes children on the edge of care.

A number of national developments shape our delivery of services:

- **Staying Put Policy:** This policy enables children looked after to remain with their foster carers from the age of 18 until 21 (or 25 for young people with disabilities).
- **Southwark Judgement:** This duty obliges children's services to provide accommodation and support to homeless 16 and 17 year olds under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 with some potential exceptions where section 17 may be used.
- **Social Work and Children Act 2017:** This Act introduces the seven principles of corporate parenting. The Act also extends the personal advisor role to care leavers until they are 25 years of age if this is requested by the young person. The personal advisor role is no longer dependent on the care leaver being in education or training.

- Remand Process: Children aged 10 to 17 years of age who are refused bail and remanded in local authority care or youth detention accommodation have the status of children looked after.

1.2 Vision and Principles

The overarching vision for children looked after in Newham is the same as the vision for all Newham children, set out in *Building Newham's Future Together – London Borough of Newham Corporate Plan 2019-2020* where the first priority (Bright Futures) is to support children and young people's aspirations, keeping them safe and removing barriers to success.

This means having:

- A high quality and accessible universal offer which supports learning and development
- An effective partnership with our schools to ensure quality provision for all and support for those with additional needs
- A high quality, co-produced youth offer that provides a varied and inclusive range of activities
- A robust partnership approach to improving youth safety
- Clear pathways for children at risk, those in care, and care leavers

Our belief is that children are best cared for within their families wherever this can be safely achieved, and that investing in services that are able to promote change in families can be more effective than removing children and placing them in alternative care.

Newham Council also works in partnership to support the borough's children and young people in all areas of their life and put people at the heart of everything we do. Our partnerships span across the local authority and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), including Newham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Metropolitan Police.

The vision of this sufficiency strategy is to ensure that we:

**Achieve the outcomes our children and young people need
With the best placement
at the right time
for the most competitive price.**

Our aim is for Newham services and performance to be in line with the best performing local authorities by 2022. Newham's administration has made it clear that it wishes Newham to be the best place in the country for children and young people to grow up in. This strategy is in support of this aspiration.

The key principles for Newham's Sufficiency Strategy are that:

- We listen to children and young people and maximise opportunities for Co-production to inform and influence service delivery
- We secure the best possible placement for every child and young person, with consistent application of processes and standards across internal and external provision
- We are clear (to providers) what excellent outcomes look like for each child and young person and explore incentives for achieving these
- We provide young people with choice (where possible) about where they live

- Commissioning priorities are based on the analysis of needs of children looked after and care leavers
- Placements are based on best value and evidence of outcomes being delivered
- We implement robust commissioning, contract and quality assurance processes and ensure that the same levels of monitoring and quality standards are applied regardless of the geographical distance from Newham.
- We work in partnership with other authorities and the market to maximise shared resources and economies of scale.

2 Achievements since the last Sufficiency Strategy

During the 2016-2019 strategy the following was achieved:

- Secured £835,000 Innovation Funding as part of eight borough bid to jointly commission a block contract of children’s home places specifically for our most challenging young people
- Secured block contract for floating support for care leavers
- Joined Framework contract for semi-independent provisions with the West London Alliance (WLA)
- Reduced reliance and expenditure on foster care placements with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)
- Increased rates paid to Newham foster carers based on level of need of the children being placed
- Worked with housing colleagues and care leavers to rent four shared houses with 26 units of accommodation for our care leavers
- Developed a new brokerage referral form which quantifies the presenting needs of our children looked after and informs our commissioning priorities
- Delivered bespoke training for all semi-independent providers and local children’s homes in partnership with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) lead and Prevent lead. This training was for 30 organisations and covered risk management plans, investigating allegations against staff and Prevent training. The training was used to improve relations with providers and to be clear about expectations
- Delivered training in Fostering Changes to over 100 Newham Foster carers. The training is based on attachment theory and social learning theory and delivers “evidence based” behaviour management strategies and skills to enable carers better manage their children and young people.

2.1 What Children and Young People said... and what We did

In addition to the achievements above, members of the Children in Care Council (CICC) requested the following improvements in the last sufficiency strategy. Our response is detailed.

Request	They said...we did
Request 1:	<p>They said: To have more foster carers in Newham</p> <p>We did: we recruited 46 new foster carers between 2016 and 2019 but lost 67 during the same period giving an overall net loss of 21 foster carers. However, the number of available placements for children increased from 130 to 145 in the same period.</p>
Request 2:	They said: Children in Care Council should train foster carers

Request	They said...we did
	We did: invited looked after young people to attend the Skills to Foster training to give a brief presentation and answer questions. We have also had a former looked after young person on our fostering panel. She also worked with us on the design of the sessions. We are now in the process of recruiting another young person for the role.
Request 3:	They said: Provide access to computers, phones and support for work experience We did: Four new properties for care leavers have Wi-Fi installed in them in as standard. The new block support contract includes access to skills training, work experience and a bursary scheme that provides young people with financial support to access education, employment or training.
Request 4:	They said: Provide communal areas in semi independent accommodation We did: We made sure the properties leased by Newham had lounge areas. Going forward, we will use this as a template for future acquisitions.
Request 5:	They said: House similar young people together We did: The new block support provider carefully matches young people living in shared houses.
Request 6:	They said: Have fewer young people living in each (semi independent) unit We did: There are between 4 and 9 young people living in the houses rented by Newham. All the properties have outdoor areas and some have more than one kitchen and up to 3 bathrooms/shower rooms. The feedback from the young people has been positive.
Request 7:	They said: Involve members of the Children In Care Council (CICC) in the commissioning and monitoring of services. We did: We recruited three care leavers to visit potential new properties and completed assessments on each property. The decision to rent was based on their assessments. A Newham care leaver is one of three care leavers sitting on the North East London Board to commission children's home places on a block contract.

3 Profile of our children looked after and care leavers

This section covers the Newham context and the demographic profile of our children looked after.

3.1 Overview of Newham

Newham is ranked the 25th most deprived local authority in England¹ (an improvement from the 8th most deprived in the previous ranking). Newham has an established history of migrant populations and high population churn. The End Child Poverty coalition estimates that 43 per cent of children in Newham are in poverty - the 3rd highest percentage in the UK² and an increase of 11 per cent when compared to the previous sufficiency strategy.

¹ Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2015

² <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/poverty-in-your-area-2018/>

Newham has a young age structure and proportionally more young people than both London and England³. Newham’s population of 0-18 year olds is 87,654, representing 25.7 per cent of the total population. The increasing population of children in Newham and the high rates of poverty are factors which would be expected to increase the demand for social care placements in the future.

Newham has the highest proportion and highest rate of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students in the school population in England. The January 2019 School Census showed that 94.7 per cent of the school population in Newham are from BAME communities⁴. This represented an increase of 1.4 per cent from the 2015 Census in the last sufficiency strategy. Brent ranks second after Newham on 91.6 per cent.

Newham is the most linguistically diverse borough in England and Wales, with 41% of the population listing a main language other than English⁵. 71 per cent of Newham residents overall are from BAME communities, the highest rate of all local authorities⁶. All ethnic groups increased their representation in Newham between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, except for White British residents, White Irish and Black Caribbean residents. Population projections estimate that Newham still has the highest number of BAME residents of all London boroughs in 2019⁷.

Table 1 shows that the rate of referrals to Newham Social Care is consistently higher when compared to England and the London average over the last four years. The Newham outturn for 2018-2019 shows a lower rate than in 2017-2018 although still higher than statistical neighbours and nationally for 2017-2018. The benchmark data for 2018-2019 is not yet available.

Table 1: Rate of Referrals to Newham Social Care per 10,000 population, Newham and England, 2014/15 to 2018-2019

Year	Newham	Statistical Neighbours	London	England
2014-2015	745	516	478	548
2015-2016	711	506	492	532
2016-2017	583	626	508	548
2017-2018	730	551	546	553
2018-2019	659			

Source: DFE, Characteristics of children in need, 2015 to 2019,

3.2 Number of children looked after needing homes

There are currently 378⁸ Newham children looked after. 56 per cent of these children are in care as a result of abuse or neglect. 17 per cent entered care due to family dysfunction and the remaining 27 per cent entered care due to factors including absent parenting (mainly

³ ONS Mid-Year population estimates, ONS for England National Population Projections for London and Newham Sub-National Population Projections extracted using NOMIS

⁴ Total number of pupils across primary, secondary and special schools

⁵ Census, 2011

⁶ Census, 2011

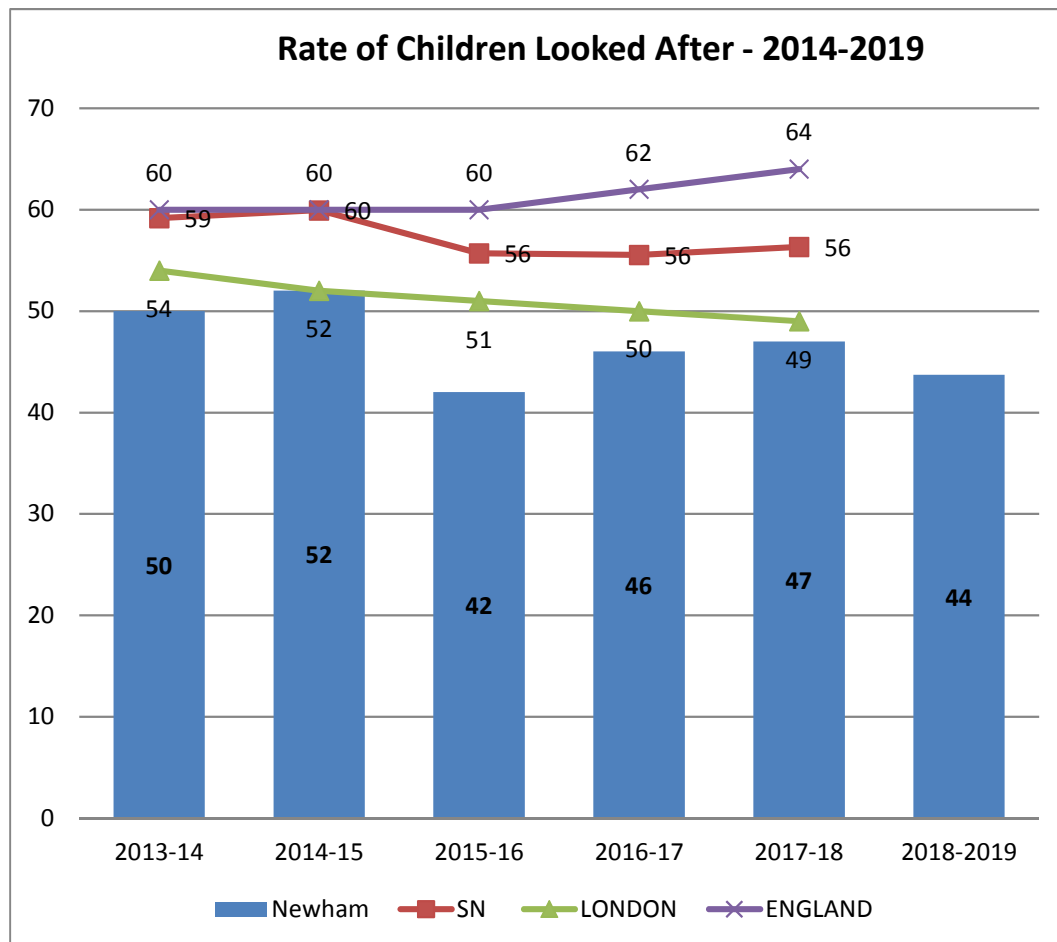
⁷ GLA, 2016-based demographic projections

⁸ 31st March 2019; SSD 903 return figure.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children), the family being in acute stress, parental disability or illness, socially unacceptable behaviour or the child's disability or illness.

Although nationally, the rate of children looked after has increased from 60 to 64 per 10,000 (children aged under 18 years) between 2013 and 2018, the trend in Newham has been downwards from 50 to 47 per 10,000 over the same period. In 2019, the rate has fallen to 44 per 10,000.

Figure 1: Rate of Children Looked After - 2013-2019



Source: DFE Snapshot data at 31st March each year from 903 Return

Newham's population of 0-18 year olds has been increasing and is forecast to rise by 4 per cent from 87,654 to 91,584 by 2025. The biggest population rise is among 16 and 17 year olds (15%). The populations of under ones and one to four year olds are predicted to decrease by 4 per cent and 3 per cent respectively.⁹

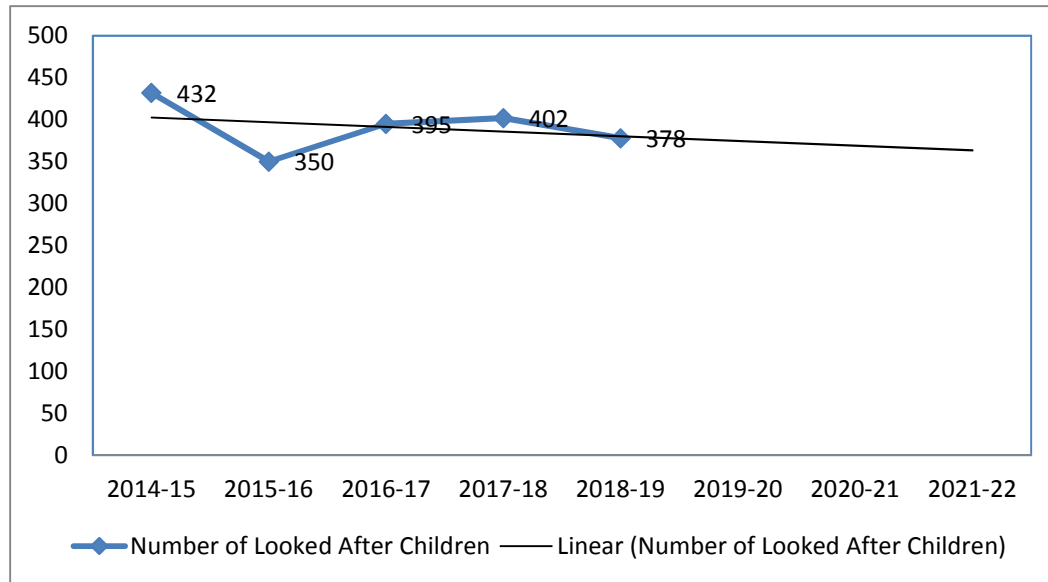
A linear projection based on the last five years' data of children looked after suggests that the number of children looked after may remain stable in the next three years.¹⁰ Certainly, the rise

⁹ Population estimates – ONS Mid-Year population estimates. Population projections – ONS for England National Population Projections for London and Newham Sub-National Population Projections extracted using NOMIS

¹⁰ The data used is the 31st March data snapshot.

in population over the last few years has happened at the same time that the looked children numbers have been decreasing.

Figure 2: Snapshot data of Children Looked After with Trend line to 2022

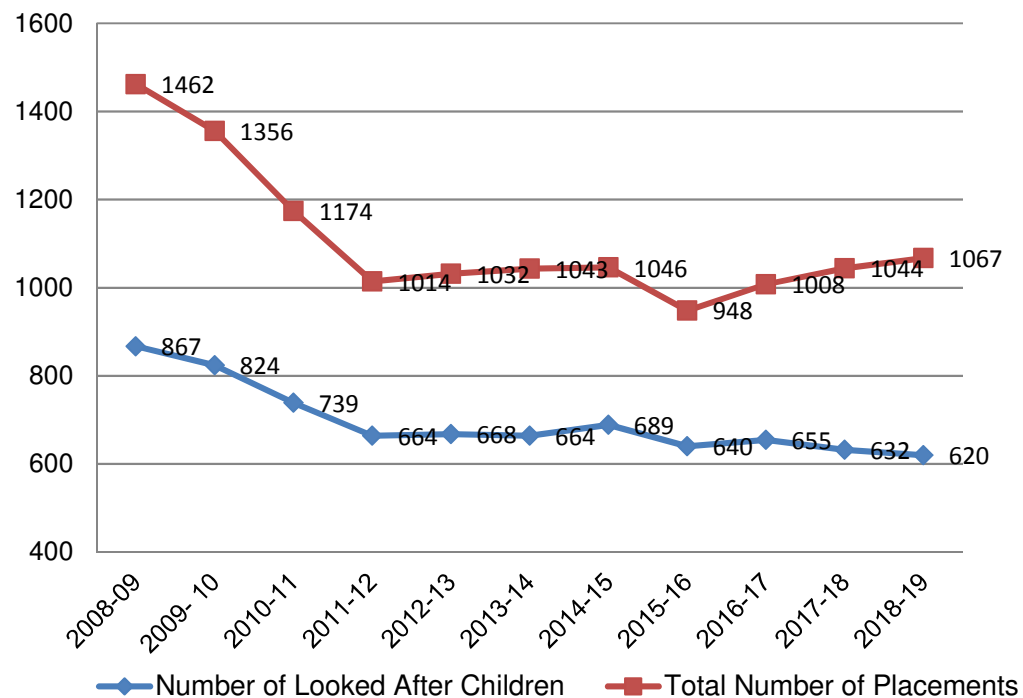


Source: DFE 903 Returns.

3.3 Volume of Placements throughout the year

The long term trend has been a decline in overall number of placements and overall number of children during each financial year. Over the last three years, there has been a year on year decline in the number of children but an increase in the number of placements.

Figure 3: Total Number of placements and children throughout each year



The following sections will use the age, gender and ethnicity breakdowns of the children requiring placements throughout the year and not the snap shot data on 31st March each year.

3.4 Age profile

The largest groups of children looked after are aged 10 to 15 years - 39 per cent – and 16 years and over represent – 30 per cent – which makes up 69 per cent of the looked after population. See table 2.

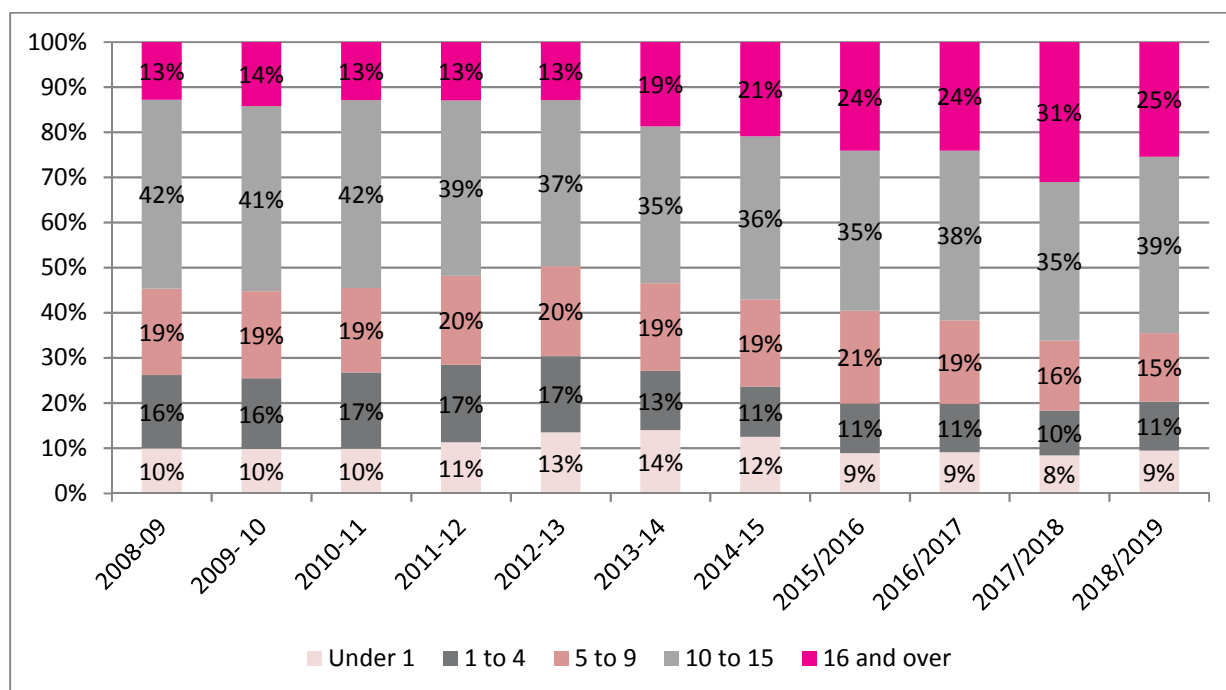
Table 2: Age profile of Newham Children Looked After throughout the year 2018-2019 compared to the Newham 0-18 population overall

Age group	Children Looked After population	Newham population 19 and under
Under 1	9%	6%
1 – 4 years	11%	23%
5 – 9 years	15%	27%
10 -15 years	39%	26%
16 and over	25%	17%

Source: Throughput data from Data Impact team CYPS and Policy, GLA population projections, 2018

Figure 4 shows that over the last 10 years, there has been an increase in placements required for children aged 16. The placements required for 10-15 year olds have increased over the same period and currently stands at 39 per cent of placements. The increase is due to increasing numbers of children coming into care as teenagers.

Figure 4: Age Profile of Children Looked After throughout the years 2008-9 to 2018-19



Source: Throughput data from Carefirst and Azeus Data Impact team CYPS and Policy, Performance and Scrutiny Strategic Services, August 2019

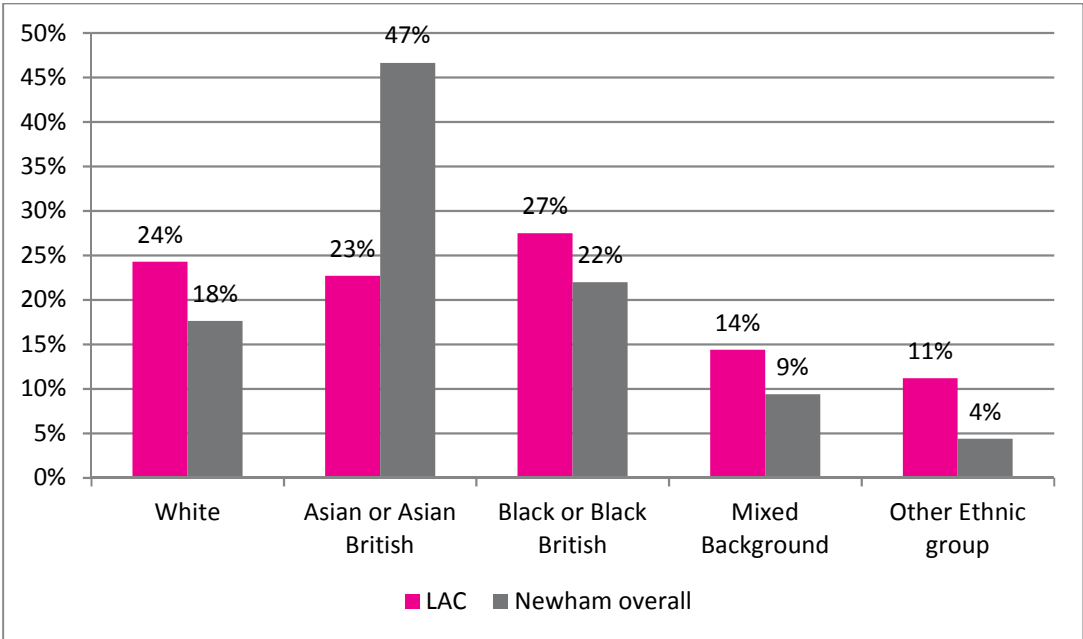
3.5 Ethnicity

The largest proportions of children looked after are from black backgrounds (27 per cent) followed by children from white backgrounds (24 per cent). Children from both white and children from black backgrounds are over represented among children looked after when compared to their proportions in the Newham under 18s population. Children from Asian backgrounds make up the largest ethnic group in Newham at 47 per cent of all Newham children but are under represented in the CLA population at 23 per cent (see Figure 5 below).

Although the reasons why there is such a stark under representation requires further analysis, the proportion of children looked after from Asian backgrounds has increased from 17 per cent to 23 per cent since 2009 (see figure 6). There has also been an increase in the proportion of children from 'other' ethnicities, from 5% in 2009 to 11% in 2018. The proportions of children of black and white backgrounds have fallen during the same period. 31 per cent of Newham foster carers are from Asian backgrounds and 47 per cent are from Black backgrounds so there are options for the ethnic matching of Black and Asian children looked after. There are fewer options for children from white backgrounds as 22 per cent of foster carers are from white backgrounds.

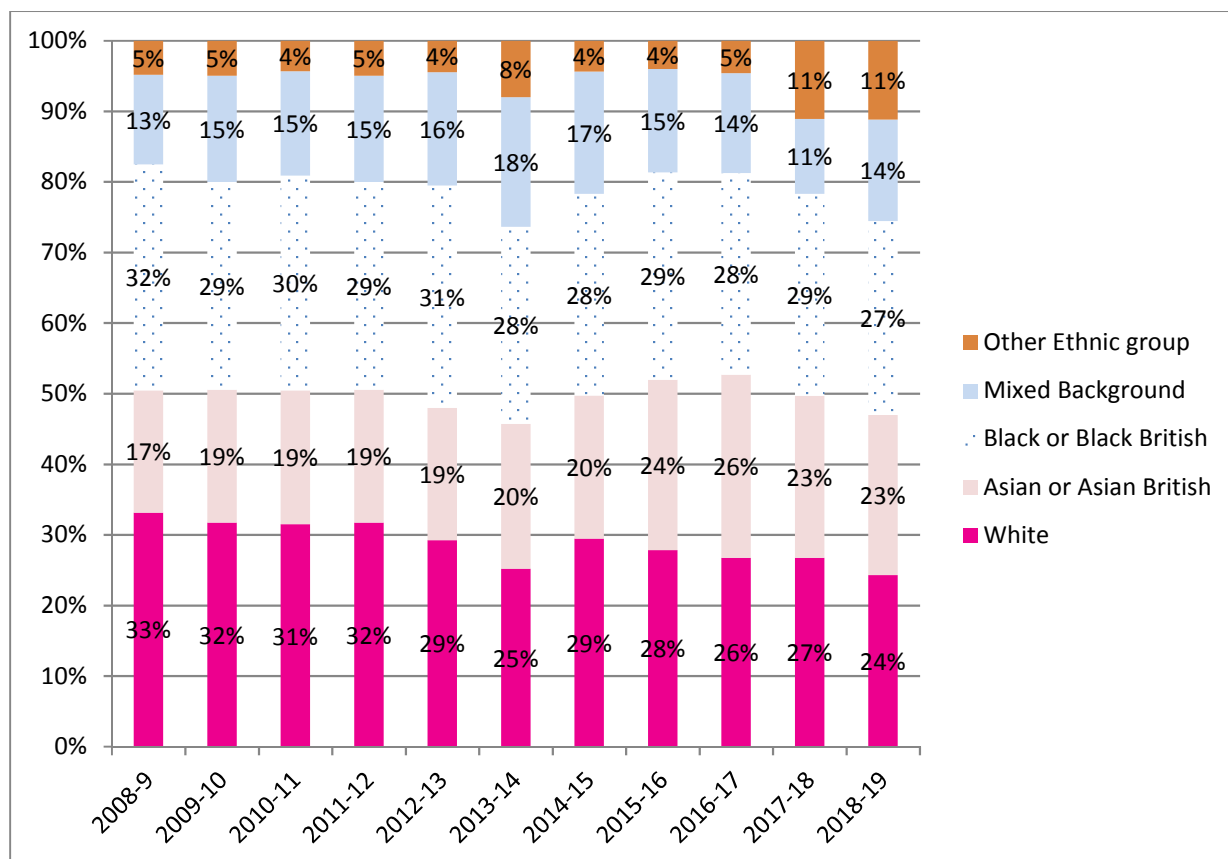
Targeted work is underway with the Keeping Safe project which will work with children identified as being at high risk of exclusion due to exploitation risks. These children are also over represented in CLA numbers and tend to be boys from Black and from White backgrounds. The project will support their transition from primary school into secondary school. The project offers family work to build capacity and resilience, positive diversionary activities through the use of residential programmes for children and parents as well as work with the school leads on a bespoke support programme

Figure 5: Ethnicity of Children Looked After throughout the year 2018-2019 compared with all Newham under 18s, 2019



Source: Throughput data from Azeus, Data Impact team CYPS and Policy, Performance and Scrutiny Strategic Services, August 2019

Figure 6: Ethnicity of Children Looked After in Newham, 2009 to 2019



Source: Throughput data from Carefirst and Azeus Data Impact team CYPS and Policy, Performance and Scrutiny Strategic Services, August 2019

3.6 Gender

There have consistently been more boys than girls for whom placements are made. In 2018-2019, boys made up 56 per cent of care entrants compared to 44 per cent for girls which is in line with the national proportions.

For new entrants into care during 2018-2019, there was a 58:42 split between boys and girls in Newham line with London and England, there were more boys than girls entering care.

3.7 Care Leavers

There are 330 care leavers with cases open to the service¹¹. Of these, 234 care leavers (71 per cent) are assessed as being of low or medium risk using their matrix for assessing the needs of this group. 98 of the care leavers or 30 per cent are unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Table 3: Newham Care leavers by Level of Risk, July 2019

¹¹ At 15th July 2019. There are over 600 care leavers who qualify for leaving care services. The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 states that a Care Leaver is someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday.

Level of risk	Number of young people	% of young people
Low/No	234	71%
Medium	61	18%
High	35	11%
Total	330	100%

Source: Leaving Care Service, July 2019

Table 4 shows that almost half of care leavers with cases open to the service are under 20 years of age. 38 per cent of care leavers aged 18 and over are from Black backgrounds. Sixteen per cent have a disability.

Table 4: Age of care leavers July 2019

Age band	Number of young people	% of young people
18-19	158	48%
20-21	130	39%
22-25	42	13%
Total	330	100%

Source: Leaving Care Service, July 2019

The majority of care leavers are provided with suitable accommodation with 76 per cent living in suitable accommodation in 2018-2019 compared to 69.4 per cent in 2013-2014. This was a lower rate of care leavers in suitable accommodation than our statistical neighbours (80 per cent), London (81 per cent) and England (84 per cent) in 2017-2018. Newham's low rate is due largely to the significant proportion of care leavers who are not in touch with the service. Additional capacity investment is already improving the contact with care leavers. This is impacting positively on the rate which was 83 per cent in the month of August 2019 with 83 per cent of the cohort in touch with the service.

4 Children and Young People Requiring Specialist Provision

4.1 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At 31st March 2019, there were 59 children looked after identified as having a disability. 32 children met the threshold for children with complex needs and were allocated a social worker with the 0-25 Special Education Needs and Disabilities Integrated Service. The most frequent presenting needs are learning, behaviour and communication. Although the number of children looked after identified as having a disability has remained stable since the last sufficiency strategy in 2016, the number allocated to the 0-25 SEND Service has increased from 19 to 32 children looked after over the same period.

62.5 per cent of the children looked after with disabilities (20 out of 32) live with foster carers (at 31st March 2019). Of the 20 children, eleven are living with IFA foster carers and nine with Newham foster carers. We need to increase the skills and capacity of Newham foster carers to enable them to care for more of our children with disabilities and to reduce the number who may be placed in children's homes because there are no suitable foster carers available. Children placed with local families benefit from going to local schools.

Newham needs specialist foster carers to provide homes for young people with complex health needs (physical health). We have insufficient foster carers to meet the short breaks offer for children and young people but there are few in house foster carers able to deliver short breaks¹².

4.2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Table 5 shows that the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)¹³ has more than doubled in the last five years for those both under and over 18 years of age. The gender breakdown of the UASC population shows that 91 per cent are male with only 9 per cent female. All of the under 18s are male and all but one are aged 14 and 17 years of age. One is ten years of age.

In the previous strategy the largest group of under 18 UASC were from Albania but this has now changed to Afghanistan. In 2015-2016, 40 per cent were of Albania origin and now 5 per cent of Albanian origin and 45 per cent are of Afghanistan origin.

Where possible, Newham continues to ensure that young people are matched with carers from the same cultural, religious and language backgrounds as them. 49 per cent of under 18 UASC (18 young people) are placed with Newham foster carers and 27 per cent (10 young people) are in semi-independent provision.

Table 5: Total number of UASC in Newham 2013-2018 (at 31st March each year)

Year	Number of UASC under 18 years of age	Number of UASC aged 18 and over	Total number of UASC
2013-2014	27	41	68
2014-2015	50	55	105
2015-2016	60	48	104
2016-2017	56	86	142
2017-2018	54	85	139
2018-2019	39	98	137

Source: Finance - Business Development Service, February 2016, August 2019

4.3 Complex needs of our children looked after

Newham has a placement referral system where social workers complete a risk matrix to support the Brokerage officers in finding a suitable placement. In the period from January 2018 to September 2018, there were 532 placement referrals for 412 children and young

¹² Short breaks are activities for disabled children and young people to give them opportunities to have fun, spend time away from home with their friends and develop skills and independence.

¹³ UASC are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK and have been separated from their parents or carers. Under the National Transfer Scheme, local authorities are required to take responsibility for all UASC who first present to them until they reach a number that equates to 0.07 per cent of their UASC to child population.

people. 129 children and young people were recorded as 'high' or 'extremely high' risk by the social worker in the following areas¹⁴:

- 17% at risk of gang-related behaviour (91)
- 12% at risk of running away (66) – these are children for whom there are concerns that they are being exploited
- 9% with emotional difficulties (49)
- 7% child sexual exploitation (38)
- 5% on Gangs matrix¹⁵ (26)
- 5% with substance misuse difficulties (26)

At 31st March 2019, there were seven children looked after with four or more placements in the last 12 months. These children have challenging needs: high risk of running away, CSE, gangs, mental health difficulties. Of the seven, only one of these children is in a children's home; three are with IFA foster carers, one is in secure and two are in semi independent placements. All are aged 14 to 17 years of age and most are female.

The low number in children's homes reflects the increasing difficulty to find such provision for these young people. We are working sub-regionally to commission a block contract of children's home places to develop our own provision for this vulnerable group of young people.

With the behaviours they present and the constant churn and move, the trauma to these young people increases and so can the cost. Providers request 2:1 support as a starting point for accepting placements for these children and the lack of options can mean that there is no choice. None of the children were placed with Newham foster carers. We need to increase the skills base of Newham foster carers so they are able to offer more choice for our young people who will also benefit from the additional Newham services.

This analysis demonstrates the complex needs of the children in Newham and the need for specialist services. The challenge for Newham is to ensure that the needs of as many of these young people as possible can be met by our foster carers with the right level of support so that we are able to provide local placements for our children and young people.

5 Review of Current Provision and Market Analysis

Newham Council operates within a mixed economy of internal and external provision. Placements are commissioned through framework, spot and block purchasing arrangements, some of which are regional. In recent years, we have seen a decline in IFA placements compared with in house fostering placements; in house placements now make up the majority of foster care placements.

¹⁴ CSE, Alcohol, Drugs, Eating disorder, Emotional Difficulties, Enuresis, Fire Setting, Gang indication, Gang matrix, Makes allegations, Mental Flag, Mental Health Issues, Radicalisation, Risk of running away, Self harming, Sexualised Behaviour, Soils, Violent towards adults, Violent towards children

¹⁵ The gangs violence matrix (GVM) is an intelligence tool we use to identify and risk-assess gang members across London who are involved in gang violence. It also seeks to identify those at risk of victimisation. The aim of the matrix is to reduce gang-related violence, safeguard those exploited by gangs and prevent young lives being lost. <https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/about-us/about-the-met/gangs-violence-matrix/>

Newham Council will work directly with providers alongside regional partners to expand what is available to meet the needs of our children.

5.1 Placement Type

Newham has an increasing proportion of children in foster care. Table 5 shows that at 31st March 2019, 72 per cent of all Newham children looked after were in foster care. This compares favourably to the 73 per cent average in England in 2017-2018.

Newham has a greater proportion of children placed in semi-independent accommodation and children's homes than the average in England. Taking into account all residential settings and placements in the community, Newham has 23 per cent of children in these type of placements in 2018-2019 compared to 15 per cent in England and 19 per cent with statistical neighbours in 2017-2018.. A key priority is to reduce the use of semi independent provision ensuring they are only used where it is in the best interest of the young person; where they may be struggling in a fostering setting and/or not wanting to be in a family setting.

Table 6: Use of Placements at 31st March 2018 and 2019

Placement Type	2017-2018		2018-2019	
	Number	%	Number	%
Newham Foster Carers	144	35.7%	142	37.8%
IFA Foster Carers	113	28.0%	116	30.9%
Semi independent	50	12.4%	38	10.1%
Childrens Homes and Hostels	44	10.9%	44	11.7%
Connected Carers	21	5.2%	14	3.7%
Placed for Adoption	14	3.5%	5	1.3%
YOI or Prison	7	1.7%	4	1.1%
Secure Unit	3	0.7%	2	0.5%
NHS/Health Trust/medical or nursing care establishment.	3	0.7%	1	0.3%
Residential Schools	2	0.5%	3	0.8%
Placed with parents	1	0.2%	4	1.1%
Family Centre / Mother and Baby Unit	1	0.2%	3	0.8%
Total	403	100%	376 ¹⁶	100%

Newham now has 57 per cent of children placed with the Newham Fostering Service (including placements with connected persons) compared to 43 per cent with IFA foster carers. Newham has fewer children in connected persons foster care placements than the rate in England. The rate in Newham in 2018-2019 was 5 per cent of all fostering placements. Nationally, during 2017-2018, 18 per cent of children in foster care placement were placed with connected persons.

¹⁶ Report detailing placements differed from the 378 reported outturn for 2018-2019. This represents a 0.5% margin of error.

We are encouraging early engagement of friends and family in supporting families to overcome difficulties through our monthly practice workshops. It is our aspiration that better engagement of extended family will support greater use of connected carers going forward.

Table 7: Looked after children placements in foster care by type of foster carer placement 2015 to 2019 at 31st March each year

Year	In house foster carers		Agency foster carers		Connected foster carers	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2015-2016	109	44%	117	47%	18	7%
2016-2017	141	50%	118	42%	23	8%
2017-2018	144	52%	113	40%	21	8%
2018-2019	142	52%	116	43%	14	5%

Source: 31st March Snap shot data, Data Impact team and Azeus report, 2019

Placements with in house foster carers

Newham Fostering Service has 122 in-house foster carer households (31st March 2019) offering up to 218 placements. At 31st March 2019, there were 150 children accommodated. 48 of the placements ‘not available’ giving an overall occupancy rate of 88 per cent¹⁷.

The likelihood of placing siblings together is limited in Newham due to the low number of Newham foster carers who can cater for 3 or more children. 13 foster care households are approved for three children with a further 6 households approved for three if they are a sibling group of three. This represents 16 per cent of Newham foster carers.

There is an over representation of fostering households from Black or Black British backgrounds. 47 per cent of in-house foster carers are from Black or Black British backgrounds compared to 27 per cent of the children looked after population. Mixed background households are under represented compared to 14 per cent of Newham children looked after. Newham considers the child’s race, ethnicity and culture to be one of a range of matching criteria which are required to meet the need of the child¹⁸. We are working to recruit foster carers that provide choice when matching children’s needs.

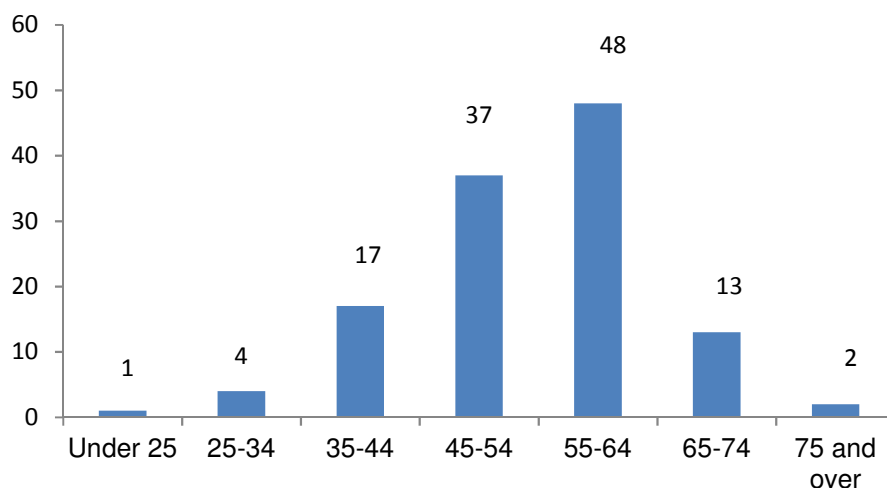
Figure 7 foster carers over 55 years of age make up more than 50 per cent of the total cohort. While we benefit from their experience, we have a profile of an ageing population of carer which needs to inform our recruitment strategy.

Figure 7: Age of Newham foster carers¹⁹

¹⁷ The 48 placements not available are excluded from the denominator. The places are not available for a range of reasons which are: carer reasons not specified (15), only available if a sibling group placed (9), used by young person staying put (7), needs of child currently in placement (5), carer taking a break/ pending resignation (5), reserved for pending placement (4), carer under investigation (3).

¹⁸ The other factors are: the child's education; the expectations around contact with relatives and friends; the child's history; child's behaviour; child's health; the focus of the placement (Newham Tri-X)

¹⁹ Where there are two adults registered in the household, the age of the primary foster carer has been used.



85 per cent of Newham foster care households are in Newham or its neighbouring authorities (58 per cent in Newham, 27 per cent in neighbouring boroughs). Eleven per cent live in other parts of London, and the remainder outside London.

Many foster carers are restricted in the number and age of children they can care for by their accommodation sizes. There remains a shortage of Newham foster carers especially those who can meet the needs of emergency placements and accommodate older children, sibling groups and higher levels of need. The Fostering Service works with Housing Allocations to secure larger properties for foster carers in social housing and to agree adaptations and extensions as required.

Foster carers benefit from the support of the fostering team family therapist, an embedded clinician with the fostering service who provides training, case consultations and 1:1 Support for the foster carers through their supervising social worker.

Placements with Connected Carers

Children placed with connected carers are more likely to have stable long term placements. Nationally 20 percent of children placed with connected carers have been in placements for more than five years compared to 11 per cent for those with other foster carers (DFE, Improving Permanence Data Pack 2013). Social workers are required to investigate placements with connected persons before in-house foster carers are approached, in order to increase the number of children in this type of placement.

Increases in the foster carer allowances have been introduced to ensure that Newham rates remain competitive with neighbouring authorities. There are currently nine fostering households that are the connected carers of the children looked after. 14 children looked after are placed with these families.

Adoptions

Legal permanency which includes adoption, special guardianship orders (SGOs) and long term fostering provide the best outcomes for children and young people. In addition to the 14 children placed with connected carers, there are 83 children in long term foster placements.

There were 21 special guardianship orders granted in 2018-2019. Over the last three years 58 SGOs have been granted. 27 were made to former foster carers so transferring foster placements to permanency. 19 of the 21 were granted to a relative or family friend. SGOs attract a fee and an ongoing financial commitment so that while the high number of SGOs reduce the overall number of children looked after, the overall expenditure remains high.

There were 13 adoptions in 2018-2019 - 5 per cent of the children who ceased to be looked after were adopted. This was below the 2017-2018 average for Newham's statistical neighbours (8 per cent). The average for England was 13 per cent. Over the last three years 31 children have been adopted. There were equal numbers of boys and girls and almost all were aged five years old or less. 39 per cent were from mixed ethnicity backgrounds with black children under represented compared to children from other backgrounds and their numbers in the CLA population.

The adoption support offer includes a systemic psychotherapist to support placement stability. There is a contact model which is being taken forward by the East London regional adoption agency, supported by the Pause team, the impact of which can be seen in its work with birth mothers and helping children move and settle in their adoptive families.

Newham will be transferring the recruitment and assessment of adopters, family finding and matching of children/adopters and adoption support to the Regional Adoption Agency known as Adopt London East (ALE) from October 2019.

Placements with independent fostering agencies (IFAs)

Newham currently spot purchases the majority of IFA placements from the London Care Placements preferred provider list. The rates paid are negotiated annually through London Councils for all London boroughs. The North and East London IFA framework has expired and we are working to establish a dynamic purchasing system for fostering providers. Of the 42 fostering agencies currently in use 37 of the 42 are from the London Care Placements database.

Children's homes

At any given time, there are approximately 30-40 Newham children looked after placed in residential homes²⁰. Some young people need the care and attention that only a children's home placement can provide. These children may have experienced multiple placement breakdowns in foster care; others may not want a substitute family, and for them a residential placement is a positive choice.

Newham uses a combination of London Care Placements approved providers and spot purchasing as it is increasingly difficult to find suitable placements. Only one of the 44 children in children homes at the 31st March 2019 was in a children's home in the borough as there is a regional shortage of therapeutic placements leading to children in homes being placed at distance. Even these placements can struggle with the complex needs of our children looked after.

²⁰ This provision includes Department for Education (DFE) approved schools with schools on site or nearby and which may employ a psychologist or different types of therapists.

To address the shortage of children's home placements and the issue of spot purchasing, we are working with neighbouring authorities, who have the same challenges, to jointly commission our own children's homes specifically aimed at the needs of our children. The aim is to work with providers to build capacity and share expertise. This provision will include step down to fostering placements and reunification. The joint commissioning approach includes co-production with young people and providers to develop the most appropriate placement model for young people at risk of CSE, gangs and other challenging needs.

Short Breaks

There is a shortage of in house short breaks foster carers for children and young people with ASD and learning disabilities including those in mixed sibling groups. A targeted recruitment of respite foster carers is planned building on families with a connection to disability as this is often a common theme of specialist carers. This will include staff at special schools, (community) nurses, social workers, teaching assistants. The 0-25 SEND service will facilitate the identification of potential foster carers and work with the Fostering service support the training of the foster carers in partnership with health colleagues.

Secure children's homes

The number of placements in secure children's homes is low at one or two a year²¹. These placements are used as a last resort where young people have a high risk of repeat absconding, CSE or are in danger to themselves or others. Young people who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and with challenging behaviour feature regularly among those being placed in secure units.

There are 12 welfare secure homes (including one female only home) in England and Wales. There are currently no secure homes in the London area with the nearest in West Sussex. There are 121 beds available in England and Wales. There are four welfare secure children's homes in Scotland with 78 beds²².

Overnight placements for young people in Police custody

There is a demand for 'emergency' placements specifically for children in Police custody who are required to attend Court the following day (or so). Custody Officers have a duty of care under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) to secure the transfer of the arrested child to Local Authority Accommodation. Local Authorities then have a duty to ensure the child is kept safe, protected and 'accommodated'.

Approximately, 30 children are detained in Police custody every month across London and require non-secure accommodation. These children are likely to be teenage boys aged 15-17 years of age. They may also have been arrested for offences with violence. We are working with Newham foster carers and IFAs to meet the overnight requirements of this cohort of young people.

Emergency Accommodation

²¹ Apart from five during 2013-2014

²² A fifth 6 bed home prioritises Scottish young people and so very rarely has vacancies.

Newham had a much higher proportion of children entering care through Police protection in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018¹. 31 per cent of children entered care this way in Newham compared to 11 per cent of children nationally and 22 per cent of Newham's statistical neighbours. In 2018-2019, the number has decreased from 78 to 47 young people or 20 per cent of children entering care this way. The Newham Fostering Service has one dedicated foster carer for emergency placements.

Where accommodation is required in an emergency, it is a challenge as there may be limited information about the young person and many children's homes. We are working with IFAs do to secure additional emergency beds. We want to build a core group of emergency foster carers who are able to look after young people aged 12 and over with the greatest level of need.

Semi-independent provision

Semi-independent accommodation is accommodation for young people of 16 and 17 year olds with staff on site. This type of provision is not regulated by Ofsted and are defined as Households of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

In 2017, Newham joined the West London Alliance Supported (WLA) Accommodation Framework contract for supported living accommodation for under and over 18 year olds. This framework includes both 16 plus and 18 plus accommodation. Our ambition is to reduce the overall use of semi independent placements and when required to have a small number of quality providers. At 31st March 2019, there were 38 placements with 17 semi-independent providers. The majority of these are on a spot purchase basis outside of the WLA framework as availability can be limited.

We are working with our North East London colleagues and partners in Children's Cross Regional Arrangements Group²³ (CCRAG to share the intelligence to ensure a better quality service to our young people. Some children's homes providers are also entering this market and the post-18 market as a natural progression for older young people living with them.

We have recently introduced a new performance management and outcomes framework for providers.

Accommodation and support for care leavers aged 18 and over

A number of young people remain in their foster placements following their 18th birthday as part of the Staying Put arrangements. It is expected that the capacity of in-house foster carers may decline in the future as more post-18 foster placements are in place. There are currently 43 staying put arrangements in place. We are also working to pilot a supported lodgings scheme to provide more options for our children looked after and care leavers aged 16 and over.

Independent accommodation for care leavers includes shared houses, flats and bedsits with or without a package of floating support depending on need. Newham Council currently has a

²³ The Children's Cross Regional Arrangements Group (CCRAG) is a partnership of local authorities working together to support the sourcing, contracting, monitoring and annual fee negotiations for children's placements and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people.

block contract of 19 units of shared independent accommodation provision for care leavers in three houses, one of which are in Newham. Some accommodation is secured from a framework contract led by the West London Alliance but the majority is spot purchased from independent providers.

We are putting in place a contract and specification for all spot purchased provision to establish a more robust contract monitoring framework for these providers. The medium term plan is to build on the new contract and service specification and use it to re-commission all accommodation and support for care leavers through a dynamic purchasing system.

Table 8 shows that 121 of care leavers (37 per cent) live in shared accommodation and 45 (14 per cent) in semi independent accommodation.

Table 8: Care leavers Accommodation type at July 2019

Accommodation	Number of Care Leavers	% of care leavers
Independent Living (Shared)	121	37%
Semi Independent (24 Hrs Supported)	45	14%
Staying Put	43	13%
Council housing	42	13%
Family & Friends	27	8%
Halls of Residence	24	7%
Supported (Shared Lives)/Private Rented Sector/other	17	5%
Prison	11	3%
Private Rented Sector/other	8	2%
TOTAL	330	100%

Due to shortages in social housing, there are delays in young people receiving their own council tenancies which has increased the number of 18-21 year olds in semi and independent accommodation.

5.2 Placement Costs

Over the last three years, expenditure on care/ accommodation and support for children looked after has exceeded budget. The overspend in 2018-2019 was £1,175,130 which was more than £5 million less than the £6,307,782 overspend in 2017-2018. Spend on IFAs and children's homes (including residential schools) make up 80 per cent of the over spend.

Table 9: Newham Council Placement Budget and Spend in 2018-2019

	2018-2019			
Type of placement	Total Budget	Total Spend	Overspend	% overspend

Type of placement	2018-2019			
	Total Budget	Total Spend	Overspend	% overspend
IFAs	£5,151,200	£5,479,181	£327,981	28%
Children's homes	£8,195,900	£8,816,228	£620,328	53%
In House Fostering	£3,351,500	£3,372,222	£20,722	2%
Semi-independent	£3,740,400	£3,722,861	(17,539)	-1%
Secure Remand	£136,000	£352,075	£216,075	18%
Other	-	£7,563	£7,563	0%
Total	£20,575,000	£21,750,130	£1,175,130	

Source: 2019 ALDCS Children's Services Finance Survey

5.3 Average Weekly Cost per child

Analysis indicates that there has been an improvement in the unit cost of in-house fostering and semi-independent provision. We aim to maintain this while getting better value for money for the unit costs of IFA fostering and residential placements.

The unit cost of in house fostering does not include overheads such as the supervising social worker costs, recruitment and assessment of foster carer costs etc... It is likely that even if we recruit more foster carers, we will not address the budget shortfall.

Table 10: Newham Council Average Weekly Cost per placement per child (excludes UASC)

Average weekly rates (£) by placement type	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
IFAs	£830	£811	£825	£841
Children's homes	£2,890	£3,000	£3,252	£3,462
In House Fostering	£395	£395	£556	£397
Semi-independent	£1,033	£944	£1,225	£823
Secure Remand	£4,952	£4,587	£6,048	£6,468
Other	£476	£443	£935	£2,225

Source: 2018 ALDCS Children's Services Finance Survey

Joint funded placements are placements where the looked after child has special educational needs and has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan or meets the criteria for continuing health care. As such, the cost of the residential placement is shared between social care, education and health on a bipartite or tripartite basis. A key priority is to ensure that funding from education and health partners is proportionate to the need for the appropriate service.

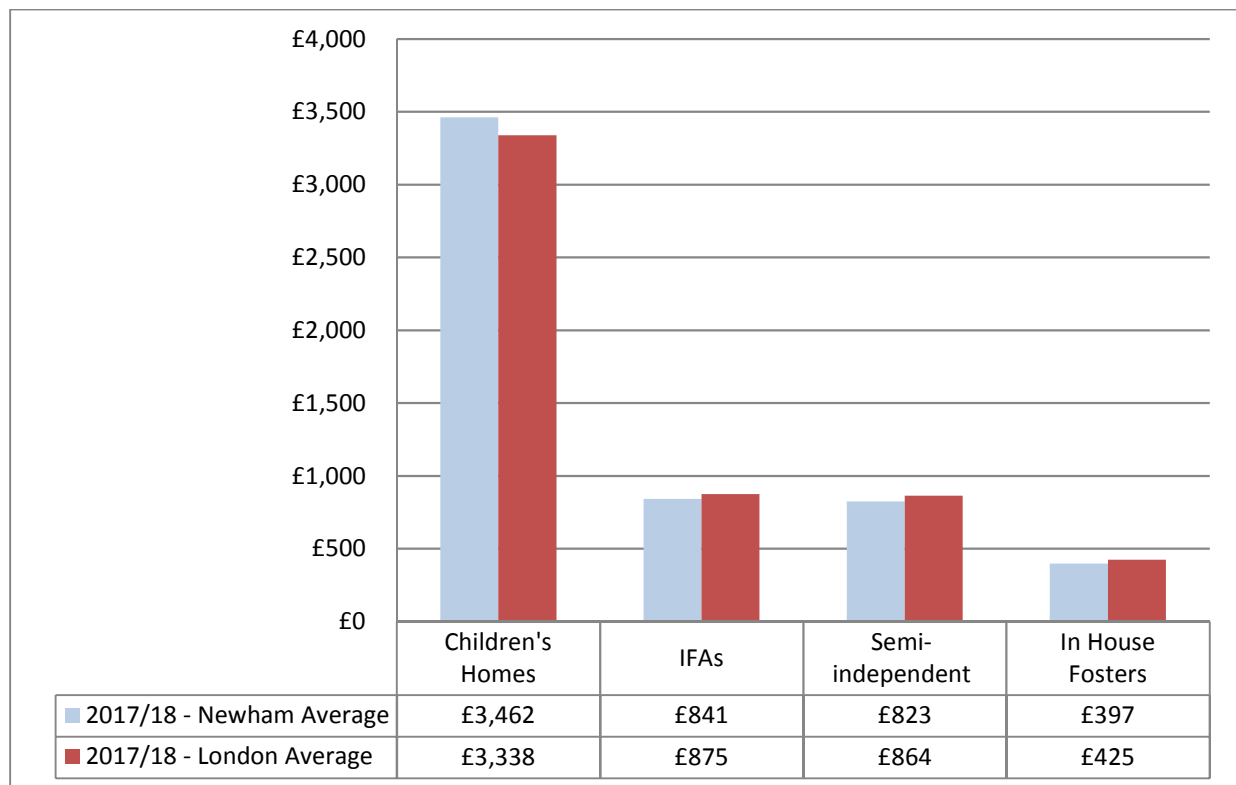
5.4 Newham Cost Comparison with London Average Weekly Cost

Newham compares favourably against other London authorities for in house foster care, IFA foster care and semi independent placement costs where Newham costs are lower than the London average. Figure 8 shows that in 2017-2018:

- the average weekly rate for in house foster care across the 32 Boroughs was £424 per week with Newham at £397 per week.

- Newham’s average weekly costs for IFA foster carers was £841 against the average weekly London rate of £875.
- Newham’s semi-independent unit cost is broadly consistent with other boroughs at £823 per week against a London average of £864.
- Newham’s average weekly rate for residential care was more expensive than the London average rate at £3,462 against an average of £3,338.

Figure 8: Average Weekly Cost of External Residential Provision for 32 London Boroughs 2017-2018



Source: 2018 ALDCS Children’s Services Finance Survey

Based on the number of Newham children in each placement type, our lower average weekly cost shows an overall saving of £232,000 compared to the London average costs.

The above average cost for external children’s home placements results in additional costs and the sub-regional commissioning in this area is focused at improving the quality and reducing the cost of this type of provision.

Table 11: Estimated Savings from Newham’s lower average weekly cost 2017-2018²⁴

²⁴ Latest available comparative data

	Newham average weekly cost	London average weekly cost	Number of Newham children at 31st March 2018	Estimated Savings/additional costs over 12 months
IFAs	£841	£875	113	-£199,784
Children's Homes	£3,462	£3,338	44	£283,712
In House Fosters	£397	£425	144	-£209,664
Semi-independent	£823	£864	50	-£106,600
Total				-£232,336

6 Priorities for 2019-2022

Based on the analysis of local need, we have identified the following nine priorities:

1. Improve services to support children, prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children to return to their families
2. Recruit more Newham foster carer households and adopters
3. Maximise the effective use of Newham foster carers
4. Develop an accommodation and support pathway for care leavers
5. Improve the commissioning of specialist and therapeutic placements, including the use of sub-regional arrangements
6. Engage better with the market and improve shaping
7. Make better use of data and management information systems to inform commissioning decisions
8. Make the best use of our resources
9. Develop a range of high quality placements and offer more choice in our placement provision

The subsequent sections will outline the priorities and commissioning intentions to meet each priority. The full action plan is in Appendix 1.

6.1 Priority 1: Improve services to support children, prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children to return to their families

We will continue to offer more support to enable children to remain safely at home or to return home when it is their best interests. Our aim is to improve the consistency of decision making and the effective use of edge of care services including interventions such as Family Group Conferencing, Multi-Systemic Therapy/Family Functional Therapy through our Keeping Families Together service and Families First. All Early Help services work in a Systemic way with our partners to provide a joined up approach for families.

The Early Help offer in Newham comprises three core services that work together in the preventative space:

- The Early Help Partnership (tier 2): this Team works closely with schools to help them identify and address family concerns as they emerge, and put in place a robust Early Help Record to address issues before they become more serious.

- Families First (tier 2-3): these First teams work with families who require more intensive support but do not meet statutory social work thresholds. Family's First key workers coordinate a personalised and multi-agency package of support for each family which will help them identify, and find practical solutions to the problems they are dealing with.
- Keeping Families Together (tier 3-4): this service works intensively for 12 weeks with families who are on the 'edge of care'. The purpose is to strengthen relationships and help families stay together where safe to do so. Families are also able to access specialist Family Therapy services.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Increase of capacity for services aimed at older children
- Implement standards and practice framework in current Families First service
- Develop an outcomes framework and dashboard for the Early Help offer to monitor activity, throughput and impact.
- Implement and monitor our new Keeping Families Together service working intensively with families who are on the 'edge of care' over a 12-week period including the provision of specialist Family Therapy services (Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy)

6.2 Priority 2: Recruit more Newham foster carer households and adopters

Our ambition to increase the percentage of in house as a proportion of all foster care placements from 57 to 70 per cent. The aim is to recruit more new carers than the number of de-registrations each year. We need to recruit new foster carers able to care for older children, disabled children and to have emergency placements. We also need fostering households able to accept sibling groups. We will work with our housing colleagues and social housing partners to support allocations of larger properties to enable siblings to be placed together locally.

We also need PACE emergency foster placements to meet the overnight requirements of the cohort of young people in Police custody required to attend Court the following day.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Implement a strategy to increase the recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers including for sibling groups, respite, PACE foster carers, white foster carers and more foster carers able to care for teenagers
- Increase the number of carers able to support teenagers and children under two years of age
- Increase the use of adoption
- Develop supported lodgings options for care leavers

6.3 Priority 3: Maximise the effective use of Newham foster carers

We want to build on the support services available to foster carers to retain them and secure foster carers able to work with adolescents especially those with complex support needs. . This will include reviewing the support and remuneration package and training to give foster

carers the skills to care for more complex children looked after and reduce placement breakdown.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Achieve a 90 per cent occupancy rate for Newham foster carers
- Review additional benefits and incentives for Newham foster carers in order to make Newham more attractive for retaining and recruiting foster carers
- Implement approaches that maximise the opportunities for permanence as soon as possible including child arrangement, special guardianship, and adoption including improving the quality of assessments for Special Guardians, foster carers and adopters

6.4 Priority 4: Develop an improved accommodation and support pathway for care leavers

Over the period of this strategy, we are going to increase the number of accommodation and support options available to our care leavers and ensure that we have in place the right contracts with providers to get the right support and move on for our young people. This will include contracts and service specifications for spot purchased arrangements.

There is a shortage of standalone and shared accommodation for care leavers and an over supply of staffed units often with support that is not always required. Our intention is to establish a local DPS with robust qualification criteria. We have developed a new approach by renting four properties on a block basis which we have then turned into shared accommodation for care leavers with floating support from one provider.

We will work with housing colleagues to acquire further properties and expand this model of working. We are working with Planning colleagues to have a shared understanding and way forward for the implications of planning criteria on our ability to provide shared accommodation in Newham for our care leavers. We are working with Housing Allocations to increase nominations while recognising the limited supply and the need to consider other options. We will investigate the use of leased, owned or acquired assets to stimulate investment and sustain sufficiency).

There is a need for accommodation for young people who are 18 plus and moving from semi-independent accommodation who may not be ready for living in shared accommodation.

We have a Care Leavers Transformation Project that is reviewing the accommodation pathway and which has developed strategies to maximise our income from housing benefit/universal credit which we can then spend on additional accommodation and support for our care leavers and children looked after.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Develop supported lodgings options for care leavers
- Create a clear, consistent accommodation pathway for care leavers which improves their outcomes and supports their independence
- Improve the social housing offer for care leavers and support care leavers to move to their accommodation of choice
- Engage with the semi independent provider market to maintain and improve standards and build on creative approaches to sourcing accommodation through the LBN landlord function.

- Re-model the use of flexible floating support for young people
- Improve the uptake and collection of housing benefit to maximise the available resource for supporting care leavers
- Reduce the use of semi independent accommodation for children looked after (under 18s).

6.5 Priority 5: Improve the commissioning of specialist therapeutic placements including use of sub-regional arrangements

Many of our children in residential homes are placed outside of Newham for safeguarding reasons or to access specialist placement to meet their need. There are a number of categories of young people for whom referrals request placements at great distance from Newham. These young people are:

- At risk of sexual exploitation.
- Go missing
- Associated with gangs or youth offending
- Self-harming behaviour
- Young people exhibiting sexually harmful behaviour

Longer placements in children’s homes are strongly associated with a reduction in levels of criminal activity and substance misuse²⁵. Our aim is to ensure that the needs of children placed further away from Newham are prioritised and that their ability to access and receive good quality services and support is not compromised by the location of their placement.

We need to strengthen the commissioning of a range of services and interventions for SEND children and young people. This will be through early intervention services, inclusive practice and co-production with families, and improved use of section 75 Agreements

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Recruit specialist foster carers for emergency and step down from residential care
- Mobilise the joint commissioning of children’s home provision with the North East London Group of local authorities, supported by the DFE Innovation programme
- Work in partnership with London residential home providers to improve the quality of provision and increase local options available at affordable prices including jointly commission the most appropriate delivery model for young people at risk of CSE, gangs and other challenging needs
- Increase the availability of foster carers able to support teenagers and young people with high level complex needs
- Strengthen the commissioning of services and interventions for SEND children and young people including shorts breaks and special schools.

6.6 Priority 6: Engage better with the market and improve shaping

Nationally there are over 2,397 children’s homes in England with 119 registered children’s homes in London of which 71 per cent are good or Outstanding (DFE, August 2019). The

²⁵ Sir Martin Narey: Residential Care in England – Report of Sir Martin Narey’s Independent Review of Children’s Residential Care (2016)

Independent Children's Home Association (ICHA) membership covers 50 per cent of children's homes registered in England.

London Care Placements has 235 registered children's homes on its database but only 18 of the 119 current children's homes in London. London Care Placements is working to increase the numbers of providers on its database. Market engagement work is required to review and make contact with providers across London to establish their capacity for working in partnership with Newham to deliver a quality service that meets the need of our children. Capacity is needed to engage with homes in the London area and establish working relationships. Of the seven homes in Newham, three are rated as good and the remaining four are rated as requires improvement. (at August 2019)

The Children's Cross Regional Arrangements Group (CCRAG) is a partnership of local authorities working together to support the sourcing, contracting, monitoring and annual fee negotiations for children's placements. CCRAG members have pooled resources to develop best practice contract management and risk management processes for children's homes. Newham Brokerage and Contracts teams will also access free training and share contract monitoring with the 18 authorities across England who are CCRAG members.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Effective communication with providers and foster carers
- Increase frequency of provider forums for fostering, children's homes and semi-independent providers
- Work with providers to develop local and appropriate provision for young people that are at risk of all forms of exploitation, self-harm and risky behaviours, and endeavour to improve outcomes for these young people
- Schedule meetings with children's homes across London to identify those that offer a service that meet the needs of our children
- Work closely with the Council's SEN service and NHS Commissioners to procure and jointly fund the best resources for children with disabilities, conduct disorders and mental health

6.7 Priority 7: Make better use of data and management information systems to inform commissioning decisions

Evidence-based quality information is key to making good commissioning decisions. There is a Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework for evidence based qualitative decisions. As part of the Framework, performance datasets will be used to support the understanding of the cohorts and placement stability/ breakdowns. This quantitative evidence will then be utilised to undertake audits and case learning.

The learning captured from both quantitative and qualitative analysis will be used for future care provision, foster care matching and parallel planning to minimise placement breakdowns and increase stability. Commissioning will use this intelligence to understand the demographics and commission at both micro and macro levels.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Create an intelligence tool for children in care and foster carers
- Provide up-to-date and current insights on the availability and occupancy of in-house Newham foster carers

- Develop robust data collection and monitoring processes for the in-house foster care service

6.8 Priority 8: Improve our Make the best use of our resources

We need to ensure the right placements are made at the right cost. We will ensure there is increased capacity in commissioning and contract management staff to deliver an enhanced service that ensures that effective monitoring of the use of resources. Membership of CCRAAG and engagement on a sub-regional level is starting to address this. Increasing the quality and supply of local children’s homes with neighbouring authorities is a key priority.

We will ensure that the internal fostering service and IFA provision is subject to the same scrutiny of performance and quality. The quality assurance system will also be used for spot purchased providers.

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Review placements to ensure value for money is being achieved
- Negotiate rates with providers based on time-limited outcomes to be delivered
- Review support and services available to care leavers
- Establish DPS contracts for fostering, children’s homes and semi-independent provision in partnership with neighbouring authorities
- Ensure requests and payments to foster carers and providers is accurate and timely

6.9 Priority 9: Develop a range of high quality placements and offer more choice in our placement provision

In developing this strategy, two focused meetings were held with 40 members of the Children in Care Councils. The new priorities for young people are detailed in the table below and relate largely to the quality of placements which will be addressed in this priority.

Table 12: 2019-2022 Priorities for Children in Council Members

What young people said they want...	Quotes from young people
To be listened to	Also I like it when they listen to me and when they are so kind. The carer listens to me. If I tell them to do something they try. For example, I asked to be signed up to a football club and they found one for me I asked my aunty for the bestest [birthday] party and I got it. I don't get along with everyone and sometimes I feel I can't tell my foster carer everything I've been trying to get therapy since May but no-one is listening.
Adults to keep their word	"I've only had one foster carer and I've been there for 7 years. Whenever I am late I call her. She's always giving

What young people said they want...	Quotes from young people
	<p>me independence as long as I call her"</p> <p>I improved my behaviour to be more responsible so I could move as that is what my IRO wanted but it has not happened"</p>
Choice about who they live with and where they live	<p>"Not every one wants to live with foster carers. Since I moved from the foster carer I am much happier"</p> <p>"I am 21. When I asked if I can share with my own friends, I was told no. Only young people from Newham"</p> <p>I don't get to choose what colour my room is</p>
To be able to say goodbye properly when they move on	<p>"We have good foster carers but we need good closures as well as good openings.</p>
Honesty when they can't 'stay put'	<p>When young people want to stay with their foster carer after up to seven years, they are not told honestly about what is going to happen"</p>
Placement planning meetings to take place earlier and more frequently so issues can be resolved quickly	<p>"When something negative happens it can be a while before the review and then too late to bring it up</p>
Online social media methods of communication to keep them up to date	<p>Would like twitter and Instagram page for young people as it is the best way to communicate.</p> <p>We are doing an Instagram page in the leaving care forum.</p>
Pets and would like to be asked if they want to be in homes with pets	<p>"There are two cats who are very friendly and cute. They listen to me when something is wrong. They are also friendly and funny.</p>
Social workers to have empathy	<p>"Social worker told me to get over it. How can I get over a 9 year relationship so quickly? She needs to have empathy".</p>
To be included in family activities	<p>I like the little outings and places that me and my carer go to and spending time together</p> <p>I don't want to just stay in my room I want to go in the living room and watch TV with the family and talk</p>
Good home environment	<p>I like it when my aunt listens to me. I like it when my foster sister makes something delicious"</p> <p>"I like it when my foster carer cares about me".</p> <p>"When I first met my foster sister and my aunty and they were nice to me".</p>

Commissioning intentions to achieve this priority:

- Improve the quality of referrals so they are strength-based with clearly defined outcomes in order to deliver effective packages of care without always incurring unnecessary additional costs for 'extras'
- Develop and implement Young Commissioners programme to work with commissioners of accommodation, care and support for young people.
- Develop an outcomes based quality assurance framework to monitor quality and establish what 'good' looks like in fostering, residential and supported accommodation services
- Implement the CCRAAG risk assessment tool and contract monitoring in partnership with other local authority CCRAAG members
- Work with all providers to improve quality and standards through regular quality assurance and contract monitoring visits

7 Measuring success: outcomes and key performance indicators

The following outcomes will be delivered through this strategy:

Evidence of outcomes being achieved and cost effectiveness – we aim to measure children and young people's outcomes using a standardised approach across all placements ensuring an understanding of what does and does not work and acknowledging when something needs to change.

Placements are stable – we will do all we can to support the stability of placements for our children looked after.

Placements are local (where appropriate) – we aim to increase in the proportion of placements in Newham and within 20 miles of Newham.

Placements are available for older, challenging and disabled children and young people – we aim to increase in the number and proportion of teenagers, disabled young people and those placed with in house foster carers.

Young people are prepared for transition – to a family environment or adulthood with the resilience, skills and abilities to thrive and a diminishing need for services.

In addition, we will track progress against the following key performance indicators.

7.1 Looked after children receive a good education

A good education is a strong foundation for economic wellbeing and provides resilience to support being healthy and having good mental health. Our ambition is always to help our children to attain the best possible educational outcomes so that they can go on to be successful and resilient adults.

In 2018-2019, 17 per cent of the school aged cohort of children looked after had an Education, Health and Care Plan (47 children). In 2018-2019, 80 per cent of children looked after attended mainstream schools with 88 per cent of settings judged as being Good or Outstanding in their last Ofsted report. A small number of children were placed in residential special schools or residential children's homes with education on site because of their complex needs.

During 2018-2019, personal education plans (PEPs) were completed for 94 per cent of children of statutory school age. The Virtual school is working hard to improve this figure so that all young people in this age range also have a PEP (or similar document if they are not in education employment or training (NEET)). The PEPs include academic, vocational and also emotional and well being targets.

In 2016, the assessment system for GCSEs changed. The Attainment 8 score is based on average level of attainment across 8 qualifications: a higher score represents a higher level of achievement. The Progress 8 score is based on the progress that pupils make from the end of Key Stage 2 through to GCSEs: a score of -1.00 means they made one less grade of progress than children nationally with similar KS2 results across the 8 qualifications.

Table 13: Academic achievement of children looked after, Newham, statistical neighbours and England

	Attainment 8				2019* ²⁶	Progress 8		
	2016	2017	2018	2019		2016	2017	2018
Newham	20.2	20.4	25.0	20.4	-1.30	-1.21	-0.38	
Statistical Neighbours	25.0	20.7	19.2		-1.00	-1.31	-1.23	
England	22.0	19.3	18.9		-1.14	-1.18	-1.20	

LBN Performance team, October 2018

Table 13 shows that Newham had a lower Attainment 8 score than its statistical neighbours and England in 2016. In 2018 Newham children looked after have outperformed children in statistical neighbours and England overall. In 2019, average Attainment 8 was 20.4 which is down on 2018 but above the last year’s National CLA average of 18.9.

in 2016 Newham children looked after were making less progress than the average for statistical neighbours and England for the Progress 8 score. In 2017 and 2018, Newham children looked after were making progress compared with our statistical neighbours. Progress 8 data is not yet available for 2019.

Ten young people achieved grades 4/5 or above in both English and Maths – 22 per cent. This is better than last year in Newham and the National CLA average for 2017-18 which was 17.8 per cent

70 per cent of care leavers are in education, employment or training. The leaving care team and the Virtual School work to re-engage these young people through individual direct work. Opportunities for short courses are offered by a variety of partners and some of these short courses have led on to longer-term training or apprenticeships.

Newham has 62 care leavers at university across all year groups in September 2019. 27 have secured places to start in autumn 2019 (three in foundation years). The overall percentage of care leavers in higher education for 2018-2019 was 11 per cent compared to 6 per cent nationally. This is in part due to the support we offer our care leavers with accommodation. At the end of 2018-2019, eleven have graduated with at least two awarded first class honours degrees.

²⁶ Provisional results gathered by Newham Virtual School for the 45 children looked after.

7.2 Placements are local

The sufficiency duty requires authorities to provide placements in the local area, as the proximity to family and social networks and communities is in the best interest of the child. Distance from Newham results in additional costs for contact, social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers going to visit children for their Children Looked After Reviews.

Over the last seven years, Newham has made year on year good progress in finding placements closer to home and is closing the gap with its national and statistical neighbours. In 2017-2018, Newham's performance was better than the average for its statistical neighbours and London and this has been maintained in 2018-2019. Our next target is to match the national average.

Table 14: The percentage of children looked after at 31 March placed outside LA boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live

Year	Newham (%)	Statistical Neighbours (%)	London (%)	England (%)
2009- 2010	27	18.3	18	13
2010-2011	27	17.3	18	12
2011-2012	25	17.4	17	12
2012-2013	23	18.7	18	12
2013-2014	23	19.5	18	13
2014-2015	19	20.5	18	14
2015-2016	18	19.2	19	14
2016-2017	15	19.80	19	14
2017-2018	18	20.86	19	15
2018-2019	18			

Source: Data Impact Team (2018 and 2019)

7.3 Placements are stable

There are two measures of stability: the proportion of children looked after who have had three or more placements in the previous 12 months and the proportion of children looked after who have been in the same placement for two or more years.

Newham's placement stability has improved over the last three years. In 2018-2019 11.3 per cent of children were moved three or more times. This was better than the rate for our statistical neighbours in 2017-2018.

Table 15: % of children looked after with 3 or more placements in the past 12 months (at 31st March each year)

Year	Newham	Statistical Neighbours	London	England
2015-2016	12.0	11.6	11.0	10.0
2016-2017	17.0	12.0	12.0	10.0
2017-2018	16.0	12.4	11.0	10.0
2018-2019	11.3			

Source: Data Impact Team (2019)

7.4 Looked after children are healthy and emotionally resilient

Looked after children and care leavers are between four and five times more likely to self-harm in adulthood. They are also at a five fold increased risk of childhood mental, emotional and behavioural problems, and 6-7 times more likely to have conduct disorders. Teenage girls who are looked after are two and a half times more likely to become pregnant than other teenagers.

Statistically, children looked after experience significantly worse mental health than other children. Nationally, almost half of children looked after meet the criteria for a psychiatric disorder, compared to one in ten children not in care²⁷.

It is recognised that all children looked after have experienced trauma in some way. They are more likely to have been exposed to deprivation, family breakdown, family mental illness and substance abuse by care gives. The impact of these Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE²⁸) directly affect the young person and impact their development, relationships and increase their risk of engaging in health-harming behaviours and experiencing poorer mental and physical health outcomes in adult hood.

Understanding childhood adversity and trauma, intervening early and adopting a strengths based approach is the way Newham is supporting our children and young people. Ensuring that they are able to regulate emotions and manage emotional stress as well as acquiring practical problem solving skills is key. Further detail on the impact of ACE and the range of activity in Newham is in Appendix 2.

The Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (“SDQ”) is used to measure the emotional resilience of children looked after: the lower the score the greater the resilience. The SDQ results indicate that Newham children looked after have greater emotional resilience than children looked after in statistical neighbours and nationally.

Table 16 shows that Newham has seen an increase in score from 10.5 in 2015 to 12.04 in 2019. The 2019 score indicates Newham children are more resilient than the previous few years.

Table 16: Average Score for CLA with whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire was carried out

Year	Newham	Statistical Neighbours	London	England
2014-2015	10.5	14.0	13.4	13.9
2015-2016	13.0	14.0	13.2	13.9
2016-2017	12.9	14.0	13.0	14.0
2017-2018	13.8	14.5	13.7	14.1
2018-2019	12.04			

Source: Data Impact Team (2015), Data Impact team CYPS 2019

²⁷ House of Commons Education Committee, 2016
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmeduc/481/481.pdf>

²⁸ Young Minds: Addressing Adversity, 2018

Table 17 shows that 88.7 per cent of children looked after had their annual health assessment in 2018-2019 which was an improvement on the 73.4^[1] per cent in 2017-2018. 87.1 per cent of children looked after had dentist checks during 2018-2019 – also an improvement. For children who are out of area, we are reliant on external clinicians to complete the health assessment. Some older children looked after also refuse their assessments and dental checks so we are developing a user friendly health questionnaire that can be completed by the young person with their key worker or social worker.

The low rate of immunisations in table 17 was due a recording issue and impacted by the refusal of the contract holder for immunisations (that take place in teenage school year groups) to share their programme information.. We are working around this through communications with foster carers, young people themselves and residential providers. The rate of immunisations was verified by the CLA nurse team through General Practitioners and through other sources and is 86 per cent. This above the national average of 85 per cent in 2017-2018. We are working to improve our IT and communication systems so that accurate reporting can be achieved in a timely manner.

Table 17: Children continuously looked after for 12 months at 31 March each year

Year*	Number of children immunisations up to date		Number of children their teeth checked by a dentist		Number of children who have had their annual health assessment ²⁹		SSDA 903 OC2 cohort - children continuously looked after for 12 months at 31 March
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
2014/15	197	78.80%	235	94.00%	236	94.40%	250
2015/16	202	86.32%	224	95.73%	219	93.59%	234
2016/17	183	83.94%	204	93.58%	209	95.87%	218
2017/18	102	41.13%	177	71.37%	182	73.39%	248
2018/19	130	50.78%	223	87.11%	227	88.67%	256

Source: SSDA 903 Submissions for years as detailed

8 Monitoring this strategy

This strategy runs until 2022, and will remain under ongoing review, including a review on an annual basis by the Corporate Parenting Board. A Sufficiency Working Group will monitor the strategy. The action plan is attached in Appendix 2.

^[1] Based on the SSDA 903 cohort of children continuously looked after for 12 months at 31st March.
²⁹ Health assessments are either initial or annual

Appendix 1: Action Plan to deliver the strategy 2019-2022

Priority 1: Improve services to support children, prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children to return to their families

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
1a) Increase of capacity for services aimed at older children	Youth Service expanded service in place Early Help Hub in place Keeping Safe project and other opportunities developed		Head of Early Help	September 2019 October 2020 March 2020
1b) Implement standards and practice framework in current Families First service	Practice framework and standards in place. 70% audits show assessment and plans are good*.	(Ref 1.1 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan)	Head of Early Help	March 2020
1c) Develop an outcomes framework and dashboard for early help to monitor activity, throughput and impact	Early help data set in place informs activity; caseload; throughput and outcome.*	(Ref 1.1 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan)	Head of Early Help	March 2020
1d) Implement and monitor our new Keeping Families Together service working intensively with families who are on the 'edge of care' over a 12 week period including the provision of specialist Family Therapy services (Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy)	Externally commissioned Family therapy services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LBN to refer 36 suitable YP/families a year for therapy up until February 2021. Minimum of 75% of young people remain out of care during post intervention tracking period.		Head of Early Help	February 2021 March 2022

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
	Keeping Families Together in house: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the number of young people aged 10+ entering care - Reduce CLA figures by reunifying young people already in care with their families. 			March 2022 March 2022

Priority 2: Recruit more Newham foster carer households and adopters

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
2a) Implement a strategy to increase the recruitment and retention of in house foster carers including for sibling groups, respite, PACE foster carers, white foster carers and more foster carers able to care for teenagers	Strategy implemented. Increase in number of children and young people that can stay with our in house foster carers		Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2020 March 2021 March 2022
2) Increase the use of adoption	% leaving care by SGO/ adoption/reunification in line with SN average*	(Ref 2.2 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan)	Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2020
2c) Increase the number of carers able to support teenagers and children under two years of age	Fostering recruitment delivers net gain in foster carers to support matching*.	(Ref 2.7 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan)	Head of Corporate Parenting	April 2020

Priority 3: Maximise the effective use of Newham foster carers

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
3a) Achieve 90 per cent occupancy rates for Newham foster carers	Live data on occupancy rates of foster carers. 90 per cent occupancy rate achieved.		Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2020
3b) Review additional benefits and incentives for Newham foster carers in order to make Newham more attractive for retaining and recruiting foster carers as part of Corporate Parenting Charter.	Proposals to increase out of hours support identified in consultation with foster carers Additional support in place to attract new foster carers and retain existing foster carers		Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2020
3c) Implement approaches that maximise the opportunities for permanence as soon as possible including child arrangement, special guardianship, and adoption including improving the quality of assessments for Special Guardians, foster carers and adopters	The proportion of young people leaving care by SGO/adoption/reunification is in line with SN average* 100% children with a permanent fostering decision confirmed by the Agency Decision Makers (ADM)* Greater number (and proportion) of care proceedings completed within statutory timescales*.	2.2 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan)	Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2020

Priority 4: Develop an improved accommodation and support pathway for care leavers

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
4a) Develop supported lodgings options for care leavers	<p>Supported lodging scheme established and used to support at least 5 children looked after and care leavers in 1st year.</p> <p>By year 2 all low support children looked after and care leavers have option of supported lodgings.</p>		Head of Commissioning	December 2019
4b) Create a clear, consistent accommodation pathway for care leavers which improves their outcomes and supports their independence	<p>70% of young people complete preparation for independence training/development.</p> <p>Inclusive offer developed for all young people especially those with SEND/ complex needs.</p> <p>A range of suitable accommodation available to meet the needs of care leavers under and over 18yrs*.</p> <p>Tender process complete for DPS for support and accommodation for 16 plus services</p>	<p>2.12 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan</p> <p>3.9 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Parenting</p> <p>Head of Commissioning</p>	January 2020
4c) Improve the social housing offer for care leavers and support care leavers to move to their accommodation of choice	<p>62 units of social housing tenancies allocated to care leavers in 2019-2020.</p> <p>95% of care leavers have suitable accommodation in accordance with DFE definitions</p>	2.17 Learning and Improvement Plan	Head of Corporate Parenting	<p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2022</p>

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
4d) Engage with the semi independent market to maintain and improve standards and build on creative approaches to sourcing accommodation through the LBN landlord function.	Extend landlord function pilot with three properties to new landlords and properties. Establish rent accounts for all care leavers.		Head Central Accommodation Agency	July 2020
4e) Re-model the use of flexible floating support for young people	Bespoke floating support service in place for those who need it and not as a default provision by the market. Care leavers access support, health and other services from a Care Leavers' Hub (drop in centre)		Head of Corporate Parenting/ Head of Commissioning	July 2020
4f) Improve the uptake and collection of housing benefit to maximise the available resource for supporting care leavers	75 per cent of care leavers who qualify for housing element of universal credit have open current applications. 95 per cent of care leavers by year 3 Housing benefit for staying put young people being claimed		Finance Project Manager	July 2020 March 2022
4g) Reduce the use of semi independent accommodation for children looked after (under 18s)	Use of semi independent provision reduced by at least 10 per cent from 31 st March 2019 baseline Further 10 per cent year 2 and year 3		Head of Commissioning	August 2020

Priority 5: Improve the commissioning of specialist and therapeutic placements, including the use of sub-regional arrangements

	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
Recruit specialist foster carers for emergency and step down from residential care	4 specialist emergency foster carers for high risk children age 12 and over in place for use by Brokerage team and EDT		Head of Commissioning/ Finance Project Manager	September 2019
5a) Mobilise the joint commissioning of children's home provision with the North East London Group of local authorities, supported by the DFE Innovation programme	Children's homes registered and begin opening in December 2019 with all units available by December 2020 Five places occupied for Newham children.		Head of Commissioning	December 2020
5b) Work in partnership with London residential home providers to improve the quality of provision and increase local options available at affordable prices including jointly commission the most appropriate delivery model for young people at risk of CSE, gangs and other challenging needs	Local providers contracted with skills to provide quality placements for our most challenging young people. Robust contract monitoring of all provision based on comprehensive risk rating.		Head of Commissioning/Head of Contracts	July 2020
5c) Increase the availability of foster carers able to support teenagers and young people with high level complex needs	Tender completed for DPS for fostering services and agencies with specialist foster carers in place to support Newham young people. Work directly with IFAs to recruit specialist foster carers including emergency foster carers		Head of Commissioning/ Finance Project Manager	July 2020
5d) Strengthen the commissioning of services and interventions for SEND children and young people including	Recruit 5 specialist foster carers for SEND children and young people with support from the SEND Service	SEND improvement Plan	Head of Commissioning/Head of 0-25 SEND	July 2020

	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
shorts breaks and special schools.	<p>A wide and varied range of short breaks provision that have been commissioned in consultation with children, young people and families.</p> <p>A reduction in the number of children in residential placements as families will be more supported before reaching crisis.</p>		services/Head of Corporate Parenting	<p>July 2020</p> <p>March 2021</p>
5e) Build on the existing models of support for foster carers and services including embedded CAMHS practitioners, training offer and carer forums	<p>New Section 75 agreement with CCG in place from October 19 delivering a wider, more flexible, responsible & equitable CAMHS support to all services for Children Looked After in LBN.</p> <p>100% of children with SDQ scores 17+ have support offered*.</p> <p>Less placement breakdown and better risk management due to an increased understanding of the mental health issues and emotional needs of CYP &</p>	<p>CAMHS new service proposal</p> <p>2.10 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning</p> <p>Head of Commissioning</p> <p>Head of Commissioning</p>	<p>December 2019</p> <p>December 2020</p> <p>December 2020</p>

	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
	<p>delivery of more therapeutically informed support.</p> <p>More robust performance monitoring to enable us to better assess impact, improvement & VFM.</p>			

Priority 6: Engage better with the market and improve shaping

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
6a) Effective communication with providers and foster carers	<p>Regular communication with providers and foster carers about Newham priorities and practice.</p> <p>Information on services available and the referral pathways shared routinely with providers</p> <p>Newham employees communicate as One Council and ensure any issues raised by foster carers or providers are resolved quickly and not passed on.</p> <p>Feedback to foster carers and providers the response to their concerns raised</p>		<p>Head of Commissioning/ Finance Project Manager</p>	September 2019

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
6b) Increase frequency of provider forums for fostering, children's homes and semi-independent providers	<p>North East London Sub-regional Provider Forum for children's homes meeting at least six monthly</p> <p>Newham provider forums held with attendance of at least 75% of providers at each meeting.</p>		<p>Head of Commissioning</p> <p>Head of Contracts</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>October 2019</p>
6c) Work with providers particularly to develop local and appropriate provision for young people that are at risk of all forms of exploitation, self-harm and risky behaviours, and endeavour to improve outcomes for these young people	<p>Organise bespoke training for providers with specialists across Newham.</p> <p>Monitor provider take up of SCBs training by providers (not just Newham)</p>		Head of Commissioning	March 2020
6d) Schedule meetings with children's homes across London to identify those that offer a service that meet the needs of our children	Specialist children's homes identified to provide accommodation for Newham children		Head of Commissioning	March 2020
6e) Work closely with the Council's SEN service and NHS Commissioners to procure and jointly fund the best resources for children with disabilities, conduct disorders and mental health	<p>Joint commissioning arrangements will support fairer and more efficient application of resources at an earlier stage to minimise escalation of need.</p> <p>Families will report positively on the benefits of early interventions.</p>	SEND Improvement Plan	Head of Commissioning	March 2021

Priority 7: Make better use of data and management information systems to inform commissioning decisions

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
7a) Create an intelligence tool for children in care and foster carers	A range of user friendly reports available for target groups and designed to drive performance improvement*.	3.8 2019 Learning and Improvement Plan 2019	Strategic Lead for Data and Impact Head of Corporate Parenting	December 2019
7b) Develop robust data collection and monitoring processes for the in-house foster care service	Foster carers register data cleanse completed Live reports available for in house foster carer availability, approvals and children in placement.		Strategic Lead for Data and Impact/ Head of Commissioning	March 2020
7c) Provide up-to-date and current insights on the availability and occupancy of in-house Newham foster carers	A range of user friendly reports available for target groups and designed to drive performance improvement*. Live data used to track and maximise occupancy rates		Strategic Lead for Data and Impact Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2020

Priority 8: Make the best use of our resources

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
8a) Review placements to ensure value for money is being achieved	Establish Placement Panel. All placements reviewed by Panel and regular reports of analysis and decision shared with DMT		Strategic Lead for Corporate Parenting Strategic Lead for Corporate Parenting	June 2019 June 2020

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
8b) Negotiate rates with providers based on time-limited outcomes to be delivered	<p>All support loaded separately on Azeus so time limited outside of standard accommodation/care needs.</p> <p>Brokerage team complete training in negotiation skills. Evidence of skills being used to achieve greater value for money.</p>		<p>Finance Project Manager/ Head of Corporate</p> <p>Finance Project Manager Parenting</p>	<p>June 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>
8c) Review support and services available to care leavers	<p>Review of support completed with analysis of needs for care leavers and older children looked after.</p> <p>Support services needing to be commissioned identified.</p>		Head of Corporate Parenting	August 2019
8d) Establish DPS contracts for fostering, children's homes and semi-independent provision in partnership with neighbouring authorities	Tender completed to establish DPS for children's homes, independent foster carers and semi independent accommodation and support services.		Head of Commissioning	July 2020
8e) Ensure requests and payments to foster carers and providers is accurate and timely	<p>Policy and Procedure for paying foster carers and providers reviewed and shared with foster carers and providers. Includes timescale for response to requests for additional resources</p> <p>Remittance advice re-designed to reflect services being delivered and who for.</p> <p>90 per cent of providers and foster</p>		Finance Project Manager	June 2020

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
	carers report that their payments are accurate and on time.			

Priority 9: Develop a range of high quality placements and offer more choice in our placement provision

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
9a) Improve the quality of referrals so they are strength-based with clearly defined outcomes in order to deliver effective packages of care without always incurring unnecessary additional costs for 'extras'	<p>Training delivered to social work teams on what makes a good referral.</p> <p>Risk assessments and care plans routinely included as part of referral and information is up to date.</p> <p>Updated care plans and pathway plans routinely shared with providers and foster carers</p> <p>Individual agreements in place for all placements and reviewed annually.</p> <p>Audit of individual agreements shows SMART outcomes.</p> <p>One Page Profiles completed by young people shared with Placement referrals as the direct voice of the young person.</p>		Head of Corporate Parenting/ Finance Project Manager/ Head of Contracts	December 2019
9b) Develop and implement Young Commissioners programme to work with	Young Commissioners recruited and supporting commissioners – receive		Head of Youth Service	January 2020

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
commissioners of accommodation, care and support for young people.	accreditation and feedback positively on the programme			
9c) Implement the CCRAAG risk assessment tool and contract monitoring in partnership with other local authority CCRAAG members	<p>All providers risk assessed and RAG rated using CCRAAG process.</p> <p>At least 1 monitoring visits completed for all providers with more according to risk and for unregulated provision</p>		Head of Commissioning/Head of Contracts	March 2020
9d) Work with all providers to improve quality and standards through new specifications, quality assurance and contract monitoring visits	<p>Standalone contract, specifications and performance indicators in place for all spot purchased provisions.</p> <p>At least 1 monitoring visit completed for all providers according to risk and for unregulated provision</p> <p>Providers attend LSCB training and implement best practice</p> <p>Section 11 audits of providers show good compliance with safeguarding requirements</p>		Head of Commissioning/ Head of Contracts/ Head of Youth Service	July 2020
9e) Develop an outcomes based quality assurance framework to monitor quality and establish what 'good' looks like in fostering, residential and supported accommodation services	New performance indicators developed for all care, accommodation and support services with new service specifications for all providers including those that are spot purchased		Head of Commissioning/ Head of Contracts/ Head of Youth Service	July 2020

COMMISSIONING INTENTION	HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED	Reference to related Plan	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE
	<p>Feedback always provided to providers on the outcome of their monitoring visit or quality assurance review.</p> <p>Survey of Providers completed annually including feedback of responses to issues raised.</p> <p>Young People feedback that they would recommend their home to other young people and rate their support and accommodation as good</p>			

Appendix 2: Working together to address safeguarding issues affecting our children and young people

The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences³⁰

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are highly stressful, and potentially traumatic, events or situations that occur during childhood and/or adolescence. It can be a single event, or prolonged threats to, and breaches of, a young person's safety, security, trust or bodily integrity. These experiences directly affect the young person and their environment, and require significant social, emotional, neurobiological, psychological or behavioural adaptation.

Forms of ACEs include: maltreatment, violence & coercion, household or Family adversity, inhumane treatment, adult responsibilities and bereavement & survivorship. ACEs impact a child's development, their relationships with others, and increase the risk of engaging in health-harming behaviours, and experiencing poorer mental and physical health outcomes in adulthood.

Of all children and young people, 48 per cent have experienced at least one form of ACE with 9 per cent having experienced four or more (from a total of nine). Children Looked After and young people are more likely to be exposed to deprivation, family breakdown, family mental illness and substance abuse by caregivers. The general consensus is that all Children Looked After and young people have experienced trauma in some way.

Compared with people with no ACEs, those with 4 or more ACEs are:

- 4x more likely to have low levels of mental wellbeing & life satisfaction
- 6x more likely to have an unplanned teenage pregnancy
- 7x more likely to have been involved in violence
- 11x more likely to have used illicit drugs
- 11x more likely to have been incarcerated

Newham's large proportion of children looked after who enter care as teenagers are likely to have more exposure to adversity. The increasing population of under 18 year olds in Newham also provides a greater number of children in the population who may then experience ACEs. The likelihood is therefore that there will be increasing numbers of Newham children exposed to ACEs.

However, not all young people facing childhood adversity or trauma go on to develop difficulties. There are personal, structural and environmental factors that can protect against adverse outcomes. These include:

1. Trauma-informed policies & systems that address bullying, harassment or victimisation
2. Compassionate, attuned and supportive responses from professionals
3. Early intervention from support, therapeutic or safeguarding services
4. Access to a wider supportive and understanding community
5. Positive and supportive family environments

³⁰ Young Minds: Addressing Adversity, 2018

6. Safe and mutual relationships with peers
7. Ability to regulate emotions and manage emotional distress
8. Acquisition of practical problem solving skills

In order to address the impact of ACEs on Newham children and young people, Newham Council is:

- Addressing ACEs as a strategic priority, analysing the available data and anticipates need in local commissioning and service pathways.
- understanding childhood adversity and trauma, having a common framework for identification and routine enquiry, and responding appropriately to the cultural and personal characteristics of the young person and their communities.
- providing services that young people can easily access, not relying on a formal psychiatric diagnosis, and targets children who live in adverse and traumatic environments.
- intervening early, avoiding re-traumatising or stigmatising young people, and ensures staff are knowledgeable, qualified, trustworthy and well-trained.
- involving young people in decisions about their care and the design of services, adopting a strengths-based approach, and ensuring services recognise and harness community assets.
- co-commissioning services and ensuring smooth transitions and communications between partners.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Issues and evidence:

75 per cent of mental health problems in adult life (excluding dementia) start by the age of 18. Early intervention avoids young people falling into crisis and avoids expensive and longer term interventions in adulthood. The estimated prevalence of mental health difficulties for children and young people aged 0-18 is approximately 10 per cent of the population; in Newham this stands at 8,832.

Looked after children in Newham (and within travelling distance) benefit from CAMHS clinicians embedded across children's social care, education and youth offending teams. We are also:

- Increasing access to effective support for children and young people with emerging and/or mild to moderate mental health difficulties.
- Increase access to effective support for children and young people with moderate to severe mental health difficulties including those with an eating disorder.
- Ensuring support is provided in the right location including youth justice, schools and children social care to maximise timely engagement.
- Ensuring services have routine outcome monitoring and data is used to drive continual service improvement.
- Strengthening joint commissioning arrangements so best use is made of funding streams across CCG, Local Authority, schools and NHSE specialist commissioning to maximise provision.

Youth Violence and Gangs

Issues and Evidence

Gun crime in London has surged by 42 per cent in the past year. Between 2014 and 2016, the number of children carrying knives in London schools rose by almost 50 per cent and in the last 12 months the number of knife offences in London schools has risen by 26 per cent. While the number of victims of youth violence has increased, the number of offences attributed to gangs has decreased locally from 115 in March 2011-2012 to 46 in 2016-2017. This indicates that not all incidents of violence among young people are directly gang related and that the interrelatedness is complex.

As Newham has been named as one of eight knife crime hot spots in London by the Young people in Newham report that they carry weapons out of fear for their own safety and this fear is often greater than their fear of the consequences of carrying weapons. A concerning feature is the number of young people previously unknown to statutory services who are involved in incidents. This includes both victims and perpetrators of these offences.

What we are doing:

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has devised a diverse range of approaches that Youth Offending Team (YOT) can utilise covering:

- Trauma-informed practice in youth justice
- The impact of trauma on children and young people
- How to work with children and young people who have experienced trauma.

We are also increasing the universal youth service provision including establishing a detached youth work team, more provision for vulnerable groups include young people with SEND and looked after young people, more opportunities for accredited volunteering and for young people have a greater say.

Rolling out restorative justice processes through Community Conferences, Restorative Justice Conferences³¹ and Family Group Conferences for individuals on the periphery of gangs, their victims, the wider community and their families.

Child Exploitation

Issues and evidence:

Child Exploitation involves the exploitation of children and young people whereby they receive 'something' (e.g. affection, food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gifts, money) as a result of their performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. In all cases, those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Child criminal exploitation is an ongoing concern nationally and in Newham. The business model of recruiting individuals to deal drugs in the counties continues to be prevalent. Individuals involved with 'County Lines' are likely to come from care homes and care homes are actively targeted for the recruitment of vulnerable individuals³².

³¹ Restorative justice conferences to bring harmed and perpetrators together

³² A Partnership Approach to Addressing Youth Violence, Risk and Safety in Newham, 2019

What we are doing:

We are raising awareness in schools, among foster carers, children's social care, commissioned providers and partners to be able to recognise the methods used to recruit and exploit young people.

We have commissioned training including Trauma based assessment and intervention for exploited children and independent reflective and clinical supervision for all staff involved including partners such as the police.

We have developed a new process for assessment and intervention for a child being or at risk of exploitation. The development of a multi-agency Team around the Child (ETAC) with a framework of planning, intervention and disruption has been implemented.

We will do further analysis to look at current and future risk in order to ensure there is adequate and suitable provision for this group of vulnerable young people. We have developed an exploitation screening tool for practitioners where exploitation is suspected.

Complex Safeguarding

Issues and evidence:

Complex safeguarding is a relatively new concept that encompasses a range of safeguarding vulnerabilities, often linked to criminal activity or harmful behaviour associated to criminality. It encompasses Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Missing from home and care, Modern Slavery and trafficking, the Prevent duty, Honour Based Violence and Abuse, Children Missing from Education, Elective Home Education, Organised Crime Groups and gang activity.

Serious Incident Notifications and serious case reviews feature youth violence and complex safeguarding elements from sexual assault to radicalisation. Newham currently has over 550 missing episodes per year involving 200 young people. Of these over 60 per cent are children looked after and the remainder live at home. Newham receives a high volume of complex safeguarding referrals

What we are doing: We are launching a Multi-agency Complex Safeguarding Hub (CSH). The CSH will provide a team of social workers working directly with young people using evidenced strength based interventions for children and young people suffering exploitation. The Hub will deliver creative and flexible interventions based on establishing a trusted relationship with children and young people and will operate in the evening and at weekends.