

Scrutiny Action Log

Name of Committee: **Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

Municipal Year: **2023-24**

Reference	Action	Assigned to	Scrutiny Lead	Due Date	Response				
Insert date	Insert agenda item title and the action requested by the committee	Insert name of director	Insert scrutiny lead	Insert Date	Response provided by the service/ witness				
11.07.23	Provide further data and information on Care Experience	James Thomas Corporate Director for Children & Culture	Cllr Bodrul Choudhury CESSC Chair	08.08.23	Email sent on 09.08.23 with links providing further information included in Appendix 1.				
12.10.23	Clarify the timescales for the completion of the research report on free schools' meals carried out by Queen Mary University	Anna Murphy Senior Strategy & Policy Officer	Cllr Bodrul Choudhury CESSC Chair	10.11.23	Awaiting response				
	Provide school attendance data for Tower Hamlets	Layla Richards Head of Strategy and Commissioning	Cllr Bodrul Choudhury CESSC Chair	10.11.23	See appendix 3				
	Research and provide any available data on the link between overcrowding, mental health and attendance.	Layla Richards Head of Strategy and Commissioning	Cllr Bodrul Choudhury CESSC Chair	10.11.23	See appendix 4				
	Provide further data on Youth Service uptake including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breakdown of new contacts - Gender split in participants 	Kelly Duggan Head of Youth Justice Service	Cllr Bodrul Choudhury CESSC Chair	10.11.23	1. That further data on Youth Service uptake, including a breakdown of new contacts and the gender split in participants, will be provided to the sub-committee for review.				
						September	October	November	Total

Scrutiny Action Log

					<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>91</td> <td>196</td> <td>396</td> <td>683</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>131</td> <td>302</td> <td>1019</td> <td>1452</td> </tr> </table> <p>The data above is in relation to the offer provided by Young Tower Hamlets</p>	Female	91	196	396	683	Male	131	302	1019	1452								
Female	91	196	396	683																			
Male	131	302	1019	1452																			
	Provide a breakdown of the Equalities monitoring data for employees of the youth service, esp. gender	Kelly Duggan Head of Youth Justice Service	Cllr Bodrul Choudhury CESSC Chair	10.11.23	<p>2. That a breakdown on equalities monitoring data for employees of the youth service, specifically gender to be provided to the sub-committee for review.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Asian</th> <th>Black</th> <th>Mixed</th> <th>Other</th> <th>White</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>9</td> <td>12</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>12</td> <td>8</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The data above is in relation to the staff in Young Tower Hamlets. This includes the current permanent staff as well as the interim project team.</p>		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Female	9	12	0	1	7	Male	12	8	0	0	1
	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White																		
Female	9	12	0	1	7																		
Male	12	8	0	0	1																		

Appendix 1 – Care experience data and information

In response to the request for further data and information on care experience the service have provided the below links, the first two links will be particularly relevant for those of you who were not members of the sub-committee last year:

1. The independent review of children's social care

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20230308122449/https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/final-report/>

2. Stable homes built on love consultation - the government response to independent review

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/childrens-social-care-stable-homes-built-on-love>

3. Care experience matters

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-experience-matters>

Appendix 3 – School Attendance Data

Absence rates - autumn term: England, Inner London and Tower Hamlets between 2018/19 Autumn term and 2022/23 Autumn term

Area	Measure	2018/19 Autumn term	2019/20 Autumn term	2020/21 Autumn term	2021/22 Autumn term	2022/23 Autumn term
England	Overall absence rate	4.3%	4.9%	4.7%	6.9%	7.5%
	Percentage of persistent absentees (10% or more missed)	10.9%	13.1%	13.0%	23.5%	24.2%
Inner London	Overall absence rate	4.0%	4.5%	5.0%	6.0%	7.2%
	Percentage of persistent absentees (10% or more missed)	10.1%	11.8%	14.4%	19.0%	23.8%
Tower Hamlets	Overall absence rate	4.0%	4.6%	4.9%	5.5%	7.4%
	Percentage of persistent absentees (10% or more missed)	9.8%	12.0%	14.5%	17.0%	26.5%

(1) Total includes state-funded primary, secondary and special schools. Data for special schools is available from 2016/17 to present.

(2) The overall absence rate is the total number of sessions missed due to absence for all pupils as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions for all pupils. One session is equal to half a day.

(3) A pupil enrolment is identified as a persistent absentee if they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions.

Appendix 4 – Overcrowding affects children’s wellbeing, Finding solutions in Tower Hamlets



Overcrowding affects children's wellbeing

Finding solutions in Tower Hamlets



How many households are affected?

Commonly used indicators of overcrowding such as the 'bedroom standard' have various purposes, including to help prioritise and allocate housing for residents on the housing list. Using this criterion, **15.8%** of households in Tower Hamlets were estimated as living in overcrowded conditions in 2021 (see Figure 1).

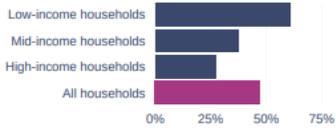


15.8%
of households in Tower Hamlets
overcrowded in 2021

Figure 1: Percentage of households that met the overcrowding criteria as per 2021 census

About **half** of all responses to a survey of 620 families during the pandemic said they didn't have enough space. **Lack of space** is more prevalent for **low-income households** (see Figure 2).

"One of the biggest concerns in our area is overcrowding. And children just not having enough space for study, for play within their homes, that is a huge concern."
Tower Hamlets parent



Income Level	Percentage
Low-income households	~55%
Mid-income households	~45%
High-income households	~25%
All households	~50%

Figure 2: Percentage of households who reported not having enough space in their homes in a survey of 620 parents of children aged 0-4 and parents to be living in Tower Hamlets

Key research findings

 The usual indicators of overcrowding miss many of the ways in which lack of space affects families and children.

 Families experiencing overcrowding often face other issues with their homes.

Recommendations to improve residents' wellbeing

1

Policymakers could adopt **broader indicators** of overcrowding.

2

Landlords can provide space for **storage** and clothes drying, and **prioritise repairs**.

3

Planning rules can require child friendly, suitably sized **balconies** for new builds.

Underpinning evidence

⚠️ The usual indicators of overcrowding miss many of the ways in which lack of space affects families and children

Overcrowding generates many impacts that are not accounted for with current indicators. The impacts mentioned by the participants in the survey are captured in Figure 3.

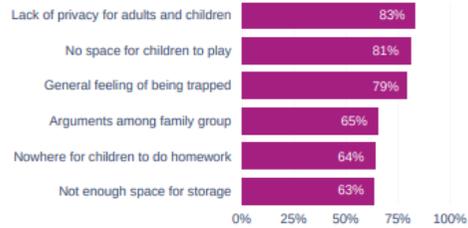


Figure 3: Impacts of lack of space, for respondents who reported this problem

🏠 Families experiencing overcrowding often face other issues with their homes

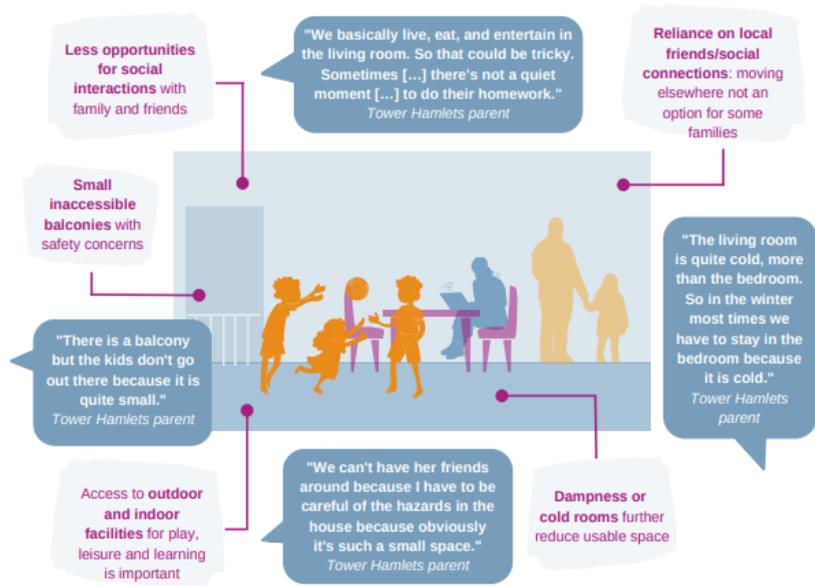


Figure 4: Overcrowding issues reported by parents

Underlying research



Cameron C, et al. "Housing and environment for young children during the pandemic: Families in Tower Hamlets community survey and panel findings".
<https://iris.ucl.ac.uk/iris/publication/2012917/1>

About the study: Community survey that collected data at two time points. Participants were families with young children, and pregnant women, who lived in Tower Hamlets during the COVID-19 pandemic. 992 people completed the first survey and most (620) also completed the second survey. People were recruited via communications from the local authority targeting low-income households.



Ucci M, Ortegon-Sanchez A, Mead NE, Godward C, Rahman A, Islam S, Pleace N, Albert A, Christie N. (2022) Exploring the Interactions between Housing and Neighbourhood Environments for Enhanced Child Wellbeing: The Lived Experience of Parents Living in Areas of High Child Poverty in England, UK. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*; 19(19):12563.
doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191912563

About the study: Carried out in partnership with community organisations to explore parents' lived experience of how housing and the local area affects child wellbeing. The study interviewed parents of children aged 2–12 years old from two local authorities in England with high levels of child poverty: Tower Hamlets in East London, and Bradford District in West Yorkshire. Here we present highlights from 13 interviews (and questionnaire data) with Tower Hamlets participants living in Watts Grove and Bromley by Bow, focusing on aspects related to overcrowding and/or space, which was one of the themes emerging from the study.

This work was undertaken as part of ActEarly: A City Collaboratory approach to early life changes to improve the health and opportunities for children living in areas with high levels of child poverty; Bradford, West Yorkshire and Tower Hamlets, London. ActEarly is supported by the UK Prevention Research Partnership, an initiative funded by UK Research and Innovation Councils, the Department of Health and Social Care (England) and the UK devolved administrations, and leading health research charities.

Partners



<https://actearly.org.uk/>

For more information contact Dr Marcella Ucci, m.ucci@ucl.ac.uk

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Associated Links (Appendix 3)

[IJERPH | Free Full-Text | Exploring the Interactions between Housing and Neighbourhood Environments for Enhanced Child Wellbeing: The Lived Experience of Parents Living in Areas of High Child Poverty in England, UK \(mdpi.com\)](#)

<https://actearly.org.uk/>