Children’s Care and Support

Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2016-17
Foreword

It is my pleasure to introduce this year’s Corporate Parenting report, which outlines the work of the Members Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG) over the past twelve months and details challenges the Group must address in the coming year.

During 2016/17, MCPG has focused on ensuring the promises LBBD make to our Looked After Children are kept, with Members and Officers working with our young people and partner services to make sure these are delivered.

One key area of concern for Members has been long term placement stability, and Officers have worked hard over the past year to ensure young people are placed in the most stable environment we can possibly offer. Although this is still a significant challenge for us, various measures have been taken to increase placement stability across the borough. Special Guardianship Orders are helping us place children with family members long term, the Adoption Team continue do their upmost to find suitable families for hard to place children and much work is being undertaken to reduce the likeliness of placement breakdown. All these measures help to provide the stability children need to flourish in other areas of their lives, so we will continue to be a priority for us in the coming year.

For our older children and care leavers, Employment, Education and Training is one of the most important issues, which is why as a group, we are really pleased to see our young people are outperforming the national average and our statistical neighbours. That said, accommodation is proving hard to find for our care leavers and is a challenge we must address if we are to give our young people the start in life they deserve.

Overall, this year has been one of both successes and challenges. As budgets continue to be squeezed, we will find it is increasingly difficult to provide the services that we know work and deliver for our young people. This said, the advice and insight that Skitz provides with, added to hard work and commitment of Children’s Services staff will ensure that we can meet the challenges we face.

Introduction

This report concerns the work of the Corporate Parenting Group of Elected Members and partner agencies from April 2016 to March 2017.

Over the last year, the Corporate Parenting Group has focussed on delivering on the ‘promises’ to children in care and care leavers, which are outlined in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, building on the work undertaken...
the previous year when the strategy was refreshed. Each meeting had an identified focus e.g. Education, Health, EET/NEET, Adoption/Fostering, CSE. In addition, one meeting was led and chaired by the Children in Care Council (Skittlz).

The Corporate Parenting Group and Corporate Parenting Strategy

The Corporate Parenting Group has aspirations for children in the care of the borough and has set out promises as part of fulfilling its roles and responsibilities which are:

- To make sure you get the best care
- To look after you and treat you well
- To help you be healthy
- To get the best education
- To be successful in life

The strategy sets out the collective responsibilities of the Council and its partners to provide the best possible care and protection for children and young people who are looked after in public care. This then involves a number of actions aimed at achieving improved outcomes. The arrangements in place, work carried out and performance are reported in Appendix 1 below.

In 2016/17, progress has continued to further strengthen the Corporate Parenting arrangements to ensure strong elected member representation including the Lead Member and 3 Councillors, through the Members’ Corporate Parenting Group.

The local performance dataset provided for the Corporate Parenting Group has been revised and expanded considerably. The report and appended dataset provides an update on numbers and trends, as well as trends in safeguarding, education, employment and health outcomes with benchmarks and analysis. The revised dataset has enabled detailed discussion in strengths and areas in need of improvement.

Over the course of the 2016-17 period the Panel has met regularly on a bi-monthly basis attended by elected members and partners from Health, Social Care, Education. The Council’s Children’s Rights and Participation Team have continued to attend and support the Borough’s Children in Care Council (Skittlz) at the MCPG meetings. Skittlz are a group of looked after children and young people who represent the views of looked after children at MCPG meetings.

The Corporate Parenting Group has received detailed reports from the Looked After Children’s Health Service, the Virtual School and Children’s Social Care services about a range of issues and performance during the course of 2016-17.

Children in Care and key trends for 2016-17

Over the course of the year the total number of children in care has remained stable, with minimal fluctuation each month. Overall there was a slight reduction in the total of children looked after to 414 as of end of March 2017 (418 at 31.3.16). This means that the rate per 10,000 children remains at 69, which is in line with our statistical neighbours but continues to be higher than the London average (52) and the national average (60).
A total of 339 (82%) children were placed in family based care through foster care, placement with adoptive carers or placement with parents as of March 2017, no change on the year before. The % of children placed within the Borough has decreased from 40% at the year end of 2015-16 to 38% at the end of 2016-17. This equates to a reduction from 167 children to 156 children living out of borough. It is important to note that there are also a lot of foster carers who live in neighbouring boroughs such as Havering. High numbers of children continue to be cared for in family based care within or nearby to the Borough which can be beneficial for the children in maintaining links with family and services, including schools.

The number of children placed in residential care has fallen from 35 (8.4%) to 33 (8.0%) over the course of the year as appropriate arrangements have been put in place for moving on in their care plans. At the beginning of April 2015 there were 45 children in residential care and a lot of work was undertaken to bring this number down to 35 at the beginning of April 16. Further work is being undertaken to review all placements of children in residential care and to review the most appropriate plans for them.

More young people are living in semi-independent placements, the numbers increased from 39 (9.4%) to 42 (10.4%) – over the last year as part of plans to move towards leaving care and adulthood. In April 2015 there were 32 young people (7%) in semi-independent placements, but over this year further work has been undertaken to prepare more young people for independent living as they are transitioning through to adulthood. However, they are not moved from foster care to 16+ provision unless it is the young person’s preference.

There has been an increase from 65 (15.6%) to 82 (19.8%), in the number of children who are placed 20 miles plus from home. It is sometimes necessary to place further away to achieve the placement to meet the child’s needs.

The number of children adopted in this period has gone down from 27 in 2015-16 to 14 in 2016-17. This significant reduction is reflected across London and nationally and is linked to the decline in Placement Orders being granted by Family Courts, which provide legal permission to place a child for adoption. The Ministry of Justice published the ‘Family Court Statistics Quarterly, England and Wales Annual 2016’ data on 30 March 2017 which evidenced a reduction in placement orders being granted for the second consecutive year. Performance, including the timeliness of achieving adoption, has been affected by rulings on cases in the courts and by the challenges in finding a suitable match for children who are hard to place. The adoptions achieved have included numbers of ‘hard to place’ children who are older, have a disability, are part of a sibling group or from a minority ethnic background.

The number of children being made the subject of Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) has increased from 7 in 2010-2011 to 45 in 2016-2017 (37 in 2015-16). This is another form of permanency that is considered alongside adoption and long term fostering. There is a correlation in the reduction of Placement Orders and the increase in SGOs. The special guardianship arrangements often mean staying within the wider family network or continuity of care from foster carers, but these arrangements are often just about good enough and do result in placement breakdown, which rarely happens in adoption. There were 8 SGO placement breakdowns in 2016-17.

The figures highlight that Special Guardianship Orders have become increasingly popular within care proceedings. Significant numbers of children have therefore been supported to have plans for permanency through adoption or special guardianship as alternative arrangements to long term care.

A good level of performance has been achieved which has impacted positively on children in care. These include: good performance in children having 3+ moves – met target of 10% or less, LAC review timescales have improved performance, reduction of children in care under S.20, met target for health assessments being over 90%, care leavers in EET has improved from 50.2% to 55.1%.
Progress is being made with permanent recruitment in all teams responsible for looked after children, which will impact positively on staff building relationships with children and young people. Despite the challenges of recruitment, all looked after child have an allocated social worker and, when leaving care, a personal adviser.

A fuller breakdown of information regarding children in care including age, ethnicity, gender and type of legal order is attached in Appendix 2 which is the Children in Care dataset for the Corporate Parenting Group.

Challenges

Long term placement stability continues to be a challenge with final year performance being 60.8% for children aged 16 as of 31st March 2017 who have been in the same placement for 2+ years (Statistical Neighbours 69%, London 66% and National 68%). Placement changes occur for various reasons which include: child’s challenging behaviour, issues with the placement, older children returning to family as they don’t want to be ‘in care’. However, there have been positive moves for some children including planned rehabilitation to parents or moves from residential care to fostering in recognition of the progress they have made, but these moves impact on the overall performance. Various measures are being implemented to prevent placement breakdown such as support from skilled Family Support Workers, Restorative Justice and Family Group Conference interventions, buddy system with in-house foster carers, Parenting Teenagers course for foster carers, but this work will continue to be built upon with the aim of improving this performance. In addition, LBBD has been successful in its bid for DfE funding to set up the Mockingbird fostering programme for in-house carers which aims to support placement stability. This will be in place around autumn 2017.

Work will continue to further reduce the number of children who are looked after in care to achieve a lower rate per 10000 which is closer to that of the London average of 52 per 10000. This however has to be seen in the context of the borough’s population, levels of need and demand for services.

Achieving adoption with the necessary order through the courts and an adoptive placement within the timescales will continue to present challenges when taking into account the profile of the children whose plan is for adoption and many children being ‘hard to place’. The Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee have been undertaking a detailed piece of work regarding adoption, the Scorecard performance and the wider issues impacting on adoption during 2016-17 and are due to report in July 2017 on the outcomes and recommendations.

There is every indication that the number of special guardianship orders (SGOs) will continue to grow. It is important that this work is not seen as being secondary to that of adoption as breakdowns of SGO arrangements will be likely to have an adverse impact on children and will have resource implications if children come back into the care of the local authority. Over the last year 45 SGOs were granted (37 the previous year) and in 2016-17 eight SGO arrangements broke down.

The number of young people who are in employment, education and training can be seen as both an achievement and a challenge. It is an achievement when making comparisons with national and statistical comparative performance, but still means that there is a significant number of young people who are not in employment, education or training and is therefore an area for continued attention. At the end of 2016-17 55.1% of care leavers were in EET compared to 53% in London, 48% for Statistical Neighbours and nationally.

Sourcing and sustaining accommodation for young people 18+ remains a continued challenge due to the lack of social housing stock available for care leavers, but there has been a dedicated resource this year to procure good quality 18+ accommodation from the private sector via the SAFE programme.
This programme has left a sustainable process to commission housing accommodation post SAFE with a commitment to ensuring an appropriate quality/value split.

Recruitment of permanent staff has remained as a priority for the services involved during this period and recognising that this can impact on performance in supporting children and young people in care. However, on a positive note there is comparative stability within the Children in Care, Leaving Care, Fostering and Adoption services.

**Priorities for 2017-18 within the Corporate Parenting Strategy**

Continuing to recognise the importance of service user views, plans are in place to continue to build upon the increase in young people who are now participating in the Children in Care Council (Skittlz). The focus will be on recruitment of care leavers aged 18+ and for children placed out of area to have a more active role in sharing their views and developing services through the use of technology.

‘Total Respect’ training about children’s experience in care and led by young people who are ‘care experienced’ – is to be arranged for Elected Members and the Corporate Parenting Group and is scheduled for June 2017.

A focus on long term placement stability for children through increased management oversight, tracking of individual cases to identify the reasons for any placement breakdown and further guidance and supervision for social workers about permanency planning for children. In addition, there are developing links between Fostering, Children in Care Team and the Access to Resources Service to identify additional supports to placements that can be flexible out of hours, with a view to increasing stability.

Monitor and improve timescales and performance regarding the placement of children with adoptive families. The Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee (CSSC) have undertaken a detailed inquiry into the issues of timescales performance and the wider issues impacting on adoption and is due to make recommendations in July 2017. The work of the Adoption Improvement Group has continued this year and tracks each child’s individual performance.

The assessment process for Special Guardians is a priority for the coming year to bring more of these assessments ‘in-house’ to the Adoption Service rather than Independent Social Workers (ISW) being commissioned. The Adoption Team are currently responsible for completion of the Support Packages for prospective Special Guardians but not the assessment of their suitability to care for the child. However, the quality of ISW reports is variable and if not robust the long-term sustainability of the placement is often challenging or the support package required is extensive. The Adoption Team are best placed to undertake the assessment and to develop the appropriate support package. Resources within the team will be under review to maximise the use of the team’s expertise in this area.

Continued attention will be given to performance regarding care plans and pathway plans being up to date and in place to ensure that the progress made in improving the performance in these areas will be sustained.

Children and young people’s views are being sought and recorded and arrangements are in place to check this through the work of the Independent Reviewing Officers, through audit as part of a programme of quality assurance work and through arrangements for supervision.
Work is constantly evolving to ensure the protocols between Health and Social Care regarding looked after children and ensuring initial health assessments, reviews health assessments, dental, optical checks and SDQs are undertaken in a timely way. A six weekly Health Improvement Group has been set up to problem solve any issues that impact on this area of performance. End of year performance for children in care for 1+ yeas was 92% having had a health check.

Further work needs to be undertaken with CAMHS now that a dedicated CAMHS LAC social worker has recently been appointed. The pathway for referral is in place for LBBD CAMHS, but there are still issues regarding eligibility, take up of service, what services are available at Tier 2 and assistance with accessing services outside of Nelft.

The introduction of new arrangements for e - Personal Education Plans has been introduced for children’s education up to age 16. This scheme enables the PEP to be reviewed and updated each term with two meetings interspersed with work done on line. The Virtual School is leading on this and PEP champions are in place and available on a session basis for input about children’s plans for education. The Virtual School will also continue to focus on ensuring that plans are in place at an early point for children in their pre-school year at nursery.

Support will be given by the Virtual School to year 6 and 11 students during key stage/exams and students who have special educational needs to fulfil their potential.

Focused attention to improving school attendance for children who are in care led by the Virtual School.

Continuing work to improve EET with close attention to each individual young person’s situation and plans alongside creating opportunities in partnership with providers of work, training and education. Two NEET workshops have taken place in 2016-17 to focus on vulnerable groups and have been attended by Members. The workshops have looked at ways to maximise the Council’s responsibilities as Corporate Parents to offer a wider range of opportunities to care leavers to ensure sustained engagement in education, employment and training and to offer new opportunities to those who are currently NEET. Work continues outside of these workshops to implement the actions agreed.

Joanne Tarbutt, Head of Service, Services for Looked After Children
23 May 2017

Appendix 1 : Progress report regarding the promises to children in care for the period 2016-17

Promise 1: ‘To make sure you get the best care’
Children are involved in the Children in Care Council known as Skittlz and they attend the Corporate Parenting Group to put across their views and experience about being in care. This is an important
gauge about services being provided and a source of ideas for improvement. One example this year is that they produced a child friendly guide for Pupil Premium Plus to assist children in care in understanding what this is, how it is used and what they can expect. They also carry out an annual ‘appraisal’ of the social work service received and a report is provided for this. The findings are brought to the Corporate Parenting Group and fed back to the service.

The Children in Care Council is supported by the Children’s Rights Officer who also offers a service to support individual children. Arrangements have continued to provide support through the Independent Advocacy Service which is commissioned from Barnardo’s.

Each child in care has a social worker and the service has ensured that 100% of children and young people have an allocated social worker. All young people who are leaving care have a Young Persons’ Advisor.

Training is in place for carers and workers, including Total Respect training which is run by young people who have care experience and training for foster carers, to support their understanding of the issues for children in care and leaving care.

The ongoing successful recruitment of in-house foster carers enables children and young people to remain in the local area of LBBD or surrounding boroughs and to maintain attendance at their school, if appropriate. In addition, the range of training for in-house carers is extensive and is developed according to changing needs. An example is the delivery of the Managing Teenage Behaviour course which has been adapted for foster carers. It is hoped that this enhanced learning might positively impact on placement stability for this age group.

The policy for permanency which has been put in place includes the commitment to placing siblings together when placements are being made and when plans for longer term permanency are agreed. If there are issues about placing siblings then these are further assessed to ensure that plans are based on sound information and if necessary further expertise sought. This work is usually undertaken by the in-house play therapist based in the Adoption Team.

There is a strong regard for arrangements for contact for children so that they are supported, where appropriate, to have contact with family and if not possible for this to be explained. The Contact Service provide expertise in this important area of work. Arrangements for contact are checked regularly at the child in care review meetings.

As mentioned, each child and young person who is looked after will have regular child in care review meetings at which the plans and arrangements are checked and altered to meet needs. Each child and young person therefore also has an allocated Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for this arrangement. As part of this the IRO seeks the views of the child or young person for the meeting. It is also important that the Social Worker, Carer and other professionals involved share good things which have happened for the child and the IRO and social worker have important roles to fulfil by ensuring that this is achieved for the child.

The frequency of Looked after Children review meetings is monitored and performance reported with 95% of the reviews being completed within timescales. This is an improvement from 93% in 2015-16 and above London (91%), national (90%) and statistical neighbours (88%).

Promise 2: ‘To look after you and treat you well’

Children’s Services has continued to experience changes in social work personnel and recognises the difficulties in this for supporting children in care and building the relationships with them which are so important. There is however greater stability in the workforce in the children in care and leaving care teams which is positive, although this year has seen a period of staff changes in both teams. The
service as a whole continues to make strenuous efforts to recruit social workers and achieve the desired workforce stability.

Arrangements are in place through a dashboard of performance information to show the frequency of visits by social workers to children so that good standards are maintained and this is regularly monitored by managers. The visits recorded are regarded as a minimum and it is important to note that many children are visited at more frequent intervals depending on circumstances. There are two measures reported for visits to children in care:

a) Visits are at a minimum frequency of 6 weeks to children for the first year of being in care. Performance for 16/17 period was 75%. This is an improvement on our 15/16 figure of 66%.
b) Visits are at a minimum of 3 months for children in care and where plan is for long term care. Performance for 16/17 was 87%, a slight decrease on the 15/16 performance of 89%.

All children must have an up to date care plan throughout being in care. All young people who are leaving care should have a pathway plan which is put in place as they approach their 16th birthday. The plans are important as these set out the actions identified to meet the individual child and young person’s needs and impact on their outcomes. At the end of the 2016-17 period 96% had a care plan recorded. Some children had been in care for less than 28 days and would not yet have a plan recorded. 91% of pathway plans for care leavers were up to date as at the end of 2016/17 – no change on the previous years performance.

The stability of placements is very important for children and is a good basis for achieving positive outcomes. There are two measures of placement stability which give information about the moves of placement over periods of time:

a) Short Term placement stability (Former NI 62) - The % of children with three or more placements during the year, fell from 12% (50/418 children) in 2015-2016 to 10% (41/418 children) in 2016-2017. This is good performance. We are now in line with the National average and below the Statistical Neighbours average (11%) and London average (12%).
b) Long Term placement stability (Former NI 63) – the % of children in care for at least 2.5 years and in the same placement for the last two years, increased slightly from 60% in 2016 (82/137) to 61% (72/120) in 2017. However, this area of performance is below all comparators – London 66%, SN 69% and National Average 68%. This is a key area of practice activity for action in the 2017-18 period with further attention to the matching of children with carers/placement and guidance for social workers about permanency planning.

Reference has been made to the challenges presented in achieving an adoptive placement for children. This is also reflected in the timescales involved where it has taken longer to match and place children in adoptive placements often because of the complexity of the children’s needs such as disability, ethnicity or sibling groups. There are two measures about timescales for adoption:

a) The average time between a child entering care and moving in with adoptive family has increased from 769 days in 2015-16 to 821 days in 2016-17.
b) The average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match has increased from 375 days in 2015-16 to 380 days in 2016-17.

Further analysis has been undertaken to understand this area of performance and actions are already in place.
Promise 3: 'To help you be healthy'

The Corporate Parenting Strategy recognises the importance of ensuring that children’s health needs are addressed and this includes a number of health-related checks. There is a strong partnership arrangement in place with a range of health-related service commissioners and providers. A presentation to GPs recently took place on LAC. This session enabled GPs to ask questions and consider issues for children in care in terms of their interventions with children and young people in the future.

There is close working with the Designated Doctor and Nurse for Looked After Children. Children in care should have initial health assessments within 20 working days of admission to care and then review health assessments – every 6 months if child is under 5 and annually if child is over 5. It is important to note that whilst the aim is for all children to benefit from the range of health-related checks some children choose not to attend for appointments arranged despite the efforts of those involved. Progress about the checks and any findings are discussed as part of the child’s review meeting. Performance regarding review health related checks has been positive with the great majority of children receiving checks.

- There was an improvement in the number of children receiving medicals which increased from 82% in 2015/16 to 84% as at the end of 2016/17.
- The number of children who have been in care for over one year having up to date health checks was 92% in 15/16. The previous year was 94% but there was an increase in adolescents refusing health checks this year which impacted on performance. We remain above all comparators however.
- Up to date dental checks for children improved from 85% to 89% over the last year.
- The number of up to date eye checks for children increased from 76% to 80% between March 2016 and March 2017.

The health assessment and review work includes attention to immunisations and ensuring that these have happened and are up to date.

Children in care can receive support regarding advice, support and information about substance misuse through the Subwize service which is commissioned by the local authority.

Emotional wellbeing and health is a significant issue for many children in care due to their experiences prior to becoming looked after and adjusting to separation from their family. As part of the health assessments, emotional issues are identified as part of the Health Care Plans. Emotional wellbeing is monitored as part of the ongoing annual health checks and at LAC reviews.

There are arrangements in place for making a referral to CAMHS and providing a response through screening and an assessment within 28 days. Further work is planned for the coming year about CAMHS support for children in care with the appointment of the CAMHS Social Worker.

Children and young people are encouraged and supported to be active, participate in hobbies, sport and interests which are appropriate to their abilities. Carers are expected to support this as part of their role and responsibilities. There are arrangements in place for allowances for children to do activities and children and young people have further support through leisure passes to the Borough’s leisure centres. A recent survey children in care undertaken by Skittlz evidence that 68% of respondents were involved in an extra-curricular activity.

A support group for children in care is held every Thursday where they can meet other children in care, have fun and be involved in various activities such as dance, music, art and video. However, a number of children in care are choosing to attend generic youth groups rather than the dedicated group as they want do not want to be identified as ‘in care’.
Promise 4: To get the best education

The Virtual School is an essential service to support children and young people to achieve good outcomes through their education. This is done in a number of ways which include ensuring that children and young people in care have a place at a good nursery or school so that they have the best circumstances to achieve in their education.

Another important source of support provided through the Virtual School is to work with the school, designated teacher and social worker for each child and young person to have an up to date Personal Education Plan. By the end of the 2016-17 period a total of 91% of children in care had a Personal Education Plan which was in place and reviewed within the required 6 monthly timescale. This was a slight improvement on the 90% reported in 2015-16.

Additional funding can be accessed through the Pupil Premium Plus as part of the plan. Arrangements are in place for Education Health and Care Plans to support children and young people with complex needs.

The results of tests and exams for children and young people in care from 2016 are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children looked after</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Rank/152</th>
<th>Quartile</th>
<th>Latest England ave LAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % Reading Level 4+</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % Maths Level 4+</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % Writing Level 4+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % Reading, Writing &amp; Maths Level 4+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Level 4+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % 5+ A*-C</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- % 5+ A*-C inc. English &amp; Maths</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2016, the new more challenging national curriculum, which was introduced in 2014, was assessed by new tests and interim frameworks for teacher assessment. Results are no longer reported as levels: each pupil receives their test results as a scaled score and teacher assessments based on the standards in the interim framework.

The new expected standards were designed to be broadly similar but are not equivalent to an old level 4b.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Latest England Ave - LAC</th>
<th>B&amp;D all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2 Expected Standard Reading, Writing, Maths</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2 Expected Standard Reading</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2 Expected Standard Writing</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2 Expected Standard Maths</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2 Expected Standard Grammar, Spelling &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definitions of Attainment 8 and Progress 8

**Attainment 8** measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English, maths, three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate and three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DFE approved list.

**Progress 8** aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils’ achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point, calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school.

The results show that at KS2 our students achieved above the national average for all LAC. It also shows that we were close to the borough average for the combined reading, maths and writing. We will continue to liaise with our Advisory colleagues to ensure out students are fully supported.

At KS4 the results show that our students’ attainment is very close to the National Average for LAC but below the results for the Borough. Strategies continue to be put in place to support our Year 11 students.

The Virtual School service continues to use a range of approaches to support and improve children’s education attainment and attendance. These include:
• Delivering training to the Designated Teachers, Foster Carers and social workers.
• Increasing the number of students receiving 1:1 tuition in English and maths.
• Employing a mentor for all year 11 students (in borough) and provided specialist mentoring for students at risk of exclusion
• Purchasing various learning apps and tablets for individual students
• Using PP+ funding to help schools support students with mental health issues

The service also takes action to address school attendance and monitor this with a view to making improvements. As at the end of July 2016, attendance for the academic year 2015-16 was

• 78% of students have 95-100% attendance
• 90% of students have 90-100% attendance

Attendance for children in care shows fluctuations and needs attention to make improvements. Students achieving less than 90% attendance have interventions in place via the Virtual School.

The Council has recognised young people in care aged 16+ and care leavers in its annual event to celebrate their achievements in October 2016 and which is a very positive experience for all involved. The awards cover a wide range of achievements including formal qualifications at school, college and university, apprenticeships, volunteering, participation in groups and giving back to the community. A similar celebration event for children aged 7 to 16 (Year 11) is planned for July 2017.

**Promise 5: ‘To be successful in life’**

It is very important to involve children and young people and seek their views about important decisions which affect their lives. Arrangements continue to be in place to promote good practice so that social workers and IROs listen to children and young people and take their views into account when decisions are being taken and plans made.

There are a range of measures in place to support young people when leaving care and living independently. Training is in place for carers who can help young people to prepare for living independently. Young people receive a leaving care grant which is specifically tailored as for example to furnishing accommodation when moving to live independently. They are also given support with finding accommodation, including priority status for council provision. As at the end of the 2016-17 period there were 81% of young people who were care leavers and in suitable accommodation – this is an improvement on our 15/16 performance of 77%. Although we did not reach our target of 83%, we are now in line with similar areas and the national average (81%), and just below the London average (83%). It is important to bear in mind that the situation is affected by a number of factors including young people being in custody. We continue to be reliant on private rented market and landlords offering care and support packages to the Local Authority so that there are ‘move on’ plans from foster care and 16+ provisions.

There is a ‘Staying Put’ scheme in place which enables young people to continue to live with carers beyond the age of 18 and avoid a sudden cut off of the arrangements for their support and care. This recognises the more usual situation for young people in which they continue to live at home after the age of 18 and beyond. At the end of 2016-17 we had 18 young people in Staying Put arrangements.

The council provides a scheme for savings for children and young people in care which they can access when they leave care. This is in addition to the leaving care grant which is more. Guidance and support is provided about the use of the savings and the leaving care grant by staff in the service and working with the young person.
The Corporate Parenting Strategy includes actions to support young people to get in to work through continuing their education, training or finding a job. There is a council wide Employment, Education and Training (EET) strategy in place and this is actively supported by Members, which has included their involvement in 2 workshops regarding NEET and vulnerable groups, Care Leavers being one of the identified groups. Individual pathway plans for young people identify actions tailored to the young person’s individual needs which can support and assist them in to opportunities for education, training or work. Work takes place within the Council and with key partners such as the Job Centres and Careers Advice Services.

The performance regarding employment, education and training of young people aged 16-21 is monitored and at the end of 2016-17 was 55%. This is an increase from the 50% reported % as at the end 2015-16. This is above all comparators - London average (53%), National average (48%) and statistical neighbours average (48%).

In the period of 2016-17 there were 17 young people attending university.