

REPORT TO: OSC

DATE: 7 November 2019

REPORT TITLE: Annual Childrens Self Evaluation Framework Assessment 2019

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PURPOSE OF REPORT: To update the committee on the Children Self Evaluation (SEF) 2019.

SUMMARY: The SEF is the Children's Services self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice in the borough over the past year.

The report covers 6 core areas:

1. The Experience of Children in Need of Help
2. The Experience of Children in Need of Protection
3. The Experience and Progress of Children in Care
4. The Arrangements for Looked After Children and those Adopted
5. The Experience and Progress of Care Leavers
6. The Impact of Leadership on Practice with Children and Families.

The SEF report is attached.

1. BACKGROUND

The Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) system was implemented by Ofsted in 2018. Under this system, Ofsted use the intelligence and information they have to inform decisions about how best to inspect each local authority. This system includes:

- local authorities sharing an annual self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice
- an annual engagement meeting between our regional representatives and the local authority to review the self-evaluation, reflect on what is happening in the local authority and inform how they would engage with each other in future
- our local authority intelligence tool (LAIT) (which brings data and information into a single record)
- focused visits that look at a specific area of service or cohort of children
- standard and short inspections where we make judgements using our four-point scale
- joint targeted area inspection (JTAI)

This report is a self-evaluation which will be shared with Ofsted in November 2019 as part of the annual engagement meeting. It includes information that already exists within the local authority and is used to monitor quality of services provided to children, young people and their families. This includes data available within the financial year.

The Self-Evaluation should answer three questions;

- What do you know about the quality and impact of social work practice in your local authority?
- How do you know it?

- What are your improvement plans for the next 12 months?

SEF highlights

- 2018/19 has been a busy year for children's services with pressures and successes and has also included a mock inspection of MASH and Assessment service in August 2018, an Ofsted focussed inspection in September 2018, culminating in March 2019 in a full inspection, which resulted in an overall judgement of Good.
- The self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice shows that across children's service practice is improving.
- The recently refreshed practice and quality assurance framework has shown steady improvement in practice. The introduction of a 6-weekly in-team audit and moderation process gives oversight and provides assurance to senior officers. The introduction of Practice Weeks supports protected learning time, and enables senior managers to understand how practitioners work with children and their families through practice observations.
- The realigning of the early help teams into an early help hub has provided a strong local early help model and offer to children and their families. So, although there has been an increase in referrals to children services, there has been a decrease coming through to MASH, requiring statutory interventions.
- Where a decision has been taken to initiate a Section 47 investigation, which is the LA statutory duty to make enquiries when a child is suspected to be suffering or likely to suffer harm, a review found decision making and application of threshold had been appropriate and proportionate.
- The number of children and young people cared for by the local authority has remained stable, with stable placements. The year has seen an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people.
- There has been an increase in children that have been adopted and Enfield has plans to become part of the regional adoption agency, Adopt London North.
- Enfield published its local offer to Care leavers; this is a requirement from the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The year has seen investment from leaders, in recognition of the pressures and needs. There was a reduction in staff vacancies, agency staff and turnover.
- Areas for continued focus and development have been detailed at the end of each section and will be embedded into the local continuous improvement action plan.

2. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Senior managers in Enfield are acutely aware that there are significant future challenges and have identified key priorities and areas for development. We are not complacent, recognising there is always more work to be done, and we remain confident that we have the talent, leadership, stability, drive and constructive relationships with children, families and our partners, to deliver consistently good outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Support the development priorities for 2019/20 as outlined within the self-evaluation.

4. NEXT STEPS

This report will be made available to Ofsted as part of the annual engagement meeting due to be held in November 2019.

ENFIELD SELF EVALUATION FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT April 2018 – March 2019

Children Services self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice

Introduction

- This report is Enfield's self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice within its children services and aims to provide a picture of current practice, service delivery and areas for future focus. Data used within this report is from April 2018- March 2019 unless otherwise stated.
- Whilst the local context provides some challenges, social workers in Enfield have high aspirations for children and young people and take pride in their practice and are focussed on improving the lives of children and families in the borough.

This year, children and family services inspection timeline has included a mock inspection of MASH and R&A in August 2018, an Ofsted focussed inspection in September 2018. Culminating, in March 2019, with a standard 2-week inspection by Ofsted under the inspection of local authority's children services (ILACs) framework. The formal report was published on 15th April 2019 with overall effectiveness being judged as good.

- The grading indicated that children in need of help and protection, child in care and care leavers in Enfield receive good services. Leadership in Enfield was judged good. This inspection identified four key areas for improvement.

Children services assurance and accountability framework

- Our **quality assurance framework** and performance information provide an overview of the effectiveness of our services and indicates what actions and areas for further development are required to improve outcomes for children and families. We routinely analyse data on activity and performance to understand practice, to learn and take improvement actions.
- Enfield has **produced a set of social work standards and promises** to children and their families, that cover the core social work activities and clearly sets out what is required and routinely practiced by case workers. The **introduction of Practice Weeks** in 2018 supports protected learning time and enables senior managers to understand how practitioners work with children and their families through practice observations. Since July 2015, our chosen **practice model has been Signs of Safety.**

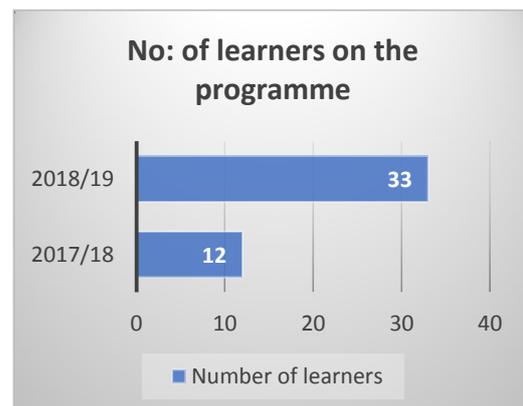
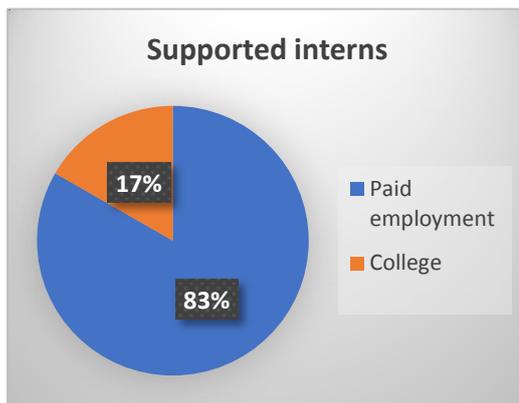
The Experience of Children in Need of Help

Main point

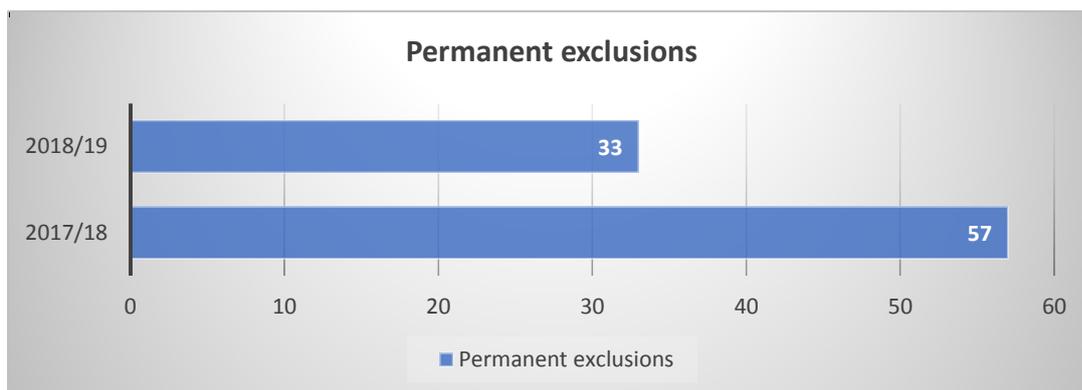
- Overall Children in need of help receive a good service from children and family services.
- Over the past 12 months the impact of bringing early help services together to create an early help family hub with a triage service, has strengthened the local early help model and offer to children, young people and their families. As well as the range of early help services, there is a strong collaborative partnership. Additional investment has also increased the capacity in Parent Support advisors to respond to local need.
- In Enfield there is a strong local offer for children with SEND, who have access to range of services to meet their complex needs

We know this because:

- During 2018-19, there was an increase in referrals accepted by Early help family hub, a total of 604 families. This is an increase, from the previous year, it is believed this is due to the increase in step downs and the launch of the early help triage system in September 2018. There was a total of 145 families stepped down to the early help family hub.
- The Joint Service for Disabled Children provides a strong offer to families and staff have been trained to deliver positive behaviour support programme. There has been notable success with supported internships which has led to 83% still in employment and 17% returning to college.



- There has been a year on year reduction of children being permanently excluded. There has been an increase in children who are being electively home educated in the current academic year.



- A streamlined electronic referral and information system was developed and is soon to be launched, aimed to reduce bureaucracy and simplify processes. This is called the Children’s Portal.

Plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

- Launch the Children’s Portal.
- Maintain high quality early help family hub
- Review the step up and step-down process
- Further develop Power B.I to all service areas including early help
- Roll out more widely the positive behaviour support programme
- Continue to monitor the number of EHE

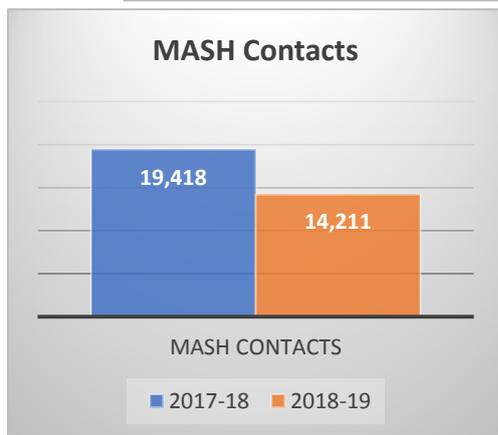
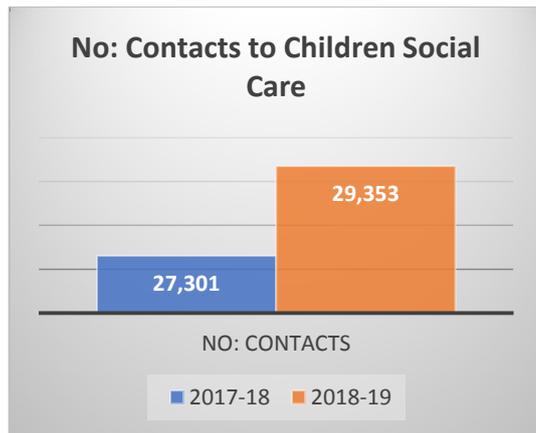
The Experience of Children in Need of Protection

Main points

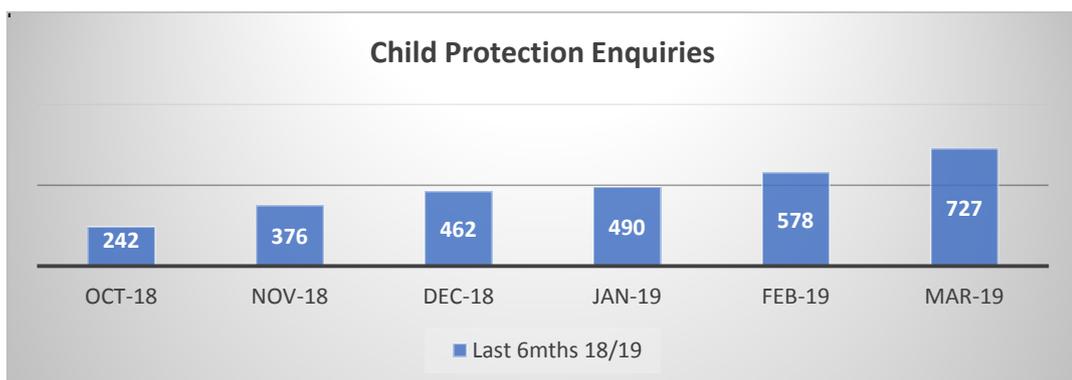
- Overall Children in need of help receive a good service from children and family services.
- A review of s47s found decision making and thresholds have been appropriate and proportionate. There is a shared understanding of thresholds with partners, but further improvement is required around the recording of decisions made in MASH. Assessments provide good evaluation of children and their families lives, and there has been improvement in the timeliness of completing C&F assessments.

We know this because:

- There has been an increase in overall contacts to children services, in 2018/19, 29,364 contacts were received compared to the same time period last year (27, 301). Due to a strong early help model there has been a reduction in contacts to the MASH service, down to 14,211 in 2018/19 from 19, 418 (2017/18).



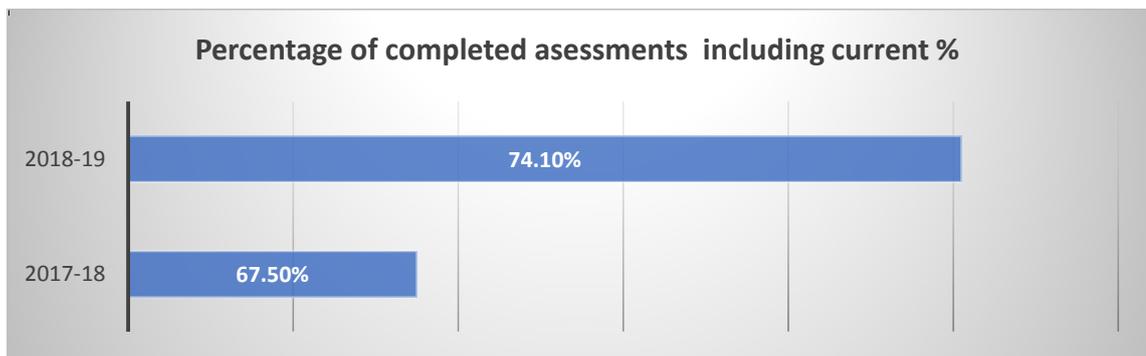
- There has been an increase in those cases that require child protection enquiries, during 2017/18 Enfield (115.3 per 10,00 children) were low compared to outer London (156.40) and statistical neighbours (205.36), however this year numbers are rising (see figure below) a review undertaken found decision making and thresholds have been appropriate and proportionate.



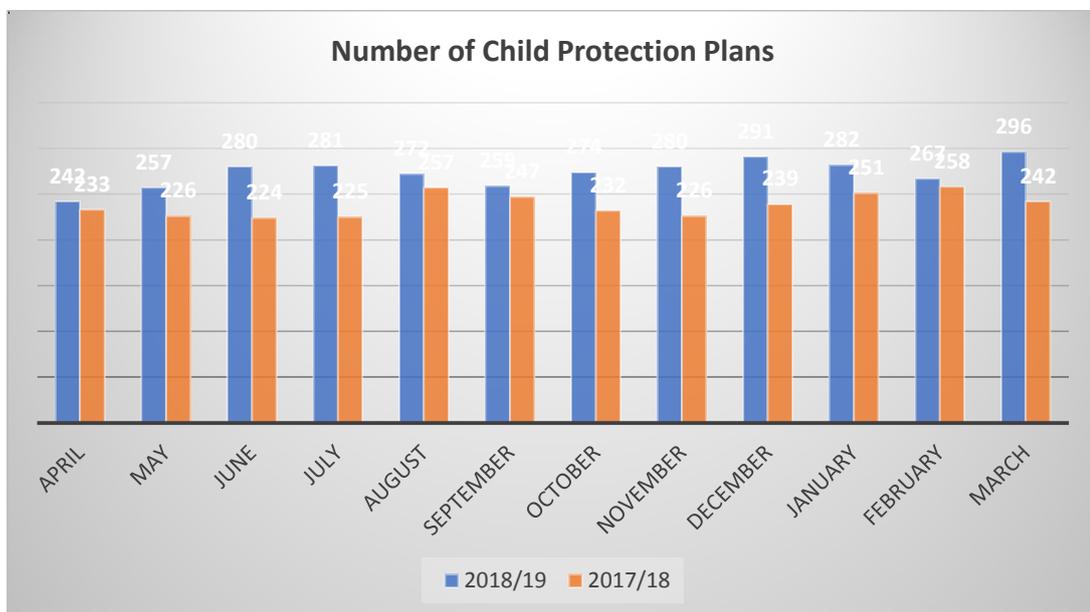
- There has been an upward trend in the number of children with CIN plans and who are subject to Child Protection plans. An audit was undertaken and confirmed decision for plans were appropriate.

¹ Power Bi data

- Ofsted found an area of improvement around the consistency of CIN plans. Action was put in place to respond and improve and sustain the quality of plans.
- There has been an improvement in timeliness of Children and Family assessments completed within 45 days, from 67.5% in 2017/18 to 74.1% in 2018/19.

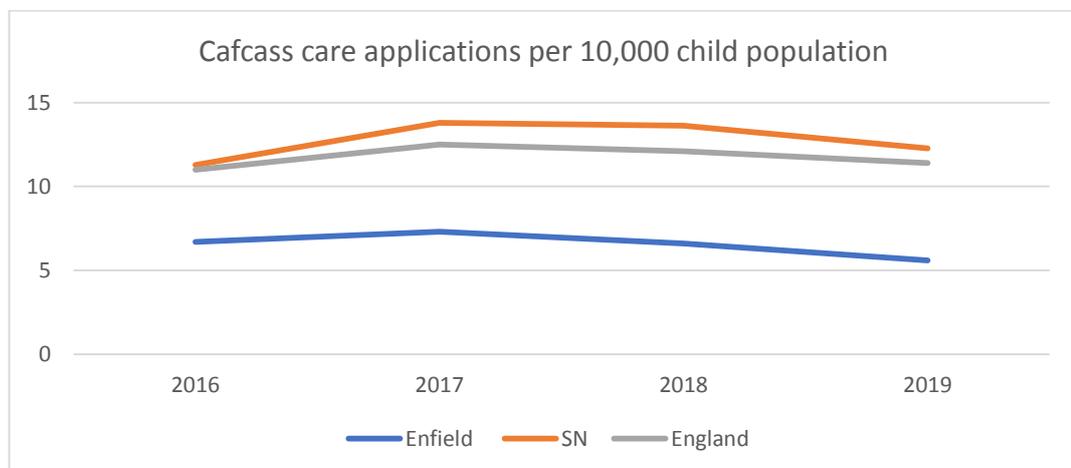


- As of the end of March 2019 there were **296 children subject to a child protection plan**. The number of children subject to child protection plans in Enfield has remained relatively low for some years but has **increased over the last few years**. 2016/17 a rate of 26.6 per 10,000 children (223 children), in 2017/18 it was 27.9 per 10,000 (235 children).



- There has been a **significant increase in CP Plans under the category of physical abuse** since last year, from 3 (1.2%) to 29 (9.79%) and sexual abuse from 4 (1.65%) to 10 (3.37%). There has been more focus on the impact of domestic abuse on children, particularly younger children and the risk of physical harm during incidents of domestic abuse.

- **The two practice weeks held in the last 12 months** focussed on domestic abuse and sexual abuse, and likely to have also been a **contributory factor**, with specific activities, team discussions and workshops on these two areas. The percentage of CPP under neglect and emotional abuse has slightly decreased.
- Locally there is a low number of known private fostering arrangements. There were 10 **private fostering** placements closed during the year and **6 notifications of new private fostering** arrangements, of which 5 became private fostering arrangements. Private fostering was an area Ofsted identified for further improvement around consistency. Action has been taken and there are changes in the local arrangements.
- **Young people at risk of homelessness** - receive a good response and over the year good outcomes have been achieved. In 2018-19 FAST worked with a total of 86 young people at risk of homelessness or entering the care system, and their families. Of these young people 2 became Looked After Children, 48 were supported to live at home and 36 were assisted to access supported accommodation and to engage with services to enable them to follow a pathway through housing to independent living.
- To complement FAST a **service was commissioned in July 2018 for 1 year** to work with children aged 8 to 16-year olds **on the edge of care**. The 6-month review of **40 children has shown a 90% success rate**, 17 cases successfully closed, 19 stepped down from CP to CiN/Early Help and only 1 child became looked after and 3 children remained subject to child protection plans. There is evidence of improved education, employment and training outcomes: increase in school attendance in 10 cases and 2 young people gained employment.
- Enfield's **care applications remain low** at 5.60 per 10,000 child population, this down from 6.60 (2018), 7.30 (2017). For 2019, our statistical neighbours were higher at 12.27 per 10,000. There is a national downward trend.



- Between April 2018 to March 2019 there were 487 episodes of children going missing, this was attributed to 158 children. Ofsted identified further

improvement in the response to children missing from home. A response to this, following leadership investment, was the recent establishing of a return home and debriefing service.

- In 2018/19, 162 children were identified as affected by CSE (increase from 136 in the previous year. There has been a year on year increase in the identification of exploitation, with a notable increase in young people with indicators of criminal exploitation. This year a new Safeguarding Adolescent for Exploitation (SAFE) strategy was developed.



Plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

- Refresh the Threshold document
- Monitor and review the conversion rate of contact to referral to ensure thresholds are consistently applied and ensure consistency of practice within the MASH.
- Improve and sustain the quality of plans for children in need.
- Raise the visibility and educational aspirations of children subject to CIN plans with all agencies and social work teams
- Monitor the timeliness of private fostering statutory checks and visits, within the new arrangements
- Review the impact of the new debriefing arrangements for missing children
- Improve our support to children affected by domestic abuse, launching a specialist team in 2019, in collaboration with police
- Participate in a Peer Review of LADO processes

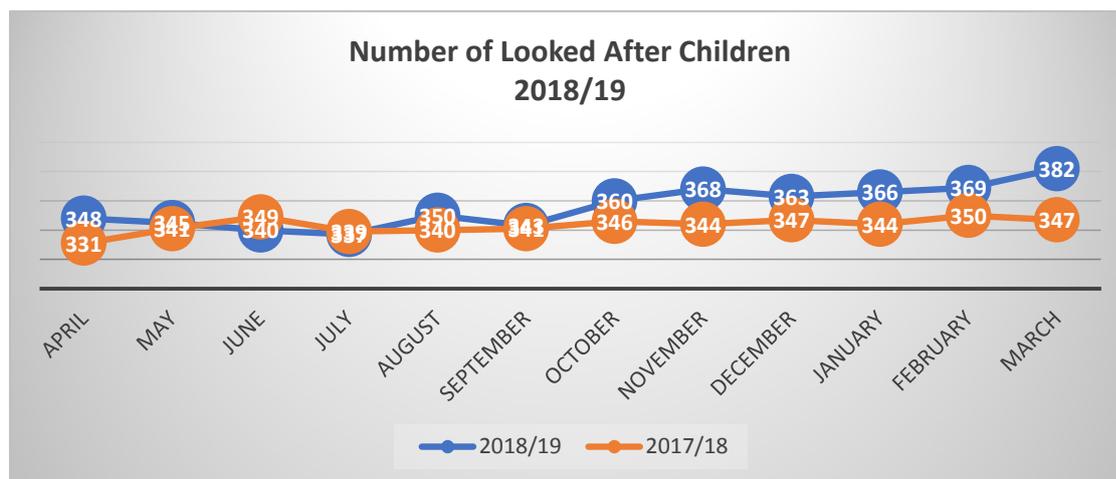
The Experience and Progress of Children in Care

Main points

- Overall, Looked After Children receive a good service from children and family services, there is stability in their placements and the number of looked after children has remained stable. There has been an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have become looked after by the local authority.

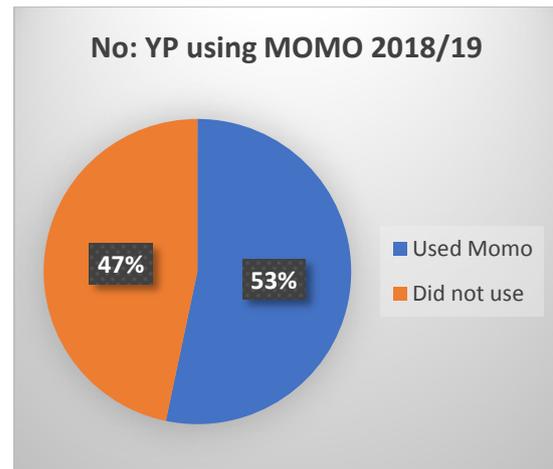
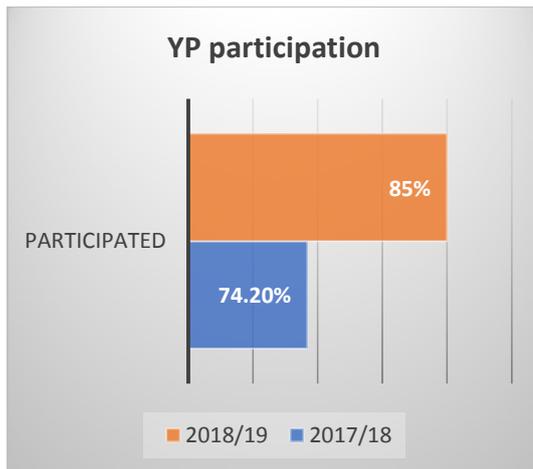
We know this because

- There has been a gradual increase in the number of looked after children (LAC) during 2018/19, with evidence of most children being in stable placements. At the end of March 2019 there were **382 children in care**, this is an increase of 10% (35 children) from the number at the end of March 2018. The year has seen an increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, who make up 19% of the looked after children.



- LAC reviews are being held in a timely manner, and a recent permanency planning audit identified good care planning. The percentage of LAC reviews recorded to be within statutory timescales has significantly improved from last year, from 80.9% to 88.6%. The number of LAC reviews taking place within the required timescales is high with only a very small number of reviews overdue².
- Participation figures for looked after children in their reviews this year was 85.3%, a significant improvement from last year's 74.2%. **MOMO (Mind of My Own) is a system that gives 8-17 year olds and care leavers the ability to express their needs and views.** Of the 167 young people who have accounts, 89 used the app on a number of occasions.

² The timeliness of the reviews is measured based on the record of the meeting being completed on our electronic system



- The completion rate of Personal Education Plans for Looked after children is good and there has been Improvement in education attainment and reduction in exclusions. There has been an increase in annual health assessments of young people between 85 to 92% completion rate, however there has been a decline in the number accessing dental checks falling below 70%.

Plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

- Improve and sustain good outcomes for more LAC including those placed out of borough
- A focus on aligning processes and templates for 'together and apart' assessments
- Review the process for regulation 24 and 25 placements
- Strengthening the management oversight of placement panel and early care planning recommendations

The Arrangements for Looked After Children and those Adopted

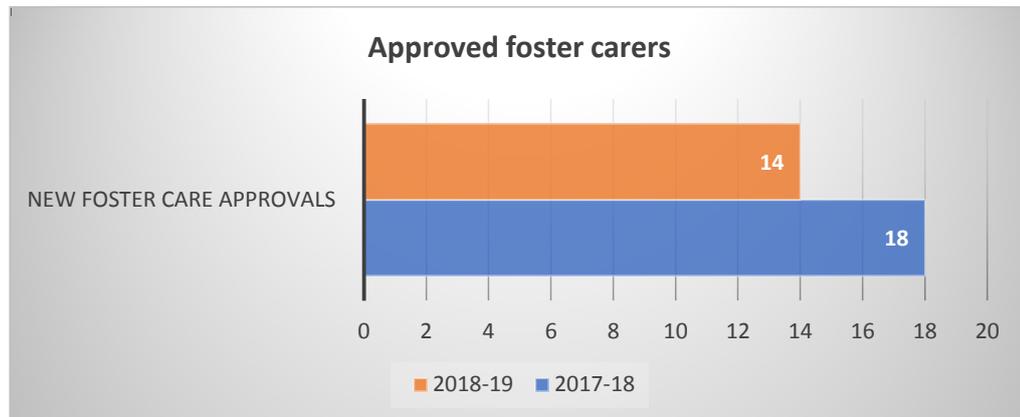
Main points

- Overall for the arrangements for looked after and adopted children is good from children and family services. Most children are placed with foster parents mainly in stable placements. There has been a slight decrease in the number of foster carer approvals.
- There has been an increase in children adopted, there is timely family finding and matching. Post adoption support is good.

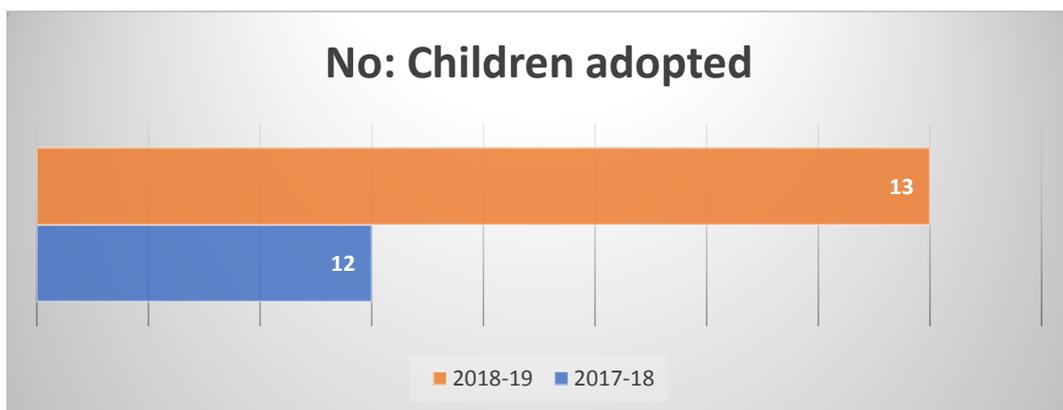
We know this because:

- Most looked after children are placed with foster carers, 69.5% at the end of March 2019, this was below the national average of 73% (17/18). There are no children in welfare secure accommodation. 20% are in semi-independent.
- There has been a continued focus on recruiting new foster carers, this year has seen a slight decrease in the number of foster carer approvals. 14 new

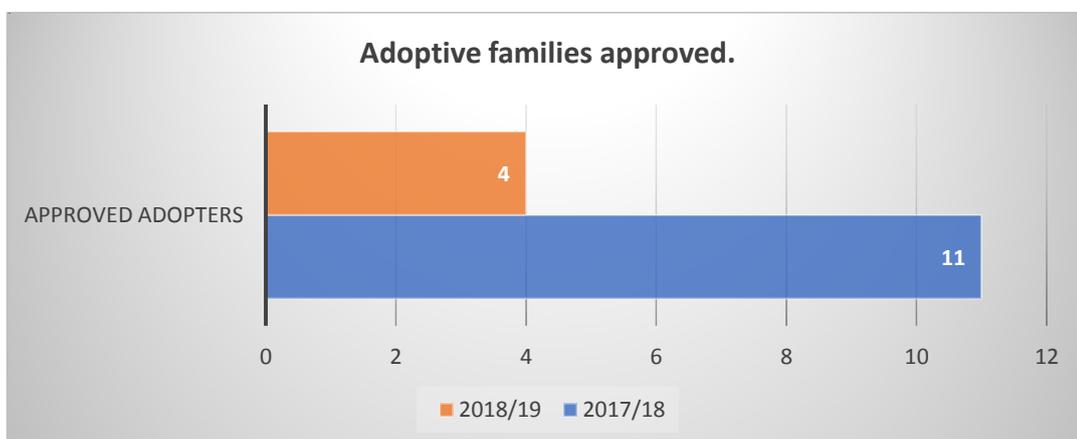
mainstream Foster Carers were approved over the last year, a decrease from 18 last year.



- There has been an increase in children adopted and in special guardianship orders. **13 Enfield children have been adopted in 2018-19.** This is an **increase from last year (2017-18)** when 12 children were adopted.



- There has been significant progress with Enfield has joined the Adopt London North Regional Adoption Agency and its expected go live date is October 2019. During 18/19, **4 sets of adoptive families have been approved.** This is considerably less than in the previous year (2017-18) when 11 families were approved.



Plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

- A review of permanency arrangements following the launch of RAA
- Ensure consistency in permanence matches for children in long term foster care

The Experience and Progress of Care Leavers

Main points

- Overall young people who are care leavers are offered a good service from children and family services. Pathway plans are of a good quality and personal advisors work well with young people. Young people are listened to and support offered in an appropriate and timely manner.

We know this because:

- In line with the requirement of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Local Offer for care leavers was published. There has been oversight of care leavers this year with a specific workstream in place through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The Leaving Care service is currently working with a total of 263 looked after children and care leavers aged between 16 and 25. At the end of the financial year 60% were showing as being in Education, Employment and Training. This is an improvement from the previous year, there continues to be room for improvement.
- As a result of feedback from care leavers, requesting more emotional support for those with mental health issues, resulted in an increase in the use of mentors and additional support from the HEART service.
- The Ofsted inspection highlighted that not all young people had access to their health passports. Work has been undertaken to review that all young people now have their passports and a system has been put in place to ensure this continues in the future.

Plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

- Review the impact of the core offer to continuously improve outcomes for care leavers
- Develop a care leavers peer support network and forum to support their emotional wellbeing
- Care Leavers Conference coordinated by young people
- Annual compliance audit to ensure care leavers continue to have access to their health information

The Impact of Leadership on Practice with Children and Families

Main points

- Overall leadership is good; there has been strong and stable leadership providing support with investment and scrutiny. Workforce stability is improving with a reduction in the use of agency workers. Recruitment of permanent staff is good, with a large proportion being newly qualified. There is a need to focus on the retaining of ASYEs post completion of the first year.
- There is a real energy and passion for social work with frontline staff feeling they can influence future developments and organisational behaviours.

We know this because:

- Over the year, the corporate and political leadership team have shown strong and stable leadership, prioritising children services and providing support with investment and scrutiny. There is a stable operational management team.
- Demand for children services is increasing, the investment has resulted in reducing caseloads and improved practice, with further permanent investment to be secured.
- This year there has been a reduction in staff vacancies, agency staff and turnover. Vacancy rates are the lowest they have been since May 2018.
- Enfield have a significant number of newly qualified team, that remains consistently high year on year. This year 24 newly qualified social workers completed the programme successfully.
- In April, the Social Care Centre of Excellence (ESCCOE) was launched. The centre oversees newly qualified and student programmes including progressing a new apprenticeship programme, Childrens workforce development, training and quality assurance and practice improvement.
- Reflective supervision is well established and found to be good, however time is not always protected to allowed for reflection or recorded to evidence it has happened.
- The practice and quality assurance framework was refreshed to include the wider assurance models including the in-team audit and moderation process, which provides assurance of quality and impact of practice to the Executive Director and Director of Children and Family Service.

Plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

- Review local ASYE programme to ensure that within their first year, practitioners are being helped with skills, knowledge and capability, and strengthen their professional confidence.

- Increase ASYE retention.
- Maintain a focus on caseloads to ensure they remain manageable.
- Continue focus on recruitment, retention and workforce stability and quality of services include succession planning.
- Review the impact of Social Care Centre of Excellence's first year
- Prepare the workforce for NAAS national rollout
- Develop 'grow your own social workers' via the national social work apprenticeship scheme
- Continue to improve and sustain the quality of supervision and recording
- Develop audit framework further to include collaborative audits - include the voice of families

Senior managers in Enfield are acutely aware that there are significant future challenges and have identified key priorities and areas for development. We are not complacent, recognising there is always more work to be done and we remain confident, that we have the talent, leadership, stability, drive and constructive relationships with children, families and our partners, to deliver consistently good outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.