

**EVERY  
CHANCE**  
for **EVERY  
CHILD**

**Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board  
Annual Report 2021/22**

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The children we care for and care experienced young people

Children Looked After

334 children were looked after by the local authority (at end of Mar 2022 – **this was 306 for Mar 2021**)

Under 5	46
5 to 9	44
10 to 15	97
16 to 17	147

There were 67 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) (at end of Mar 2022 - **this was 29 at Mar 2021**)

CLA long term placement stability 65% (end of Mar 2022 - **this was 73% at Mar 2021**)

Average no. of placement moves 1.6 (end of Mar 2021 - **this was 1.5 at Mar 2021**)

Accommodation

84% of allocated care leavers were in suitable accommodation (at end of Mar 2022 - **this was 96% at Mar 2021**)

Care Leavers

At 31st March 2022 the Through Care Service was working with a cohort of 418 young people, between the ages of 14 – 25 (**this was 435 at Mar 2021**)

Health

97% of Children Looked After had an annual health check within 12 months (end Mar 2022 – **this was 86% at Mar 2021**)

82% of Children Looked After had an annual dental check within 12 months (end Mar 2022 - **this was 60% at Mar 2021**)

Education, Training and Employment

68% of pupils making expected progress (autumn term 2021/22 - **this was 62% for autumn term 2020/21**)

96% of pupils had a personal education plan meeting during the term (autumn term 2021/22 - **this was 95% for autumn term 2020/21**)

97% of allocated care leavers had a pathway plan (end of Mar 2022 - **this was 98% at Mar 2021**)

64% of allocated care leavers were in employment, education or training (end of Mar 2022 - **this was 73% at Mar 2021**)

## Governance

### Legal Context

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Section 1) sets out seven corporate parenting principles which local authorities must have regard to for looked after children or care leavers. Statutory guidance for local authorities ‘Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers’ was published in February 2018. The guidance highlights that the critical question for local authorities as the ‘corporate parent’ should be ‘would this be good enough for my child’?

### The principles

In order to thrive, children and young people have certain key needs that good parents generally meet. The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people

4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

### Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

The board meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from Councillors, young people, foster-carers, partner organisations and senior managers from across the Council. The corporate parenting principles underpin the work of the board as it takes a strategic approach to the experiences of children we care for and care experienced young people and works with partners to meet corporate parenting responsibilities.

Alongside the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC), the board provides a forum where children and young people in the care of the council have direct access to senior leaders and decision makers to share their views and raise and address issues.

A CPB Action Plan was developed in Spring 2021, which used feedback on priorities from the CLICC (their 'Wish List') as a foundation. Progress against the action plan was reported to the board throughout 2021/22 and is included within the following sections of this report.

The complete original 'Wish List' from the CLICC is shown below and have been incorporated within the 'What are our priorities?' sections of the annual report.

The diagram on page 5 sets out the membership of the board and a full list is provided at Appendix A. Appendix B provides an overview of the topics covered in CPB meetings during 2020/21.

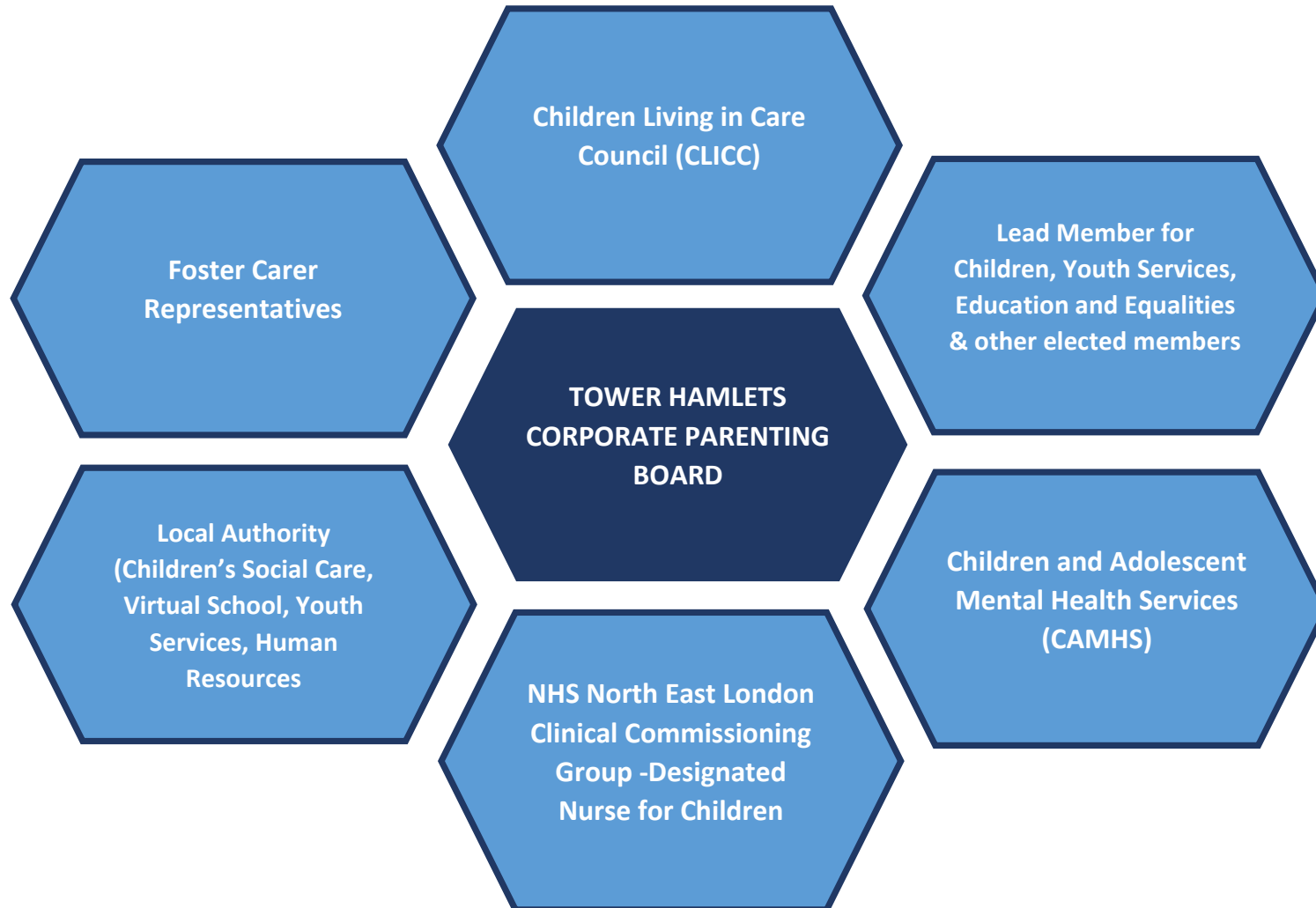
### CLICC 'Wish List'

- Creating wrap around services – identifying gaps in service delivery and exploring how feedback from young people can be embedded in practice.
- Strengthening joined-up approach to transitions – working with young people to find ways to make transitions smoother in the future.
- Creating CLICC Ambassadors Scheme – to represent children looked after and care leavers by advocating for them and being their voice.
- Training and development for social workers – young people to help shape the future training offer, including awareness

of the wider services and opportunities that young people may need to access.

- Affordable travel – improving awareness of, and access to, travel entitlements and increasing the offer through the Pan-London CLICC Participation Group.
- Local Offer for Care Leavers – delivering a more 'young person friendly' resource.
- Relationships with professionals and agencies – establishing ways that young people can easily raise and address any concerns about relationships with staff.
- Referral processes – working with young people to identify challenges with referral processes ensuring support is provided and reducing the need to repeat information.
- Mental health and wellbeing – finding more ways to provide support around emotional wellbeing for young people.

## Membership of the Corporate Parenting Board



## Role of Foster Carers

The Corporate Parenting Board benefits from the experience and expertise of two Foster Carer Representatives, who are also members of the Tower Hamlets Foster Carers Association. Their input to the board ensures that the voice of foster carers informs all discussions, actions taken and planning for the future.

### Tower Hamlets Foster Carers Association (THFCA)

The THFCA helps and supports foster carers and acts as a voice for them. They work closely with the council and other partners, putting carer's views and experiences forward, and looking for ways to make improvements. As well as supporting existing carers members of the THFCA are dedicated to promoting fostering and act as ambassadors in the recruitment of new carers.

One of the ways in which the THFCA brings foster carers together with their children is through events and outings. Activities during 2021 included trips to Chessington World of Adventures, Southend-on-Sea and seeing a Christmas Pantomime.

### The Tower Hamlets Fostering Service

Following some staffing changes in 2020/21 the Fostering Service has established a permanent and secure workforce which is having a positive impact on support and communication to foster carers.

The Foster Carer Referral Scheme has been developed further with fostering households holding information coffee mornings, word-of-mouth recruitment activities and Fostering Ambassadors attending recruitment events to encourage and promote fostering applications.

### Foster Carers' Award Ceremony

After a break due to the pandemic, the Foster Carers' Award Ceremony was able to take place in March 2022. This provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievement of carers and for the council to show its appreciation of the valuable work they do.

### Training for Foster Carers

Significant progress has been made on training opportunities for foster carers. The service's new online provision has been accessed by an incredible 180 learners and a new training brochure is in development which will offer courses both in the classroom and online.

The Fostering Service has also introduced a six-week parenting course 'Foundations for Attachment and Parenting' which is being delivered by the new Fostering Therapeutic Service. Fifteen fostering households have successfully completed the training since in 2021/22.

**Mockingbird Programme (part of the Fostering Network)**

The Fostering Service remains committed to rolling out the Mockingbird Family Model which offers carers additional support. Carers and staff have attended a webinar featuring the Fostering Network and the service is now looking at how they can link up carers to create new groups. Work is underway to establish a third Mockingbird Hub to increase the number of carers who can benefit from the model which nurtures the relationships between children, young people and foster families supporting them to build a resilient and caring community.



## The voice of children we care for and care experienced young people

### What are our priorities?

- Developing and expanding the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC), including establishing thematic leads and developing ambassador programmes
- Increasing co-production and engagement opportunities for the children we care for and care experienced young people
- Ensuring all young people are aware of advocacy support and how to access it

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Children Living in Care Council (CLICC)

Work has continued throughout the last year to further develop opportunities for the children we care for, and care experienced young people, to get involved and have their voices heard.

Plans to expand the CLICC, and establish further forums for specific age groups, have progressed:

- CLICC Plus (for 18 to 25 year olds) – A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and recruitment is underway to appoint Leads for independent living, education, employment & training, safety & security, health & wellbeing and finances

- Teen CLICC (for 13 to 17 year olds) – a group of young people are working with the Haileybury Youth Centre Girls Group to develop the CLICC for this age range. A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and the ‘Share my World’ consultation gathered feedback on care experiences
- Junior CLICC (for 8 to 12 year olds) – discussions have taken place with some interested families and this group will continue to be developed in 2022.

Activities to promote and develop the CLICC in 2021 have included:

- An Open Day in October 2021 – held in partnership with Independent Reviewing Officers and the Foster Carers Association and focused on the Junior & Teen CLICC
- Meetings with Children’s Social Care, Fostering & Through Care Teams to share information and promote the groups
- Leaflet promoting the CLICC produced and distributed
- 30 volunteers supported ‘Share my World’ event (aimed at foster cares and their young people in care)

#### ‘Know Now’ APP for Care Experienced Young People

The app was developed during 2021/22 with young people involved in the design and content to ensure it meets their needs. The app was launched in March 2022 and will enable care experienced young people to access local information, guidance and support.

This will include details of the Advocacy Service available through Barnardos. The App will also allow communication between care experienced young people and their social workers and personal advisors.

### Social events and activities

There were a wide range of opportunities to socialise, learn new skills and provide support between young people taking place during 2022/23. These included:

- Collaboration session with Bexley Children Living in Care Council during National Care Leavers Week
- 'Come Dine with Me' contest
- Residential Trip in Wales
- Christmas Cinema trip and meal

### Workshop with Queen Mary University

The CLICC worked with researchers from Queen Mary University to identify issues that they would like professionals to be aware of and understand. Discussions during a workshop session explored their experiences at different ages and stages of their lives with the development of brief story styled 'scripts'.

Young people reported how much they enjoyed the session and that the approach helped to bring their ideas to life. They felt that the scripts would help make it easier to pursue the issues raised with other people and that they wanted to find ways of taking this work further.

## What will we do next?

### Development and expansion of the CLICC

The CLICC groups will continue to undertake activities focused on promoting the benefits for children and young people from getting involved, which include:

- A space to share their voice
- Support accessing services
- Social and creative activities
- Access to a peer support network

Key activities to strengthen the CLICC groups in 2022/23 will include:

- Recruiting to all vacant post within CLICC Plus and continuing to meet on a weekly basis at Kitkat Terrace
- CLICC Plus to hold regular meetings to review the 'Wish List' of priorities and other items
- CLICC plus to liaise with the Young Mayor and Youth Council and join the 'All Participation Forum' meeting scheduled for July 2022
- Recruiting to all posts within the TEEN CLICC and continuing to meet every Friday at Haileybury Youth Centre with the wider girls group.
- Identifying families who can support the Junior CLICC and appointment a Chair and Deputy Chair for the group.

**‘Create your own Podcast’ Project**

This media initiative aims to bring to light the day-to-day issues of care experienced young people, how they cope and their solutions. The podcast will be an opportunity to use the feedback gathered through the workshop with Queen Mary University (see above) and further develop the story style scripts that the young people had started work on.

**Event for children, young people and families**

A day of activities and creative opportunities is being planned for children we care for. The event will be focused on having fun and exploring different mediums for children to express their feelings and views. The day will include a presentation by the children to Senior Managers and Members and will also offer the opportunity for social care staff to drop in and have informal conversations with attendees.

**Case Study – Children Living in Care Council**

When members of the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) highlighted the mental health and wellbeing challenges they had faced during pandemic restrictions this led to work with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to create a focus group to explore the issues. The sessions gave young people an opportunity to share their experiences, seek advice on coping mechanisms and to hear about other resources and services available.

The focus group also inspired some of the young people to find more ways to support other young people with their mental wellbeing. Some of the participants were interested in becoming ‘wellbeing champions’ and work to create these roles is underway. One young person wanted to pursue a career in mental health. They have successfully completed their level 2 qualification in Mental Health Practice and are now looking for an apprenticeship within the NHS to complete their level 3.

## Services & support for children we care for and care experienced young people

### What are our priorities?

- Delivering 'Wrap around' services to make sure all services come together for the young person
- Ensuring young people experience smooth transitions from one place or situation to another
- Developing and improving relationships between staff and young people
- Reducing referral fatigue for young people when accessing new services and support
- Enhancing training and awareness for social workers on the range of services and support available for young people

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Information & advice session with young people

Relevant professionals, such as Education, Training, Employment Advisors and Duty Managers have been available at every 'Wednesday Late Night' session held at Kitcat Terrace to respond to questions raised by young people. Further sessions have been arranged with attendance from the Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Department of Work and Pensions to provide expertise in other areas, as required by young people.

### Supporting young people through transitions and referrals

Personal Advisors (PAs) are now involved at an earlier stage (by the time a young person is 17 and a half years old) to assist in the transition from 'cared for' to 'care experienced' services. In many cases the PA will have also been the social worker for a young person which offers greater continuity. Social workers, PAs and Support Workers are attending most appointments that children and young people on their caseload have. Especially those arranged for tenancy sign ups, college registrations and appointment with the Home Office, as these can be particularly challenging for young people. All of this work is aimed at helping to ensure smoother transitions and referral processes and to reduce the need for young people to repeat their story which can cause additional stress and anxiety.

### Building and improving relationships with professionals

Young people have access through a range of channels to freely give feedback and raise questions and concerns. This is offered through service staff and managers, the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) and the Advocacy Service (from Barnardos). Issues are escalated to the Head of Service level and beyond if necessary to ensure swift resolutions.

### **Lifelong Links**

Lifelong Links was introduced in Tower Hamlets two years ago and offers the children we care for a chance to connect with their support network for the years to come. The aim of the initiative is to find family members and other people who care about the child, such as former foster carers, teachers, youth workers and family friends. Everyone is then brought together in a family group conference where they can all chat and discuss support they can offer both now and in future. Examples of the outcomes from this work include a child reconnecting with their mother who lives outside the UK and a child getting back in touch with a school friend who they knew when they were in a previous fostering placement.

### **Recruitment and training of staff**

The Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) has been supporting the Social Work Academy to offer feedback on the recruitment and training of new social workers. The CLICC has also been involved in other recruitment activity including the appointment of the new Director of Supporting Families.

### **Refresh of the Local Offer for Care Leavers**

The CLICC has helped to steer the updating of the Local Offer for Care Leavers by providing feedback on what young people wanted to be included and the layout used.

### **What will we do next?**

#### **Training and awareness for social workers and personal advisors**

A range of agencies are currently invited to service meetings, open days, and other events to inform and educate social workers and personal advisors about their services and support they can provide for our young people. We plan to work with our Social Work Academy to design training specific to the service needs and will ensure this learning and development time is prioritised for our staff groups. Where possible, we want to involve our young people in co-producing and co-facilitating this learning and development offer.

#### **Enhancing relationships between staff and young people**

The implementation of 'Listening Circles' as part of the Restorative Practice offer is planned to further build on the positive relationships with care experienced young people. Young people have already had the opportunity to meet the Directorate Leadership Team and put a face to some of those with corporate parenting responsibility for them in a relaxed environment. The aim is to continue this twice a year, or on a quarterly basis if possible. Children's social care services are also proactively working with Barnardo's on how feedback from young people can be used to improve relationships and practice.

### Service development at Kitcat Terrace

Our vision is to create ‘empower and progress’ working partnerships with providers and services, with Kitcat Terrace as a local hub where this is delivered, so that we provide holistic support for young people. As set out below in the ‘Education, enrichment, employment and training’ part of this report, the offer at Kitcat Terrace includes support focused on learning and achievement but the following will also sit alongside this:

- Barnardo’s – access to advocacy support
- Housing Options Support Team (HOST) – access to Leaving Care Housing Options Officer
- Youth Participation Service – providing support with further development of independent living skills

Discussions are underway to develop the offer at Kitcat Terrace further to include:

- A Benefits Advisor to be available one day a week
- ‘Compass Safe East’ (sexual health and substance misuse service) to be available one day a week
- ‘Step Forward’ to potentially offer therapeutic support and outreach services. This service provides an LGBTQ+ group (Step Out) and we are looking at how this be of benefit to our care experienced young people.

### Case Study – Through Care Service

P.L had completed a Level 3 in Business Studies and wanted to attend university and pursue a career in finance but was unable to access funding due to their immigration status. This situation persisted for two years and then with support from Education, Training & Employment (ETE) Advisors P.L gained a place on a Level 3 Finance and Accountancy course with a placement, which allowed them to gain experience and a qualification in their chosen field.

ETE Advisors undertook research and found a university scholarship which P.L was eligible to apply for which removed the barrier they had been facing to higher education. P.L was successful with their application for funding and then, with further support, was also successful in securing a place at University to study Accountancy and Finance. P.L’s course has been going well and they remain focused on their career progression. ETE Advisors have since been able to source funding to attend university for another young person with the same immigration status.

## Education, enrichment, employment and training

### What are our priorities?

- Delivering consistent support which helps young people to maintain their education and access opportunities that are right for them at all stages
- Increasing apprenticeship opportunities for care experienced young people whilst ensuring they are the right type and level
- Offering functional skills training (Maths & English) to ensure young people can access future employment and training opportunities
- Improving availability and awareness of travel concessions

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Educational attainment of children we care for

68% of children we care for in the Virtual School are making expected progress in the core subjects of English/Maths (Autumn 2021). This rises to 75% for those children we care for (for one year+). This is up from 53% (Spring 2021) and 58% (Summer 2021).

#### Educational attainment Year 11 at GCSE

The Virtual School have achieved the best ever recorded outcomes at GCSE for children we care for. The percentage achieving a

Level 4+ pass in English and Maths with 3 other subjects has risen from 19% to 46% (the national average is 14%). Accurate progress data is not available due to the pandemic but 67% of children we care for made 'expected' or 'better' progress in English and 47% in Maths (this is for Personal Education Plan (PEP) targets based on KS2 attainment). The highest attaining students achieved multiple Level 9 & Level 8's in their subjects studied. These achievements have been celebrated at the first Virtual School Awards in 2 years.

#### Blended learning and digital provision

16,899 devices were distributed to schools in Tower Hamlets, including to children we care for and care experienced young people, via the scheme in place during the pandemic. This is more devices per child than any other authority in the UK.

#### Pupil Education Plans (PEP)

96% of pupils overseen by the Virtual School have had a PEP meeting in the Autumn 2021 term. 92% of these plans were rated Green and Amber, which means they are completed to a high standard and within time frames.

### **Improvements to language**

The language used in Virtual School reports, policies and on the website has been updated to reflect the recommendations of children we care for and national policy.

### **Care Leaver Employability Working Group (CLEWG)**

The CLEWG led on a range of activities in 2021/22 which were aimed at exploring and sharing best practice so that this learning could be applied to the work being undertaken to improve outcomes for young people with care experience. The work of the group has informed action taken across a wide range of issues as well as plans for the future.

### **Education, Training & Employment (ETE) Advisors in the Through Care Team (TCT)**

The team and the advisors support young people to aspire to, and achieve, the best possible outcomes. The ETE Advisors have been instrumental in taking forward work to raise Maths & English attainment rates. This has included ensuring data on achievements for care experienced young people are captured so that they are supported effectively at all stages and the development of programmes at Kitcat Terrace (see below).

Other progress and achievements during 2021 included:

- Supporting young people to access Higher Education opportunities with 19 university admissions from care experienced young people for undergraduate programs in 2021
- Finding ways to overcome barriers to progressing in education for care experienced young people with No Recourse to Public Funding (NRPF). This has resulted in 2 undergraduate young people gaining full scholarships and securing 3 grant applications for Further Education for learners with NRTPF
- Assisting with applications to the Civil Service Internship Scheme. In 2020-21 12 young people were successful in securing civil service roles due to the support of ETE Advisors.

### **Help with travel costs**

Affordably travel is essential for young people to access education, employment and social activities. Alongside the Transport for London free travel offer to children under the age of 18 who are in full-time education, the Through Care Service supports young people to apply for the 18+ Oyster student card and monthly top up assistance. The service also supports unaccompanied asylum seeking children with their travel. The Children Living in Care Group (CLICC) will continue to campaign for assistance with travel through the Pan London CLICC Participation Group.



## What will we do next?

### Blended learning and digital provision

The Virtual School will be re-starting the pre-pandemic laptop programme for all children we care for in secondary schools and continue moving towards a policy of digital inclusion.

### Learning Hub at Kitkat Terrace

The Learning Hub is being developed to provide more face to face support for those who need additional engagement to overcome barriers to successful outcomes. The hub will offer rolling programs which provide continuous accessibility.

The provider 'Prevista' will deliver a Level 2 Functional Skills English and Maths Programme to help address a learning gap which is frequently an issue for care experienced young people. Extensions to this programme are being explored, such as support from Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service and progression to the West Ham Foundations "Future Pathways" programme.

The offer at the Learning Hub will continue to be developed and expansion through additional providers will be explored such as the National Careers Service, to support employment and Education Pathway Plans, and provision of in-house education and training opportunities in maths, English, ICT and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

### Post 16 Pilot

A national initiative is being piloted for Virtual School Headteachers to support children we care for and care experienced young people. If this leads to funding being available the Tower Hamlets Virtual School has plans in place to rapidly reorganise to become an all-through college.

### Mantra Music Project

A music writer and rapper, who has had care experience, has received funding from Youth Music to deliver this initiative. The council will be working with him to support five care experienced young people, two of which are from Tower Hamlets. For our young people wanting to break into the music industry, Mantra Music will be providing mentorship, alongside 2 professionally produced singles, 1 music video each, artwork, press shots and the opportunity to win £1000 to help get their music off the ground.

### Case Study – Virtual School

MN experienced instability in their education – attending 4 primary schools due to care placement changes. The Virtual School (VS) supported targeted work, via the Pupil Education Plan and Pupil Premium, leading to good progress. The VS supported MN's transition to secondary school and worked with an out of borough authority to maintain EHCP provision.

Pupil Premium Plus provided pastoral support in Year 7 & 8, and with Personal Education Plan (PEP) planning the focus then moved to support on Maths, English and Online tuition. MN experienced a further change in placement but managed to settle and maintained their schooling.

MN has participated in many 'Give it a Go' enrichment activities and their VS Teacher has provided consistent support throughout changes in carers and schooling. MN has recently attended a creative dance and drama workshop at the English National Ballet displaying enthusiasm and talent for dance, movement and poetry. Their participation will be recognised at the Virtual School Awards Ceremony 2022.

## Health and wellbeing

### What are our priorities?

- Improving communication between health professionals and young people
- Development of young peoples' Emotional Wellbeing Champions Programme
- Development of mindfulness and mind & body support and information for young people which focuses on positive approaches to mental health

### What progress did we make in 2021?

#### Service delivery during the pandemic

Following restrictions introduced during the pandemic face to face Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) recommenced in Sep 2020 and any previous virtual IHAs were reviewed to ensure that there was previous/future face to face medical contact to validate the assessment.

The Clinical Commissioning Group developed guidelines to support risk stratification and delivery of virtual health assessments. These were updated with each government change to social distancing. The guidelines supported the provider with risk assessment for the children and young people that would benefit from face to face contact. The guidelines were also shared with multi-agency

partners so that they could contribute towards decision making of the prioritisation of health needs for the children we care for.

A literature review was carried out into the pros and cons of virtual health contacts. This supported more reflective discussions about virtual and face to face health assessments. The literature review was followed with a video blog and '7-minute' briefing document to aid learning and support multi-agency partners.

#### Capturing the voice of children and young people

Activities undertaken to capture the views and experiences for children and young people have include:

- The quality assurance of health assessments ensures that the voice of the child has been captured.
- Multi-professional relationships have improved through the Children Looked After & Care Leavers Health and Wellbeing Steering Group, which has enabled the voice of the child to be shared amongst professionals, allowing services to adapt to meet their needs.
- Liaison with the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) through discussions between health representatives and young people at the Corporate Parenting Board and engagement with priorities set out by young people (the 'Wish List') which provides an evidence base for professionals to integrate into their practice.

### Referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Social Care Team

In 2021 83 new referrals to the team were for children (or sibling groups) on a Looked After Child Plan. Care experienced children and young people live in foster placements and residential homes both in Tower Hamlets but also in neighbouring London boroughs and further afield. Those placed outside of the borough face difficulties in accessing their local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for a variety of reasons. The Tower Hamlets CAMHS in Social Care Team, therefore, aims to fill the gap where there are needs but local CAMHS are not able to provide support.

This involves providing a CAMHS assessment where needed but also providing clinical input to support children and their carers where there are issues regarding placement stability. Other roles include consulting to the wider network of concern around the child including schools as well as helping the allocated Social Worker access a local CAMHS provision.

### Emotional wellbeing screening

Emotional Wellbeing screening is offered for all children and young people coming into the care system who are still in our care by the time of their second review. This involves reaching out to the allocated Social Worker to offer a 'screening consultation' before deciding on next steps. In 2021 54 Emotional Wellbeing Screens for care experienced young people were offered and 44 were taken up and undertaken. The outcomes included further consultation on

request for 34 individuals, clinical Interventions to support a placement for 3 individuals and a CAMHS Assessments for 2 individuals.

*NB: It is important to note that this does not represent the full number of care experienced children from Tower Hamlets who are receiving support from CAMHS as some children are receiving a service in their local area.*

### What will we do next?

#### Responding to the priorities of children we care for and care experienced young people

The development of health pathways, guidelines and services need to refer to the priorities set out by young people (the 'Wish List') to ensure they are acknowledged and addressed within service changes. The Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) will continue to be consulted key areas of development, such as the Health Passport. Arrangements will be made for the Local Health Team to attend a CLICC meeting to learn more about their experiences and ideas.

#### Emotional Wellbeing Champions Pilot Scheme

As previously mentioned, some of the young people who took part in the focus groups arranged by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) highlighted their interest in creating the role of 'Wellbeing Champion'.

The sessions provided a space for sharing experiences, exploring ways to improve emotional wellbeing and learning more about the range of advice and support options that are available. Having seen the impact of this the young people want 'Wellbeing Champions' to be able to offer support and guidance to other young people. Work will be undertaken by CAMHS, the CLICC and other stakeholders in 2022 to develop an Emotional Wellbeing Champion Pilot Scheme for care experienced young people.

### Children in our Care and Care Experienced Young People Health Steering Group

The work of the steering group over the next year will include the following initiatives:

- Local Health Profile – this will provide a clear picture of what the main health needs of children are so that themes and key findings can be identified. A task and finish group will be set up to take this work forward through meetings led by operational partners.
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ's) – we will track information over a 12 month period and use this to map additional insight about the emotional wellbeing needs of children.
- Health passports - another sub-group will be established to explore how we can improve the use and quality of health passports. This will include how an e-passport could be created in alignment with health service systems.

### Case Study – CAMHS in SCT

One of the main vulnerabilities for care experienced young people is the way that eligibility for services can change whenever they move to a placement in a different borough.

JH was a 17 year old who was assessed as suffering from symptoms of Complex PTSD as a result of early experiences of witnessing domestic violence in their family of origin. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Social Care Team assessed JH whilst they were on a Child Protection Plan and living at home. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) was recommended to work through their traumatic experiences at a time when they felt safe to do this. Whilst waiting for the right time for CBT they were monitored for any risks of self-harm and suicidality.

JH was then placed in local authority care and provided with semi-independent accommodation outside of the borough. Although a referral was made to CAMHS in the other borough for follow up therapeutic support they did not meet the criteria for this due to the amount of time they had lived in the area. Therefore the plan to offer therapy within Tower Hamlets CAMHS continued so that JH did not lose access to an intervention they had been waiting for.

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report – One Page Summary

The voice of children we care for & care experienced young people

Priorities

- Developing Children Living in Care Council (CLICC)
- Increasing co-production & engagement opportunities
- Ensuring all young people are aware of advocacy support

Progress

- Chairs for CLICC Groups, promotion programme & events
- ‘Know Now’ APP for care experienced young people
- Research with Queen Mary University

Next steps

- Expand CLICC Plus, TEEN CLICC & Junior CLICC
- More engagement & involvement – e.g. All Participation Forum, Just 4 You event & Podcast
- Promote advocacy services through new channels

Services and support for children we care for & care experienced young people

Priorities

- ‘Wrap around’ services for young people
- Smooth transitions and reduced referral fatigue
- Developing and improve relationships between staff and young people
- Enhance awareness amongst professionals of services available

Progress

- Information and advice sessions for young people
- Earlier engagement to support transitions
- CLICC work with Social Work Academy – recruitment & retention
- Refreshed Local Officer for care experienced young people

Next steps

- Training for professionals designed with Social Work Academy
- Implementation of ‘Listening Circles’ to support relationship building
- Enhanced offer at Kitcat Terrace – support and guidance

Education, enrichment, employment & training

Priorities

- Delivering consistent support to maintain education & access opportunities
- Increasing apprenticeship opportunities - right type and level
- Functional skills training (Maths & English)
- Improving availability and awareness of travel concessions

Progress

- 75% of children in our care (for 1 year +) making expected progress in M&E
- ETE Advisors support overcoming barriers to opportunities
- Support with travel costs and ongoing campaigning

Next steps

- Learning Hub to provide more face to face support:
  - rolling programmes, including functional Maths & English)
  - expansion to additional providers e.g. National Careers Service
- Virtual School to operate as ‘all through’ college – subject to funding

Health and wellbeing

Priorities

- Improving communication between health professionals & young people
- Development of young peoples’ Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors Programme
- Development of mindfulness and mind & body support and information

Progress

- Quality assurance of health assessments ensuring voice of the child captured
- Improved multi-professional relationships through the Steering Group
- CAMHS in Social Care Team support to children living in and out of borough

Next steps

- Health pathways, guidelines & services refer to young people’s priorities
- CLICC and partners to develop Emotional Wellbeing Champions Pilot
- Local health profile and health passports – improved insight and service provision

**Appendix A: Membership list for the Corporate Parenting Board (including officers who also report to the board)**

Name	Job Title / Organisation	Name	Job Title / Organisation
Samantha Anderson	Young Carers Engagement Officer, Young People Services, LBTH	Farhan Hoque	Young People's Co-ordinator, Young People Services, LBTH
Susannah Beasley-Murray	Director, Supporting People, LBTH	Asma Islam	Councillor
Asma Begum	Chair of the CPB and Cabinet Member for Children and Schools ( <i>note: changes following the election in 2022 to come</i> )	Reagender Kang	Designated Nurse for CLA, NHS NEL CCG
Robert Bielby	Head of Family Support & Protection, LBTH	Leo Major	Head of CLA and Through Care Services
Vicky Clark	Divisional Director, Growth and Economic Development, LBTH	Lissa-Marie Minnis	Head of Children's Regulated Services and Resources, LBTH
Peter Cox	CAMHS in Social Care Team Lead, LBTH	Edosa Obunge	Through Care Service, LBTH
David Cregan	Headteacher Virtual School, LBTH	Geraldine O'Donnell	Head of Service Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, LBTH
Pam Cummins	Business Support, LBTH	Shirley Quarshie-Dunne	IRO Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, LBTH
David Edgar	Councillor	Tracy Stanley	Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture, LBTH
Hasan Faruq	Youth Participation & Engagement Manage, Young People Services, LBTH	Ann Sutcliffe	Corporate Director, Place, LBTH
Foster Care Representatives		James Thomas	Director of Children and Culture, LBTH
Amanda Harcus / Diane Lomas	HR Representatives, LBTH	Karlijn Tummers	Interim Senior Commissioning Manager Children and Young People, LBTH
Vicky Clark	Divisional Director, Growth and Economic Development, LBTH	Val Whitehead	Councillor
Young People's Representatives	Children in Care Council		

## Appendix B – CPB Meetings and Agendas 2021/22

MEETING	KEY AGENDA ITEMS
Standing Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update from Foster Care Representatives</li> <li>• Update from Children Living in Care Council (CLICC)</li> <li>• Performance Report</li> </ul>
January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Parenting Best Practice</li> <li>• Update on Apprenticeship Opportunities</li> </ul>
April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Care Leavers App</li> <li>• Draft Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan 2122</li> <li>• Local Planning and Implementation Group for Lifelong Links</li> <li>• Adopt London East - Performance and Service Development Report</li> </ul>
July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan – Update Report</li> <li>• SEND Improvement Programme – progress update</li> <li>• Care Review &amp; Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) Sounding Board</li> <li>• Foster Care Recruitment</li> </ul>
October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt London East Annual Report 2021</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan – Update Report</li> </ul>
January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Offer for Care Leavers 2022</li> <li>• Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan – Update Report</li> <li>• TNW CCGs Safeguarding Annual Report 2020/2021</li> </ul>



## Appendix C – Children's Social Care Key Performance Indicator Report Extract April 2022

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Overview</b>					
Number of Children Looked After	307	306	<b>335</b>	338	Snapshot
Number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)				63	Snapshot
Children Looked After (CLA) - rate per 10,000	43.3	43.1	<b>45.2</b>	45.6	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Looked After Children</b>					
No of new Children Looked After (CLA) episodes in period	151	131	<b>186</b>	17	YTD
No. of Children Looked After (CLA) exits in period	172	131	<b>161</b>	12	YTD
% repeat Children Looked After (CLA) (entries that were re-entries within 2 years)	6.0%	2.3%	<b>2.7%</b>	0%	YTD
Average no. of placement moves	1.6	1.5	<b>1.6</b>	1.6	Rolling Year
Max. no of placement moves	6.0	5.0	<b>8.0</b>	9.0	Rolling Year
% Children Looked After (CLA) long term placement stability	71.6%	73.1%	<b>64.8%</b>	64.0%	Snapshot
% of Children Looked After (CLA) with a named Social Worker (key worker or personal advisor)	100.0%	100.0%	<b>100%</b>	100%	Snapshot
% of Children Looked After (CLA) entries with health assessment done within 20 days	82.0%	91.5%	<b>45.7%</b>	25%	YTD
% of Children Looked After (CLA) who had an annual Health check (children looked after for at least 12 months)	78.7%	86.0%	<b>97.3%</b>	97.3%	Snapshot
% of Children Looked After (CLA) who had an annual Dental check (children looked after for at least 12 months)	83.1%	60.0%	<b>82.1%</b>	78.4%	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Section 6 - Care Leavers</b>					
% allocated care leavers "in touch" (17,18,19,20,21 yr. olds with activity updated within last year)	95.7%	98.8%	<b>88.9%</b>	90.4%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers 'in touch' and known to be EET	67.3%	72.6%	<b>64.3%</b>	66.3%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers 'in touch' and known to be in suitable accommodation	91.4%	95.8%	<b>83.6%</b>	85.9%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers with a pathway plan	98.8%	98.2%	<b>96.9%</b>	97.2%	Snapshot
% allocated care leavers with pathway plan updated in last 6 months	96.7%	95.6%	<b>87.5%</b>	90.0%	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Missing Children</b>					
Number of missing children during period	276	210	<b>205</b>	35	YTD
Missing from home	176	141	<b>156</b>	15	YTD
Children Looked After (out of borough)	73	41	<b>39</b>	16	YTD
Children Looked After (in borough)	16	15	<b>15</b>	6	YTD

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Fostering and Adoption</b>					
Number of Foster Carer Enquiries (initial contact)	95	193	<b>240</b>	4	YTD
No. of Foster Carer Enquiries leading to Initial Visits	48	53	<b>44</b>	0	YTD
% Initial visits completed within 5 working days	75.0%	44.2%	<b>46.2%</b>	0%	YTD
Total Approved Foster Carers (excl. family & friends, staying put, on hold/unavailable)	97	116	<b>113</b>	116	Snapshot
Foster Carer Vacancy rate	23.7%	45.3%	<b>21.1%</b>	21.7%	Snapshot
Foster Carer Occupancy rate	75.3%	54.7%	<b>78.9%</b>	78.3%	Snapshot
No. of children placed with In-house Foster Carers	115	109	<b>116</b>	116	Snapshot
No. of children in Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) Placements	92	85	<b>72</b>	73	Snapshot
Children in Residential Placements (incl dual registered schools and mother & baby units)	30	27	<b>22</b>	25	Snapshot

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current	Period
<b>Fostering and Adoption (continued)</b>					
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family	376.3	432.3	<b>509.5</b>	553.8	YTD (3 years)
Average time between court authority to place a child and deciding on a match	164	245	<b>300</b>	-	YTD
% waiting less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their family (14 months)	46.2%	36.1%	<b>35.7%</b>	37.5%	Snapshot
Adoptions from care (number adopted and percentage leaving care who are adopted)	6.4%	6.1%	<b>8.7%</b>	8.3%	YTD
Number of Adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders granted for Looked After Children (S)	37	17	<b>18</b>	2	YTD
The percentage of black and minority ethnic children leaving care who are adopted	4.4%	3.9%	<b>7.1%</b>	9.1%	YTD
The percentage of children who ceased to be looked after because of an SGO	15.1%	8.4%	<b>2.5%</b>	8.3%	YTD
Percentage of Children Looked After (CLA) placed for adoption within 12 months of agency decision	91%	87.5%	<b>50.0%</b>	100%	YTD

Performance Measure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current – Autumn 2020/21	Period
<b>Virtual School</b>					
% of pupils making expected progress in English and Maths	56.0%	62.0%	<b>67.5%</b>	68%	Termly
% of pupils where a Pupil Education Plans (PEP) meeting took place in the term	93.0%	95.0%	<b>96.3%</b>	96%	Termly
% of Pupil Education Plans (PEPs) which were signed off and RAG rated green	73.0%	91.0%	<b>78.1%</b>	78%	Termly

Appendix D – Tower Hamlets Partnership Structures

