

# Corporate Parenting Panel Agenda



To: Councillor Maria Gatland (Chair)

Councillors Sue Bennett, Mike Bonello, Samir Dwesar,  
Maddie Henson, Tamar Nwafor, Helen Redfern and  
Catherine Wilson

**Co-optee Members**

Virtual School: Shelley Davies, Angela Griffiths, Sarah Bailey  
CLA Designated Health Professionals: Dr Julia Simpson, Charity  
Kanotangudza

Health Commissioner Representative

EMPIRE: Young People and Council Staff

Care Leaver Representative

Foster Carer Representatives: Angela Christmas, Manny Kwamin

A meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Panel** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Thursday, 22 September 2022** at **5.00 pm** in **F10, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

KATHERINE KERSWELL  
Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service  
London Borough of Croydon  
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Tuesday, 13 September 2022

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If you require any assistance, please contact Michelle Ossei-Gerning 020 8726 6000 x84246 as detailed above

## **AGENDA – PART A**

**1. Apologies for absence**

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Panel.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 5 - 12)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23 June 2022 as an accurate record.

**3. Disclosures of interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality to the value of which exceeds £50 or multiple gifts and/or instances of hospitality with a cumulative value of £50 or more when received from a single donor within a rolling twelve month period. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Democratic Services representative at the start of the meeting. The Chair will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

**4. Urgent Business (if any)**

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

**5. Update on actions agreed at previous meeting(s)**

**6. Update from E.M.P.I.R.E**

To receive an update from E.M.P.I.R.E

**7. Housing & Support for Care Experienced Young People in Croydon (Pages 13 - 24)**

This report provides an overview of the housing options and pathway for young people leaving care in Croydon

**8. Children in Care Performance Scorecard (Pages 25 - 28)**

The Children in Care Performance Scorecard for August 2022 is attached

**9. What decisions has the Panel made to help Children in Care today?**

For the panel to consider how its work at the meeting will improve services for children in care.

**10. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

“That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.”

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## Corporate Parenting Panel

Meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 at 5.00 pm.  
F10, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX in Room F10, Town Hall, Katherine  
Street, Croydon, CR0 1NX

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillor Maria Gatland (Chair);

Councillors Sue Bennett, Mike Bonello, Samir Dwesar, Maddie Henson, Tamar Nwafor, Helen Redfern and Catherine Wilson,

#### **Co-optee Members**

Manny Kwamin (Foster Carer Representative)

#### **Also**

#### **Present:**

Roisin Madden (Director of Children's Social Care)

Shaun Hanks (Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People)

Kim Jones (Youth Engagement Practitioner (E.M.P.I.R.E))

Maret Arselgova (Youth Engagement Practitioner E.M.P.I.R.E.)

Child K (E.M.P.I.R.E)

Kerry Crichlow (Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance (Deputy DCS))

Adam Fearon-Stanley (Service Manager IRO & Children's Participation)

#### **Apologies:**

For lateness Councillors Maddie Henson Tamar Nwafor

Co-optee Members: Shelley Davies, Porsha Robinson, Lajay Taylor, Angela Christmas

### PART A

#### **32/22 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 April 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **33/22 Disclosures of interest**

There were none.

#### **34/22 Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

**35/22 Update on actions agreed at previous meeting(s)**

There were none.

**36/22 Terms of Reference**

The Chair welcomed the new Panel to a new cycle and municipal year which was formed of a new membership and shared that the Panel was in need for new changes this year.

**ACTION – Senior officers to review and update the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel.**

**37/22 Corporate Parenting Panel Moving Forward & Forward Plan**

The Chair informed the Panel of the proposals for how the Corporate Parenting Panel would deliver in the future which included the Forward Plan.

The Chair reminded the Panel that the Corporate Parenting Panel's role was to ensure they were doing all that they could for children in social care.

The Panel discussed change within the Panel meetings and suggested that the Panel meetings were to be of a business forum, ensuring that the services was delivered to young people; by this direction, the Panel would be better corporate parents and carry responsibility that they ought to have.

*Councillor Tamar Nwafor attended the meeting at 5:11pm.*

The Director of Children's Social Care added that future Panel meetings would be better structured, to include child focused sessions, where children and care experienced young people would attend Panel meetings where appropriate for their understanding. Formally, the Panel meetings addressed what was asked of the Council by capturing the view of the parents, young people, foster carers and more.

Panel Members welcomed the idea for more involvement with the young people particularly where experiences were to be addressed, it was important for the Panel to understand from a child's perspective to cross reference.

Members of E.M.P.I.R.E shared with the Panel of previous Q&A sessions with senior practitioners that was attended by young people, where questions such as 'What can you do to be more parent and less corporate' was asked. E.M.P.I.R.E shared that this Q&A session constructed compelling conversations as young people were able to speak their truth and empowered conversations. E.M.P.I.R.E was happy to continue to build on these sessions for effective partnership with actions to work with young people. Upon reflection, E.M.P.I.R.E appreciated that everyone was working towards the same goal.

In conclusion, the Panel agreed to split the Corporate Parenting Panel meetings to provide more business material, further, to engage with E.M.P.I.R.E to learn and understand what young people would want from corporate parents.

**ACTION – Officers to work with E.M.P.I.R.E on a programme for Members of the Panel for visits that they need to do to understand lived experienced and help Member move forward as Corporate Parents.**

### **38/22 Children in Care Council E.M.P.I.R.E. Update**

Members of E.M.P.I.R.E updated the Panel with some of the activities the young people had partaken in. They shared that there were fourteen activities booked for the summer provision, with a residential trip due in October.

The monthly Sunday service had commenced, which was to support young people in transition for moving to a semi-independence or care leavers. The service also included conversations and sharing ideas with lived experienced care leavers with other advice provided. The Sunday Service was a shared space for peers to listen to their truth. E.M.P.I.R.E hoped to attain that young people and care leavers feed into their forums to take and be part of decision process. E.M.P.I.R.E had also created a training programme to help young people express themselves on various platform whilst speaking with senior professionals, carers and young people. This helped maintain relationships for positive change.

Panel Members welcomed the provision from E.M.P.I.R.E. and the Sunday service which saw a safe space for young people within the community and enabled young people to be open in their feelings.

In response to the question from Panel Members relating to Sunday Service, the Youth Engagement Practitioner of E.M.P.I.R.E shared that the first Sunday service session saw eleven young people in attendance which was a good turnout. The service provided to the young people were tools to receive information and add further support to their need.

In response to the question relating to accommodation provided for young people who have reached university, and the local offer for young people who have reached university and transitioning from 1<sup>st</sup> year to 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People clarified that councils could not act as guarantors and this was being reviewed, additionally communication with the homeless department was under review as this was a gap to be closed.

During the discussion, the Panel identified that there were issues and a lack of communication with young people and other service officers in relation to the home allowances and other packages and local offer offered. The Panel

addressed that communication was something that needed improvement and reviewed in more detail as there was a gap in what the council had to offer.

*Councillor Maddie Henson attended the meeting at 5:39pm*

Further, the Panel Members discussed the local offer leaflet and booklet for young people which was a standard item on Looked After Children Reviews that E.M.P.I.R.E had an impact on. The Youth Engagement Practitioner shared that E.M.P.I.R.E was very inclusive on this work and had worked within and above their means and were more than happy to share lived experiences with powerful messages to share.

The Chair was grateful for the inspiring service from E.M.P.I.R.E and thanked E.M.P.I.R.E for their contributions. The Panel welcomed the complaints and compliments discussed.

### **39/22 Children's Social Care Placement Sufficiency & Update on South London Commissioning Programme**

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Children's Social Care Placement Sufficiency & Update on South London Commissioning Programme, which provided an update on work undertaken by the South London Commissioning Partnership, which sought to address, and collaboratively respond to a number of commissioning workstreams for Children and Young People. The report also contained an update on the commissioning teams intentions to refresh the accommodation and sufficiency strategy. It also contained a summary of the strategic priorities of the programme for the period 2022-23. The Panel received a short presentation overview from Kerry Crichlow, Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance (Deputy DCS).

In summary, the Panel heard that:

- In 2013, the Department for Education (DfE) awarded Croydon funding which aimed at testing out the proof of concept for successful commissioning and alliance alongside with other boroughs with Croydon as the host for this partnership.
- Since 2013, the DfE funding had fallen out and was now based on subscription with two elements, homes for children in care and special educational needs (with providers).
- There were enough decent quality homes for young people.
- There were now five local authorities that was part of the partnership.
- There were delivery priorities for 2022/23 and what the future held for the South London Commissioning Programme.
- An outlined timeline for the accommodation strategy was streamlined.
- The young children were the centre of this work, which reflected on what was seen as good through their eyes.



The Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance (Deputy DCS) further addressed that the service aimed for young people to be involved in making the service better.

Panel Members thanked the officers for the annual report which was a huge improvement. The future priorities were also welcomed.

In response to queries raised by the Panel, the Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People clarified the following:

In relation to the timeline for the sufficiency strategy to be completed, the service was working towards the end of March 2023. The team were working for a more detailed project plan, and there was more engagement with adults and young people. The process to this was to discuss the work with the Chair and E.M.P.I.R.E for a more inclusive positioning and setting out Croydon providers and organisations to work with.

In relation to the service consulting with social workers and personal advisors who worked with young people residing in the provided homes, the Panel was informed that there were various conversations with partners which included seeking other services that would form a view for young people. The service was seeking to take a more robust view in how information was triangulated for where differences could be made for a more accurate view.

During the consideration of the recommendations, the Panel discussed the following:

The importance of young people being part of the consultation, with the inclusion of young people with diverse background, challenging need, and complex behaviours to be supported. There were a number of opportunities to engage and build relationships with young people at different stages and ensure that their voices were important, additionally having a safe person to work with them and share their needs.

The importance of listening to young people through their reviews, feedback and voices, and support children in the homes they reside in. Further the sufficiency strategy would also review children with complex needs that were deemed high risk.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the updates and progress of the South London Commissioning Programme and the strategic priorities of the programme for 2022-23.  
  
and
2. Note the update of the refresh of the accommodation and sufficiency strategy for children looked after and the associated timescales for this workstream.

## 40/22 Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report, which provided an update on analysis of the activity of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service and its effectiveness and impact on children's and young people's safety and care in Croydon between 31st October to 31st April 2022.

The Panel received a short presentation overview from Adam Fearon-Stanley, Service Manager IRO & Children's Participation.

Panel Members thanked the officers for the annual report as a huge improvement. The upcoming priorities addressed within the report was also welcomed.

In response to queries raised by the Panel, the Service Manager IRO & Children's Participation clarified the following:

In relation to the frequency of Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews per young person, the Panel were informed that the number of LAC Reviews for a young person was based on their circumstances. At the point of the review, the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) would have oversight on the progress made which was an effective way to track collaborated progress, further the IRO would have more discretion to initiate the reviews within six months. Equally, a LAC review for a young person may happen earlier depending on the rationale of the child and their progress. Officers were mindful of not having too many reviews to also allow work to take place.

In relation to the reduction of caseloads, the Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People clarified that the main reason for the reduction was the amount of work completed with the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children which included transporting cases much quicker. Cases would remain in Croydon services for between four and six months before they were transferred out of borough. Statistics had shown that the service was working well.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the report.

## 41/22 Children in Care Performance Scorecard

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Children in Care Performance Scorecard which provided an overview of the May month. The Panel received an overview from the Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People, Shaun Hanks.

In response to queries raised by the Panel, the Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People clarified the following:

In relation to the significant reduction of Children Looked After being a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequence, and the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, would the numbers increase as the country moved out of the pandemic? The answer was unknown as statistics had shown that during the pandemic caseloads did increase and caseloads had also reduced. There was continued support from the Early Help services to address some of the arising issues in supporting families. The Director of Children Services added that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic had seen numbers risen for Child Protection cases where some children had gone into care, and this had been due to the impact of services available. Services were doing all they could to manage this. The Service Manager IRO & Children's Participation also addressed the issue around the judiciary of supervision orders where services were much more reluctant to separate children, and thus the focus to return children home was under review.

In relation to the low percentages relating to the key indicator CLA 17 (the initial health assessments requested for health service within three working days of date child become looked after), and the key indicator CLA 18 (the initial health assessments delivered within 20 working days of date child became looked after), the Panel heard that this was a result of how quickly a form was completed within a certain time as the turmoil of a child going into care was sometimes missed. There was also a small number of children who led to the variant of percentage being reported, and this could be missed by a day and a half. Officers further informed that the service was working on including the parent's agreement for children to be giving a medical. This included providing more parent friendly paperwork for parents to avoid complication or a notion of uncertainty. The work included the front door service tracking all children who came into care and ensuring all forms were completed within a certain time and included consent for the health service.

Panel Members commented on the excellent work over the last twelve months in relation to the key indicator AD8 (the average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days) (12 months rolling average)), and asked what learning was required throughout the year and how could it be carried in the future. The Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People shared that the proactive approach in working with the Adopt London South helped provide better communication with other services and in relation to the judiciary and delays, further, there had also been enthused conversations to ensure services were working better together.

Further, Panel Members noted that children were adopted quickly, and asked whether Croydon was part of a service where adoption was. It was confirmed that Croydon was part of the Adopt London South. The regional adoption agency was made mandatory which was two years old. Staff were working with the reviewing officers as there was a lot more focus on adoption. It was noted that some adopters were approved foster carers, though there was a different process for relinquished children. There were also children who did not match to a family and was the alternative picture in the data.

The Chair referenced the number of red key indicators on the scorecard and queried on the progress. The Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People informed that the key indicator CLA14 (the percentage of eligible CLA with an up-to-date Care Plan (6 months)), and CLA 15 (the Percentage of eligible CLA with an up-to-date Pathway Plan) were linked together.

In detail, the Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People informed that the key indicator CLA14 had jumped up in percentage and the key indicator CLA15 (for children aged 16-17) were looked after children of which most of them had a care plan and a pathway plan for being looked after for more than thirteen weeks. Though every child had a care plan, it was apparent not all had a pathway plan. Of the 174 children in care; 125 had an up-to-date pathway plan; there were 27 children who did not have a pathway plan triggered or started due to case transfers between services and system issues; and there were 22 children who had a pathway plan out of date.

The Chair was optimistic that the service was working towards green key indicators. There was also a lot of green key indicators on the scorecard which had shown there was a lot of improvements, additionally, the scorecard reflected on how the service was looking after the young people.

The Chair encouraged the Panel to review the Scorecard carefully and to scrutinise what was working and not working for children and young people and the reasons and challenges that lie behind the indicators.

**42/22 How has the Panel helped Children in Care today?**

The Panel **RESOLVED** to review this item at the next meeting.

**43/22 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 7.09 pm

**Signed:**

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**Date:**

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# Agenda Item 7

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Corporate Parenting Panel 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2022
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Support for Care Experienced Young People in Croydon</b> <i>Is this good enough for our young people?</i>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Shaun Hanks: Head of Service, Children in Care & Care Experienced Young People
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Cllr. Maria Gatland
<b>WARDS:</b>	All
<b>PUBLIC/EXEMPT:</b>	None

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT:**

This report provides an overview of the housing options and pathway for young people leaving care in Croydon. It provides a comparison of the use of different accommodation types and an explanation of each. The report then outlines some of the recent achievements and current challenges.

## **COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2024**

*The recommendations and future actions outlined at the end of the report focus on all three of the council priorities: alleviating the impact of poverty for our most vulnerable children and young people as they become independent; ensuring an affordable and quality service; providing value for money.*

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- i) Continued work with housing colleagues to improve the offer to young care experienced young people namely:
  - Enabling access to housing register at 17
  - Increasing the priority allocation of social housing for care leavers from 2% to 10%.
- ii) Improving the support that Care experienced young people receive in preparing to live independently via two new specialist PA posts and the use of 'young inspectors' in checking properties.
- iii) In liaison with our Housing colleagues, we are ambitious to deliver the best for our children and young people as corporate parents, developing a framework towards independence that prepares and provides for our young people's specific housing needs.

## Housing & Support for Care experienced young people in Croydon

### **Introduction:**

We currently have responsibility for 714 care experienced young people aged between 18-25. As young people transition to adulthood one of the most significant aspects, that impacts on wellbeing and achievement, is having a settled and appropriate home environment.

### **Suitable accommodation**

Each year the local authority reports on the types and suitability of the accommodation that Care experienced young people are living in at the ages of 18-21. ( Children Looked After return SSSDA903)

Suitability is not defined rigidly, however the criteria of Safe, Secure and Affordable are outlined in the guidance. Any emergency accommodation used in a crisis would be graded unsuitable, but short-term accommodation used to help gain a long-term home would be seen as suitable.

The types of accommodation reported on are:

- **With parents/relatives**
- **Staying put-** Where young people remain living with their foster carers at from 18-21. As young people are no longer looked after a legal agreement is set up where an allowance is paid, made up from part of a young person's universal credit and a contribution from the council.
- **Community home/residential care-** For young people who require ongoing residential care due to their significant care needs.
- **Semi-Independent** (Supported hostel/trainer flats)- These arrangements enable a young person to live independently with adults in the household, either full time or part time, who provide 'support' rather than 'care'.
- **Self-contained** with floating support
- **Supported lodgings-** This is an arrangement where an individual provides accommodation within their household and 'supports' a young person.
- **Foyers-** These provide hostel type accommodation, with an expectation of engagement in Education, Employment and Training for young people who are homeless.
- **Independent tenancy**
- **Emergency / homeless accommodation**
- **Bed and Breakfast**
- **Custody**

As at the end of August 91% of our young people were placed in suitable accommodation. This compares well against the 2021 national average of 81%

Table 1

Current 17–21-year-old 903 return data. (566 young people)

<b><u>Type of accommodation</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
With parents/relatives	4%
<b>Staying put</b>	<b>20%</b>
Community home	1%
Semi-independent	3%
Supported lodgings	2%
Independent (Housing association)	2%
<b>Independent (Landlord Bond Scheme)</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Independent (Private Rented)</b>	<b>23%</b>
Independent	8%
Unknown/ Emergency/Homeless/ B&B	3%
Foyers	1%
Custody	3%
other	3%

### **Support for YP to live independently**

Whilst many young people are keen to live independently, the realities of this can be daunting. There are many elements that young adults find themselves struggling with for the first time. In addition to the independent living skills such as budgeting, cooking & cleaning, young people also require support with managing emotionally and making the most of employment and education opportunities.

Every care experienced young person over 18 will have someone who is a Personal Adviser, and they will provide practical and emotional support to help young people transition to adulthood. The support provided to individuals varies according to their need and is outlined and reviewed via their Pathway Plan.

As corporate parents our support needs to be guided by the principle of *'is this good enough for my child?'* as they transition in to adulthood. Many of our young people have additional needs and vulnerabilities that most of the population do not have, it is therefore important that support goes above and beyond what the majority of young people require.

The Care Leavers Offer outlines the basic support that can be provided, some of the important aspects are:

- i) Help with obtaining relevant identity documents (e.g., Birth Certificates, Passports, driving licences) in order that young people can set up bank accounts/ claim benefits.
- ii) Deposit and 1 month's rent in advance – within Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates
- iii) Providing the equivalent of Universal Credit for the first 5 weeks while UC is processed.
- iv) Setting up home allowance- this enables young people to purchase essential items, such as washing machines, beds, cutlery etc. up to a limit of £2000.
- v) Council Tax Relief is provided at 100% for Croydon care Leavers.
- vi) Support with Educational, Employment and Training costs.

Whilst all the PA's are able to help with welfare benefit advice and housing issues, there is a need for greater knowledge and co-ordination at a local level. Two PA's have been recruited who will focus on helping individuals and other PA's with housing issues, as well as developing an up to date knowledge of welfare benefit changes and advice.

Transition to adulthood:

*'Leaving home and becoming an adult is daunting for anyone, but for many care leavers this means moving to a completely unfamiliar place or to live alone, and managing cooking, cleaning, and budgeting for the first time, often with little support. Care leavers need a gradual transition and to be taught the skills they need to live independently. They need to be kept informed about the next steps, for example knowing the plan early enough to get used to it before they leave care.'*

*Many young people reported feeling alone or isolated after they left care, but professionals did not always consider emotional well-being as part of leaving care plans. Professionals should recognise that not all children will need the same level of assistance, and some will need ongoing support after leaving care.'*

'Ready or Not', Care Leaver view on Leaving Care. January 2022

As young people develop, they require different support. Croydon has effective support provided through E.M.P.I.R.E for all its Looked After Children which has started a 'Sunday Service' group ,where young people can come for food and discussion about issues affecting them as young adults. This is in addition to the emotional and practical support that Social Workers and Personal Advisers provide.

The community also supports care experienced young people and the 'Esther Outreach' group provides a space where Independent Living Skills are learnt and a sense of group identity and support is enabled in partnership with Council staff.



Esther Outreach has recently reached the finals of the Children & Young People Now Awards for 2022.

## **Pathways**

Our current Housing Pathway consists of many of the reported options outlined above, please see appendix i) for a visual outline of the pathway.

### **Staying Put**

Young people are supported wherever possible to remain with their foster carers as young adults, and can remain as Staying Put until they are 21 years old (or until they finish their course of study)

We have made exceptional progress in this area for our young people and the numbers of our young people staying put has significantly increased over the last 2 years.

At the current time 115 young people are Staying Put.

### **Semi-independent supported accommodation**

This provision is funded post 18 via the service for the very small percentage of young people (3%) who are not able to transition into any of the other supported options. We currently have a low use of this type of provision. These types of provision are not regulated and there is a national drive to improve the standards. Significant positive progress has been made within this area in the last 18 months, resulting in many more young people transitioning on to alternative options successfully at 18.

### **University**

In the last year 30 of our young people were attending university.

Our young people can and do transition to university and their accommodation needs are met via general student pathways, be those halls of residence or shared accommodation. We provide vacation accommodation for these young people for up to 26 weeks or support them to remain around their university or with friends for the holidays. We also have strong links with the universities to ensure our young people are able to access the 52-week halls provision, if they wish, and other care leaver support provided by some universities.

### **Supported Housing Pathways**

We have 2 foyer type supported housing options within the borough that our young people are able to access for accommodation:

- Ingram Court YMCA for young people 18 to 21 and
- Fitz Millennium Centre which provides supported accommodation for young people from 18 to 30; We use this provision for our older young people.

We also have access to a supported housing pathway for our young people with more significant emotional needs, learning difficulties, or those who require significantly more support to enable them to transition on to independent living. This comprises of 3 and 4 bed homes that are supported by staff to support young people to transition on to the next stage of independence. This provision is generally utilised for an assessment period of between 3 to 6 months during which time the next step for moving on to independence is identified and supported. There is limited capacity within this provision.

### **Guaranteed Rent Scheme accommodation, Private Lease Accommodation.**

At the current time we have 411 young people (aged 18-25) within this provision.

Young people who do not wish to be provided accommodation within the supported pathway, are able to access independent accommodation via the Guaranteed Rent Scheme pathway (GRS).

GRS is the provision of privately rented accommodation for our young people which is managed by our housing colleagues. The accommodation comprises of a room in a shared house, a studio flat or a stand-alone dwelling. There are capacity issues within this offer and stand-alone self-contained accommodation is increasingly difficult to source. Young people are provided with a tenancy which is with the Local Authority. These properties are generally managed and inspected by the Local Authority and is available to young people up to the age of 21.

### **NRPF Accommodation. (No Recourse to Public Funds)**

At the current time we have 45 young people within this provision, this has reduced by approximately 50% in the last 18 months, supported by the work with our Home Office Colleagues and more robust and effective oversight of the use of void management in our block purchase arrangements.

This accommodation is provided by our housing colleagues and comprises of shared houses for our young people who do not yet have an immigration status. This provision was formerly funded by a block purchase agreement, however significant work has progressed in this area, and a new contract is in place which ensures we are only funding provision that is in use.

Young people transition from this accommodation as they achieve immigration status. Young people also leave this provision if they deemed All Rights Exhausted by the Home Office, who then provide for their needs and accommodation under immigration legislation and arrangements. This provision provides support up to the age of 25 or the outcome of immigration matters, which-ever is soonest.

### **Support to access Private Rental Accommodation**

Young people who identify that their needs are not able to be met within any of the above provision are supported to access the private rental market with the support of their PA and the provision of one months' rent and one months' deposit. Care Experienced People are supported by the government to be able to access a higher rate of housing benefit to assist with affordability. This type of provision is very

difficult for our young people to access due to costs and guarantor requirements. There is a concern that with increasing rents, evictions, and an increase in the cost of living this solution will not be sustainable for many young people starting out in work.

### **Provision of Social tenancies**

At the current time our housing colleagues provide 15 priority housing nominations for our cohort of young people. Enabling them to fast track within the housing bidding system to secure a tenancy with the council. We are currently in discussion with our Housing colleagues with the aim to increase this offer to be closer in line with our statistical neighbours. The current offer represents 2% of our total Care Leaver population, we are hoping to be supported to achieve a 10% offer of priority nominations annually for our young people.

Our young people are supported to ensure they are placed on the housing register, and our housing colleagues are currently reviewing their practice to enable care experienced young people to access the housing register at age 17. The level of priority is at level 3 (moderate) for Care Leavers- we would want this to increase to give Care Experienced young people a higher priority. Our housing colleagues are also reviewing their systems with an intention of implementing an 'auto bid' process for our young people.

### **Achievements**

We have successfully been awarded with DFE funding to support the provision of two specialist Personal Adviser posts, who will focus on Housing and reducing risk of homelessness. We have successfully recruited to these posts, and they will be in service by Mid October 2022. This will increase both capacity and expertise in the service to assist our young people around housing issues and challenges.

We have established a clear link with our colleagues in both the Housing benefit and the council tax departments and have an outline plan to enable us to more effectively support our young people in these areas and reduce debt and arrears for both rent and council tax.

We are working closely with our colleagues in housing, to look at improvements to how our young people are placed and monitored on the housing register. Consideration of them being able to be on the register from age 17 is one area and increasing priority housing nominations from 2% to 10% per annum is another. These changes would have a significant positive impact for our young people and their outcomes going forward.

We have achieved 15 priority housing nominations for our young people in the last year, enabling them to secure a council tenancy, which will support their journey on to successful independence and lift them out to the financial poverty trap of private rental arrangements.

We have implemented a new contract across our NRPF providers that supports higher standards and expectations for the property and safeguarding of our young people and also ensures that we are effectively managing voids and minimising any overspend.

We have reduced the number of young people who were All Rights Exhausted (ARE) and living in our NRPF housing provision significantly, allowing for eligible young people to be accommodated within this provision and also ensuring best value and appropriate usage in this area of accommodation.

## **Challenges**

There are several challenges that Croydon faces in supporting care experienced young people to achieve permanent and suitable accommodation.

### **Capacity:**

41% of complaints through the advocacy service are in relation to housing issues for our young people.

The availability of suitable housing stock and options for young people is a significant issue within London. Many of our Care experienced young people have remained on the Housing Register for several years, with no suitable vacancies being identified or made available. As outlined in the pathway appendix i), this can lead to the prolonged use of privately rented accommodation that is becoming increasingly unaffordable and may result in young people presenting as homeless at a point of crisis (e.g., eviction). As outlined above the provision of 15 priority tenancies each year in total is not an appropriate level for our Care Leaver population. We are discussing with housing colleagues increased capacity in managing voids across housing stock and prioritising care leavers.

### **Quality & Safety:**

Although many of the tenancies are viewed as 'suitable' there is room to improve the inspection standards being used. We would like to introduce 'young inspectors' who are care experienced and can provide additional insight in to the safety, security and affordability of housing offers.

## **Future Plans**

As outlined above there are several initiatives that we are undertaking to improve the experience for our young people in seeking and obtaining a permanent home.

- i) The priority that Care experienced young people are given on the housing register does not enable a quick transfer to social housing. There are options being explored such as, accessing the register at 17; improving the way that voids are managed and the recruitment of two specialist PA's who will work closely with the housing department to champion Care experienced young people housing needs.
- ii) Aiming to increase the priority allocation of social housing for care experienced young people from 2% to 10%.

- iii) Improving the support that Care experienced young people receive in preparing to live independently via two new specialist PA posts and the use of 'young inspectors' in checking properties.

In liaison with our Housing Colleagues, we are ambitious to deliver the best for our children and young people as corporate parents, developing a framework towards independence that prepares and provides for our young people's specific housing needs.

## **1. CONSULTATION**

- 1.1. This report is an overview of the current service provision and sets out improvements that are already in consultation with Housing.

## **2. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

### **2.1. Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations**

-The proposals set out do not adversely impact on revenue.

### **2.2. The effect of the decision – N/A**

### **2.3. Risks - N/A**

### **2.4. Options – N/A**

### **2.5. Future savings/efficiencies**

- A reduction in complaints in relation to Housing issues for Care Experienced young people represents an efficiency saving in reducing officer time investigating and responding.

## **3. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

N/A

## **4. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

N/A

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

N/A

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

N/A

**7. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

N/A

**8. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

**8.1. WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?**

**NO**

**8** Approved by: Róisín Madden Director Children's Social Care

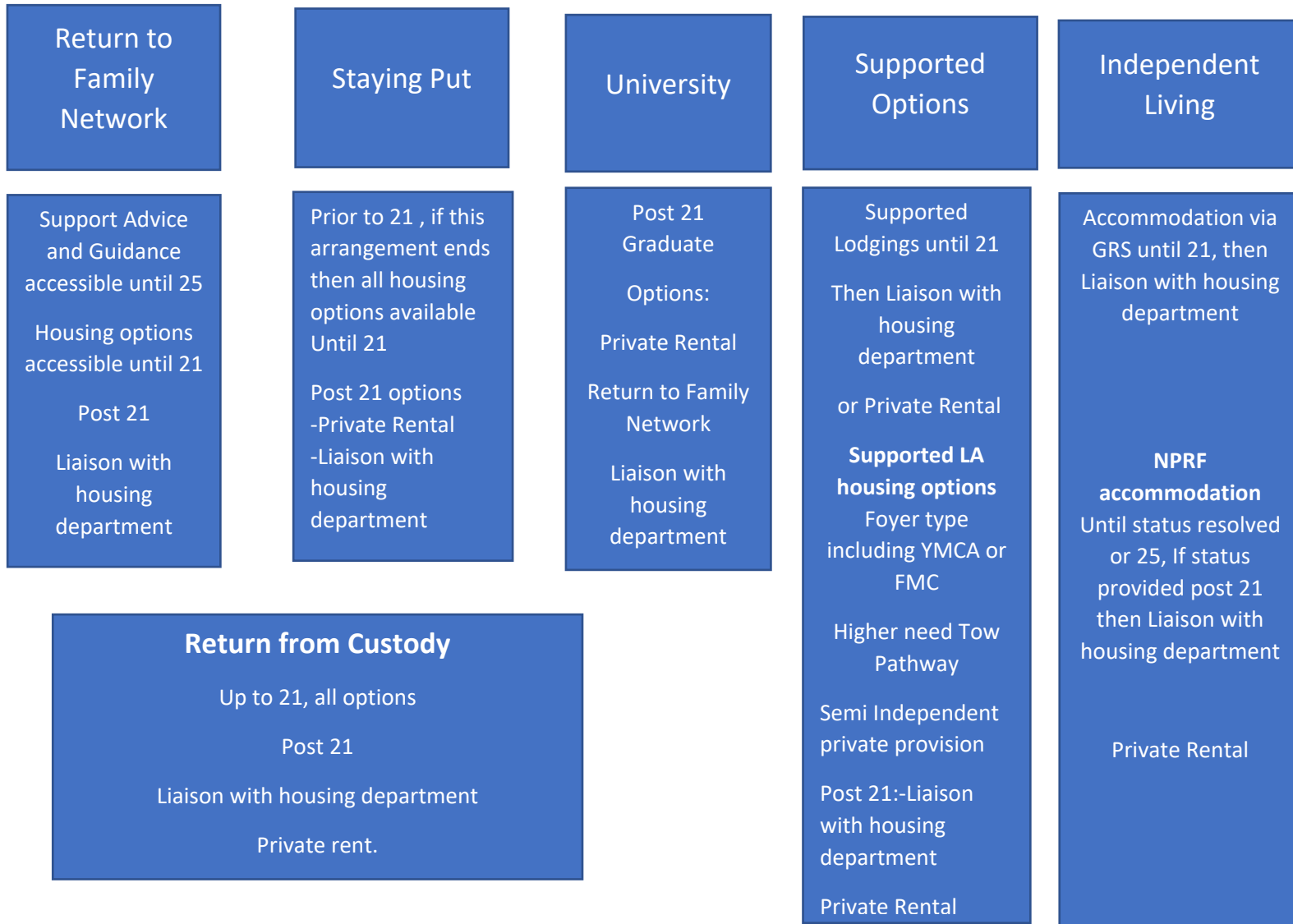
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**CONTACT OFFICER:** Shaun Hanks; Head of Service; Children Looked After and Care Experienced Young People [Shaun.Hanks@Croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Shaun.Hanks@Croydon.gov.uk)

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT**

Appendix 1 - Housing pathways and options post 18

## Housing pathways and options post 18

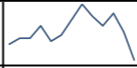

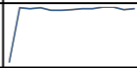


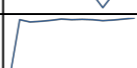


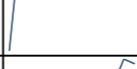




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Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	2021/22												2022-23					RO	2022-23 Target	Trend (since April 21)	RAG	YTD/LATEST	2022-23 YTD or latest	DfE Published Croydon 2020-21	Stats Nbr Average 2020-21	London 2020-21	England 2020-21
			Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22														
<b>Children Looked After (CLA)</b>																													
CLA 1	Number of CLA at the end of the month		616	595	589	570	575	547	540	559	545	544	539	538	529	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	529	683	500	9,670	80,850				
CLA 2	Rate of CLA per 10,000 under 18 population		64.6	62.4	61.8	59.8	60.3	57.4	56.7	58.7	57.2	57.1	56.6	56.4	55.5	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	55.5	72.0	51.8	47.0	67.0				
CLA 2a	Rate of CLA per 10,000 under 18 population excluding UASC		49.3	48.1	47.3	46.9	47.3	45.6	45.4	46.7	45.9	46.6	46.5	46.5	45.4	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	45.4	51							
CLA 3	Number of CLA at the end of the month who are Local CLA (Non-UASC)		470	458	451	447	451	435	433	445	437	444	443	443	433	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	433	69%							
CLA 3b	Number of Ceased CLA in the month who are Local CLA (Non-UASC)		16	17	13	29	23	14	13	6	23	8	8	10	11	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	60	31%							
CLA 4	Number of CLA at the end of the month who are UASC		146	137	138	123	124	112	107	114	108	100	96	95	96	SH	98		Green	LATEST	96	211	36	1,330	4,070				
CLA 4b	Number of Ceased CLA in the month who are UASC		12	11	13	19	11	19	8	9	8	15	7	8	3	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	41	116							
CLA 5	Number of new CLA in month (total)		19	15	15	20	27	24	15	36	16	26	14	17	10	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	83	195	187	4,250	28,440				
CLA 6	Number of new CLA in month who are UASC		8	4	12	6	6	11	2	16	5	6	3	7	6	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	27	51							
CLA 7	Rate of adolescents entering care per 10,000 (13-17 year olds) population excl. UASC - New		29.0	26.6	24.2	25.4	26.3	26.6	28.2	29.4	29.0	31.4	30.6	26.6	24.2	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	24.2								
CLA 8	Rate of adolescents leaving care per 10,000 (13-17 year olds) population excl. UASC - New		13.5	13.7	13.8	16.9	16.1	16.9	17.6	19.4	38.7	29.0	27.4	26.6	27.1	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	27.1								
CLA 9	Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC - New	SIB	0.15%	0.14%	0.14%	0.13%	0.13%	0.12%	0.11%	0.12%	0.11%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	SH	0.10%		Green	LATEST	0.10%			0.06%	0.03%				
CLA 10	Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales (6 weekly Visits)	BIB	93%	95%	94%	95%	90%	87%	92%	92%	89%	92%	93%	91%	89%	SH	95%		Amber	LATEST	89%	95%							
CLA 11	Percentage of CLA children with an up to date review	BIB	91%	91%	95%	93%	92%	93%	96%	92%	93%	92%	94%	95%	91%	DW	95%		Amber	YTD	93%	95%							
CLA 12	Percentage of CLA who have participated in Reviews (aged 4+) in the month	BIB	76%	73%	78%	76%	71%	74%	75%	82%	79%	74%	75%	81%	90%	DW	80%		Green	YTD	80%	75%							
CLA 13	CLA 13 - Percentage of CLA at SSA (Statutory School Age) with a Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviewed & completed in the last 6 months.	BIB	97%	94%	87%	77%	97%	98%	97%	91%	95%	92%	96%	95%	96%	SH	90%		Green	LATEST	96%	93%							
CLA 14	Percentage of eligible CLA with an up-to-date Care Plan (6 months)	BIB	69%	66%	74%	92%	88%	82%	81%	77%	74%	85%	90%	92%	86%	SH	90%		Amber	LATEST	86%	85%							
CLA 15	Percentage of eligible CLA with an up-to-date Pathway Plan	BIB	65%	57%	57%	74%	70%	66%	69%	71%	76%	72%	81%	84%	78%	SH	90%		Red	LATEST	78%	82%							
CLA 19	Percentage of CLA that have been in care for 12+ months, that have had same social worker for last 6 months	BIB	57%	54%	55%	53%	57%	56%	56%	65%	57%	57%	57%	54%	58%	SH	65%		Amber	LATEST	58%	72%							
CLA 20	Percentage of CLA under 16 in care for more than 2.5 years: in the same placement for 2+ years	BIB	72%	72%	73%	73%	72%	72%	72%	71%	70%	72%	70%	70%	72%	SH	75%		Amber	LATEST	72%	70%							
CLA 21	Percentage of CLA at end of month with 3 or more placements during the year	SIB	5%	5%	5%	3%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	SH	8%		Green	LATEST	5%	5%							
CLA 22	Percentage of CLA placed <20 miles from home	BIB	84%	84%	84%	83%	85%	84%	83%	85%	85%	83%	83%	82%	81%	SH	90%		Amber	LATEST	81%	85%							
CLA 23	Number of CLA allocated to CWD		22	22	20	18	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	15	RC	NA		Grey	LATEST	15	23							
CLA 24	Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales (Allocated to CWD teams)	BIB	100%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	RC	95%		Green	LATEST	100%	100%							
CLA 25	Number of CLA who returned home (E4A, E4B, E13, E41)	BIB	7	5	4	3	2	3	4	2	17	1	4	4	2	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	28	39	40	810	4,610				

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	2021/22												2022-23					RO	2022-23 Target	Trend (since April 21)	RAG	YTD/LATEST	2022-23 YTD or latest	DfE Published Croydon 2020-21	Stats Nbr Average 2020-21	London 2020-21	England 2020-21
			Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	2022-23 YTD or latest													
<b>CLA Health</b>																													
CLA 16	% of children in care for at least 12 months for whom health assessments are up to date	BIB	86%	89%	84%	82%	85%	88%	87%	93%	95%	92%	95%	91%	89%	SH	95%		Amber	LATEST	89%	95%	92%	94%	91%				
CLA 16a	Number of children in care for at least 12 months for whom health assessments were due in the month (RHA's completed in the year to date/Health reviews due in the year from April to date)		22/99	25/79	24/100	37/121	29/93	33/87	21/75	31/60	21/41	24/54	9/28	4/40	10/52	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	10/52								
CLA 17	% initial health assessments requested for health service within 3 working days of date child become looked after.	BIB	67%	64%	60%	50%	19%	37%	31%	38%	13%	44%	57%	24%	TBC	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	TBC	43%							
CLA 18	% initial health assessments delivered within 20 working days of date child became looked after.	BIB	88%	55%	100%	82%	41%	38%	43%	28%	43%	55%	77%	38%	TBC	SH	85%		TBC	LATEST	TBC	83%							
<b>Fostering</b>																													
F 1	Total number of foster carer households	BIB	213	212	210	209	211	207	204	203	202	199	198	199	195	202%	NA		Grey	LATEST	195								
F 2	Percentage of DBS Checks within time	BIB	100%	99%	98%	97%	97%	99%	98%	98%	97%	97%	98%	97%	98%	97%	95%		Green	LATEST	98%								
F 3	Percentage of Annual Reviews of Foster Carers completed on time	BIB	93%	93%	90%	92%	93%	98%	99%	95%	92%	95%	93%	96%	93%	SH	95%		Amber	LATEST	93%								
F 4	Percentage of Foster Carers' most recent announced visit within timescales (6 weekly)	BIB	90%	87%	87%	87%	87%	93%	89%	82%	91%	90%	87%	80%	88%	SH	95%		Amber	LATEST	88%								
<b>Adoption</b>																													
AD 0	Number of Adoption Orders achieved in the month	BIB	0	2	0	1	3	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	4	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	7								
AD 1	Number of children for whom the agreed plan is adoption (ADM)	BiB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	1								
AD 2	Number of children waiting to be matched to an adopter		10	8	11	11	13	12	12	9	9	8	9	11	10	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	10								
AD 3	Number of children placed in the month	BiB	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	2								
AD 7	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with the adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days) (12 Months rolling average)	SIB	492	461	437	449	449	492	491	491	488	520	496	508	508	SH	558		Green	LATEST	508								
AD 8	Average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days) (12 months rolling average)	SIB	206	201	191	191	190	192	171	171	172	159	155	157	156	SH	226		Green	LATEST	156								
AD 9	Number of special guardianship orders made in the month (from care)	BIB	2	4	0	9	2	0	2	0	2	1	1	2	0	SH	NA		Grey	YTD	6								

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	2021/22										2022-23						2022-23 Target	Trend (since April 21)	RAG	YTD/LATEST	2022-23 YTD or latest	DfE Published Croydon 2020-21	Stats Nbr Average 2020-21	London 2020-21	England 2020-21
			Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	RO											
<b>Care Leavers</b>																											
CL a	Care Leavers with an Up-to-date Pathway plan	BIB	73%	75%	75%	79%	74%	76%	81%	86%	82%	79%	83%	77%	68%	SH	85%		Red	LATEST	68%						
CL 1b	Number of Care Leavers in employment, education, or training (EET) now aged 19 to 21 (New*)	BIB	259	255	253	261	254	256	254	265	265	270	274	272	278	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	278	273	165	3950	16900		
CL 1c	Percentage in employment, education, or training (EET) now aged 19 to 21 (New*)	BIB	63%	61%	60%	61%	58%	58%	59%	60%	60%	62%	62%	59%	60%	SH	85%		Red	LATEST	60%	42%	56%	55%	52%		
CL 2b	Number of Care Leavers not in employment, education, or training (NEET) now aged 19 to 21 (New*)	SIB	153	163	153	153	164	167	163	157	154	146	156	168	167	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	167	234	108	2590	13260		
CL 2c	Percentage not in employment, education, or training (NEET) now aged 19 to 21 (New*)	SIB	37%	39%	36%	36%	38%	38%	38%	36%	35%	34%	35%	36%	36%	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	36%	36%	36%	36%	41%		
CL 3b	Number of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation now aged 19 to 21	BIB	399	405	391	396	402	410	405	409	407	400	404	410	418	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	418	476	254	6110	28870		
CL 3c	Percentage in suitable accommodation now aged 19 to 21 (New*)	BIB	95%	95%	92%	93%	92%	93%	93%	93%	93%	92%	91%	89%	91%	SH	90%		Green	LATEST	91%	74	87	86	88		
CL 5a	Percentage in touch with the authority now aged 19 to 21 (New*)	BIB	98%	97%	97%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	97%	98%	SH	95%		Green	LATEST	98%	77%	90%	90%	91%		
CL 6	Care Leavers - LOCAL (non-UASC)		258	262	254	245	242	252	231	254	253	262	265	287	283	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	283						
CL 7	Care Leavers - UASC (non-LOCAL)		441	438	409	429	428	438	448	426	429	428	428	436	431	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	431						
CL 8	Number of young people who have Appeals Rights Exhausted New *		6	6	7	5	4	4	3	5	2	2	3	2	2	SH	NA		Grey	LATEST	2						

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