



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

Title:

Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date:

Tuesday 5th March, 2024

Time:

6.30 pm

Venue:

Rooms 18:06 – 08, 18th Floor, Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, SW1E 6QP

Members:

Councillors:

Angela Piddock (Chair)
Lorraine Dean
Elizabeth Hitchcock
Karen Scarborough

James Small-Edwards
Max Sullivan
Jesscia Toale

Co-opted Members:

Alix Ascough
Marina Coleman
Professor Ryan Nichol



Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda.

Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception. If you have a disability and require any special assistance, please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Linda Hunting, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor.

**Email: lhunting@westminster.gov.uk
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions, they should contact the Head of Committee and Governance Services in advance of the meeting please.

AGENDA

PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)

1. MEMBERSHIP

To note any changes to the membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations by Members and Officers of the existence and nature of any pecuniary interests or any other significant interest in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the last Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee meeting, 5 December 2023.

(Pages 5 - 10)

4. WORK PROGRAMME

To discuss and shape the Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2024-2025.

(Pages 11 - 24)

5. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP (LSCP) ANNUAL REPORT

To review and note the Council's Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report.

(Pages 25 - 58)

6. PROVISIONS FOR MIGRANT FAMILIES

To undertake post-decision scrutiny on the Council's current provisions for migrant families and make recommendations.

(Pages 59 - 98)

7. CARE LEAVERS TASK GROUP REPORT

To Follow.

Stuart Love
Chief Executive
26 February 2024

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CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday 5th December, 2023**, .

Members Present: Councillors Angela Piddock (Chair), Lorraine Dean, Sara Hassan, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Iman Less, Ellie Ormsby and Ralu Oteh-Osoka

Also Present: Councillor Tim Roca (Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning and Employment), Sarah Newman (Bi Borough Executive Director of Children's Services), Helen Mann (CEO Young Westminster Foundation), Madhu Chauhan (Head of Early Help Family Services WC), Iraklis Kolokotronis (Bi-Borough Principal Early Years Service), Johnathan Turner (Service Manager - Westminster Looked After Children and Leaving Care Service) (online) and Linda Hunting (Policy and Scrutiny Advisor).

1 MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Committee noted apologies from Co-opted Members Alix Ascough, Marina Coleman, and Professor Ryan Nichol.

2 MINUTES

- 2.1 The Committee approved the minutes of its meeting held on 18 September 2023.

RESOLVED:

- 2.2 That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September be signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 The Committee noted Councillor Hitchcock declared that in respect of the item the Early Help Strategy 2022 -2025, she is a trustee of the St Andrew's Club.
- 3.2 The Committee noted that Councillor Piddock declared in respect of the item the Early Help Strategy 2022-2025, she is as a Board Member for the Queen's Park Family Hub, by extension as a member of the Board of Governors of Queens Park Primary school.

3.3 The Committee noted that there were no other declarations of interest.

4 WORK PROGRAMME

4.1 The Committee noted that the Work Programme meeting held in October was to agree the items for this meeting and 5 March 2024.

4.2 The Committee noted that another Work Programme meeting would be scheduled in due course to plan the next municipal year programme.

4.3 The Committee noted updates to the Work Programme and received an overview of the forthcoming plans.

4.4 The Committee queried the substantive item focussing on the provision for migrant families for the 5 March Committee meeting. It was noted this is a fast-changing landscape, migrant families are an extremely vulnerable group, and there is a multi-agency board that oversees this provision. The Committee agreed this item should broadly cover migrant families and the changing situation, asylum-seeking families in contingency hotels, and those not in receipt of public funds.

5 EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2022-2025

5.1 The Committee welcomed Sarah Newman (Bi Borough Executive Director of Children's Services), to introduce the report on the Early Help Strategy. The Bi Borough Executive Director of Children's Services and Madhu Chauhan (Head of Early Help Family Services WC) responded to questions on the following topics:

- The importance the Family Hubs as they bring all the services and support for families together in one accessible place.
- How the Council should be prepared and carry out any necessary risk assessments to ensure that in the event of another pandemic the Council's universal provision, targeted provision, and specialist services are met by the existing budgets and would not cause any disruption to young people and families.
- The importance of the Early Help services being agile and reactive.
- The national recruitment crisis with social workers.
- The pressures on the system with only three Family Hubs in Westminster and the other types of services that could be delivered through Community Hubs and Libraries.
- Gaps that exist in the services for young people and looking into additional opportunities, funding streams, and voluntary sector groups to assist.
- Creating seamless services for families with a joined-up approach with health, housing, employment services, youth clubs, and schools, and how the family navigator role is to link up these services to support families for 0-18 years.
- Social Workers based in schools to offer support at an early age and steer young people away from potential statutory referrals at a later stage.

- The importance of the services that are available for 0-5 years and how that assists in steering young people and families away from social services.
- Building resilience and independence with individuals and families, awareness of those families where this may not be possible, and the role of community champions and the family hubs.
- The system approach that is set out in the strategy, what works and what does not work in terms of approaches with families, and how that is communicated throughout partners.
- The community sector groups and the training that is offered, in particular, which schools use the trauma informed way of working and how this can be extended to others across the system.
- How well the Portman building site works at offering a Family Hub, the significant need for a Queens Park Family Hub, the delays in opening a Family Hub with the services needed in this area of deprivation, and the funding that is needed to ensure the project is completed.
- Early Help services and any potential plans to cut funding for the Family Hubs, including any planned refurbishment projects.
- Ways to capture the data on every child in Westminster, how this is reliant on the voluntary nature of parents to engage, and whether it is possible to predict which young people might need interventions or assistance in the lead up to attending education and at the early stages of their development.
- How the Council promotes the services that are available to families, where issues such as poor parenting and deprivation have a marked effect on a child starting education at a level not commensurate with other children of a comparative age, and whether there will be additional funding available in order to focus on the Early Years offer from 0-5 years.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, first-time entrants of children to the criminal justice service, and how the Early Help Strategy aims to prevent young people from going on this path.
- Cyber bullying and online safety and how the Council promotes the importance of this with parents and with young people.
- The Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit and whether there is investigation into the demographics of the young people this includes, in particular, families with absent fathers and what contact the service has with these fathers to gain the views on their child.
- How the Council gains an understanding of the young population in Westminster is in terms of ethnicity, school population, the youth justice system, referrals to social care, and exclusions in order to gain more knowledge about disproportionality, highlight the key areas of concern, and help to inform what services are required.
- How the priorities in the report, overlap with other issues and departments such as secure housing, and what collaborative work is being carried out in the Council across departments.
- Youth engagement in the transition from Primary School to Secondary School, the role of the Young Westminster Foundation and what things should be a focus for the next year, including, what the young people have identified as gaps in the provision.
- How the Council engages with young people and are helping to prepare young people for life after school.
- The health and wellbeing of young people.

- Workshops with service users and how this would inform the review of the strategy in the future, capturing the voice of parents from the voluntary sector partners that sit on the Early Help Partnership Board, the Local Integrated Partnership, and the Quality Assurance Framework.
- International migration in Westminster and how these statistics feed into how services that are developed and delivered to include different cultural expectations and the willingness of different cultures to interact with services.
- The performance framework for the Early Help Service and the Quarterly Performance data set which evaluates and monitors the impact of the service and provides an oversight of what is being achieved across Children's Services, including, how the strategy may be modified.
- How the Council are promoting services in different languages and to different communities, including refugee and asylum-seeking parents.
- Genetics of mothers, origins of birth, and the differences between birth weights between cultures, and how post birth weight is supported with parents in the 0-5 years in the family hubs, including perinatal health.
- Embedding a new universal assessment tool for families to avoid them needing to repeat their information and stories between services, as well as cost saving benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Council extends its outreach work for 0-5 years across Westminster Council to assist in reducing the number of children that may be directed to Children's Services under a statutory obligation in the future.
2. That the Council continues to promote a trauma informed way of working with young people across all Primary and Secondary Schools and the system and promotes the training with all partners.
3. That the Council continues to work on a universal assessment tool that goes across all Early Help Services and develops further data sharing protocols to speed up the delivery of support for families.
4. That the Council continues to work on ways in which to effectively reach out and communicate with families about the support services that are available in Westminster, with a particular focus on the 0–5-year age group.

6 CARE LEAVERS TASK GROUP REPORT

6.1 The Chair welcomed Councillor Iman Less, Chair of the Care Leavers Task Group, to introduce the report on the scope for the Task Group. The following points were noted by the Committee:

- That Councillor Ralu Oteh-Osoka would like to join the Task Group.
- The importance of the site visits to Tuesday Group and for Members to speak with relevant officers beforehand.
- How the work of this Task Group will report back to the Committee and will provide recommendations to officers and the Cabinet Member for the preparation of the forthcoming Ofsted inspection.

- That the role of the Task Group will be to independently test the offer for Care Leavers in Westminster by speaking with the young people, reading the policy, and speaking with the relevant staff.
- The importance of scrutiny carrying out this review outside of the Ofsted inspection.
- That the Council are updating the Care Leavers offer and the recommendations of the Task Group will help to inform the review process and ensure the Council's offer is robust.
- A session to provide a high-level overview of the service to Members, to include both clinicians and officers, and people working in the CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) team that support the Westminster Guardians Board and the Corporate Parenting Board.
- The possibility of Members shadowing officers on Practice Month to observe the service and support levels.

RESOLVED

- 6.2 That the Committee approved the establishment and scope of the Task Group.

7 CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Committee welcomed Iraklis Kolokotronis (Bi-Borough Principal Early Years Service) to take any questions arising from the report on Childcare Sufficiency to be noted by the Committee. The Committee raised the following points:
- The need to create more places in local schools for under 5 years and specifically under 3 years in the North West of Westminster to support families to stay in the local areas.
 - The available funding in the system for lower income families returning to work and the available hours for childcare.
 - How demographics, present changes in the population, and the economy are affecting the uptake of places for children in Westminster.
 - Changes to Universal Credit and getting a greater understanding of the gaps and local demands, including, how families may respond to the new policies.
 - Family Hubs in Westminster, the upgrades that are needed, and how the available data will help to inform this.
 - Areas of deprivation in the North West of Westminster, nursery places in the Queen's Park area, and the forthcoming move of the Queen's Park family hub to another location.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 The Committee received a verbal update from Councillor Tim Roca (Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning and Employment) about an intended consultation due to start prior to Christmas until the middle of January 2024 about the future of the Churchill Gardens Primary School due to low pupil numbers. The Committee was advised that as the school is part of an academy chain, different rules apply for the consultation and that the relevant

Ward Councillors have received a briefing from Ian Heggs (Bi-borough Director of Education).

- 8.2 The Committee noted that the potential amalgamation plans would be of Churchill Gardens and Millbank Primary Schools and any changes to the SEN (Special Educational Needs) provision at Churchill Gardens school would have an effect on the local community.
- 8.3 The Committee was advised by Councillor Roca that there would be a formal announcement forthcoming to advise that he will be stepping down from his role as Cabinet Member for the Young People, Learning and Employment portfolio.

The Meeting ended at 8.17 pm.

CHAIR: _____

DATE _____



Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Tuesday 5 March 2024
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2024/2025 Work Programme
Report of:	Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Linda Hunting - Policy & Scrutiny Advisor lhunting@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee ("the Committee") to discuss topics for its work programme.
- 1.2 This report also considers the work of the Committee since its last meeting on 5 December 2023.

2. Formal Meeting Dates for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year

- 2.1 The Committee is advised that this is the last scheduled meeting date for the 2023/2024 year.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Policy and Scrutiny team supports the Committee in creating the work programme and the Committee considers items on those areas where the Council is currently working to develop new policy, where policies previously implemented are ready for strategic review or where scrutiny plays an overall role in assurance. The overall emphasis is to provide scrutiny with maximum opportunity to have impact and influence Council policy.
- 3.4 When drawing up work programmes, the Committee considers the vision and purpose of scrutiny at Westminster.

Scrutiny is a vital function to promote transparency and accountability. On behalf of Westminster's communities and stakeholders, local non-Executive Councillors will endeavour to ensure services in the City not only meet people's needs but enhance lived experiences by:

- 1. Championing the best possible outcomes for communities and stakeholders.*
- 2. Holding the Council, its partner organisations and external bodies to account for decisions taken and the impacts on our communities.*
- 3. Examining Council priorities, actively engaging in policy development and offering constructive challenge prior to decisions being taken.*
- 4. Working strategically across the city to focus our efforts on policy and service areas where scrutiny can make the biggest impact.*
- 5. Demonstrating integrity and commitment by adhering to the Nolan Principles of Public Life.*

4. Work Programme for 2024/25

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to discuss and propose topics of interest for the next municipal year's work programme in 2024/25.
- 4.2 The Committee's attention should be drawn to the Terms of Reference, set out in Appendix 1, which may assist the Committee in identifying issues to be included in the work programme.
- 4.3 The Committee is due to meet on 14 May 2024 to discuss items for its work programme after the Cabinet Member Annual Updates held between Monday 15 April to Thursday 25 April. The Committee will use the Updates to help identify possible issues for future investigation by scrutiny.
- 4.x When considering the work programme, and agreeing an overall programme of scrutiny activity, the Committee should have regard to whether the work programme is achievable in terms of both Officer and Member time, taking into account that the Committee is scheduled to meet four times per year. Members are also reminded that it is advisable to hold some capacity in reserve for any urgent issues that might arise.

5. Task Groups and Single Member Studies

- 5.1 Each Committee has discretion to establish Task Groups and Single Member Studies to examine key issues in more detail. The Committee should be advised that both Members and Officers will only be able to successfully take part in and support a finite number of Task Groups at any one time.
- 5.2 This Committee has discussed establishing a Task Group on Care Leavers. The final report of this Task Group is detailed in Item 7 for the Committee's comments and approval.

6. Monitoring recommendations and actions

- 6.1 The recommendations and actions arising from each meeting are recorded in the Recommendation and Action Tracker attached as Appendix 2. Members

are invited to review the work undertaken in response to those recommendations and actions.

7. Committee activity

- 7.1 Since the previous meeting of the Committee on, 5 December 2023, the Committee has received updates of the latest policy developments, key national announcements, and publications relevant to Children's Services on the 12th and 26th of February 2024.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers, please contact Linda Hunting
lhunting@westminster.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Recommendation and Action Tracker

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YOUNG PEOPLE, LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION

7 Members of the Council (4 Majority Party Members and 3 Opposition Party Members).

4 co-opted Members with voting rights i.e. one co-opted representative each from the Church of England and Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Boards and two Parent Governor Representatives. 2 co-opted Members without voting rights, i.e. 2 Headteachers of Westminster maintained schools.

NB: The voting rights of the co-opted only extend to matters relating to Education.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

(1) To undertake Policy and Scrutiny activity, in line with the functions set out in Section 1 of Chapter 4 of the Constitution, in respect of matters noted in this terms of reference.

(2) To lead Policy and Scrutiny Activity for all matters relating to:

- Children's safeguarding services
- Schools and other pre-18 education options
- Adult education, including further and higher education
- Wider employment and skills programmes
- Libraries
- Leisure services and partnerships
- Any other matter intended to support or safeguard young people, improve the learning environment of the City or provide leisure and library-related services

(3) Matters referred to in (2) above which are the responsibility of external agencies, and where the Committee may legitimately act to investigate.

(4) Any other matter which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has requested that this Committee investigates.

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Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker

This tracker enables the Committee to monitor progress against the recommendations it has made, requests for information and actions to be completed.

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendation / Information Request/ Action	Detail	Policial Lead and Officer Lead	Status
5 December 2023	Item 5: Early Help Strategy 2022-2025	Recommendation	That the Council extends its outreach work for 0-5 years across Westminster Council to assist in reducing the number of children that may be directed to Children’s Services under a statutory obligation in the future.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure <i>Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services</i>	Completed Received 16 February 2024 Response on pages 2, 3 & 4 of Appendix 3.
		Recommendation	That the Council continues to promote a trauma informed way of working with young people across all Primary and Secondary Schools and the system and promotes the training with all partners.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure <i>Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services</i>	Completed Received 16 February 2024 Response on pages of 5 & 6 Appendix 3.
		Recommendation	That the Council continues to work on a universal assessment tool that goes across all Early Help Services and develops further data sharing protocols to speed up the delivery of support for families.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure <i>Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services</i>	Completed Received 16 February 2024 Response on page 6 of Appendix 3.
		Recommendation	That the Council continues to work on ways in which to effectively reach out and communicate with families about the support services that are available in Westminster, with a particular focus on the 0–5-year age group.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure <i>Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services</i>	Completed Received 16 February 2024 Response on page 7 of Appendix 3.

Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker

Recommendation	That the Council extends its outreach work for 0-5 years across Westminster Council to assist in reducing the number of children that may be directed to Children’s Services under a statutory obligation in the future.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services
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RESPONSE

This is covered through our current Pre-birth to five key priorities and action plan incorporated in the Early help offer through our Family hubs. Please refer to Appendix A. These actions are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the pre-birth -five transformation board.

Appendix A

Priorities set out by the 0-5 transformation board.

Priority 1 – NWL 20:80 Demonstrator and Health Integration.

Actions:

- Establish health navigator posts.
- Establish mechanism for tracking ‘20’ cohort
- Embedding Early Help in primary care and similarly health services into Family Hubs
- Alignment of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams to Family Hubs

Priority 2 – Public health and early years priorities.

Actions:

- Track performance against PH outcomes – EWMH, Child Healthy Weight, Oral Health, Immunisations
- Extension of community-based immunisation and learning from pilot
- Develop mechanism to enable visibility of 0-5 outcomes data across partnership
- Support improvement of SLCN in early years e.g. through PC+ programme
- Baby Friendly Accreditation in Family Hubs and Early Years

Priority 3 - Development of integrated 0-5 pathway and services.

Actions:

- Implementation of the 0-5 Intensive Support Offer

Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker

- Implementation of the 3-4 month contact and group reviews
- Strengthening of midwifery and maternity links in primary care and similarly health services into family hubs
- Development of the Perinatal Mental Health pathway
- Strengthening and embedding the principles of the integrated service model inc. workforce development & OD

Priority 4 – Communication of the pathway and Start for Life offer.

Actions:


- Establishing / publishing the Start for Life offer
- Shared key messaging across partnership, inc. VCS
- Improve visibility and understanding of the 0-5 pathway services for parents, carers, and professionals
- Develop parent/carers panels and seek feedback to inform service development

Priority 5 – Early Years Sector Developments



Actions:







- Development of wraparound care offer
- Track EYFS performance data
- Review of childcare sufficiency inc. PVI sector in context of new extended eligibility from 2024
- Libraries: development of enhanced service offer

Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker



Pre-Birth to Five Action Plan 2024

 <p>Reshape Healthy Child Programme</p>	<p>Implement the 3-4 month contact and group reviews</p>	<p>Implement the 0-5 Intensive Support Offer.</p>	<p>Extend pilot of group contacts for 6-8 week contact and 2-2.5 year development reviews .</p>	<p>Extend use of online ASQ to all families to support development and group reviews.</p>	<p>Develop sustainability strategy for health visiting workforce</p>	<p>Develop the perinatal mental health pathway</p>	<p>Strengthen partnership links with midwifery and maternity services</p>
 <p>Reduce duplication across the pathway</p>	<p>Extend info-sharing agreements across family hubs to cover all localities</p>	<p>Bring together recording and reporting across Family Hubs, Early Help and VCS</p>	<p>Embed VCS offer within the 0-5 pathway. Train them to deliver health promotion messages.</p>	<p>Develop peer support through Maternity & Community Champions, Doulas and VCS providers.</p>	<p>Embed Early Help into primary care and similarly health services into Family Hubs</p>	<p>Align of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams to Family Hubs</p>	<p>Develop enhanced early years service offer in libraries</p>
 <p>Strengthen targeted work</p>	<p>Continue development of 0-5 targeted pathway including practice model, interventions etc.</p>	<p>Embed joint Health Visiting and Early Help leads and other specialist roles within the 0-5 workforce .</p>	<p>Review parenting offer to ensure appropriate provision for families with younger children</p>	<p>Roll out the Wellcomm toolkit to EY settings (Phase 1) and the HV service (Phase 2).</p>	<p>Improve support for families with additional needs, making transition to primary education.</p>	<p>Extend community-based immunisations and learning from pilot</p>	<p>Support improvement of SLCN in early years e.g. through PC+ programme</p>
 <p>Align Best Start in Life, Healthy Child Programme and School Readiness</p>	<p>Continue workforce training to embed whole-family, trauma-informed practice</p>	<p>Establish health navigator posts to focus on the targeted 20:80 Demonstrator cohort.</p>	<p>Establish mechanism for tracking '20' cohort in 20:80 Demonstrator Programme.</p>	<p>Embed principles of the integrated service model inc. workforce / organisational development</p>	<p>Track outcomes - EWMH - Child healthy weight - Oral health - Immunisations</p>	<p>Work towards Baby Friendly accreditation in Family Hubs and Early Years</p>	<p>Develop a mechanism to enable visibility of 0-5 outcomes data across partnership</p>
		<p>Track EYFS performance data to establish impact of school readiness interventions</p>	<p>Develop wraparound care offer</p>	<p>Review childcare sufficiency incl. PVI sector in context of new extended eligibility from 2024</p>			

Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker

Recommendation	That the Council continues to promote a trauma informed way of working with young people across all Primary and Secondary Schools and the system and promotes the training with all partners.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services
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RESPONSE

- We continue to deliver training to all staff working with children and families in schools and the wider workforce including key partner agencies in VCS’s and health.
- Schools have incorporated trauma informed practice through whole school training the inclusion team are delivering training and have a trauma informed network offering peer mentor sessions including consultation. Please see Appendix B for schedule of training offered through schools and to the wider workforce.
- Changing Futures Programme has launched the Trauma Informed Westminster Network of which we are a key partner recognising the existing good practices, we have embedded in Early help and accelerating our collective commitment to making Westminster more trauma informed.

Appendix B

List of the schools trained for this academic year 23/24

Schools		Academic year 23/24
St Clement Danes	Standard Offer	1/10/23
King Solomon Academy	Standard Offer	19/4/23
Essendine Primary	Standard Offer	17/10/23
Pimlico Academy	Standard Offer	30/11/23 & 14/03/24
Ukrainian School	Standard Offer	02/11/23
St Gabriels	Standard Offer	13/12/23
Queens Park Primary	Standard Offer	08/01/24
Westminster Education Centre (Ormiston AP)	Refresher	01/02/24
St Saviours primary	Standard Offer	15/04/24
Gateway Academy	Standard Offer	TBC
St Vincent De Paul	Standard Offer	TBC

Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker

Reflective group sessions for schools		28/11/23, 30/01/24, 12/03/24, 07/05/24, 02/07/24.
FOR EH and wider partners	LEVEL 1 TRAUMA INFORMED TRAINING	20/9/23, 17/1/24, 8/05/24
For EH and Wider partners	Level 2 Trauma Informed Training	13/03/24 & 20/03/24
For EH and wider partners	Trauma insight resource and emotional safety planning	05/03/24

<u>Recommendation</u>	That the Council continues to work on a universal assessment tool that goes across all Early Help Services and develops further data sharing protocols to speed up the delivery of support for families.	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services
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RESPONSE

- We have been looking at expanding the use of Mosaic as the preferred method of case recording of the universal assessment tool currently hosted on another platform system for family navigators working within the Family hubs.
- Information sharing agreements are in place with key stakeholders so that data on the families can be shared particularly new birth data following the initial visits made by health visitors.
- Current referral process using the multi-agency referral form are also being upgraded to enable easier smoother access to external agencies referring into children’s services.

Appendix 3: Young People, Learning and Employment P&S Committee Tracker

<u>Recommendation</u>	<p>That the Council continues to work on ways in which to effectively reach out and communicate with families about the support services that are available in Westminster, with a particular focus on the 0–5-year age group.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning & Leisure Bi-borough Executive Director of Children’s Services</p>
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RESPONSE

We have a bi-borough draft comms plan proposal waiting for sign off from senior leaders. This includes 4 key communication objectives to raise families’ awareness about services available to them:

1. Create simple, easily identifiable printed communications assets that summarise all the support available for families and can be out in the community for multiple years
2. Execute a multimedia campaign that reaches as many families as possible across both boroughs via various touchpoints – print, digital, face to face
3. Target our communications to families in greatest need of our services with an emphasis on services that are free for them
4. As a result:
 - a. Increase web traffic to the Family Information Hub
 - b. Increase footfall into our family hubs
 - c. Increase awareness and uptake of specific services

Core Key Messages:

- Are you a parent or guardian of a child aged 0-19?
- Did you know that there is a range of free support available to you? - Check out all the resources at our online family information hub
- Or why not pop into your local family hub and speak with a member of staff
- There are loads of resources including free childcare, parenting programmes and support if you have a specific need
- You can also find a variety of free and low-cost local activities for children and young people at the Our City website

Multimedia approach

For this campaign, we are proposing a multimedia approach which has three pillars: print; digital and direct engagement. We aim for the campaign to go live in May - when the new family information hub is live in both boroughs and post the Mayoral pre-election period.

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Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting:	5 March, 2024
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Report 22/23
Report of:	Sarah Newman - Executive Director Bi Borough Children's Services
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Councillor Aicha Less - Cabinet Member for Communities, Children and Public Protection
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	It is a statutory requirement for each Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) to publish an annual report.
Report Author and Contact Details:	Emma Biskupski - Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Manager emma.biskupski@rbkc.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The LSCP Annual Report is a report of the work of the multi-agency Local Safeguarding Children Partnership across Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. It gives an overview of the work of the Partnership during 2022-2023.

2. Relevant Background and Introduction

- 2.1 The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership is required to publish an annual report of its work. The LSCP covering Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster has completed the annual report detailing the work against the key priorities:

- reducing the harm of domestic abuse and coercive control
 - safer communities (including child exploitation and serious youth violence)
 - recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic
 - transitional safeguarding
- 2.2 The report gives an overview of the multi-agency safeguarding children training that we provide to the children’s workforce across the partnership, as well as the local learning from multi-agency audits and local as well as national case reviews.
- 2.3 This is the second annual report of the new Local Safeguarding Children Partnership covering Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster, following the disaggregation from Hammersmith and Fulham.

3. Key Matters for the Committee’s Consideration

- 3.1 Committee members are asked to review and note the content of the report about the work of the partnership in 22/23.
- 3.2 That the LSCP partners have taken action to reduce the harm of domestic abuse and coercive control. For example, Westminster Children’s Services has rolled out training to frontline staff on the Safe & Together model to help upskill practitioners in holding perpetrators of domestic abuse to account and keep children safe and together with the non-abusing parent.
- 3.3 That the LSCP partners have taken action to develop safer communities, in tackling child exploitation. For example, partners have worked together on the Home Office pilot regarding the national referral mechanism (NRM). The devolved decision-making panel that has been established locally with consistent attendance from multi-agency colleagues has allowed for rich discussions about individual cases and valuable local knowledge to be shared. The effective business support provided by the local authority has ensured that the Panel’s reports and minutes are shared accurately and in a timely manner.
- 3.4 That the LSCP has continued to offer a range of safeguarding children training to the multi-agency workforce across our footprint. There has been good engagement from partners in early years, education, health and the voluntary sector. The LSCP continues to monitor feedback from delegates in order to quality assure our workshops. A training needs analysis is planned to inform the training programme for April 2024 onwards.
- 3.5 The LSCP continues to reflect on learning from reviews, including those published by the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, such as the Child Protection in England report (June 2022) and the Safeguarding Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings Phase 1 report (October 2022).
- 3.4 The Committee should note that revised statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 was published on 15 December 2023. The

guidance states future LSCP annual reports will need to be published by the end of September each year.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. Legal and Governance Implications

5.1 There is no identified legal implication as a result of this review and assurance activity.

6. Carbon Impact

6.1. There is no identified carbon impact as a result of this review and assurance activity.

7. Equalities Impact

7.1. There is no identified equalities impact as a result of this review and assurance activity.

8. Consultation and Engagement

8.1 The LSCP annual report was produced in consultation with partner agencies.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Report Author, emma.biskupski@rbkc.gov.uk

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Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report

April 2022 – March 2023



Local Safeguarding
Children Partnership

Kensington and Chelsea

|

Westminster

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Foreword from the LSCP Independent Chair

As the Independent Chair of the Partnership, I am pleased to present the LSCP annual report which covers the reporting year from April 2022 to March 2023.

This has been a pivotal year with the additional challenges as we experience the aftermath of the Covid pandemic and cost of living crisis and navigate the impact on our workforce, children, families and communities.

The responsibility for the strategic oversight of the local Partnership arrangements rests with the three safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, the Integrated Care Board, and the Police) working collaboratively to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in our local area and with partners where children are placed elsewhere.

The strength of our partnership lies in our overriding commitment to work together, to challenge each other and to hold each other to account to ensure the best possible outcomes for all our children and young people.

Aileen Buckton

LSCP Independent Chair and Scrutineer



Introduction to our Annual Report

Welcome to Our Annual Report for 2022-2023 for Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster's Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership.

This year we wanted to capture our **Purpose, Principles and Priorities**, what we pay attention to, how we are shaping and delivering services and how we work collaboratively to **protect, support and safeguard children, young people, their families and the communities in which they live.**

Our Purpose

Our multi-agency Local Safeguarding Children Partnership is built on strong foundations. Established in 2021, our current membership includes senior representatives from the Local Authorities, Police, Health Providers and the Integrated Care Board, Education, Voluntary Sector, Probation, CAFCASS. The partnership meets quarterly to share updates, provide oversight, challenge and scrutiny to all aspects of our work to support, protect and safeguard children.

Central to our Partnership lies our shared understanding and **purpose**. We recognise that building effective relationships and creating meaningful interventions both together and within our respective organisations is vital if we are committed to effect meaningful change in safeguarding children and families.

We do this by ensuring objective oversight and peer scrutiny is firmly in place to hold each other to account, to drive outstanding practice and to identify and strengthen areas for development across our respective services.

Our Partnership's responsibility is to **inform, scrutinise and challenge** professional practice to ensure all multi-agency safeguarding activity is appropriate, effective, robust and sustainable.

Our safeguarding partnership arrangements are determined by our overarching **principles** and agreed **priorities**, informed by our borough profiles, learning from our audits and inspections and by listening to our children, families and communities. These **principles** and **priorities** inform our multi-agency arrangements and shape our delivery.


The LSCP adheres to the statutory guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 that sets out the requirements for local partnerships to be established and led by the three safeguarding partners and publish our local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.


Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility





Our Principles


Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, the strength of our partnership lies in a shared set of principles that determine our vision and purpose. Our core principles are:

- 

1 Working collaboratively to ensure our local arrangements for safeguarding are effective in promoting and protecting children's welfare
- 

2 Listening to what children and young people are telling us will keep them safe
- 

3 Promoting a culture of continuous learning and evidence based practice
- 

4 Effective information sharing to inform timely decisions
- 

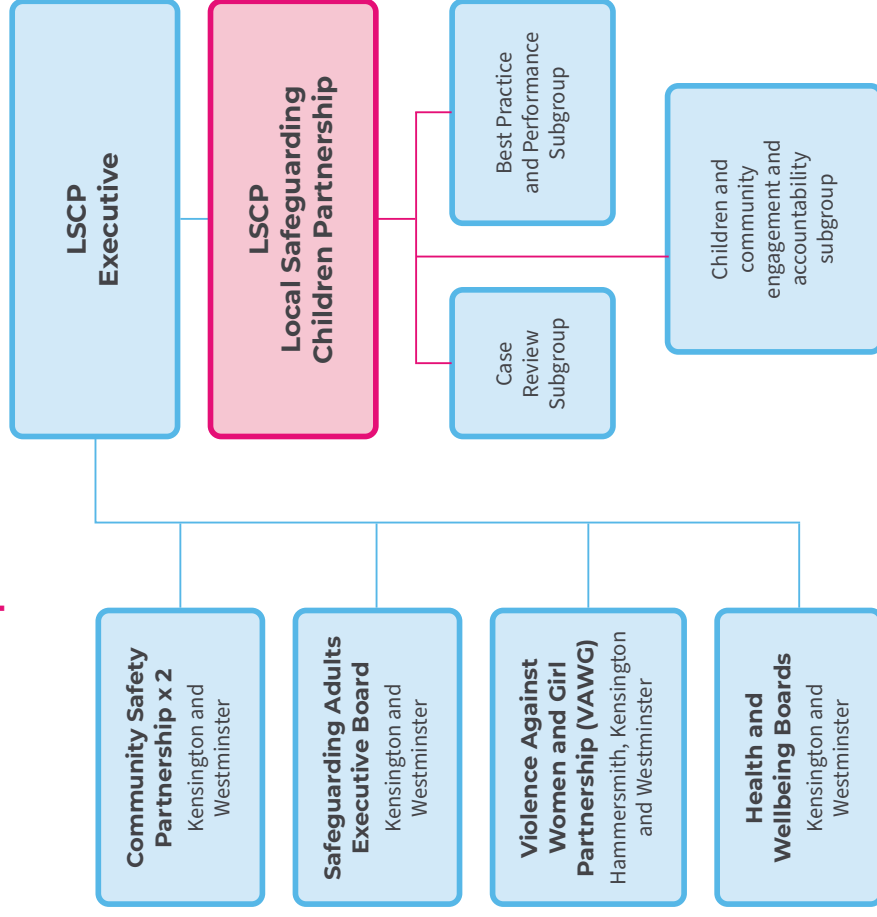
5 Scrutiny: Being open to constructive professional challenge and holding each other to account

Our Priorities

Our principles, alongside analysis of local data, practice audits, reviews, consultation with local partners and listening to what young people and our communities tell us, have informed our current LSCP priorities:

- 1** Reducing the harm from domestic abuse and coercive control
- 2** Safer communities: exploitation and serious youth violence
- 3** Covid-19 recovery and cost of living crisis
- 4** Transitional Safeguarding

Structure of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership



Borough Profiles

Paying attention to our borough stories in Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster shaped and informed our priorities for 2022 to 2023. By agreeing a collective understanding of our local context, we ensured that initiatives and services are delivered in a way that is proportionate to the needs of our communities.

We know that living in poverty, the cost of living crisis and the pandemic have placed increased pressures on families and contributed to a rise in domestic abuse, mental health and homelessness resulting in an increase in referrals to all our services.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Health and Wellbeing JSNA Spring 2023

People

Total population
143,900
36 per cent from ethnically diverse background

0 to 15 yrs population
20,200
44 per cent from ethnically diverse background

Working age (16-64)
102,900
37 per cent from ethnically diverse background

Older People (+65)
20,800
25 per cent from ethnically diverse background

Daytime/nighttime visitors
250,000



Health and wellbeing has been exacerbated by impacts of the Grenfell Tragedy, Covid-19 and the cost of living



1 in 5 children live in poverty
1 in 4 households in London are at risk from cost of living crisis



Unemployment rate of 5.3 per cent
Average annual income varies by area (range £30,000 to £65,000)



Air pollution has reduced by half over the last 15 years
Over half of the borough's open space is located in just four wards



18,400 social rented households
Concentrated in North Kensington, Chelsea Riverside and Brompton and Hans Town



Place



Over 1 in 4 children have not received 2 doses of MMR
Uptake varies from 55 per cent in Earl's Court to 83 per cent in South Kensington



Nearly 1 in 5 five-year-olds have decayed teeth
The biggest cause of hospital admissions for this age group



Over 1 in 3 are overweight by age 11
Children in Golborne are 2.5 times more likely to be overweight than in Courtfield



Over 1 in 6 children have a mental health disorder
Common reasons for GP visits are speech and language and depression



Many outstanding schools
Average GCSE level attainment is lowest in the most deprived areas



3 in 10 residents have a long-term condition
Those of Black ethnic groups have almost twice the rate of hypertension



Over 2 in 5 adults are overweight or obese
Residents of Black ethnic background have almost 3 times the rates of obesity and diabetes



1 in 4 adults report high levels of anxiety
Depression is more common in those living in deprived areas



1 in 7 adults smoke
Most likely in manual jobs, in the north of borough and people of Mixed ethnicity



3,600 residents are at high risk of drug dependence
Drug related deaths are among the top five causes of death in the under 50's

Start well

Live well

The City of Westminster Health and Wellbeing JSNA Spring 2023

People

Total population
205,100
45 per cent from a global majority background

0 to 15 yrs population
26,700
60 per cent from a global majority background

Working age (16-64)
153,400
45 per cent from a global majority background

Older People (+65)
25,000
30 per cent from a global majority background

Daytime/nighttime visitors
up to 1 million



1 in 4 children live in poverty
1 in 4 households in London are at risk from the cost of living crisis



Unemployment rate of 5 per cent
Average annual income varies by area (range £27,000 to £56,000)



1,700 people seen rough sleeping
Life expectancy for people sleeping rough is 30 to 40 years less than average



Air pollution has been reduced
Westminster has over 200 parks and open spaces



26,810 social rented households
Including Queens Park and Mozart Estate, Lisson Green Estate and Warwick and Brindley Road Estates

Place



Almost 1 in 3 children have not received 2 doses of MMR
Uptake varies from 54 per cent in Bryanston and Dorset Square to 84 per cent in Knightsbridge, Belgravia and Hyde Park



2 in 5 five-year-olds have decayed teeth
The biggest cause of hospital admissions for the age group



Almost 1 in 2 are overweight by age 11
Children in Church Street almost twice as likely to be overweight than in West End



Over 1 in 6 children have a mental health disorder
Common reasons for GP visit are speech and language, depression and autism



Many outstanding schools
Average GCSE level attainment is lowest in the most deprived areas



Start well



30 per cent of residents have a long term condition
Residents of a Black ethnic background have twice the rate of hypertension



1 in 2 adults are overweight or obese
Residents of a Black ethnic background have 3 times the rates of obesity and diabetes



Over 1 in 4 adults report high levels of anxiety
Depression is more common in those living in deprived areas



1 in 9 adults smoke
Most likely in manual jobs, living in the south and identifying from a Mixed ethnicity



Almost 7,000 residents are at high risk of drug dependence
Most common cause of in death in under 50s in the most deprived areas

Our Children and Young People data – 31 March 2023

	Kensington and Chelsea	London average	Westminster	Source	Activity Trend since March 2022
Children aged 0 to 18	24,310	60,412	32,997	Age 0 to 18 census	
Children aged 0 to 25 with SEN	759	2,594	1,368	Age 0 to 25 EHCP	←
Children living in relative low incomes families	9.9%	16.4%	14.2%	Under 16s living in relatively low incomes	←
Pupils eligible for free school meals	33%	25.8%	37.6%	FSM eligible schools data	←
Number of pupils with an education health and care plan (EHCP)	5.9% (797)	4.6% (60,404)	4.5% (964)	EHCP schools data	←
Referrals to Children's Social Care (month of March 2023)	1,855	N/A	1,803	Children and Young People data	→
Children in need cases March 2023	726	2,120	1,309	CIN March 2023 DfE	→
Child Protection Plans March 2023	42	230	85	CPP March 2023 DfE	→
Looked after children March 2023	105 (34 UASC)	294 (42 UASC)	182 (49 UASC)	CLA March 2023 DfE	→
Early Help referrals April 2022/March 2023	596	N/A	381	Monthly performance report	→

The above table sets out the base line children's activity from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, with a trend comparison to enable partners to consider the changes from the previous financial year.

LSCP Principle One: working collaboratively to ensure our local arrangements are effective in promoting and protecting children's welfare

Our Partnership works collaboratively across a range of multi-disciplinary settings to both inform and achieve our priorities. Our strength lies in the designated safeguarding roles appointed in our key partner organisations and services to ensure a co-ordinated and consistent approach in promoting safeguarding arrangements across all our services for children and young people.

Partnership education partners

Schools and Colleges: Headteachers and representatives from schools and education settings attend the LSCP and subgroups.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) also attend termly forums coordinated by the local authority Safeguarding Lead for Schools and Education, in collaboration with partners in health, police and social care. The forums enable the Partnership to hear directly from education settings, whilst also delivering key safeguarding messages, best practice and promote ongoing partnership working and cross-engagement from all education settings.



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Health partners

Northwest London Collaboration of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG), transitioned to Northwest London (NWL) Integrated Care Board (ICB) from the 1 of July 2022. The NWL Integrated Care System is made up of eight London boroughs which include the Royal Boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster.

The ICB's Deputy Chief Nursing Officer attends the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Executive meetings, whilst the Assistant Director for Safeguarding Adults and Children and the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children attend the LSCP Partnership and subgroup meetings. The LSCP Partnership and subgroup have representation from each of the local NHS Trusts. This ensures that our Health partners are fully engaged in the LSCP priorities.

A co-ordinated approach with health providers continues to be maintained through the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children who sits on the LSCP and provides a crucial link to local health providers through Grand Round meetings with Local Provider Named Professionals. This year the **Grand Round** meetings considered:

- **Audits:** ICB Three Borough Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Health Problem Profile audit, Provider Service Child was not Brought Dis-engagement or Child not seen policy (audit to review efficacy)
- **Case Studies** with key issues on patients' access to primary care records and national review child safeguarding practice reviews. Maternity Cases – maternal alcohol and substance misuse, perinatal mental health, multi-agency information sharing, application of the LSPC Threshold Continuum of Needs Matrix
- **The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel:** "The Myth of Invisible Men" report

Over the past twelve months, several safeguarding themes have been embedded through the quarterly GP forums that run for GPs in both boroughs. The forums are led by the Lead Safeguarding GP and attended by the Designated Lead for Safeguarding Children and the LSCP Business Manager. Some of the areas of learning were:

- Safeguarding children with disabilities and special educational needs and disability in light of the recently published [national review](#)
- Parental alienation – how to spot signs and the impact of parental separation and alienation on children
- **Myth of Invisible Men Report** – encouraging professional curiosity around enquiry of new partners who could pose potential harm or fathers who may be protective in the child's life
- Adultification and the Hackney [Child Q Child Safeguarding Practice Review](#)
- CAMHS update and support for mental health in adolescent groups in light of local Rapid Reviews
- Prospective online access safeguarding considerations in cases of domestic violence and abuse looked after children and vulnerable families
- Partnership work to develop the Was Not Brought Podcast to promote better use of language in children who miss health appointments
- Partnership work with the Alternative pathway to the Initial Child Protection Conference/Safeguarding Family Group Conference Pathway Pilot ensuring coding was embedded within primary care documentation

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The Early Help Offer

The Partnership continues to recognise the importance of early intervention and early help for all our residents. Many of our families will face challenges and sometimes need support. Early Help is about providing support as soon as possible to tackle difficulties for children, young people and families before they become more serious. Our early help services take a whole family approach to delivering their support. This preventative work, carried out alongside many of our local partners, especially in the voluntary sector, is an integral part of our approach to putting the needs of children and families at the centre of everything we do. Early Help is represented on our LSCP Case Review Subgroup and colleagues contribute to our thinking and learning across the partnership.

Early Help Kensington and Chelsea:

Work has continued to enable closer integration with statutory and voluntary children and family services within the borough. Forums such as the Team Around the Family Hub, and the Youth Hubs Partnership Board have been developed to look at the need on a locality-based family hub level.

This year, Early Help began the implementation of the integrated delivery pathway for pregnancy to five, which consists of a targeted Health Visiting and Early Help intensive home visiting programme offer, alongside a more integrated core universal offer in the two hubs in the North and South of the borough.

A new training programme focusing on family work skills and trauma-informed training focused on schools and the police will roll out in Autumn, with over 159 partners and council staff attending previous training.

In Kensington and Chelsea, the 2022-2023 annual report updates on the work of the two Family Hubs, the in-house Early Help Family Support and the Children's Centres teams and an update on the second year of delivery of the North Kensington Inclusion Project (NKIP).

Police

The Central West BCU Detective Chief Inspector for Public Protection attends the LSCP. Detective Inspectors with a safeguarding remit attend a range partnership forums and boards.

For example, each borough has a Youth Crime Prevention Partnership (YCPP), a management board that oversees the local delivery of responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for Youth Justice Services. The two YCPPs are chaired by the Executive Director of Bi-Borough Family Services and provide strategic direction to prevent offending and



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

re-offending by children. The respective YCPPs are accountable to the Safer Westminster Partnership and Safer Kensington and Chelsea Partnership.

Across the Partnership there is active involvement of the Police in different strands of work, including child exploitation, missing, VAWG, MASH, Right Care, Right Person, Safer Schools and more. There is good information sharing at both operational and strategic levels to inform partners and help keep children safe.

The above partnership arrangements assist in providing oversight and scrutiny of local delivery of services to meet our priorities. Highlighted below are the key deliverables against each of our LSCP priorities.



LSCP Priority One:

Reducing the harm from domestic abuse and coercive control

Domestic Abuse is a significant reason for referrals to Children's Social Care. Reflecting The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, that identifies children subjected to domestic abuse as victims, the LSCP retains oversight of a range of interventions in this priority area.



Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>Development of the Westminster Restart Project</p>	<p>This is a domestic abuse service delivered by the Drive Partnership, Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and the charity Crounstoun. Restart helps to keep families safe at home by providing effective early intervention. The programme provides training and support for children's social care teams to recognise patterns of abusive behaviour as early as possible and to ensure specialist support for victims. Supports housing teams in the development of new approaches to domestic abuse and family safety. This includes, where appropriate, access to accommodation pathways for the person causing harm in order to keep families safe at home whilst creating space for action and change.</p>	<p>To date, 25 families have been referred to the programme.</p>	<p>Referral rates have been lower than anticipated for this programme. The LSCP will invite partners to reflect on this and present their learning from the programme in order to share best practice.</p>
<p>Roll out of Safe and Together Model Training</p>	<p>An accredited programme designed to support children, family services and their systems to improve outcomes for families impacted by domestic abuse and ensure competency across the workforce.</p>	<p>Social care practitioners have accessed case consultations from the Safe and Together implementation lead. Since the start of the programme, 52 case consultations have taken place. The offer has included introduction training days for multi-agency partners to share overarching principles, develop a shared understanding and language and embed good practice.</p>	<p>The learning from this roll out has been shared with Family Services leaders in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, who will roll out the programme to practitioners from April 2024.</p>
<p>IDVA role in Kensington and Chelsea</p>	<p>Consultation and support to frontline social care practitioners from the independent domestic violence advocate (IDVA).</p>	<p>Quality assurance work is undertaken within Family & Children's Services with respect to Domestic Abuse. The role of IDVAs is evidenced within this work, contributing to safeguarding conversations and assisting in the assessments of risk and safety planning. IDVAs provide a key role in strengthening the support to families, enabling social care practitioners to be curious about the victim/survivors lived experiences. They also provide signposting to specialist services for support and protection.</p>	<p>The LSCP will continue to engage with the CYP-OG. The LSCP will also continue to seek an education representative to join the operational group and bring a useful perspective to our work.</p>

Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>VAWG Children and Young People's Operational Group</p>	<p>The Children and Young People Operational Group (CYP-OG) plays a crucial role within the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategic partnership, promoting an aligned and consistent approach to addressing domestic abuse affecting children and young people. The CYP-OG works closely with the LSCP.</p>	<p>The CYP-OG were approached by the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to contribute to thematic review published on domestic abuse. The CYP-OG was commended as a model of good practice.</p> <p>In March 2023, representatives from the CYP-OG were invited by the National Panel to present at their national webinar, showcasing the work of the partnership and our commitment to implementing the 'Safe & Together' model. View the full webinar here.</p>	
<p>Domestic Abuse Prevention in Schools Programme</p>	<p>A programme working with schools to raise awareness of healthy relationships – this is a key aspect of preventing violence against women and girls (VAWG). The programme helps schools to develop a whole school approach to domestic abuse prevention.</p> <p>The programme is free to education settings. It includes training and capacity building support for all school staff to improve their knowledge about coercive control and its impact, equip them with skills in facilitating disclosures safely and raise their confidence levels in using resources to create lesson plans and run classroom activities. Through this programme, schools can access resources and support around policy developments, staff wellbeing, local referral pathways and support services.</p>	<p>Feedback from a teacher in a Westminster School:</p> <p>'The Domestic Abuse in Schools Programme Lead is always readily available and she is willing to share her knowledge with us.</p> <p>She wants to empower school staff as well as learners to know signs/symptoms of Domestic Abuse and what support to seek if someone has experienced Domestic Abuse. Because of her support and input Domestic Abuse awareness and knowledge has been strengthened in our school.'</p>	<p>The programme will continue to be promoted to schools.</p>
<p>Operation Encompass</p>	<p>Operation Encompass is a police-led initiative where the police notify schools when a domestic abuse incident has occurred so that the school can provide the appropriate pastoral support needed for children who may have experienced domestic abuse at home.</p>	<p>Currently, Operation Encompass does not collect data from schools regarding how they use the information shared with them for this project. However, the LSCP is seeking to gather further information from schools via our upcoming schools safeguarding audit.</p>	<p>An ongoing priority for the LSCP is to ensure that all schools are signed up to the initiative, including where possible, our independent schools.</p>



LSCP Priority Two: Safer Communities – Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence

Our priority reflects both the regional and national priority for children and young people at risk of exploitation and serious youth violence. As a partnership, we play close attention to the national picture to ensure our local activity is both reflective and responsive to emerging need.

Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>National Referral Mechanism: Home Office Pilot Project (June 2021)</p> <p>Children's Services in both boroughs successfully bid to the Home Office for a devolved decision-making pilot to test different approaches to determining whether children are victims of modern slavery in collaboration with local safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Children's Services and key partners are piloting the use of devolved decision making in relation to thresholds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable grounds decision (where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the child is a victim) Conclusive grounds decision (where on the balance of probabilities a child is a victim) was met and what the child-centred safeguarding plan would be through monthly review panels 		<p>In September 2022, the partnership undertook an audit of all the cases referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to better understand the difference the project was making.</p> <p>The audits looked closely at practice prior to the NRM referral, the quality of decision making and the impact that the NRM decision making had on the young person. The audits also considered how closely the voice of young people was understood and incorporated into the process.</p> <p>The audits highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that work did focus on understanding the young person's views, particularly about risk and safety, along with their wishes and feelings. Outcomes of using the NRM panel process for young people who were exploited on their journey to the UK to claim asylum were positive with young people speaking positively about this work. Support offered through the NRM process decreased isolation. NRM decision making led to a quicker and simpler process in determining a young person's asylum claim, which reduced isolation as it supported to build better networks in the UK and to pursue their educational and career goals at an earlier age. Some evidence that young people with a positive conclusive or reasonable grounds decision might experience the criminal justice system differently than if they did not have this decision: courts were less likely to give them a custodial or lengthy sentence if they had a positive NRM decision. <p>Independent Child Trafficking Guardians work with young people subject to this process who have no one with parental responsibility in the UK. Child Trafficking Guardians were viewed as positive and there was clear evidence of information being shared with the young person.</p>	<p>The Pilot has been extended through to March 2024</p> <p>The LSCP will monitor the use and impact of the NRM decision-making has on the young people and how the voice of young people is understood and incorporated into the process.</p>



Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>Relaunch of the shared MACE Panel</p>	<p>The Partnership have worked together to relaunch the MACE panel, which covers Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. This is a multi-agency panel that aims to deliver a holistic and effective response to children at risk of exploitation. The panel also aims to identify and remove barriers to providing a child centred approach to reducing and disrupting child exploitation in our boroughs.</p> <p>The membership of the panel was reviewed and revised, and a new term of reference agreed. Multi-agency attendance and participation has been good.</p>	<p>The shared MACE meeting panel has developed and continues to refine a problem profile with data from police and health partners to inform our local approach. The Panel has identified themes emerging from practice, including cross-borough issues, vulnerability of children looked after and also of girls being asked to store weapons.</p> <p>Panel members have also contributed to the Pan-London MACE review and continue to support the implementation of recommendations in order to further strengthen their work.</p>	<p>The LSCP to monitor the impact and oversight of MACE Panel through bi-annual reporting.</p>
<p>Safer Schools Officers</p>	<p>Safer Schools Officers in the police provide cover for all secondary schools across the partnership including independent schools. Each school will have a named point of contact for the officer that can provide a visible and familiar point of contact with their assigned school.</p> <p>The role of the Safer Schools Officers is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a visible and familiar point of contact with their assigned school. • Advise headteachers and their staff on policing issues and work in partnership to deal with emerging issues. • Make pupil referrals to intervention and diversion schemes to safeguard the child's welfare and/or divert them from criminal activity/anti-social behaviour (ASB). • Develop strategies to keep young people safe, in partnership with the school. • Deliver key messages to pupils around general policing themes of crime prevention and facilitate delivery on more specialist themes. 	<p>The Safer Schools Officers have run engagement sessions on a number of topics, across a wide range of education settings in Westminster and Kensington. Topics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grooming, indecent images and malicious communications • Stop and Search • Stay Safe Anti Robbery • Anti-social behaviour, Online Safety, and Careers in the Police • Gangs • Online Bullying <p>The Safer Schools teams have also hosted coffee mornings with parents/carers in order to help explain safeguarding topics and what steps families can take to keep their children safer.</p> <p>“Thank you very much for arranging the parent coffee morning and for inviting PC Knight. Please can you pass on special thanks for the way he shared and responded to questions. Such events go a long way to building up good relations and safer communities.”</p>	<p>To continue to host regular coffee mornings with parents/carers to build trust and strengthen relationships with local communities.</p> <p>To continue to engage with local schools to foster links between the Police safer neighbourhood teams and other education facilities who do not have an assigned Safer Schools Officer.</p>

Did you know?

In June 2022, Ofsted carried out a focused visit inspection of Children's Services on the theme of extra-familial risk.



Ofsted Focused Visit Inspection of Children's Services – Theme of Extra-Familial Risk

In the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, inspectors noted in their [report](#) that children who are vulnerable to extra-familial risk receive excellent support from social workers and partner agencies. They **top** commented that professionals have **good** understanding of vulnerability and **were** concerned about children who may be **at** risk. In schools, for example, professionals **are** alert to changes in children's attendance **and** behaviours that might indicate risk of extrafamilial harm, quickly notifying either the early help service or locality social work teams. The inspectors further noted that leaders have developed strong relationships with police services. The effective exchange of information enables child-centred planning and strengthens boroughwide mapping activity to identify risks and plan disruption activity.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

In the City of Westminster, the inspectors noted in their report that children at risk of extra-familial harm receive excellent support and services. The [report](#) stated that protecting children and supporting their families are at the heart of a whole-council, partnership and community-based approach. Senior leaders and partners understand the interconnected complexities and barriers to tackling exploitation. They critically evaluate the impact partnership work is having on improving children's lives. The report also noted that children in Westminster are quickly signposted to the right service and for the most relevant support. Early help assessments identify children's needs, vulnerabilities and risks of extra-familial harm. Workers use a range of direct work tools to understand children's relationships and experiences. They bring a 'team' around the family, creating multi-agency plans and achieving positive change.



City of Westminster




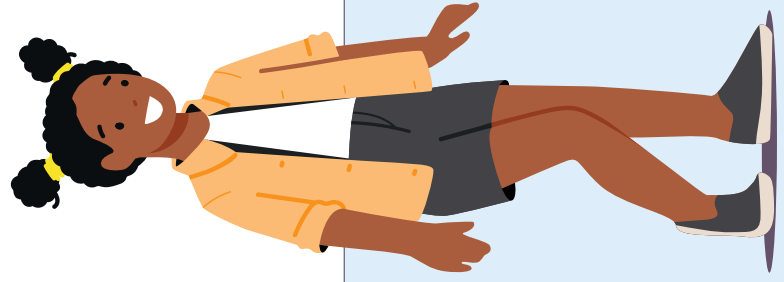
LSCP Priority Three: Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Cost of Living Crisis

The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership has recognised the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our local children and families, as well as the impact on local services.

Children have been impacted by the disruption to their access to education during the pandemic lockdowns and given that we recognise that being in education is a protective factor, we are keen to ensure that this is minimised in the future.

Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Plan</p>	<p>Health partners and the local authorities collaborated together to develop Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Plan 2022-2024. The Plan highlights the importance of increasing support available for education staff, expanding early intervention services, and providing support for parents and carers for children and young people with special education needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of a Whole School Approach by specially trained school nurses, Designated Mental Health Leads, and Mental Health Support Teams for every state school in the borough. We enhance support for special schools through MIND, invest in school staff and parent wellbeing, and deliver training and from Education Psychology (ELSA). • Community Based Support enhances the wider community offer as some CYP don't access support via schools or Primary Care. We invest in Mental Health Workers in youth clubs, deliver Mental Health First Aid to front line practitioners and have trauma informed practice in Early Help. • Promotion of the offer including digital accessibility, eg with "We Got U, U Got This" with a campaign to increase awareness of support available. We signpost to online resources and helplines, and have produced videos to reduce the stigma around mental health. • Support for vulnerable groups. There is effective interface between the Systemic approach delivered in Family Services and CAMHS. We ensure there is delivery and a clear focus for those at risk of exclusion, serious youth violence and domestic abuse. 	<p>The LSCP will invite key partners responsible for the delivery of the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Plan to report back on progress achieved in 2022-2023.</p>
<p>We got U, U Got This Campaign</p> 	<p>Developed across both Boroughs 'We got U, U Got This' aims to empower children and young people to access support for mental health and wellbeing. The campaign includes a new web page for mental health services, co-produced videos and phased in-person engagement in youth settings.</p>	<p>To empower people to feel confident in accessing services to support their mental wellbeing with a focus on early intervention services such as MIND and Kooth.</p>	<p>Young people will continue to lead the online and offline campaign over the next few months, including our young ambassadors in both boroughs.</p> <p>The Partnership will continue to help promote the We Got U, U Got This campaign and seek feedback from children and young people about how this has helped their access to mental health and wellbeing support.</p>

Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>School Inclusion Strategy 2022</p> 	<p>Delivery of the strategy has been a partnership endeavour involving Children's Services, local schools, Ormiston Academies Trust, CAMHS, and the wider voluntary sector. Oversight has been provided by the Education Partnership Board in each borough, where the membership includes headteacher and school governor representatives.</p> <p>Continuing the work of the Equality and Diversity Working group hosted by the local authorities to build leadership and embed best practice in whole school approaches to anti-racism.</p>	<p>Supporting schools to develop trauma informed training via the Early Help Partnerships that seeks to understand and develop tailored responses to pupils' behaviour.</p> <p>In-school pilot at secondary stage in three schools to monitor how interventions can impact on attendance, engagement in school and pupil behaviour.</p> <p>Additional years funding for North Kensington Advocacy Pilot to provides specialist advice and advocacy on education matters for children and parents. Increase in referrals and positive feedback from parents/carers secured the additional funding.</p> <p>Funding has been secured from the from the Violence Reduction Unit to deliver mentoring programmes at Beachcroft and Latimer Alternative Provision Academies and the two managed intervention centres.</p> <p>Whole school approach to anti-racism-including masterclass sessions for senior leaders in schools and a professional development programme for Equality and Diversity leads in schools.</p> <p>Inclusion – Working with providers of alternative provision to develop and implement individual intervention plans that will outline clear next steps for pupils referred to transitional places in alternative provision.</p> <p>Improving the range of online materials via the local authority and schools websites to ensure parents and carers are better informed and supported around their rights and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Our education partners will continue to strive to ensure that pupils can access inclusive education settings that nurture and support all of our pupils and seek to minimise the use of exclusions, so that all children have an opportunity to thrive and succeed.</p>



LSCP Priority Four:

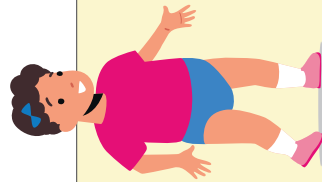
Transitional Safeguarding

Recognising the changing and emerging needs of young people aged 16 to 25, the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) have worked in partnership with the Safeguarding Adults Executive Board (SAEB) to develop a framework that will inform how we safeguard young people aged 16 to 25.

Both partnerships recognise that many young people are transitioning into adulthood with a history of having experienced other transitions which impact the way in which they face moving from children to adults' services across education, social care, health, and the criminal justice system.



Activity	Purpose	Impact	What next?
<p>Development of Transitional Safeguarding Steering Group (July 2022)</p>	<p>Set up in July 2022 to consider how effectively our current services and systems are in identifying young people aged 16 to 24 at risk of harm and what support we offer in order to safeguard them. These discussions have supported the development of a project plan, which is helping both partnerships to explore opportunities to share more effective ways of working.</p> <p>The project plan focuses on the lived experiences of young people and raising awareness about transitional safeguarding with LSCP and SAEB members, as well as front-line staff and managers.</p>	<p>It is too early to be able to demonstrate the Partnership's impact for this area of work, nevertheless, we remain committed to developing our approaches in order to provide appropriate support to young people aged 16 to 24.</p>	<p>In 2023-2024 the transitional safeguarding steering group will co-ordinate a data task and finish group to seek and examine current data about the cohort of young people aged 16-24.</p> <p>In doing so, we hope to better understand the potential needs of this group and determine whether or not there are any gaps in service provision that may be able to assist them further as they transition into adulthood.</p> <p>We also aim to host an extraordinary joint LSCP/SAEB partnership meeting with strategic leads to share the findings and stimulate cross partnership discussions about the next steps we need to take.</p>



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LSCP response to new and emerging safeguarding issues:

Supporting Afghan Evacuees and Ukraine Refugees

Provision for Afghan Evacuees

Many of our partners have collaborated to support the needs of the Afghan evacuees who arrived in our area in August 2021 following the withdrawal of coalition armed forces from Afghanistan.

In Kensington and Chelsea, the Afghan Social Care Team (ASCT) was set up to provide a trauma-informed service to support these evacuees up until February 2023 when the families were relocated by the Home Office. 804 Afghan Evacuees were placed in the borough across 3 bridging hotels. The programme had a total of 465 children and 182 households.

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804
Afghan Evacuees received help

465
Children benefited from the programme

183
Households were used as accommodation

Achievements:

- Supporting education and employment, staff were proud that they were able to support families to access school places, and empowering adults to secure employment.
- Strong partnership working: this ensured appropriate signposting and high levels of service – including with midwifery and school admissions.
- Activities for families: team members enjoyed supporting people's first experiences of activities in London.
- Team set up: Staff reflected that the multi-disciplinary set up of the team was very effective, with children's and adults' services co-located and working together.

Learning:

- Staff support: the team emphasised the importance of team meetings and established specialisms.
- Working with partners: the team felt the programme would have benefited from better support for families around benefits and additional safeguarding training for hotel staff, which was later provided by the LSCP.
- Building Independence: Staff recommend giving more information to families on benefits systems, GPs, housing, bills, and offering choice around essential and personal items.
- Holistic support: staff reflected on the importance of ensuring an efficient system of support.

Home Office Contingency Hotels

In addition to the work undertaken to support the Afghan evacuees, multi-agency partners have continued to provide support to children and families placed by the Home Office in contingency hotels in each borough. There is a dedicated response service in each borough to enable the right support to be coordinated for hotel guests.

The Partnership has recognised the need to upskill the hotel staff to ensure that they are able to make appropriate referrals to Children's Social Care when concerns are identified. A programme of safeguarding training has been developed, which builds on our experience of delivering similar training to the staff working in the bridging hotels.

Ukraine Response

Both boroughs have seen an influx of Ukraine citizens arriving because of the breakout of war in Ukraine in February 2022. A Ukraine Response Service was set up to advise, support and assist the central Government programme for the resettlement of those fleeing the conflict. The local authorities and partners have:

- supported residents to sign up to the scheme as sponsors.
- carried out checks on accommodation being provided.
- provided welfare checks for families and individuals arriving from Ukraine.
- supported access to education for children and young people.
- provided wider signposting to support services where this was required.

In addition to services provided by statutory partners, there has been a coordinated effort by partners in the voluntary sector, including the Ukrainian Community Centre and St Mary's Ukrainian School to support those displaced by the conflict.

LSCP Principle Two: listening to what children and young people are telling us will keep them safe

Children and Young People's Plan 2022-2025

The LSCP has been particularly keen to ensure our priorities reflect and align with the priorities highlighted in the Local Authorities' Children and Young People's plan for 2022-2025. Informed through extensive engagement and consultation with residents, partners and children and young people from a range of settings, these priorities have shone a lens on the importance of ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements are in place across the partnership and beyond.

Children and Young People's priorities 2022-25	
1	All children have the best start in life, needs are identified and supported early and they are school ready at five.
2	Children and young people have access to high-quality education and training opportunities, have good attendance at school and achieve their full potential.
3	Children and young people feel safe, and are protected from serious youth violence, harm, harmful practices, abuse, and neglect at home, online and in the community.
4	All young people, and particularly those who are vulnerable can realise their ambitions and take advantage of opportunities and life skills which prepare them for adulthood.
5	All our young people feel listened to, empowered to take action and have opportunities to co-produce/co-design services that affect them.
6	All children and young people are happy and healthy, with access to a diverse range of activities and opportunities to support their physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing within the post- pandemic context, environmental challenges, and rising cost of living pressures.

Supporting our Children in Care in Kensington and Westminster

It is the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to ensure that all partners are meeting the needs of our children looked after and care leavers. IROs provide internal scrutiny and challenge to the local authority and partners. They are an integral part of the quality assurance process and in holding all partners accountable for delivering positive outcomes for this cohort of children and young people.

A summary of the key data and further information can be found in the annual reports produced by the IRO service in each borough.

Some of the key highlights from the work of the IRO service are:

- The number of children in care increased during this reporting period. This is influenced by the continuing rise in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving in our boroughs.
- There has been an improved timeliness of Looked After Child Reviews, with 99% undertaken within the statutory timescales.

- **The voice of children and young people is key to all discussions and care planning arrangements.** Children are invited to contribute to their reviews and most children speak for themselves at their review. This is a slight decrease on last year. A hypothesis for this is that older children may have become accustomed to using virtual platforms for meetings (as we did during the pandemic) which means that in-person review meetings now may be less favourable to them.

It is important to note that in the last year, the **Independent Review of Children's Social Care** was published and the DfE provided a response that confirmed the intention to support and to continue to strengthen the role of the IRO.



What next for the IRO service in 2023-2024

The IRO Services will:

- Continue to ensure that all details of new looked after children are recorded timely on the case management system so the correct electronic processes are triggered.
- Map informal alerts which relate to late notifications, which will be shared periodically with Heads of Service with the aim of improving the timeliness of notifications.
- Strengthening the working relationship with the Business Intelligence team to ensure coordination in the way LAC reviews are recorded to minimise any discrepancies in the data that is being collected.



Participation work for our Looked After Children and Care Leavers

What have our Children Looked After and Care Leavers been up to in 2022-2023?

- Regular attendance for the Thursday Group for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (in Kensington and Chelsea) and the Children and Young People's Panel and Tuesday Group in Westminster.
- February 2023: The Stepping Up Awards were held to celebrate children's achievements in Kensington and Chelsea.
- Young People wrote the introduction to the latest Children's Services Self-evaluation.
- Young people gained work experience through interview panels.

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Young People regularly contributed to consultations, with the most recent discussing mental health, a youth review for council services, and the borough Health and Wellbeing Strategy for both boroughs.

- Young people continue to support foster carer recruitment, with an event held at Westfield.
- Young people have helped shape new online safety training for foster carers.

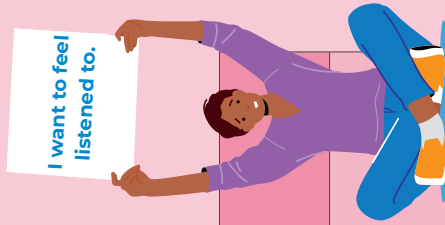
Health Assessments

They form part of the corporate parenting responsibilities for children cared for and care leavers. In a recent consultation we asked care experienced children and young people (children cared for and care leavers) about their experiences of the 'Health Assessment', overall health and wellbeing, and health support available to them once they become a care leaver. In addition to this information, we are hoping this will be able to help us answer the question 'What does a corporate health parent look like to you?'

- Young people spoke positively about their experiences of their health assessments.
- Young people wanted to maintain connections to their LAC nurse even after health assessment concluded post-18.
- All young people had a trusted adult they could name for who to speak to about their health.



Following the Ofsted Focused Visit in June 2022, Children's Services convened conversations with young people who attend the Tuesday and Thursday leaving care groups in both boroughs.



Children and Young People Said	We did
You wanted more information about how to feel safe on-line.	We will deliver a session on online safety which we want you to help us develop. Please look out for this information from your social worker and the newsletter.
You said you feel lonely sometimes.	We have safe spaces where you can get support such as Tuesday group and Future Union. We will have sessions at both these groups where you talk to a therapist. You can also access KOOOTH online and the Elements project (therapeutic arts course).
You said you wanted to know how authorities such as police could keep you safe and what your rights were.	Police are going to come and talk to you about your rights when you are stopped and searched and you will get the opportunity to ask your own questions. This will take place at the Tuesday Group and/or Future Union. We will do a brief summary of this in the newsletter.
You said you felt unsafe sometimes in the community due to knife crime and gangs and hate crime	You will be offered the opportunity to talk about your worries and make a plan to keep yourself safe. We call this a safety plan. You can do this anytime with your social worker/ personal advisor and can be changed/ adapted depending on what is happening for you. We get someone from the Community Safety team to come and talk to you about how to keep yourself safe in your area.
You said you felt unsafe sometimes in your semi-independent accommodation	If you are worried about what is happening in your accommodation, you can get help and advice from the advocacy service to raise issues and make a complaint. You can also talk about this in your safety plan.

What next for Participation in 2023–2024

- Recruitment panels will continue alongside training more young people to be part of the main interview panels of council staff.
- Trips/experiences during the school holidays.
- Stepping Up Awards and Looked After/Care Leaver Celebrations in 2024 to celebrate achievements.
- The development of a care-leavers alumni network in each borough and how young people will be involved in this going forward, including proposing the name of this network.
- Co-design of materials and publications with young people around the support available, as well as the support the service provides including a newsletter.

Summer Plus Programme (2023), including workshops and shadowing/work experience opportunities.



SCP Principle Three: To promote a culture of continuous learning and evidence based practice

The LSCP seeks to share learning across the partnership through a variety of means as outlined by the activity below.

Introduction to Systemic Practice

The LSCP is built on a relational approach in the way we work together. This relational model is fundamental to systemic practice, a practice model embedded in children's social care since 2018. In response to a request from partners the Centre for Systemic Practice has delivered an introductory training to systemic practice for LSCP partners.

- Workshops offered in this period include but were not limited to:**
- Introduction to Safeguarding Children
 - Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Workshop (level 3)
 - Understanding Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery
 - Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Children
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health and CAMHS services
 - Meet the LADO and Safer Recruitment

LSCP Multi Agency Training

During March 2022–March 2023, the LSCP delivered 55 multi-agency safeguarding children training workshops including core training, specialist training and managerial training to delegates across the partnership. Delegates came from a wide range of disciplines and settings, including schools, early years, GPs, social care, early help, the voluntary sector and housing.



Training with Police: In May 2022, the LSCP collaborated with the Met Police to host a learning event specifically for Police and Social Care staff on the theme of modern slavery and child exploitation. This was well attended by over 70 delegates across the LSCP footprint.

Training evaluation and Mystery shopping: All training is evaluated to inform the content and style for future delivery.

Evaluations: The LSCP actively seeks feedback from delegates at the end of each workshop to help us to quality assure the training we provide.

#like

Feedback: How will this workshop impact your practice and ability to safeguard children?

I am the lead for DV in my team and it has renewed my confidence in the knowledge of DV since the last time I attended training.

Although I'm not a frontline worker the training helped me understand the responsibility of organisations working with young people.

Having a team of professionals to bounce ideas off and the life like case studies to discuss, was very beneficial.

It was great to know where things can be reported and knowing what signs to look out for.

I have a better understanding of how triage, and special services work.

Understanding that the possibility of a consultation is possible is very helpful.

Mystery shopping: This year, two members of the LSCP attended our Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Children workshop to help evaluate the content of the training as well as the skills and knowledge of the trainers. The feedback from this mystery shopping exercise was positive and this exercise will be included as part of our evaluation process moving forward.

Education partners: have participated in a range of training through the LSCP Training team, such as Safer Recruitment and Meet the LADO. In addition to the multi-agency training led by the LSCP, schools have accessed the single agency training offer which is delivered by the local authority Safeguarding Lead for schools and Education. The workshops offered under this programme include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Refresher
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 briefing.
- Risk Assessment & Decision Making Beyond the Front Door – advanced training for DSLs.
- Reflective practice sessions, where the Designated Safeguarding Leads discuss a particular safeguarding topic in more detail with their peers.
- To respond to our LSCP training needs analysis and offer more workshops face to face, as well as continue to deliver online sessions where most practical, with increased availability of online learning tools such as short podcasts/webinars.
- To deliver more workshops on specific topics such as Working with Interpreters and Adultification and Young Carers.
- To further develop our pool of co-trainers with practitioners from across our multi-agency to further enhance the safeguarding training offer with views and expertise from local practitioners and managers.
- Continue to collaborate with the London Safeguarding Children Partnership on the creation and delivery of pan-London training workshops on relevant topics including Information Sharing and the Pan-London Threshold of Needs Guide.
- Deliver the planned LSCP Safer Organisations Learning Event.
- To continue to dip sample longer term evaluations from delegates to try and measure the impact of our training on their practice, 3 to 6 months after attending a workshop.

What next for LSCP multi-agency training:

Our commitments to future learning:

Learning from Local Reviews

Holland Park School Learning Review

The LSCP initiated a local learning review of Holland Park School, following concerns shared by former students and staff. The independent reviewers appointed by the Partnership considered the organisational culture of the school and how other agencies were supporting the school, with a view to identifying improvements to strengthen safeguarding practice.

The review made a number of findings that included: Complaints had not been systematically reviewed, school policies had not been approved by the former governing body or reviewed annually in line with best practice, lack of sufficient oversight of behaviour policy, inadequate training records for staff according to the statutory guidance for schools at the time (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021), consistently high staff turnover was left unchallenged by the former governing body, safeguarding records were inadequate with lack of oversight from the former school leadership.

The review also made a recommendation for the LADO Service to review how low-level concerns about children's settings (that do not meet the threshold for referral to the LADO) are recorded and tracked in order to help identify patterns and trends that may indicate further concern.

The school's new leadership have been working to an action plan and both the school and the LADO service have provided assurance and updates about progress at the school to the LSCP Case Review Subgroup and the LSCP.

Other learning reviews initiated

In January 2023, the LSCP decided to initiate a non-statutory review following the death of a care leaver in Westminister.

In March 2023, the LSCP, together with the SAEB also proactively initiated a non-statutory review following the death of an elderly resident who had arrived from the Ukraine, whose family had been supported by our local services responding to the families displaced by the war in Ukraine.

We will report the findings for both these reviews in our next annual report for 23/24.

Learning from National Reviews

As well as reflecting on local learning, the Partnership considers the learning from national reviews and makes adjustments to local LSCP training, policy and practice where applicable.

Child Q – Child Safeguarding Practice

Review from City and Hackney LSCP (March 2022). Both the LSCP Case Review Subgroup and LSCP Partnership meeting considered the review findings, partners were asked to disseminate

across their agencies. The Police and Local Authorities reviewed data regarding stop and searches involving children and were able to provide assurance that no such intimate searches of children had taken place in our local schools.



The local Safer Schools Officers and the Safeguarding Lead in Schools and Education discussed the learning in the DSL forums for schools & colleges and the case has also been included in our core LSCP training. Partner agencies have reflected on the need to continue to develop anti-racist practices and upskill staff about the risks of adultification bias.

Safeguarding Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings Phase 1 report (October 2022)

In anticipation of the publication of the report, all local authorities were tasked by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the DiE to undertake quality and safety reviews for all children with complex needs and disabilities placed in residential specialist schools registered as children's homes and for host authority LADO for such establishments to review LADO referrals, complaints and concerns over the last three years. Our Children's Services completed the above checks and provided assurance to both the LSCP and the Corporate Parenting Boards about the small number of such placements facilitated by the local authorities.

Child Protection in England (June 2022)

The LSCP held an extraordinary meeting in January 2022 to discuss our local practice in the immediate aftermath of the media reporting of the deaths of Star and Arthur.

The final report from the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel was published in June 2022 and looked at the circumstances leading up to the children's deaths in 2020, addressing why the services designed to protect them were unable to do so. The LSCP Case Review



Subgroup and the main Partnership Board reflected on the learning from this review and partners were asked to cascade the report to their teams. The Partnership agreed to wait until the DiE published their response to the review before any further decisions could be made about next steps as we await the outcomes from DiE Pathfinder programmes testing new ways of working, such as developing specialist child protection teams.

The Partnership has also acknowledged the publication of the Government's response to the **Independent Review of Social Care**, with their report **Stable Homes, Built on Love**.

Learning from case of Awaab Ishak (December 2022)

In December 2022, our LSCP Case Review Subgroup discussed the Prevention of Future Deaths report prepared by the Coroner in Rochdale following the death of Awaab Ishak, aged two, whose cause of death was recorded in part as due to environmental mould exposure at his family home.

The January 2023 LSCP meeting requested that Housing partners in each borough present their assurance to the Partnership about the extent of damp and mould issues and what actions were being taken to address these them, particularly for families with children.

As a proactive step, housing partners in each local authority shared (and the LSCP further disseminated) a contacts list for housing staff for residents and partner agencies to use if they were concerned about damp and mould in their properties.

Learning from Inspection Reports

Children's Home Inspection Report – Ofsted 17 November 2022

Olive House was the only children's home in the LSCP footprint. The home was subject to a routine Ofsted inspection and the overall judgement was rated as 'good'. This was the final inspection before Olive House was repurposed into accommodation for our care leavers.

Learning from other partnership arrangements

Private Hospital Network

The Private Hospital Network is a provider-led forum (supported by the ICB Safeguarding Team) for sharing good practice, learning, concern, and innovation regarding safeguarding children. The Children's Social Care Head of Safeguarding, the LSCP Manager and an NHS Provider Consultant Midwife for Public Health and Safeguarding were invited to last year's meeting. Some of the themes discussed around clinical cases presented for learning were:

- Perinatal Mental Health
- Transient Families
- Information sharing between Private Psychiatry provision and Maternity services
- Consent and the risk of harm to the unborn child
- Surrogacy

Northwest London Child Death Review Team

The purpose of Child Death Overview Panels (CDOPs) is to ensure that when a child under the age of 18 dies there is a comprehensive and independent review of the circumstances. This team consists of expert nursing staff who

coordinate Child Death Review Meetings, convene the Child Death Overview Panel and ensure that families who have suffered the loss of a child are supported.

Achievements of the Child Death Review Panel 2022-2023

- Introduction of multidisciplinary team training, and continued utilisation of lunch and learn workshops.
- Clearance of a backlog of cases: only cases with police investigations from 2019-2021 remain open.
- Cooling blankets have been provided for community teams.
- Stronger attendance at Joint Agency Response meetings, Child Death Review Meetings, and Child Death Review Panels.

Learning from the Child Death Overview Panel

- The CDOP has an opportunity to ensure we understand how mental health services work together to ensure young people aren't lost.
- Pre-assessment of children attending the UK from abroad for surgery is a key process.

- Basic Life Support is necessary in the community.

- There is a gap in the provision of mental health wellbeing for children where a parent has been imprisoned, and for young people aged 16-18 years old interacting with CAMHS when they engage on their own terms.

What next for the Child Death Review Team in 2023-2024

- Increased training events including joint teaching alongside police, trusts, and community teams as well as our own events.
- Knife crime event in June with the Pan London Child Death Review Panel.

- Increased collaborative working with hospice services to provide bereavement support for families across Northwest London, not only in the case of expected deaths.
- Continued work on the asthma network for Pan London Guidelines.

LSCP Principle Four: effective information sharing to inform timely decisions

Policies and Procedures that ensure compliance

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

is the statutory guidance that sets out what is expected of agencies, organisations and individuals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. It sets out the expectations for the systems that provide help, support and protection for children and their families, providing clarity for practitioners and organisations to provide effective services. It is anticipated that an updated version will be published at the end of 2023.

The Partnership also adheres to the [London Safeguarding Children Procedures](#), and Threshold of Needs Guide.

We intend to build upon existing good practice

highlighted in the Ofsted Focused Visit – Protection of Vulnerable Children at Risk of Extra Familial Harm in RBKC and WCC in May 2022, **which is summarised on page 26.**

A Safer Workforce: The management of allegations

The LSCP ensures all agencies in the children's workforce have procedures for managing allegations made against staff or volunteers working with children. These should be consistent with the London Safeguarding

Children Procedures. Organisations should have a designated safeguarding lead who will take responsibility for consulting with and referring to the local authority designated officer (LADO) when they become aware of an allegation where a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children.

- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The LADO service manages and has oversight of allegations across the children's workforce. The LADO service will provide guidance and oversight to employers about their next steps, including any fact finding or internal investigation that should take place. The LADO service coordinates the safeguarding network, including liaison with the police where required.

Overall, there has been an increase in the number of referrals to the LADO service in both boroughs. This year, the number of allegations where the threshold for investigation is met is high. Schools and education settings were the highest referral source, followed by early years provision. The LADO service continues to receive referrals from the health sector including medical professionals and care workers, with reports such as domestic abuse, drugs, and small number of child protection cases.

Due to the increasing number of referrals, there is heightened pressure on schools, police, referring child workforce agencies, regulatory bodies, and the Local Authority Safeguarding team.

Most settings are now beginning to gain a greater understanding of how to manage low-level concerns and can seek consultation with the LADO service and take internal action.

A low-level concern is any concern that any adult has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough for the setting to refer to the LADO service in the local authority.

Outcomes of allegations referred to the LADO Service

Outcomes	RBKC	WCC
Unfounded	6%	6%
Unsubstantiated	52%	30%
Substantiated	23%	28%
Advice Only	—	32%
No further action after initial consideration	10%	—
Open for investigation	—	4%

These outcomes are in line with expectations.

A review of cases in quality assurance indicates that thresholds for referral to the LADO were appropriate.

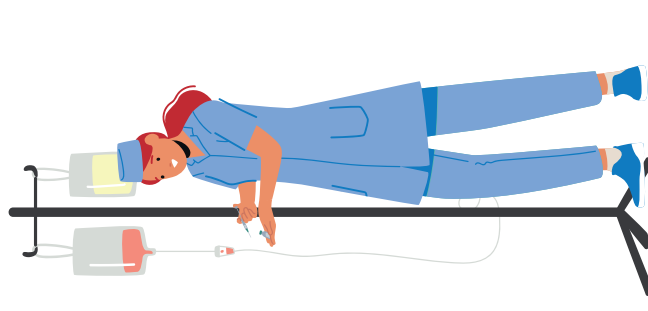
Impact of LADO training and awareness raising

An increased uptake of LSCP training, including opportunities to 'Meet the LADO', or attend Safer Recruitment training, has ensured that a greater number of professionals are aware of when, and how, to make a referral. Training for low-level concerns has also been essential and has allowed the LADO service to equip agencies and partners with the skills needed to identify and address issues with their staff and volunteers.

The LADO service have also observed our community's growing knowledge of how to raise allegations, as more information about this is accessible online, which makes it much easier for the members of the public to raise concerns and for professionals to whistle blow.

What next – LADO Service Plan for 2023/2024

1. Further upskill partner agencies in the identification of low-level concerns and acting now to minimise raising impact later.
2. Essential development of our Case Management System (Mosaic) to be undertaken to ensure that LADO activity and effective case recording are in place.
3. Contribute to the LSCP training programme to ensure we meet the need across the children's workforce.
4. Contribution to the LSCP Safer Organisations Learning Event



LSCP Principle Five: scrutiny, being open to constructive challenge and holding each other to account

Single Agency Audits – the LSCP Best Practice and Performance Subgroup has been informed by a number of single agency audits undertaken by partners.

CLCH: an Audit on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) was conducted to understand if the workforce felt skilled in recognising exploitation and sexual abuse. 81% of staff felt confident in their role to identify and act accordingly. 15% indicated they had no knowledge or awareness. Responses indicated showed slightly less awareness of sexual abuse in boys and children with disabilities.

Recommendations have been adopted and include sessions in confidence building in having difficult conversations with service users, skills in using techniques and tools to assess risk, access to support in supervision, and the dissemination of CLCH's new CSA policy to all staff.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust:

'Was Not Brought' Cases. The audit explored how well the Trust's 'Was not Brought' (children) and 'Did not Attend' (pregnant mothers) policies were followed. The topic was selected for audit as it is recognised in research that failure to attend medical appointments, including antenatal appointments, can be an indicator of a family's vulnerability and may also have an impact on a child/unborn's health outcomes. The dip sample of these cases found overall that the Trust's policies were being followed correctly. Good practice included that follow up calls were made to pregnant women and



Multi-agency audits

There have been good examples of multi-agency collaboration in service design, including working with Headteachers and DSLs to re-design the Section 175 audits for 2023/2024. However, to date there have not been any multi-agency audits for this year. To address this, we have considered capacity, the need for an agreed audit tool for all partners to use vs partner agencies using service specific audit tools and we will collaborate further on agreed information sharing governance arrangements.

What Next for multi-agency audits in 2023-2024:

To further assist with the roll out of our LSCP multi-agency audit programme, the LSCP aims to develop a tier 2 information sharing agreement with local agencies specifically in relation to multi-agency audits. This will help us to minimise delays and challenges when needing to share information about children as part of our LSCP quality assurance. Lastly, in 23/24, we will re-launch our LSCP Section 11 audits to help local partners reflect on the effectiveness of their own organisation's safeguarding children arrangements.

Independent Scrutiny

The LSCP is required, as per the statutory guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children, to set out how it will enable independent scrutiny of our multi-agency arrangements. The Independent Scrutineer provides objective and constructive feedback to the Partnership in order to help drive continuous improvement.

Challenged by long term sick leave of the Independent Chair & Scrutineer, the LSCP has been proactive in developing a workplan for 23/24 for independent scrutiny that includes but is not limited to:

- Scrutiny of housing responses to issues of damp and mould impacting on children and families.
- Scrutiny of the LSCP multi-agency safeguarding children training programme.
- Scrutiny of our published LSCP partnership arrangements and developments in light of revised Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 expected to be published in December 2023.
- Scrutiny of the Section 11 audit submissions requested by the Partnership in 23/24.
- Feedback and challenge around nationally important issues such as reviews published by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
- Scrutiny of the work of the LSCP subgroups and how we incorporate the voice of children throughout our work.



Appendix 1

Members of the LSCP

LSCP Executive		
Sarah Newman	Bi-borough Executive Director of Children's Services	Children's Services RBKC/WCC
Jennifer Royle	Interim Chief Nurse	NHS North West London ICB
Lucy O'Connor	Detective Chief Inspector Public Protection Investigations	Central West BCU, Metropolitan Police
Members of and Advisers to the LSCP		
Aileen Buckton	Independent Chair and Scrutineer	
Sarah Newman	Bi-borough Executive Director of Children's Services	
Glen Peache	Director of Family Services, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	Children's Services RBKC
Nicky Crouch	Director of Family Services, Westminster City Council	Children's Services WCC
Angela Flahive	Bi-Borough Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	Children's Services RBKC/WCC
Shelley Duffy	Principal Lead Advisor, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council	Education
Trevor Papworth	Headteacher, St Thomas More Language College, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	Education
Naomi Leaver	Executive Headteacher, Robinsfield Infant School and George Eliot Primary, Westminster City Council	Education
Cllr Catherine Faulks	Cabinet Member for Family and Children's Services, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (Observer)	Councillor RBKC
Cllr Tim Roca	Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning and Leisure, Westminster (Observer)	Councillor WCC

Louise Butler	Interim Head of Safeguarding and Quality, Adults Social Care, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council	RBKC/WCC
Bernadette Fry	Assistant Director Neighbourhoods	RBKC Housing
Janet Durrant	Community Safety Manager	Westminster Housing
Rekha Brigue	Interim Head of Public Protection and Stakeholder Engagement	National Probation Service
Sue Sheldon	Assistant Director for Safeguarding Adults and Children	North West London Integrated Care Board
Emelia Bulley	Designated Nurse for Safeguarding	North West London Integrated Care Board
Melanie Guinan	Lead Nurse for Paediatrics, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital	Health – ChelWest
Nicci Wotton	Deputy Director of Nursing and Consultant Nurse for Safeguarding	Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
Trish Stewart	Head of Safeguarding, Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust	Health – CLCH
Emma Kay	Head of Safeguarding Children, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust	Health – Central North West London Mental Health Trust
Debbie Saunders	Head of Nursing, Safeguarding Children for Guys and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust	RoyalBrompton and Harefield Hospitals
Chermal Williams	Senior Project Manager, Health Team, Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse	Voluntary Sector
Emma Biskupski	LSCP Business Manager	Children's Services
Mark Staples	Detective Chief Inspector, Central West Basic Command Unit	Metropolitan Police
Angela Adams	Service Manager	CAFCASS
Angela Spence	Chief Executive Officer	Kensington and Chelsea Social Council
Mark Chalmers	Head of Community Safety	WCC
Stuart Priestley	Chief Community Safety Officer	RBKC
Manju Lukhman	Bi Borough Violence against Women and Girls Strategic Lead	RBKC/WCC

Appendix 2 Glossary

Adultification: this is a form of discrimination where children from black and other global majority backgrounds are perceived as being more adult-like. It is where they are seen through a lens of deviancy and not necessarily acknowledged as deserving victims, and where their innocence and vulnerability is erased over time.

Alternative Provision: education provision for children who are unable to access mainstream provision for reasons including school exclusion or behavioural issues.

CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Child Protection: part of the safeguarding process, focusing on protecting children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Corporate Parenting Board: board to advise, guide and provide leadership to the council on issues relating to children looked after and care leavers.

CSA: Child Sexual Abuse

CSE: Child Sexual Exploitation

DfE: Department for Education

DAHA: Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead

EHC: Education Health and Care Plan

EPB: Education Partnership Board

ICB: Integrated Care Board

KCIE: Keeping Children Safe in Education – statutory guidance for all schools to follow

Kooth: an online mental health platform providing digital mental health support for children and young people.

LAC: Looked After Child

LADO: Local Authority Designated Officer. Role based within the local authority that coordinates the management of allegations against staff and volunteers in the children's workforce.

MACE: Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Panel

MOPAC: Mayors Office for Policing and Crime

CSPRP: Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

NRM: National Referral Mechanism

SAEB: Safeguarding Adults Executive Board

VAWG: Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Partnership

VRU: Violence Reduction Unit

Appendix 3 LSCP Financial Arrangements 2022 to 2023

Income	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	City of Westminster
Children's Services	£49,800	£61,800
North West London ICB	£20,000	£20,000
Metropolitan Police	£5,000	£5,000
Probation	£893.37	£1611.21
LSCP training	£6,354.37	£6,354.37
TOTAL	£82,047.74	£94,765.58

Expenditure		
Staffing	£81,379	£81,379
Reviews	£26,454	£0
LSCP Training	£900	£900
Other	£437.50 (TASP Membership Fee)	£437.50 (TASP Membership Fee)
TOTAL	£109,170.50	£82,716.50
Variance	(£27,122.76)	£12,049.08

Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report

was created in partnership with

In partnership with



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA



City of Westminster



North West London



North West London
Integrated Care System



Local Safeguarding
Children Partnership

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City of Westminster

Young People, Learning and Employment Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting:	5 th March 2024
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Migrant Families Living in Westminster
Report of:	Sarah Newman, Executive Director of Children's Services Sarah Warman, Strategic Director of Housing and Commercial Partnerships
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Councillor Aicha Less - Cabinet Member for Communities, Children and Public Protection Councillor Liza Begum - Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Fairer Communities
Report Author and Contact Details:	Helen Farrell, Director of Family Services Project (hfarrell@westminster.gov.uk) & Aaron Hardy, Principal Policy Officer (ahardy@westminster.gov.uk)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report is intended to summarise the arrangements, challenges, and local response in relation to families seeking asylum who are placed in contingency hotels within Westminster by the Home Office whilst they await the outcome of their immigration application. The report will additionally summarise the current arrangements and response in relation to Ukrainian and Afghani families and those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

- 1.2. The length of time families are accommodated within hotel settings varies based on each individual asylum application with some families living under this arrangement for several years. Approximately more than 70% of asylum seekers will receive a positive immigration determination nationally and remain in the UK. However, awaiting this outcome can be an enormously stressful and unsettling time. Many report feelings of inertia and lack of agency, particularly since legally they cannot seek employment, and that their lives are on hold until they receive their immigration decision. There are instances of families having to move accommodation with very little notice, which can be very disrupting – particularly if there are no vacancies within other local hotels.
- 1.3. The living conditions are very challenging with a number of families and professionals voicing concerns and escalating these to the Home Office and Clearsprings, the company commissioned by the Home Office to manage the contingency hotels.
- 1.4. Westminster has developed a wide range of services that are intended to support families when they first arrive, with settling into new and unfamiliar settings and whilst they await their immigration determination. Services have been introduced with the aim of mitigating some of the daily challenges associated with living in hotel accommodation. Strong partnership arrangements have developed between the local services supporting families. Good reporting and escalation routes ensure that issues of concern are quickly raised with the Home Office and Clearsprings, although there are concerns that this has not resulted in sufficient or sustained improvements.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to consider:
 1. whether the Council's delivery of services for migrant families is effective, having a positive impact and reaching families in need of support and assistance.
 2. any service gaps.
 3. future delivery arrangements given fixed term funding.
 4. whether mechanisms and approaches to escalating and addressing concerns with the Home Office and Clearsprings are sufficient.
 5. whether the Council is preparing for and equipped to meet anticipated future housing demand.

3. Background, including policy context

- 3.1. There are currently 8 contingency hotels across Westminster with placements arranged by the Home Office. Of these 1 accommodates adults only and the remainder accommodate both single adults and families with children. The Home Office subcontracts the management of the hotels to an organisation called Clearsprings Ready Homes. The number of residents

fluctuates depending on when adults and families receive their immigration decision, but with the majority living in hotels over a protracted period.

- 3.2. Over the last 3 years the Home Office has increased the volume of hotels and asylum seekers placed in Westminster. However, more recently the Home Office has begun work on closing hotels nationally. This is linked to asylum application rates, people moving out of hotels when their asylum claim is determined and the Home Office making alternative accommodation arrangements. In October 2023, the Home Office announced that they would close 50 hotels nationally by January 2024; none of which were within Westminster. In January 2024, the Home Office notified Westminster that 1 hotel will close by the end of February. This is the smallest contingency hotel within Westminster and currently accommodates 11 children. We have sought confirmation that families and Council officers will be given adequate notice to support families with transitions and that where there are vacancies within other local hotels that families are moved to those to prevent disruption to their social and professional network and disruption to children’s education. The table below shows the current asylum-seeking population placed in contingency hotels compared with January 2023:

Contingency Hotel Overview	January 2023	January 2024
Number of Contingency Hotels	8	8
Number of Adults	608	660
Number of Children	209	254
Total Number	817	914

Challenges faced by those seeking asylum

- 3.3. People living in hotels, particularly over a prolonged period and with the uncertainty regarding their immigration application, face significant emotional distress which can deepen the trauma and dislocation many have already experienced. Parents are raising children in cramped conditions, with families living in one room, which impacts upon relationships, sleep and wellbeing. This is alongside receiving a restricted income of £8 per person per week and so experiencing considerable financial strain.
- 3.4. Asylum seekers, Council officers, charities and health professionals have all raised a number of concerns about the quality of accommodation and food available for those living in hotels and the significant psychological and physical impact of this.
- 3.5. Concerns in relation to the quality and availability of food has been repeatedly voiced by families. This includes reports from parents that food is too spicy or unsuitable for young children, weaned babies not having access to a wide range of nutritional foods and formula that health professionals do not recommend due to high sugar content, the availability

of fresh fruit, medical and allergy requirements not being catered for and meats being served that are culturally inappropriate. The Home Office and Clearsprings repeatedly state that a wide range of foods are available, and that people are given a limited choice from a menu each day, however families have disputed this. The majority of food is pre-packed ready meals which are microwaved. Parents tell us that not having agency over what they eat and not having opportunities to prepare meals for their children on a long-term basis is detrimental to their wellbeing. Children's Services have completed unannounced visits to hotels during mealtimes to check what food is available including that children have access to fresh fruit. On these occasions officers found that a range of food was available but that one communal dining room was in a very messy state such as overflowing bin and tables not cleared since breakfast.

- 3.6. There have been several reports of bedbug infestation within the hotels, including a two-year-old being taken to her GP with a number of bites in September 2023. Westminster's Environmental Health and Public Health officers have completed inspections as a result and outlined what remedial action is required. Public Health have delivered training to hotels in relation to infectious diseases to ensure clear steps are in place to control and respond to any outbreak risk. Environmental Health have completed inspections within all the hotels to assess compliance with space standards, a report of which is pending.
- 3.7. Women have repeatedly reported that they do not have consistent and ready access to period products or the specific type of product that they require and are forced to ask male hotel staff for products. They find this embarrassing and culturally shameful. This has been escalated to Clearsprings by officers on several occasions with an agreed solution reached. Women are currently reporting that this has improved, and officers will continue to monitor.

Escalation of issues to the Home Office and Clearsprings

- 3.8. These concerns have been repeatedly escalated to the Home Office and Clearsprings. This includes both formally writing to express concerns and escalating specific incidents and safeguarding concerns impacting individual families. Monthly meetings are held with Children's Services and Public Health attended by Unfold who are a local charity commissioned to work directly with families, the Home Office and Clearsprings where concerns are also escalated. In October 2023 the Executive Director of Children's Service and Director of Family Services Special Projects met directly with Clearsprings' senior directors and their safeguarding lead to discuss specific concerns and seek reassurance this would result in improvements. There are individual hotels which have repeatedly been raised as hotels of concern. Despite concerns being escalated there has been a repeated cycle of the Home Office and Clearsprings agreeing to address concerns raised, both organisations reporting that matters have been resolved, only for those seeking asylum to again raise the same issues. Other Councils across London are reporting similar issues which they have individually escalated to the Home Office. In December 2023

representatives from the Clearsprings management team met directly with families to listen to their experiences of living in the hotels. This meeting was well attended by families who spoken in detail about their experiences. Hearing directly from families has unfortunately not resulted in improvements in food quality and availability or in evidence that agreed actions have progressed. Much more is required by senior leaders within the Home Office and Clearsprings for a proactive solution so that improvements are made and sustained.

- 3.9. Some asylum seekers have voiced that they are apprehensive about raising complaints directly with hotel staff and fear this will jeopardise their immigration application. Whilst we do not have specific evidence this has happened, they are concerned that if they complain about the hotel conditions, hotel staff will inform the Home Office that their behaviour has been problematic since living in the UK and that this will negatively impact their immigration outcome. Some have reported being reprimanded by hotel staff for raising concerns and told that they should not have done this. There is therefore a concern that some asylum seekers will be silenced and feel unable to speak out.
- 3.10. Children's Services have commissioned organisations and developed specific roles within Early Help to form relationships with, and support asylum seeking families. Staff are regularly based within the hotels and seek to work together in identifying any families who are particularly struggling or where there are any safeguarding issues. Children's Services have received very few referrals from the Home Office or Clearsprings where they have worries about specific families. Given the volume of people living within the hotels under very difficult circumstance, and given many may have unresolved and lasting trauma, we would expect to have received referrals from both organisations. This has been raised with them and has been raised London wide as an area of concern. In response, Children's Services offered to deliver bespoke safeguarding training to hotel staff which has recently commenced. Clearsprings also has a safeguarding lead, to whom issues of concern are escalated to.

Wider London response and escalation

- 3.11. Across London, there are approximately 16,000 asylum seekers living in hotel accommodation and approximately 6,000 asylum seekers living in dispersal accommodation (typically flats, HMOS, or other self-contained accommodation). Local Authorities have raised and collectively discussed their concerns regarding safeguarding issues, the poor standard of some accommodation and the overall standard of living, through London Councils' Asylum Borough Working Group and the London Asylum Oversight Group.
- 3.12. Local authorities, including Westminster, have conducted inspections at the contingency hotels to determine whether they would meet the test for, and qualify as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). This determination would enable councils to better regulate housing standards within hotels and improve the standard of living for asylum seekers by ensuring there is increased accountability and therefore scope for local authorities to take

action, if needed. This is currently subject to litigation and whether this mechanism will be available to local authorities is a matter for the Property Chamber.

- 3.13. In Summer 2023, London Councils surveyed all London boroughs on safeguarding practices in asylum accommodation. Surveyed boroughs reported that 88% infrequently or never receive safeguarding referrals from the Home Office and 84% infrequently or never receive safeguarding referrals from Clearsprings directly. Clearsprings has shared aggregate level data on safeguarding concerns with the London Asylum Oversight group and, the number of safeguarding concerns flagged in this aggregate data (which included domestic abuse, suicide risks and mental health needs) is significantly higher than the levels of safeguarding referrals received by local authorities. There are therefore concerns that Clearsprings are not making necessary safeguarding referrals to local authorities. The London Councils Chief Executive leads for asylum and joint chairs of the London Asylum Oversight Group have written to the Director and Deputy Director of Asylum Support at the Home Office to raise these concerns. London Councils have also set up a series of meetings with several Directors of Children's Services from across London to agree approaches to collectively engaging and escalating concerns to the Home Office.
- 3.14. In December 2023, the London Borough of Hounslow published a comprehensive findings report following a deep dive review into the experiences of asylum seekers living in hotels. "On Hold: The lived experiences of asylum seekers in Hounslow's contingency hotels" highlights the significant challenges those living in hotels face and the impact of this upon their health and wellbeing. The report makes 15 recommendations, including for the Home Office to work more collaboratively with local authorities, sufficient central government funding to enable local authorities to meet the long-term needs of the asylum seeking population, and to take immediate action to effectively hold to account organisations that are commissioned to manage the hotel estate, such as Clearsprings to ensure they deliver services that are culturally sensitive, empathetic and trauma informed. The report recommends that local authorities and NHS partners are enabled with sufficient central government funding, particularly given services are already stretched, to develop specialist mental health support for asylum seekers to prevent crises and long-term mental health needs. The report also calls for improved multi-agency partnership, and co-ordinated outreach services which includes primary care, mental health and social prescribing services, in order to address unmet health and wellbeing needs and identify health protection risks at the earliest opportunity.

Local response to supporting families

- 3.15. In recognition of the significant challenges that asylum seekers face whilst living in hotels, Westminster has funded and implemented a number of services and commissioned local charities to deliver services. Services developed aim to mitigate the daily challenges of living in hotels and provide opportunities for growth, belonging and connection. These have been funded via the Home Office's Asylum Dispersal Grant.

- 3.16. Children's Services have appointed family navigators based within the Family Hubs to work specifically with families living in contingency hotels. They welcome families as they arrive in Westminster and support them to access a range of services and resources including GP registration, immunisations, child development checks and school places. They support families to access clothes and baby items via charities that they require following displacement. They conduct family assessments, create support plans and complete regular family reviews. They support families to access support services within the community and hubs, including stay and play, leisure activities, ESOL, college places for adults and child-based activities within the libraries. They refer families to local services outside Westminster when they move from the hotels, as appropriate. A welcome pack and leaflets have been developed which are designed to assist families with navigating their new lives within the borough and provide them with information about local support services (see Appendix B – Welcome Pack for Asylum Seeking Families).
- 3.17. Children's Services has commissioned Unfold, a well-established local charity, to deliver support to families since 2022. This includes individual mentoring for children, twice weekly Women's Support Groups for women which includes cooking together, individual mentoring for women and outreach delivered within the hotels. As of January 2024, Unfold have begun running twice weekly youth support groups at Feathers and St Andrews. Children's Services and Unfold are working very closely together in both supporting families and escalating issues up to the Home Office and Clearsprings. It is increasingly recognised that young adults aged 18-25, particularly those coming to the UK without family, can be isolated and impacted psychologically. Adult Service's Commissioning Team are currently exploring options to support this cohort of young adults.
- 3.18. A number of activities have been introduced within Bayswater Children's Centre to address the stress of living in cramped conditions as a family and to provide opportunities to engage in activities outside the hotels. This includes providing stay and play three times a week, ESOL, music and cooking sessions.
- 3.19. Families face significant emotional challenges, both because of the trauma they experienced which resulted in them seeking asylum and because of the enormous stress of living in cramped conditions with children in hotels. In recognition that this impacts family relationships and emotional wellbeing, Children's Services have commissioned Dream Arts to deliver group-based family therapy within Bayswater Children's Centre. This aims to provide early support to prevent escalation to statutory services, including social care and CAMHS. The first group was well attended throughout the programme with several children also receiving their own 1:1 therapy when it was identified that they could benefit from this. Families overwhelmingly raised food as an issue impacting them emotionally, both in terms of not having agency to cook food from their own cultures but also that cooking for their children is a means of nurturing and conveying love as a parent. Dream Arts therefore incorporated cooking within the sessions. A second group is scheduled to run from March 2024.

- 3.20. Westminster libraries are providing a range of opportunities to those living in the hotels. This includes providing children with book packs, homework clubs and running sessions at Paddington Children's Library.
- 3.21. During the school holidays, Children's Services supported children from hotels to access a range of HAF activities. Westbourne Park Family Centre was funded to deliver bespoke sessions for refugee children. During the summer holiday in 2023, over 200 refugee children attended the holiday provision, which included those who have recently received their immigration status. Again, food is incorporated into these sessions to ensure children have access to a freshly cooked meal each day.
- 3.22. Adults and families are supported to access the food pantries, baby banks and cooking sessions across a number of locations across the borough. Public Health are exploring options for reviewing the food that is available within the hotels to assess their nutritional value, especially as these are primarily pre-packed ready meals. Alongside needing to determine that food available is nutritionally complete we need to continue to maximise opportunities to address the psychological factors impacting this and provide opportunities for people to cook and access foods from their own cultures.
- 3.23. A monthly co-ordination meeting is held with a wide range of local charities, Early Help, NHS, GPs, Library Services and is chaired by Unfold. Typically, 10-12 organisations attend each month. The purpose of these meetings is to identify gaps, avoid duplication, coordinate to ensure smooth coverage of services, raise concerns and emerging issues and to share best practice. Alongside this, a quarterly partnership meeting is held and chaired by the Director of Family Services Special Projects to oversee the work being delivered or commissioned by the Council.

Families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

- 3.24. The Home Office is legally required to assist and prevent destitution for those seeking asylum until their application is processed and determined. There are a number of instances where the Home Office is not legally required to provide accommodation or subsistence to families who are either awaiting their long-term non-asylum immigration outcome or who are living in the UK under an arrangement that does not provide access to housing or benefits. Examples are wide-ranging and include victims of domestic abuse living in the UK on spousal visas, those seeking leave to remain having entered the UK on an alternative visa but where they are not seeking asylum, those appealing a non-asylum Home Office decision and EU Nationals with pre-settled status but without access to benefits. The Children Act 1989 (section 17) is the legal mechanism through which Local Authorities need to provide accommodation and subsistence to children and their parents who would otherwise be destitute. In these instances, Children's Services complete assessments to understand the individual family's circumstances, the legal basis for them living in the UK, links to any other local authorities, whether they have alternative sources of income and the right to work, whether they have friends/relatives they could live with and

the overall needs of the family. Given the financial commitment, it is essential that any assessment carefully considers whether families have no other means of supporting themselves and their legal circumstances. This is kept under review.

3.25. Where families require accommodation and subsistence, this can be a long-term financial commitment for Local Authorities which is funded through Children’s Service’s “Section 17” budget. Timeframes are compounded by Home Office backlogs. There are currently 5 families that have been accommodated and financially supported by Westminster for over 2 years whilst they await their Home Office decision. Westminster has commissioning arrangements with organisations that provide accommodation to families that are NRPF. These arrangements provide better value for money than private rental arrangements and enable the local authority to cease funding without long contractual notice periods when families move out. Work is currently underway to benchmark our approach and spend with other London local authorities and to explore whether there is any additional better value options Westminster can commission or develop. This exercise has confirmed that the main organisation where Westminster accommodates families provides good value for money especially given huge demands across London and supply challenges. Children’s Services provide a named allocated practitioner who provides support to families based on individual need and supports them to access local services. The practitioner maintains regular communication with the family’s solicitor and the Home Office to ensure all necessary steps are being taken to enable their immigration to be determined.

3.26. The table below shows the volume of families and financial impact between 2021-2024:

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Number of Families at January	25	27	23
Total Number of Families For Full Year	106	63	84 at January 2024
Average Monthly Accom	£36,413.79	£26,018.13	£35,445.13 Projected

modatio n Spend			
Average Monthly Subsist ence Spend	£10,510.27	£7,129.83	£7,870.32 Projected
Total Annual Spend	£563,088.91	£397,775.17	£519,785.50 Projected

Afghan and Ukrainian Response

Afghan Response

- 3.27. Following the withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan and the subsequent emergency developing in the country, the UK Government established Operation Warm Welcome to support those arriving in the UK from Afghanistan. As part of this, the government established temporary bridging accommodation for evacuees whilst they were awaiting permanent accommodation.
- 3.28. Westminster and partners, on behalf of the Home Office, provided wraparound support for Afghan evacuees at the Hilton Metropole Bridging Hotel. This support included:
- Securing school and college places for all children and young people
 - Co-ordinating health provision, GP registration and mental health support
 - Activities for children and young people (including visits to Lord cricket ground and training sessions at Chelsea and QPR)
 - Holistic support needs such as additional clothing and essential items
 - Supporting evacuees to navigate living in a new and unfamiliar city
- 3.29. The Home Office recognised the support that Westminster provided as the 'gold standard'.
- 3.30. Approximately 740 people were accommodated at the Metropole between September 2021 and May 2022, and over that time 233 people had moved into permanent accommodation. In February and March 2022, the majority of residents were moved to other bridging accommodation across the UK as the Metropole was stood down. A few families remained at the Metropole as permanent accommodation was imminent. By May 2022, all evacuees had left the Metropole.

- 3.31. London Councils has agreed a 'fair shares' proposal for two Afghan resettlement schemes (Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy and Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme). Based on London Council's calculations, Westminster's fair share was 11 households. To date, Westminster has accommodated 8 households, and officers are seeking further homes.

Ukrainian Response

- 3.32. The Ukraine Family Scheme allows family members of British nationals, UK settled persons and certain others to come to or stay in the UK. Those coming as part of this scheme will be able to live, work and study in the UK and access public funds.
- 3.33. The 'Homes for Ukraine' local sponsorship scheme allow individuals to sponsor those forced to flee Ukraine to the UK. Organisations such as charities and churches will also be able to sponsor refugees, though there is no start date for this yet. Sponsors will receive a £350 monthly 'thank you' payment for hosting.
- 3.34. Since the war began in February 2022 there have been 952 Ukrainian nationals, including 169 children, that have arrived into Westminster through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. There is not a mechanism for tracking Ukrainian nationals who live in Westminster via the Ukraine Family Scheme. Westminster continues to have a specialist Ukraine Response Team that provides Ukrainian nationals with holistic support when they arrive in the UK. This is intended to support them to settle and access universal and specialist support, school and college provision and local support services.

Longer-Term Housing Impact

- 3.35. Across London one of the main challenges with regards to supporting migrant people is the reported rise in homelessness applications. This is caused by a number of factors including:
- Those arriving on Ukrainian schemes finding that their placements with friends and family or sponsors are not sustainable.
 - People placed in Home Office supported accommodation receiving their asylum decision and being given notice.
- 3.36. In Westminster we have seen a rise in the number of homelessness applications from these cohorts. To date since the contingency hotels opened and Ukrainian war began there have been:
- 31 Sudanese single adults/families have presented to the Housing Solutions Service (HSS) as homeless (24 families; 7 single applicants). 21 of the households have been placed into temporary accommodation.
 - 10 Afghan single adults/families; 3 of whom are currently in temporary accommodation.

- 131 Ukrainian single adults/families. 43 were from the Ukraine Family Scheme, 65 from Homes for Ukraine and 23 were via other means of entry. 65 households are currently in temporary accommodation.
- 3.37. Across London, including within Westminster, there are increasing private rental and hotels costs associated with increased demand and pressures within the housing sector. The volume and demand for contingency hotels and private rental dispersal accommodation contributes to this.
- 3.38. The fourth main reason for homelessness applications is now households, principally single adults, who have been given notice to leave Home Office hotels following a positive asylum application decision. The challenge of accessing affordable private rental accommodation for single adults not in priority need is increasing volumes of rough sleeping across London.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. The Asylum Dispersal Grant has been utilised to fund the range of services developed to support migrant families within hotels. Local Authorities are free to determine how best to utilise this funding to support the aims of the Asylum Dispersal Policy.
- 4.2. There remain sufficient funds to meet the cost of services that are supporting asylum seeking families living within hotels. However, all plans are time-limited given the grant is not indefinite. A total of £310,000 grant funding for 23/24 financial year remains unallocated in Westminster and this will rollover into the next financial year if not used. As yet, the Home Office has not announced funding levels for 2024-25. It is anticipated that future funding will reduce in line with the Home Office reducing their 'asylum estate'. Funding is approved to fund Unfold until January 2025, with a 3-month break clause given anticipated changes to the future hotel population and possible hotel closures. Funding is secured to deliver Family Navigator, Dream Arts, HAF and ESOL provision until June 2024. It is proposed that the Asylum Dispersal Grant continues to be utilised to deliver a range of services to support families living in contingency hotels, although provision can evolve based in assessed need and the volume of families living within hotels.
- 4.3. As outlined above Westminster is projected to spend £519,785.50 from Children's Services budget for families awaiting immigration decisions outside the asylum pathway. There will continue to be a legal requirement for local authorities to support families who would otherwise be destitute where they have a legal basis to remain in the UK.

5. Legal and Governance Implications

- 5.1. The Home Office can provide housing and financial support to a person who has claimed asylum if they do not have accommodation and/ or cannot afford to meet their essential living needs. This support is provided under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and will continue until

the person's asylum claim is finally determined by the Home Office or appeal courts.

- 5.2. Section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, defines all those people who are 'subject to immigration control' and will have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). This means they have no access to public funds i.e., Local Authority housing, Local Authority homelessness assistance and most welfare benefits (although the list of benefits does change from time to time).
- 5.3. A person with NRPF can be provided with support from Children Services under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. The local authority can provide accommodation and financial support to a family where a child is assessed to be in need in their area (s17(6) CA 1989). A child will be in need if they are homeless, or their parents do not have sufficient resources to be able to provide for their housing and/or basic living needs. Accommodation and financial support can be provided to the whole family (s17(3) of the Children Act 1989).
- 5.4. The local authority must establish the parents' immigration status and if they fall into an excluded group, the family can only be provided with the support or assistance that is necessary to prevent a breach of their human rights or European Union (EU) treaty rights (Schedule 3 of the Nationality Immigration Asylum Act 2002).
- 5.5. When exercising this power, the local authority has the power to provide a wide range of services in order to meet assessed s17 needs. The local authority is not under a duty to meet all formally assessed needs; section 17 is a target duty and may take into account its resources in determining which needs are to be met, but such a decision must be reached rationally, and the local authority must act reasonably.
- 5.6. Under section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006, the local authority has a target duty to take steps to improve the health of the people in its area. This can include providing: Services or facilities for the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness and Assistance (including financial assistance) to help individuals to minimise any risks to health arising from their accommodation or environment.

6. Carbon Impact

- 6.1. There are no material climate implications resulting from the delivery of work outlined in this report.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1. The services outlined in this report are intended to promote equality of opportunity for migrant families and support them with settling in a new and unfamiliar country. The services that have been introduced are intended to mitigate very challenging living arrangements including providing opportunities to support families socially, emotionally and educationally.

8. Consultation and Engagement

- 8.1. Families have been consulted on services that have been developed or commissioned to support them. This has resulted in services being re-shaped to meet current or evolving needs.
- 8.2. Council and Unfold staff have facilitated meetings with families and management from Clearsprings to give families the opportunity to speak directly about their experience of living in the hotels and the issues that need to improve.
- 8.3. Monthly partnership meetings are held with the Home Office and Clearsprings to escalate concerns raised by families. In addition, urgent issues of concern are also escalated outside these meetings as these arise. We have requested to both organisations that an asylum-seeking parent living within a hotel joins this group as an expert by experience. Whilst these escalation routes have helped resolve some issues, there continues to be concerns about hotel living arrangements and the challenges families are facing.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Overview of Services Working with Migrant Families within Westminster

Appendix 2 - Welcome Pack for Asylum Seeking Families

Appendix 3 - Summary of Accommodation Provision for Migrant Families & Single Adults

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Report Author,
hfarrell@westminster.gov.uk**

Appendix 1

Overview of services working with migrant families within Westminster

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Provision Type</u>	<u>Number of Children / Families Supported 2023-24 YTD</u>
Early Help Family Navigators	Consent based allocated practitioner to support with range of family needs, to provide emotional and practical support and to support families with accessing local services including health, ESOL, education, leisure, food pantries. Supporting families with transitions when their receive asylum applications or are moved by the Home Office/Clear Springs. Supporting families with accessing local support when they move out of hotels/ Westminster. Referring families to statutory services as needed.	Children: 150 Families: 83
Unfold	Twice weekly women’s support group, 1:1 women’s mentoring, youth mentoring programme, outreach within the hotels.	Women’s Support Group: 144 Women’s Mentoring: 12 Youth Mentoring: 28

	Bespoke Youth Support Group at Feathers and St Andrews commenced January 2024	
Dream Arts Project 1	1:1 and family group therapy sessions with hot meal	Children: 24 Families: 17
HAF (Holiday Activities and Food Programme)	School holiday activities including sports, cooking, arts and crafts and trips. A daily meal is included. Provided to children who are both asylum seekers and living in hotels and refugees who have moved on from hotels.	Attendance per holiday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter 23: 113 children • May 23: 86 children • Summer 23: 200 children • Oct 23: 102 children • Winter 23: 136 children
Bayswater Children's Hub	Stay and play, cooking, fun days and ESOL sessions for families living in hotels.	Average weekly attendance at different groups: Children: 10 Families: 18
Libraries	Provision of book bags, homework clubs and linking with Paddington Children's Library	Book bags: 135 families

		Every family has been given library membership.
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SUPPORT FOR ASYLUM SEEKING FAMILIES

WESTMINSTER



A warm welcome to Westminster

Welcome to Westminster. We are here to help and support you. This booklet gives you information about helpful services and friendly places in Westminster for you and your family. For more information, scan the QR codes using your phone.

1. Support for families and young people

Family Hubs

Family Hubs and Children's Centres are warm and friendly places which offer different activities for children aged 0-19, or up to 25 with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) as well as support for pregnant women. There are friendly and qualified staff to help you and your children.

Activities and support include:

- Drop-in stay and play
- Breastfeeding support
- Midwife / Maternity Support
- Baby Massage
- Health Visitors
- Child Health Clinic
- Parenting groups
- Citizens Advice
- Cooking group at Queen's Park

ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Each of the Family Hubs listed in the next section offer free ESOL classes - ask at your local hub for more information.

You can also access more advanced ESOL and other Further Education courses as an Asylum seeker once you are over 19 and have been in the UK for 6 months (except if you have a 'no study' condition).

Westminster Adult Education Service offers ESOL and other adult education courses:

<https://www.waes.ac.uk/>



Your local Family Hub centres are:

Queen's Park Family Hub

88 Bravington Road, W9 3AL

Telephone: 020 7641 5838

Email: [queensparkfamilyhub](mailto:queensparkfamilyhub@westminster.gov.uk)

@westminster.gov.uk



We also deliver services from
**Bayswater Children's
Centre:**

Shrewsbury Road, W2 5PR.

Bessborough Family Hub

1 Bessborough Street, Westminster, SW1V 2JD

Telephone: 020 7641 5923

Email: bessboroughfamilyhub@westminster.gov.uk



Your local Family Hub centres are:

Church Street Family Hub

12-18 Salisbury Street, NW8 8DE

Telephone: 020 3307 1940

Email: office@portmancentre.co.uk



We also deliver services from

Maida Vale Children's Centre

St. Augustine's CE Primary School, Kilburn Park,
NW6 5XA.

Tel: 07971 625 862.



2. Schools and Education



Age 4+

All children who have turned 5 can go to school for free in England. A lot of children start the September after they turn 4. The school year runs from September to July.

You can apply for a school place during the year through the Council's Admissions team. They can help you find and apply for places.

You can talk to the team on telephone

020 7745 6432 / 6433 (Monday to Friday 9am to 2pm)

or email: schooladmissions@westminster.gov.uk

Free school meals

Asylum-seeking children can have free school meals. Talk to the school to apply - they may ask to see a copy of the Section 95 document from the Home Office.

Age 2-4

Children aged 2-4 can go to nursery part-time for free

www.gov.uk/get-childcare

Support for disabled children and their families

The Disabled Children's Service is here to help disabled children and their families. You can talk to the Disabled Children's Team by phoning 020 7641 5100.


3. Health

As an asylum seeker you can get free health care, prescriptions, and dental care through the National Health Service (NHS). All children in the UK can use these services for free.



GP (Doctor)

You should register yourself and your children with a GP (a doctor). If you or your children feel unwell, talk to your GP. You can find your nearest GP here: nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery.

If you cannot get a GP appointment, you can telephone  111 for medical advice at any time.

You should talk to your GP if you think you might be pregnant or for contraception advice or you can access a walk-in service at a family planning centre - find your nearest one here:

nhs.uk/Service-Search/other-services/Family%20planning/LocationSearch/1863



Mental Health Support

There is support available in the UK for anyone experiencing worries, feelings of sadness, not being able to sleep, or struggling with day-to-day routines. You can speak to your GP or you may wish to self-refer to Talking Therapies - a free NHS service that provides a wide range of support -

<https://talkingtherapies.cnwl.nhs.uk/westminster>



Dentist (Tooth care)

You can find your nearest dentist here:

nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist




Pharmacy (also called Chemists)

A pharmacy is where you can get medicines and advice from a professional about how to use them. You can find your nearest pharmacy here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy>



Emergency Care

For medical emergencies, go to the nearest hospital's Accident and Emergency department (A&E) - see next page or call  999.

4. Hospitals

There are several hospitals in Westminster, all of which have an Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department where you can go if you have a medical emergency.



A&E departments are open 24 hours a day, every day.

You should not go to A&E for minor medical problems or illness - for this see a Doctor (GP).

You will need to register when you arrive. You'll be asked a few questions, such as your name, address and why you came to A&E.

Asking for help in another language

If you need help in another language, including British Sign Language (BSL), ask for an interpreter.

Hospitals in or near Westminster:

St Mary's Hospital

Praed Street, London W2 1NY
020 3312 6666

www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-locations/st-marys-hospital

St Thomas' Hospital

Address: Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7EH
020 7188 7188

www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/st-thomas-hospital

Chelsea & Westminster

56 Dean Street, Soho, London, W1D 6AQ
020 3315 8000

www.chelwest.nhs.uk/

University College Hospital

235 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BU
Telephone
020 3456 7890

www.uclh.nhs.uk/our-services/our-hospitals/university-college-hospital

5. Safeguarding children

If you are worried about the safety of a child, please talk to Children's Services by telephone on 020 7641 4000 (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm).

Outside these hours call the Emergency Duty Team on 020 7373 2227.

If you are worried someone is in immediate danger, please call 999.



Most children arriving in the UK are expected to be in the care of a parent or family member. If you are concerned that a child is not in the care of a parent or appropriate adult or you are concerned about the care they are receiving please contact Children's Services on the numbers above.

6. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse and violence includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in couple relationships or between family members. If someone is hurting you or controlling you, you can talk to someone about it and get support.

24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline

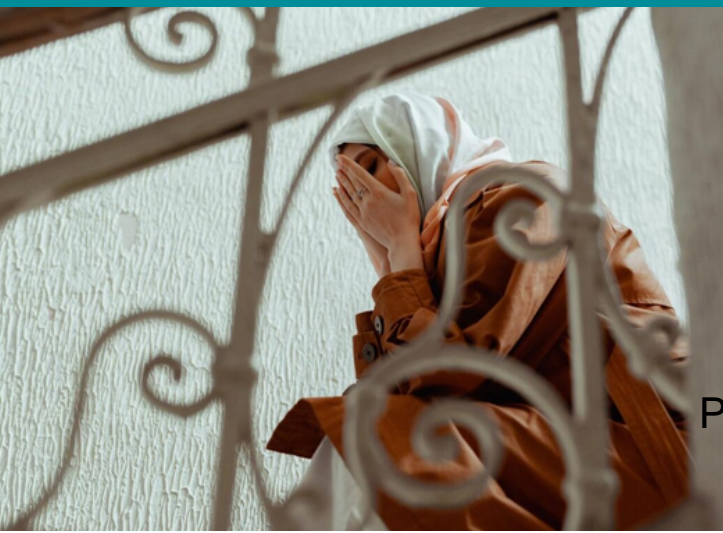
Advice and support, including refuge search. Call: 0808 2000 247 (freephone)

The Angelou Partnership

Supports women and girls experiencing domestic or sexual violence.

Call: 0808 801 0660 (freephone - Mon-Fri 10am - 4pm)

www.angelou.org/our-services



Westminster Early Help service also have a Domestic Violence Consultant in their team:

Valbona Preniqi

07971092567 (Tues-Fri 9-5pm)

vpreniqi@westminster.gov.uk

If you are in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

7. Community Support

Unfold are a local organisation who run a specialised programme of support for asylum seekers and refugees.

They have weekly women's support groups at Bessborough Family Hub and Westbourne Family Centre which offer a safe and supportive space where women can make friends, support one another, and join in group activities that they choose, such as knitting, crocheting and jewellery making.

Please see below for group times and locations:



Email:

parents@unfold.org.uk

Or visit:

<https://www.unfold.org.uk/>



Mondays 10am -12pm

Bessborough Family Hub

1 Bessborough Street, SW1V 2JD

Fridays 10am-12pm

Westbourne Park Family Centre

Westbourne Park Baptist Church
Porchester Road, London, W2 5DX

Tel: 020 7727 6019



8. Food

Queen's Park Family Hub have a cook and share lunch on Mondays where families can cook and eat together. Ask at the hub for more details.

There are also a number of food banks and community pantries in Westminster but many of them require a referral.

The best way to access this support is to go to one of the groups above as they can provide vouchers and make referrals.

9. Libraries & Internet Access

You can go to your local library to access free Wi-Fi, computers, books, a study area and lots of things to do for children and families. They also have lots of books in different languages.



Church Street Library

67 Church Street, NW8 8EU



Maida Vale Library

Sutherland Avenue, W9 2QT



Queen's Park Library

666 Harrow Road, W10 4NE

Paddington Library

Porchester Road, W2 5DU



Libraries & Internet Access



Paddington Children's Library

Westbourne Park Baptist Church,
Westbourne Park Villas, W2 5EA



Pimlico Library

Lupus Street, SW1V 3AT



Pimlico Toy Library

133A Lupus Street, SW1V 3EN



Victoria Library

Buckingham Palace Road, SW1W 9UD

10. Sport, Leisure & Activities

The Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) Programme

Has free activities and food in the school holidays for children 4-16 on Free School Meals.

Find your nearest centre and activities here:

ourcity.org.uk/haf-programme



Sports and leisure activities

Local leisure centres are community spaces where people can go to take part in sports and activities for fun and exercise.

Find out about free activities in your leisure centre here:

active.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-centres/



Parks and playgrounds

Find free local parks and green spaces here:

active.westminster.gov.uk/active-places/parks-and-open-spaces/



11. Youth Hubs

Youth Hubs are fun, informal club spaces for young people to connect with their friends, community and trusted youth workers. They deliver a wide range of activities and provide a safe space for members to socialise and learn new skills.

Your local youth hubs in:

North East Westminster

Fourth Feathers Youth Club

12 Rossmore Rd, NW1 6NX

Telephone: 020 7723 9167

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



North Paddington Youth Club

235 Lanark Road, London, W9 1RA

Telephone: 020 3875 0412 (Ronnie Rennie)

ourcity.org.uk/organisations/north-paddington-youth-club

Marylebone Bangladesh Society

19 Samford Street, NW8 8ER
Telephone: 020 77249746
mbs-uk.org/youth-club/



Youth Hubs

Your local youth hubs in:

North West Westminster

Avenues

3-7 Third Avenue, W10 4RS

Phone: 020 8969 9552

Email: hello@avenues.org.uk

avenues.org.uk/



Amberley Youth Hub

Millennium Centre, 11 Clearwell Drive,
W9 2JZ

Phone: 020 7286 1014

workingwithmen.org

Westbourne Park Family Centre Clubs

Term Time at Westbourne Park Baptist Church, Porchester Road, W2 5DX:

- Lancaster Gate Club: Tues 3.30-5.00pm for 4-11s. Parents can stay.
- Hallfield Estate Multi Sports Club: Thurs 4.00-5.30pm for 4-14's Westbourne Park Baptist Church (Winter) on sports pitch on Hallfield Estate (summer)
- Club Xpress: Fri 5.30-7.00pm 4-11's
- Young Leaders: Fri 6-8pm for years 7 & 8/ 7-9pm for years 9 upwards

Holidays:

- Club Xpress and Young Leaders Holiday club: Tues-Fri 11-3pm for 4-16's

Phone: 07941100762 (Geoff) / Email
info@westbourneparkfamilycentre.org.uk
www.westbourneparkfamilycentre.org.uk



Youth Hubs

Your local youth hubs in:

South Westminster

St Andrews Youth Club

Alec Wizard House, 12 Old Pye Street, SW1P 2DG

Tel: 020 7222 6481

Email: info@standrewsclub.com

standrewsclub.com/



Churchill Gardens Youth Club

Churchill Gardens Rd,

Pimlico, SW1V 3JA.

Phone: 07948 740166

workingwithmen.org

Specialist youth club for young people with disabilities

Caxton Youth Organisation

As well as a youth club Caxton Youth Organisation also has a wide range of support programmes and opportunities for young people with disabilities, whether physical and/or learning disabilities. They have programmes to support wellbeing, health, independence and much more.

Caxton Youth Club

Tintern House, Abbots Manor Est, SW1V 4JF

Phone: 020 7834 1883

<https://caxtonyouth.org/>



12. Free things to do



There are lots of free things to do with children near Westminster, such as museums like the Natural History Museum and the Science Museum.

www.nhm.ac.uk/

www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/home



Young Westminster Foundation



Lists lots of activities for children and young people, many of which are free.

You can filter the activities by choosing your local area and clicking the 'free' button:

ourcity.org.uk/projects/young-people/outofschool/grid/any/0/0/-1/undefined/free/youngPeople/

Westminster council also has lots of activities for children and families on their events page:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/event>

13. Travel



Bus, Tube and Train

An Oyster card is a travel card for London that you can use to pay for buses, trains, and other transport. When traveling by tube or train, you need to tap your oyster card when you enter and exit the station. When traveling by bus in London, you need to tap once when you get on the bus. You can also use contactless debit or credit cards in the same way if you have one.

Children under 5 travel free with an adult who is paying to travel. You can also get free or discounted travel for older children and students but they will need their own Oyster card for the right age group. You can find all the details here:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel>

Bikes

Santander Cycles are bikes you can rent in London to ride around the city. Prices start from £1.65.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/santander-cycles>

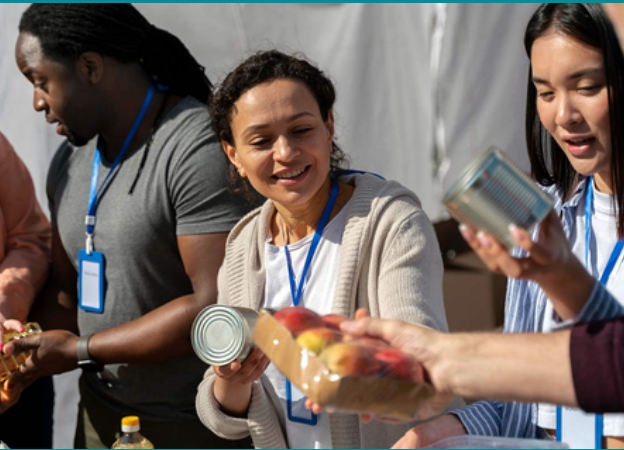
Getting Around

Citymapper is a useful website that helps you to get around in London. You can use the website or download the app to your phone. It shows you the best ways to travel, different ways to get there including by walking, and how long your trip might take.

<https://citymapper.com/london?lang=en>

14. Volunteering

Volunteering means helping others without getting paid. It can make you feel good, give you more confidence, and teach you skills that may help you find a job in the future. You can volunteer even if your asylum claim is being checked and you can't work yet.



These two organisations both offer volunteering opportunities and support in finding them:

Westminster Connects

westminster.gov.uk/jobs-and-volunteering/volunteering/westminster-connects

One Westminster

onewestminster.org.uk/volunteering

15. Employment

Permission to work - If you've been waiting for your case for over a year, you can apply to the Home Office for permission to work. You will only be able to work in certain jobs from a list called the “shortage occupation list”. To ask for permission to work, you need to write an email or letter to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). For more information about the shortage occupation list and how to apply for permission to work visit:

gov.uk/government/publications/handling-applications-for-permission-to-take-employment-instruction/permission-to-work-and-volunteering-for-asylum-seekers-

If you want help and advice about finding a job or volunteering, you can talk to Westminster’s Families and Communities Employment Service:

Email: employmentteam@westminster.gov.uk

Phone: 07971026709

16. Refugee & Legal Services



NRFP Connect

NRPF (No Recourse to Public Funds) and Refugees Services is a service that helps asylum seekers and refugees. They can help you access services and get any extra help you might need.

<https://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/nrpf-connect>

Migrant Help

Can help with applying for accommodation and financial support, reporting issues with asylum accommodation, and any other advice needed during their asylum journey. Also provide support during the post-decision period, whether the decision is positive or negative.

<http://www.migranthehelpuk.org/Pages/Category/asylum>

Migrants Organise

Provide legal immigration advice and support.

Tel: 020 8964 4815

Email: info@migrantsorganise.org

Address: 15 Gertrude St, London SW10 0JN

Website: <https://www.migrantsorganise.org/>

Legal Advice

There are 3 levels of immigration adviser. To understand these levels and how they work see:

[gov.uk/find-an-immigration-adviser/what-advisers-can-do](https://www.gov.uk/find-an-immigration-adviser/what-advisers-can-do)

To find a level 2 or 3 advisor for yourself, you can use the 'adviser finder' website here

https://home.oisc.gov.uk/adviser_finder/finder.aspx

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Appendix 3

Summary of Accommodation for Migrant Families & Single Adults

Immigration Status	Accommodation Type
Asylum Seekers	<p>Contingency Hotels – Temporary accommodation provided by the Home Office whilst their asylum claim is being determined that have not been placed in longer term dispersal accommodation.</p> <p>Dispersed Accommodation – Longer-term temporary accommodation including self contained accommodation, shared houses, hostels and flats provided by the Home Office whilst final immigration outcome is determined.</p>
Families with No Recourse to Public Funds	Short term hotels and longer-term self-contained accommodation provided by the Council.
Afghani Nationals	<p>Afghan Bridging Hotel – Temporary accommodation for people evacuated from Afghanistan. Run by the Council and partners on behalf of the Home Office. Now Closed.</p> <p>ARAP/ACRS – Resettlement schemes for Afghans. The Council has identified properties for and resettled 8 Afghan families to date.</p>
Ukrainian Nationals	Ukrainian Friends and Families Scheme – Scheme for Friends and Families to sponsor Ukrainians to come to the UK. Homes for Ukraine - Scheme for organisations and individuals to sponsor Ukrainians to come to the UK.

