

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

## Corporate Parenting Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **6 June 2018**

**Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL**

### Membership:

Councillors Joycelyn Redsell (Chair), Graham Hamilton (Vice-Chair), Qaisar Abbas, Abbie Akinbohun, Barry Johnson, Steve Liddiard, Sue MacPherson and Angela Sheridan

Gregg Brown, Open Door  
Jackie Howell, Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association  
Joseph Kaley, Children in Care Council  
Sharon Smith, Vice Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association

### Substitutes:

Councillors Gary Collins, David Potter, Sue Shinnick and Lynn Worrall

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 12</b>
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting held on 7 March 2018.	
<b>3 Items of Urgent Business</b>	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
<b>4 Declaration of Interests</b>	

<b>5</b>	<b>Information on recent External Placements for Young People</b>	<b>13 - 18</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Briefing Note - Attainment of Children Looked After 2017 Validated Data</b>	<b>19 - 24</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Social Care Development Plan: CLA Progress Report</b>	<b>25 - 30</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Children's Social Care Performance</b>	<b>31 - 42</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>43 - 44</b>

**Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:**

Please contact Kallum Davies, Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **29 May 2018**

## **Information for members of the public and councillors**

### **Access to Information and Meetings**

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

### **Recording of meetings**

This meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

### **Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings**

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at [CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk) before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

## Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

## Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

## How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

**Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:**

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

**If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps**

### Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



**You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.**

## Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
  - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
  - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
  - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
  
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
  - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
  - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
  - Fewer public buildings with better services
  
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
  - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
  - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
  - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on 7 March 2018 at 7.00 pm

---

**Present:** Councillors Bukky Okunade (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Jan Baker, Leslie Gamester, Joycelyn Redsell and Aaron Watkins

Natalie Carter, Thurrock Open Door Representative  
Joseph Kaley, Children in Care Council  
Jackie Howell, Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association

**Apologies:** Councillors Sue MacPherson (Chair), Martin Kerin and Sharon Smith

**In attendance:** Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services  
Adriana Cimpean, Interim Service Manager for the Through Care Service  
Paula Gregory, Designated Nurse  
Michele Lucas, Interim Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills  
Claire Pascoe, Child Sexual Exploitation Manager  
Keeley Pullen, Head Teacher for Virtual School  
Janet Simon, Strategic Lead, Looked After Children  
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

---

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **19. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting held on the 6 December 2017 were approved as a correct record.

Paula Gregory requested that her apologies be recorded.

### **20. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **21. Declaration of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

### **22. Missing Children and Child Sexual Exploitation**

Claire Pascoe, Child Sexual Exploitation Manager, presented the report that had set out the actions that Thurrock Social Care had taken over the past year and what was planned for the coming year alongside the achievements made to date. Working persistently and collaboratively to safeguard the children of Thurrock from Sexual Exploitation and any associated harms by reviewing the current Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Trafficking position as assessed by the Thurrock Children's Social Care.

Claire Pascoe briefed Members on the key achievements in identifying and tackling Child Sexual Exploitation both internally and across Thurrock.

The Vice Chair thanked Claire Pascoe for the very detailed report and was pleased to hear that the Child Sexual Exploitation Manager was now a substantive post.

The Vice Chair questioned what training could be undertaken with private taxi drivers. Claire Pascoe stated that she would be interested to include private taxi companies into the training schedule but unfortunately many of these were licenced in London. Claire Pascoe agreed to make some enquiries and contact any such operators.

Councillor Redsell stated that Thurrock taxi drivers had to undertake further scrutiny under the Licensing Committee where as private drivers such as UBER do not.

Claire Pascoe stated that the figures quoted in the Thurrock Picture section of the report referred to Looked After Children.

Councillor Redsell questioned what training was being undertaken in Thurrock schools. Claire Pascoe stated that Local Safeguarding Children Board undertook training on Stranger Danger and Walk Online which would be directly communicated with Thurrock children and parents. These schemes had been recognised by Ofsted and between August 2016 and August 2017, 2207 children had received the Stranger Danger training.

Councillor Redsell stated that the 2207 figure did not seem a lot when compared to the number of schools and children in Thurrock. Claire Pascoe stated that the Local Safeguarding Children Board was commissioned to undertake this training to children of all ages in primary and secondary schools. Claire Pascoe agreed to obtain the exact number of those children trained and update Members.

Councillor Watkins thanked Claire Pascoe for the report and reiterated that training should be undertaken with all children whether in primary or secondary schools. That focus on training going forward should be paramount with more children having access to IT and with the introduction of more social media apps, with training being specific to the age of that child.



Paul Gregory requested the number of Looked After Children that formed part of those children currently assessed as being at risk of child sexual exploitation.

Councillor Watkins asked whether extra curriculum groups such as brownies, scouts and after-school clubs could benefit from this training. Claire Pascoe stated that this training should be made available from a broader approach but would be dependent on the capacity of the Local Safeguarding Children Board team.

Keeley Pullen, Head Teacher for Virtual School, stated that e-safety training formed part of the statutory curriculum in schools and that support for children and parents would be available.

The Vice Chair thanked Claire Pascoe and moved to the recommendation that Members noted and commented on the report.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report.**

### **23. Children's Social Care Performance**

The Vice Chair welcomed Janet Simon the new Strategic Lead for Looked After Children to the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services, briefed Members on the summary of children's social care performances set out in the report and that the data produced to meet internal and external requirements was a good indication of issues.

Members were updated on the following from the report:

- The reduction in the number of contacts and referrals.
- The number of care leavers in suitable accommodation had reduced.
- That Thurrock we compared themselves with a benchmark group which included Medway and Luton. That in comparison Thurrock's figures were lower.
- The number of Looked After Children had been reduced to 311.
- That Thurrock continued to be part of the Transfer Protocol for Asylum Seeking Children entering into Thurrock.
- That 4 Looked After Children had gone missing at the time of reporting.
- That a review on the whole Adoption service would be undertaken because of the low number of Looked After Children adopted from care.
- That the first round of inspections under the new Inspection Framework were being undertaken. It was possible that Thurrock could receive a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) later this year or we could have a short notice inspection.

- The planned Joint Targeted Inspection would be themed around Child Sexual Exploitation.

The Vice Chair thanked Rory Patterson for the report and asked when the Ofsted inspection was due to take place for the Single Inspection Framework. Rory Patterson stated that this would not be a full inspection and would take place probably around the autumn time. Thurrock would probably not receive a full inspection under the new framework for at least another year.

Councillor Redsell thanked Rory Patterson for the report but stated that more information should be available to all Corporate Parent Members on those Looked After Children that had gone missing. Rory Patterson stated that a weekly report on incidents was sent to the Portfolio Holder for her information and that these 4 incidents were very short term. That more in-depth work on the understanding the risk of different groups would need to be undertaken.

The Vice Chair asked how the return home interviews were progressing. Rory Patterson stated that this was an opportunity to look at this process more and that a report on missing children would be prepared for Corporate Parenting Committee.

Councillor Gamester asked if there would likely be any changes in data with regard to cross gender identity. Rory Patterson stated he saw no particular issues with the service meeting all needs and continued to develop new ways of working with all vulnerable children.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the Corporate Parenting Committee noted the areas of improvement in Children's Social Care, work undertaken to manage demand for statutory social care services and highlight areas of further investigation for deep dive studies.**
- 2. That the Corporate Parenting Committee noted a new inspection framework has been introduced by Ofsted for children's social care.**

## **24. Care Leavers into Employment, Education or Training (EET)**

Michele Lucas, Interim Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills, introduced the report that summarised the approach taken to improve the number of care leavers into education employment and training to enable them to access the regeneration opportunities in Thurrock and to respond positively to the Council's corporate parenting role. That Thurrock Council was enabling and supporting education employment and training and addressing accommodation and life skills.

Michele Lucas briefly updated Members on target rates that were monitored monthly and looking at early intervention of engaging young people into activities such as the Princes Trust.

Michele Lucas stated that it was a whole Thurrock Council approach with the support of finance and housing.

The Vice Chair thanked Michele Lucas for the report.

Councillor Redsell thanked Michele Lucas for the very passionate report but stated life skills training such as money management should be given to children much younger than at 18 years of age.

Councillor Redsell stated that training clubs such as football or cricket clubs should be made more available to allow more children, parents and coaches to be involved.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Corporate Parenting Committee noted and supported the Care Leaders into Employment Education or Training.**

### **25. Children in Care Council Update**

Joseph Kaley, Children in Care Council, presented to Members the new Health Passport designed for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The Health Passport being an easy to reference record of medical and health care history of an individual. Joseph Kaley showed Members an example of how the Health Passport would look that also included a plastic wallet on the reverse so that prescriptions and notes could be stored. That three years funding had been secured and that initially 1000 copies would be printed. It would be the intention to present the Health Passport at the Looked After Children Event and then they would be distributed to Looked After Children and Care Leavers at medicals or through social workers.

Joseph Kaley updated Members on the Pledge. That the consultation period had finished and that findings made by Looked After Children would be included in the Pledge:

#### Money Management

The Local Authority would help Looked After Children set up bank accounts and provide information on bank rates and accounts.

#### Language and Culture Needs

To ensure that all culture backgrounds and languages spoken by Looked After Children are taken into consideration and included within the Pledge.

#### Religion

The Local Authority will support and supply provisions as required.

#### Security in Placements

Information on the stability and security of a placement with details of long term plans.

### Quality in Placements

Information on the quality of a placement.

### Foster Care Breakdown

Information on when children return back into care, arrive into care, changing placements and to look at all alternative scenarios.

### Missing Persons

Information on when a child goes missing and how this would be approached. Information on the return home process and interview and what repercussions would there be for that child.

### Advocate Services

Information on tutors and the advocate services be made available.

The Vice Chair thanked Joseph for his presentation and that it was great news that funding had been secured.

Paula Gregory stated that it was the great presentation given by the Children in Care Council that had secured the funding.

Natalie Carter stated that these findings were open to discussion and would arrange to meet Officers.

Councillor Redsell stated that the Children in Care Council should not forget to speak with Members who would be able to offer assistance. Joseph Kaley thanked Members and stated that dates of their meetings were advertised, open to all and encouraged Members to attend.

## **26. Corporate Parenting Work Programme 2017-2018**

The Vice Chair stated that this was the last Corporate Parenting Committee for this municipal year and that the work programme was now complete.

The Vice Chair asked Members if there were any items to be added or discussed for the work programme for the next municipal year.

The Vice Chair thanked Members and Officers for their contribution and their continued support to the Corporate Parenting Committees.

**The meeting finished at 8.29 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>6 June 2018</b>	<b>ITEM: 5</b>
<b>Corporate Parenting Committee</b>	
<b>Information on Recent External Placements for Young People</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Simon, Strategic Lead	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children’s Care and Targeted Outcomes	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## Executive Summary

This report updates members of the Committee on a range of issues regarding the placement choices made for looked after children

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**1.1 That the members of the Committee review the efforts made by officers to choose appropriate placement resources for looked after children.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This report provides an overview of placement activities to the end of the reporting year 2017/18 including information on new external placements made and comments provided on a number of the presenting issues which influence decision making.

2.2 The numbers of looked after children in Thurrock is detailed in a comparative table below. This is a snapshot within the month, as the numbers will fluctuate as children/young people enter and cease being looked after throughout each month. Thurrock has seen a gradual reduction in the number of looked after children from the start of the year (Apr 17 – 337) to the end of year position (Mar 18 – 307. Thurrock has 26 fewer children in the care system than in the previous two financial years and there has been. Figure 2 highlights the rate of LAC and indicates that Thurrock is above its statistical neighbours, regional average and national average.

Figure 1

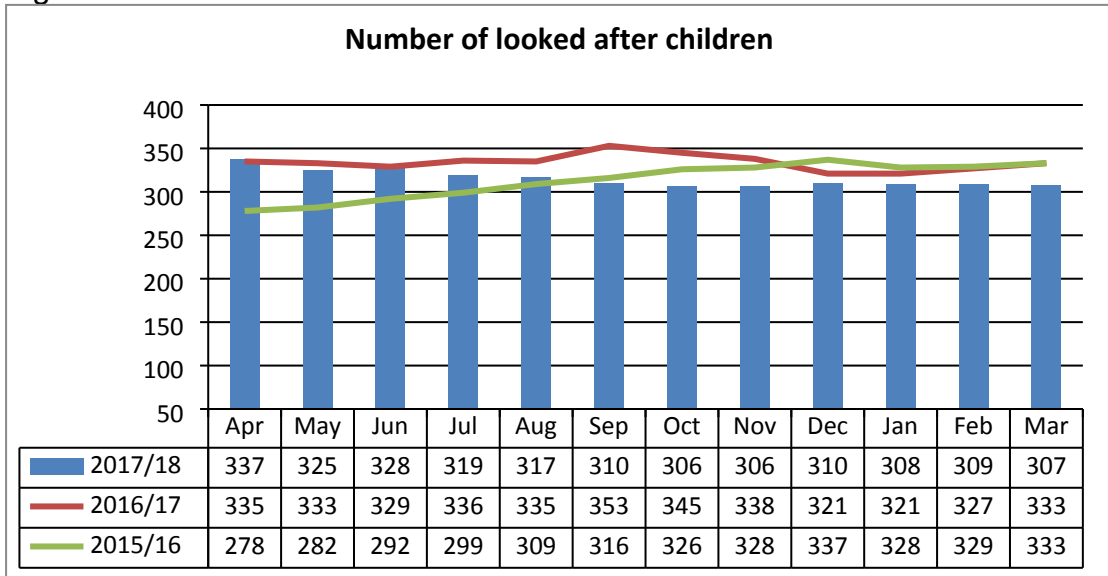
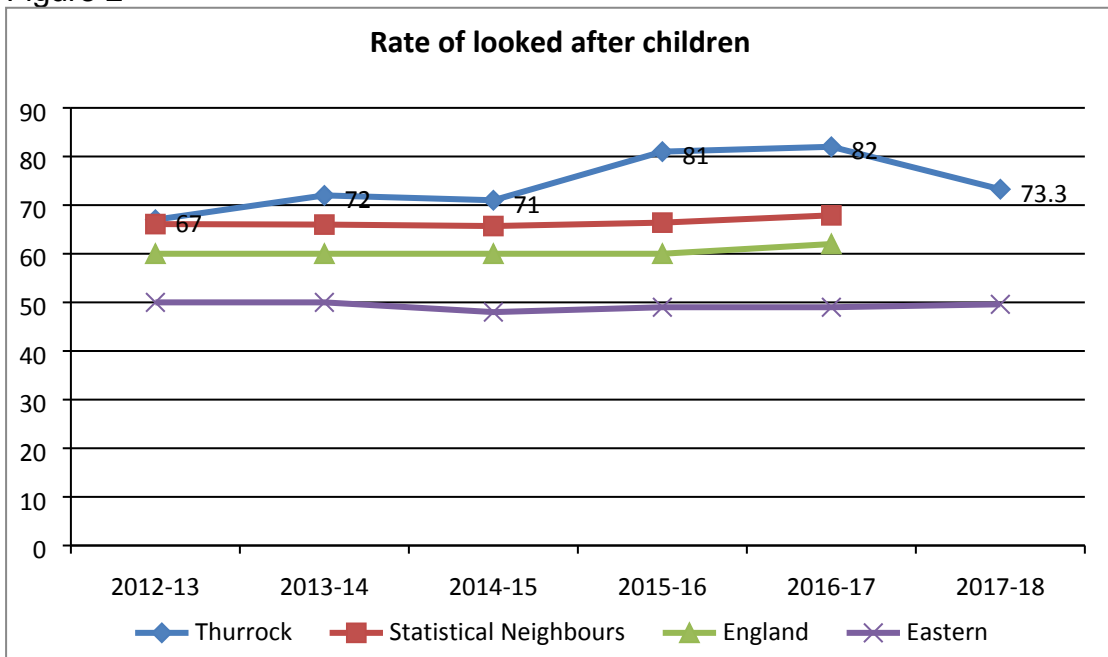


Figure 2



2.3 The following table shows the numbers of **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)** that have become looked after during the financial year of 2016/17 and 2017/18. Thurrock has reduced the number of asylum seeking children this financial year from 50 to 35. Figure 4 highlights that Thurrock is now in line with its statistical neighbours.



Figure 3

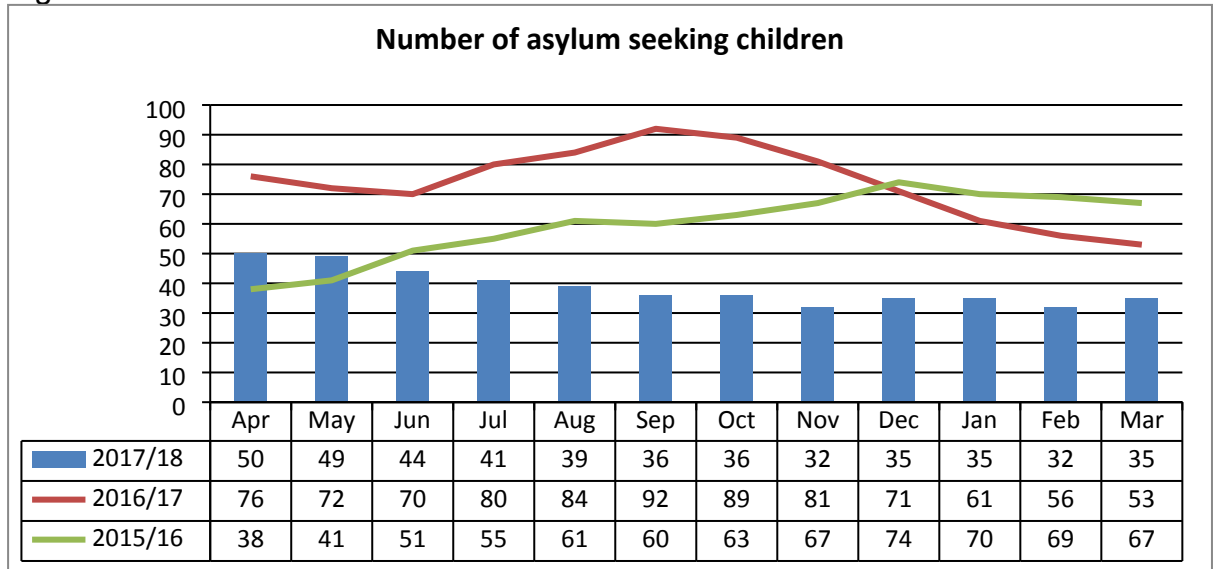
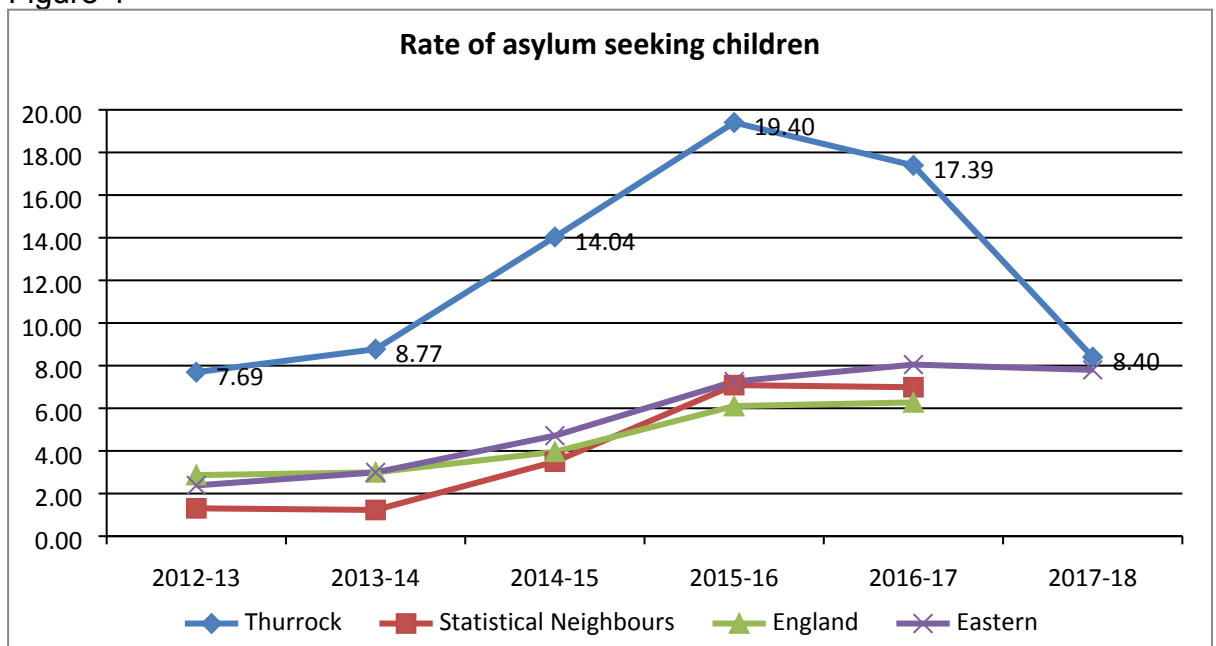


Figure 4



2.4 The looked after children are in the following placements:

- Residential Children’s Homes – 24
- Parent & Child Residential Assessment Placement – 0
- Independent Fostering Agency Placements – 96
- Parent & child placement – 3
- In – house Foster placements – 117
- Parent & child placement – 0
- 16+ Supported Accommodation – 20 (excluding UAS)

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children = 35

- Independent Fostering Agency Placements – 11
- In – house Foster placements – 10 (7 in-house, 3 connected carers)
- 16+ Supported Accommodation – 14

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

3.1 We continue to focus on the use of in-house foster placements as opposed to independent fostering agencies through our recruitment programme.

3.2 In terms of our in-house fostering provision, our current performance as of 31 March 2018 is as follows:

- Number of new carers approved = 23 (17 mainstream & 6 connected)
- Number of mainstream fostering applications at various stages = 7
- Number of current fostering households = 102, which equates to a net increase of 21 in the financial year
- Number of temporary approvals = 9
- Total number of in-house fostering spaces occupied = 128 (equates to 117 looked after children & 11 Staying put young people)

3.3 Our use of residential placements has stabilised at 25.

3.4 To date we have 35 UASC, which again continues to decrease in numbers. This is due to the Eastern Region Protocol and those young people reaching the age of 18.

3.5 The Department continue to be the recipients of new arrivals of UASC into the borough, which are then transferred to other local authorities under the Eastern Region Transfer Protocol System.

3.6 The Department continues to monitor placements through the various multi-disciplinary panels, such as the Placement and Accommodation Panel, which is chaired by the Assistant Director of Children's Services, and the High Cost Placement Meeting, chaired by the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

3.7 The Department is aware of the budgetary situation within the Council and work hard to provide placements that are fit for purpose and are cost effective. The Corporate Director and other senior managers are working closely with the Finance Department; ensuring placements are of good quality, that we get the best value from each placement and that we plan the transition of our young people when appropriate to accommodation that is suitable for their needs and age.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 Members of the Committee to be informed on the issues in relation to external placements. Officers accept there is a very real challenge in balancing the

need to find the best possible placement option for children and young people, whilst simultaneously working within the financial resources available.

**5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

None

**6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

None

**7. Implications**

**7.1 Financial**

Verified by: **Nilufa Begum**  
**Management Accountant**

There are financial implications associated with external placement as it has a tendency to go up and down. However, finance is working closely with the service to analyse placements costing and review which would be best value for money.

**7.2 Legal**

Verified by: **Lindsay Marks**  
**Principal Solicitor Children's Safeguarding**

Section 22g Children Act 1989 requires local authorities to take steps that are reasonably practicable to secure sufficient accommodation for children under their care who cannot live at home and whose circumstances indicate that it would be in a child's best interests to be accommodated within the local authority's area for example in order for the child to stay at the same school or near to other family where contact can take place easily. This duty has been clarified and reinforced by the issue of statutory guidance in 2010.

**7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Verified by: **Natalie Warren,**  
**Strategic Lead, Community Development and Equalities**

Individual needs of children and young people which include their gender, religion, language and disability are considered to ensure their placements meet all their diverse needs. There is also the need to consider risks to

children and young people such as sexual exploitation, gang related violence and trafficking.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

None

**Report Author:**

Janet Simon  
Children and Family Services

## Corporate Parenting Committee

### Briefing Note: **Attainment of Children Looked After 2017 Validated Data**

**Purpose of the briefing note:** Details of the attainment for Children Looked After [CLA] has been provided during previous reports and discussed in meetings. It was requested by the Corporate Parenting Committee that once the validated data was available, a briefing note be provided.

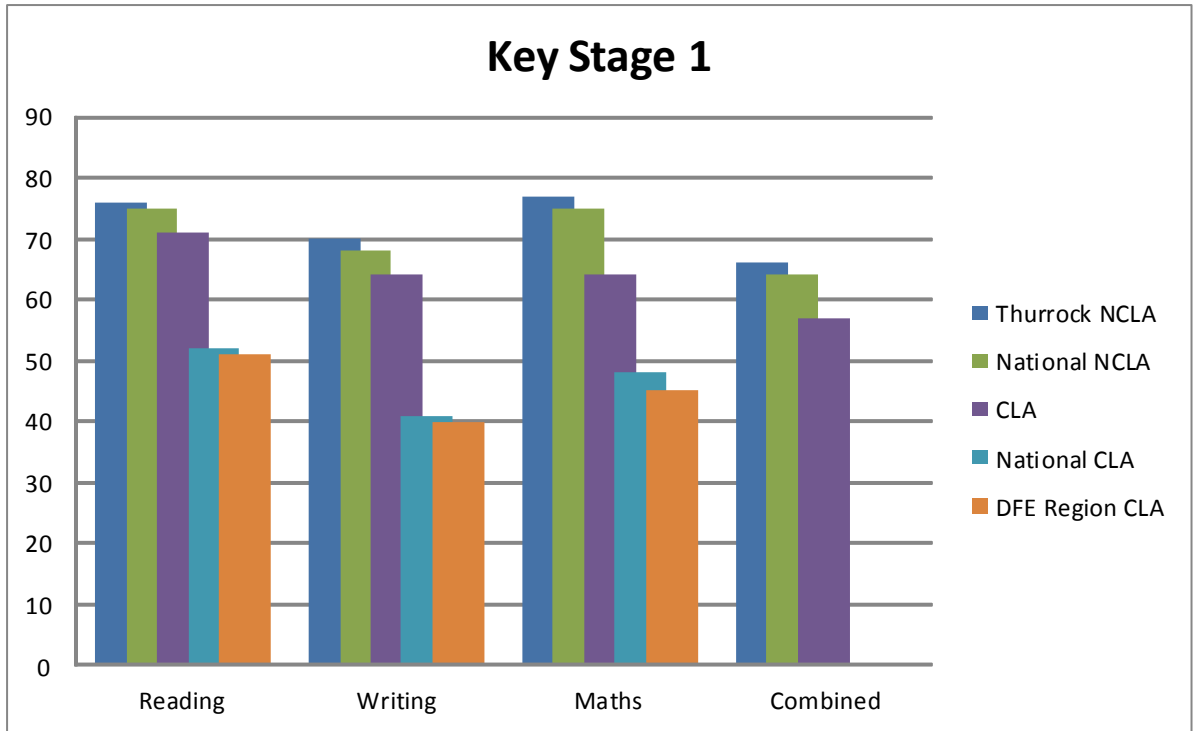
1.1 On 28 March 2018, validated attainment data was provided by the Department for Education [DFE]. This DFE report detailed the attainment information of Children Looked After in Key Stages 1, 2 and 4. Previous reports by the Virtual School Headteacher have commented upon the academic attainment of CLA using indicative data. These reports provided in detail the contextual information of the cohorts as well as academic outcomes. The purpose of this briefing is to provide the Corporate Parenting Committee with the validated data for 2017 examinations and to highlight comparisons with other CLA groups.

1.2 There are no formal recommendations as part of this report. This briefing is to provide information.

1.3 There are no formal implications within this report.

#### **2. Attainment of Key Stage 1 Pupils [age 6/7]**

2.1 The following graph details the comparison between Thurrock CLA and Non-Looked-After for Key Stage 1. It also details the attainment of Thurrock CLA compared with Eastern region and National data for CLA.



**Graph of Validated 2017 Data Comparing Thurrock CLA to National CLA and Non-Looked After**

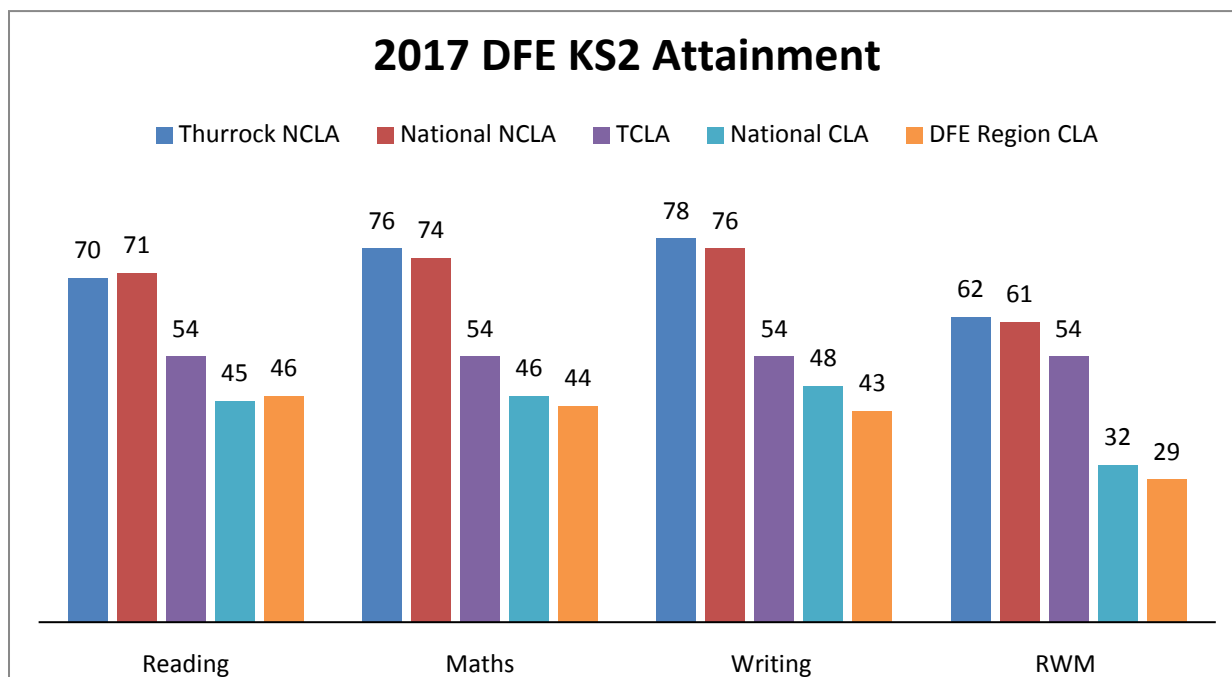
- 2.2 The gap between CLA and non-CLA is closing in 2017 with improvements in results across all subjects.

This is a very good news story and the data is based upon a cohort of 14 pupils which the DFE has included as they were in care at some time during year 2 in 16/17.

Additionally, when comparing the expected standards attained against National and Eastern region CLA, Thurrock CLA are above in all areas and significantly above in Reading and Maths.

### 3. Attainment of Key Stage 2 Pupils [Age 10/11]

- 3.1 The following graph details the comparison between Thurrock CLA and Non-Looked-After for Key Stage 2. It also details the attainment of Thurrock CLA compared with Eastern region and National data for CLA.



**Validated Data Graph for all CLA pupils including those that were disapplied – cohort of 19 pupils in total**

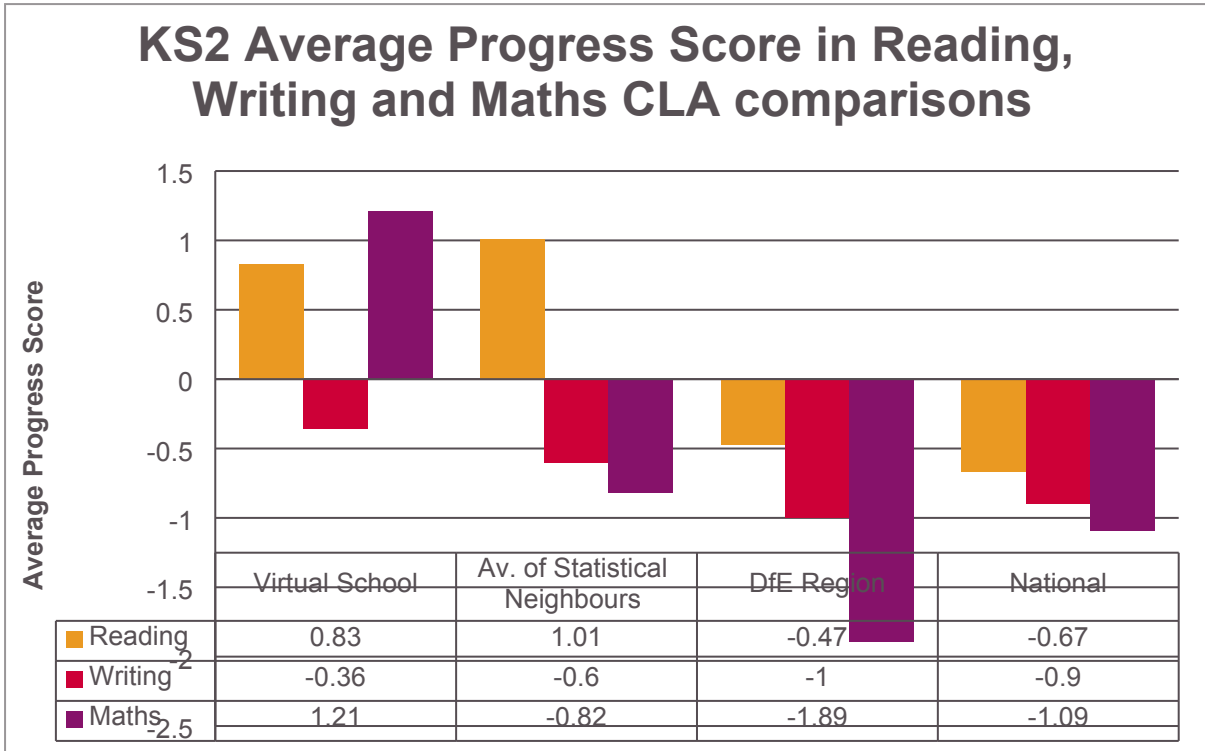
3.2 This data is inclusive of all pupils including those disapplied. That is, their level of SEN need meant that they were unable to take the Year 6 SATs exam. This also includes data for those children who were removed from care before SATs were taken.

Progress rates (not shown in this graph) from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 were very good for reading and maths. They were better than national CLA and in line with Thurrock all pupils. Writing would definitely be an area for development as there is a gap between Thurrock CLA and other groups. [Although less so for those in care for 1 year or more]

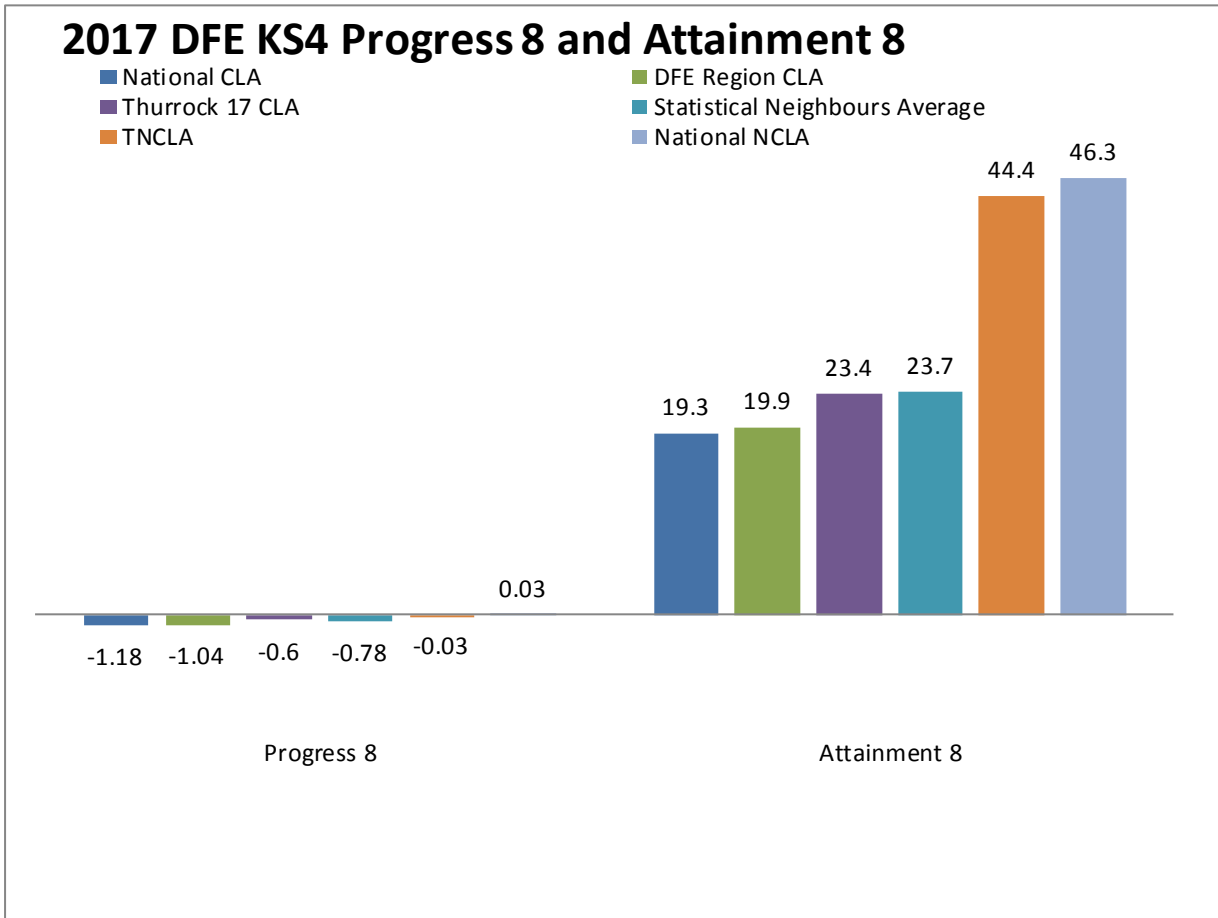
When looking at distributed scaled score, Thurrock CLA performed better than National CLA in all subjects for those achieving higher scores.

Our scaled score results were better than National CLA in all subjects. There is no scaled score for writing as this was teacher assessed.

3.3 The following graph illustrates the amount of progress from Key Stage 1 that our Key Stage 2 pupils made compared to our statistical neighbours, DFE Region and National CLA. Again the area for development would be for writing although Thurrock CLA progress in this area was better than its comparators. Key Stage 2 progress is better than DFE Region and National CLA in all areas and is close to Statistical Neighbours in reading and writing and is better in maths.

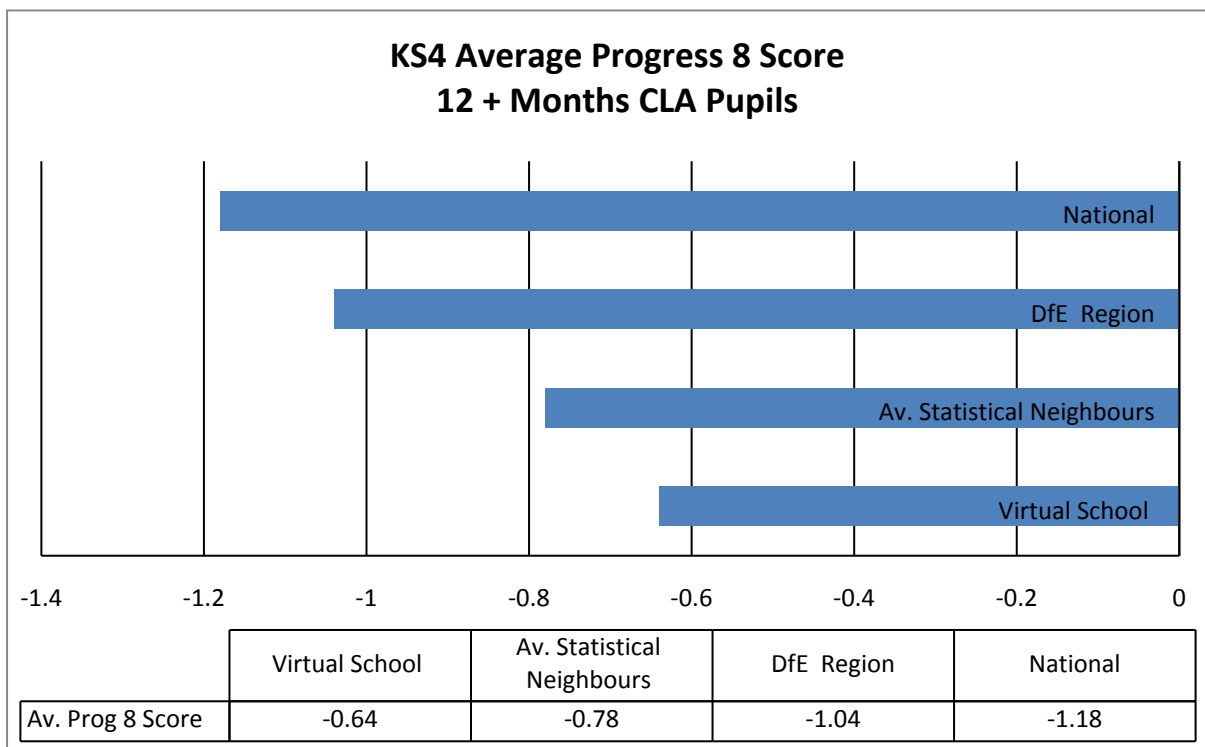


**4. Attainment of Key Stage 4 Pupils [age 15/16]**





- 4.1 The above graph details the outcomes at Key Stage 4 for Thurrock CLA pupils. It compares Attainment 8 and Progress 8 against a range of data national, local and regional data as well as our top 5 closest statistical neighbours.
- 4.2 Thurrock Children Looked After have performed better in Progress 8 and Attainment 8 when comparing against other CLA groups. The gap against Non-Looked After is closing, however, this is still an area for improvement for Thurrock pupils which is in line with the National picture to drive up standards for CLA.
- 4.3 The diagram below illustrates in greater detail the distinct comparison against other CLA groups. The closer the score is to 0, the better the score is.



## 5. Summary Statement

- 5.1 Overall Thurrock's CLA have performed better in all areas compared to 2016 validated data. When comparing Thurrock CLA to a range of other CLA groups for national, regional and the top 5 closest statistical neighbours, our pupils have performed better.
- 5.2 Our data demonstrates an improvement in outcomes for our most vulnerable pupils with very good rates of progress.
- 5.3 The focus of the Virtual School is to continue to improve outcomes for all of our CLA in order that they have the best possible chance of future achievements and economic well-being.

**For any questions regarding this briefing note, please contact:**

**Name:** Keeley Pullen

**Telephone:** 01375 652406

**E-mail:** [kpullen@btinternet.com](mailto:kpullen@btinternet.com)

<b>6 June 2018</b>	<b>ITEM: 7</b>
<b>Corporate Parenting Committee</b>	
<b>Social Care Development Plan: CLA Progress Report</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Simon, Strategic Lead, Children Looked After	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children and Families	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Rory Patterson, Corporate Director, Children's Services	
<b>This report is Public</b>	

## Executive Summary

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**1.1 Corporate Parenting Committee to note and comment on the issues in this report relating to Children Looked After.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This report provides a summary of the children looked after service and highlights key areas within the service.

2.2 There are currently 323 children looked after within Thurrock, 35 children are Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. Thurrock has reduced the number of asylum seeking children this financial year from 50 to 35

2.3 The average caseload for the CLA Teams is 16-18 children and 11-13 children in the Court Team. Social workers in the Fostering Teams do not hold caseloads in the traditional sense.

### 2.4 Fostering Households

Thurrock Council is focussed on the recruitment, approval and training of foster carers who are willing to offer placement to children looked after while maintaining and expanding the capacity of existing foster carers.

<b>Number of Fostering Households</b>	105
---------------------------------------	-----

<b>Number of temporary approvals (connected carers)</b>	9
<b>Number of children/young people placed with in house foster carers</b>	117
<b>Staying Put Arrangements</b>	11

## 2.5 Fostering Approvals (Application to panel target – 8 months)

<b>Quarter 4 2017/18</b>	<b>January 2018</b>	<b>February 2018</b>	<b>March 2018</b>	<b>Within timescale from application to approval</b>
Approval Mainstream	2	1	1	4
Approval Connected Carers	1	0	1	2

<b>Year to date</b>	<b>April 2018</b>	<b>May 2018</b>	<b>June 2018</b>	<b>Within timescale from application to approval</b>
Approval Mainstream				
Approval Connected Carers	1			1

## 2.6 Applicants currently in Assessment (8)

<b>Carer Name (Mainstream or Connected)</b>	<b>Allocated Date</b>	<b>Predicted Panel date</b>	<b>Number of days between allocation and predicated panel</b>
A	14/12/2017	22/3/2018 (actual)	98 days
B	26/2/2018	17/5/2018	80 days
C	10/7/2017	21/6/2018	346 – delay due to bereavement
D	14/2/2018	14/8/2018	181 – delay due to applicants request for Aug panel (teachers)
E	08/05/2018	14/08/2018	98 days
F	19/3/2018	19/07/2018	122 days
G	22/02/2018	TBA	awaiting date
H	07/02/2018	17/5/2018	99 days

## 2.7 Private Fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts.

Referrals are received from a variety of resources identified below. Thurrock has an awareness campaign and action plan for private fostering. As well as conducting free sessions to professionals and the general public, small sessions have been offered to professionals within their place of work. Working within this framework has seen an increase in the number of notifications received and general enquires. An assessment is completed by the service which focuses on the needs of the child and the identified private foster carer.

Source of Notification	School Admission	Social Care Thurrock	Home Language International	NHS	Self-referral	Other LA	Schools
	24	10	2	3	2	3	2

## 2.8 Private Fostering Notifications Year to date (April 2018 to date)

One notification received from school admissions for one child and the assessment is underway.

## 2.9 Post Adoption Support

Referrals for post adoption/Special Guardianship Order (SGO) support are made via Mash, family support team, Prevention and Support Services (PASS). Thurrock's timescales for responding to families seeking Post Adoption Support are:

- Contact within 48 hours of receipt of enquiry
- Initial Visit within 10 days of referral
- Assessment within 45 days of referral

Quarter Four 2017/18	January 2018	February 2018	March
Referrals	7	8	2
Visit within 10 days	7	6	2
Assessment within 45 days	7	6	2
Contacts (signposting/information/NFA/letterbox contact)	5	2	15

The timeliness of responding to post adoption and SGO support has been sustained at 100% over the last three months.

<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>April 2018</b>	<b>May 2018</b>	<b>June 2018</b>
Referrals	4		
Visits within 10 days	4		
Assessments within 45 days	4		
Contacts (signposting/information/NFA/letterbox contact)	8		

### **Development Plan Updates**

#### Priority 4

*Looked-after children have access to high quality care planning, review and support. They are supported in stable care placements and have access to and attend good schools. There are sound arrangements to plan for and achieve permanency where the decision is that a child will not be able to return home. There are effective corporate parenting approaches.*

#### Priority 5

*The views, wishes and experiences of children and young people are fully and consistently considered in social work assessments, care plans (including the PEP), case conferences, visits and reviews.*

Delegation of authority policy shared with the foster carers on the 20.03.2018 and also discussed with foster carers at the foster carers support groups. All foster carers approved this year have a current and up to date DBS. All foster carers reviewed have an up to date DBS.

Our fostering recruitment target is a net increase of 60 approved carers within the next 3 years by 2020. A net increase of 20 placements has been achieved for 2017/18.

23 fostering assessments have been completed between 2017/18 which consists of 17 fostering households and 6 connected carers. 78.2% (18) were completed within the national timescale of 8 months from application to panel and approval. All new foster carers presented to panel within the last three months were within national timescales which evidences an improvement in performance.

A workshop has been held with foster carers focussing on Permanence through Special Guardianship Orders and further workshops are planned.

7 children were adopted in 2017/18, a minimum of 15 adoptions are anticipated for 2018/19 which is further evidence of our improved adoption and permanence work.

100% (8) CLA adopted during 2017/18 were placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision and the average days between Placement order and approval of match is 47.3. This is top quartile performance. Thurrock has 84 Looked After children subject to Section 20 of Children Act 1989; 35 of which are Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. These cases are reviewed and tracked via a formal process and legal action taken to secure permanence where appropriate.

The Adoption and Permanency Tracking (APT) meeting considers all children who are looked after regardless of their status to ensure permanency plans are being rigorously progressed and regularly reviewed.

A therapeutic parenting programme “A Way down the line” started in April 2018, which supports adopters and special guardians to understand behaviour issues and provide them with different strategies to deal with emerging behaviours.

### **3. Key areas of practice development for the next 6 months:**

- Implementation of the agreed business case, to create a dedicated recruitment team for fostering to focus on increasing our in-house fostering resource so that more children are placed within Thurrock.
- Continued improvement of front line management oversight and supervision of practice.
- Looked After children are seen and all visits are recorded and children’s voices are evident.
- Robust reviews of permanency plans for all children.
- Consistent support of letterbox contact for adopted children.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 Members of the Committee to be informed on the issues in relation the Department’s Development Plan and how it relates to Children Looked After.

### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 N/A

### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 N/A

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Nilufa Begum**  
**Management Accountant**

No legal implications.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**  
**Deputy Head of Legal Social Care and Education**

No legal implications.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Strategic Lead Community Development and Equalities**

Although there are no direct Diversity or Equality Implications arising from this report, the overall improvements documented have a positive impact on children and young people.

### **7.4 Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

7.5 N/A

## **8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

8.1 N/A

## **9. Appendices to the report**

9.1 No appendices.

### **Report Author:**

Janet Simon

Strategic Lead, Children Looked After



<b>6 June 2018</b>	<b>ITEM: 8</b>
<b>Corporate Parenting Committee</b>	
<b>Children’s Social Care Performance</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key
<b>Report of:</b> Iqbal Vaza, Strategic Lead, Performance Quality Assurance and Business Intelligence	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children and Families	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Rory Patterson, Corporate Director, Children’s Services	
<b>This report is Public</b>	

## Executive Summary

Thurrock has experienced a high level of demand placed on its statutory social care service for children. Considerable work has been undertaken by the department in managing this demand through improving its early intervention service and managing the front door (MASH) more effectively. There has been a reduction in the number of contacts and referrals; easing the demand pressure of children becoming looked after and children being placed on a child protection plan. In particular the number of children on a child protection plan is now in line. This is a considerable improvement, given the high rate of child protection plans in previous years.

An area of focus is the number of children that have been adopted in 2017/18. Seven children were adopted, which is similar to previous years. This position is below Thurrock’s comparator group of 30 children.

- 1. Recommendation(s)**
  - 1.1 Corporate Parenting Committee to note the areas of improvement in children’s social care, work undertaken to manage demand for statutory social care services and highlight areas of further investigation for deep dive studies.**
  - 1.2 Corporate Parenting Committee to note a new inspection framework has been introduced by Ofsted for children’s social care.**
- 2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 This report provides a summary of children’s social care performance. It highlights key demand indicators such as number of contacts, trend analyses, benchmarking data and key performance indicators.
- 2.2 Thurrock produces a considerable number of data sets and performance reports to meet its internal and external reporting requirements. It is essential that one version of performance information is used by the whole system; from case workers to the senior management team. The data in this report is from the latest performance digest (March 2017), regional benchmarking data (quarter 3 position) and national data sets based on 16/17 financial year. This data had been presented and discussed with the social care senior management team and DCS Performance Group.

**3. Contacts and referrals**

- 3.1 Thurrock is managing its demand placed on the front door (MASH) of children’s social care well.

Although there has been an increase of 78 more contacts in 2017/18, than 2016/17, it is well below the increase from 2015/16 to 2016/17 (373).

Good progress has been made in reducing the rate of referrals and assessments. In 2015/16, Thurrock had one of the highest assessment rates at 713 per 10,000 of the child population. This has been reduced to 500 per 10,000 of the child population (see fig 2). Thurrock has also reduced its referral rate from 592 in 2015/16 to 507 in 2017/18.

Fig 1

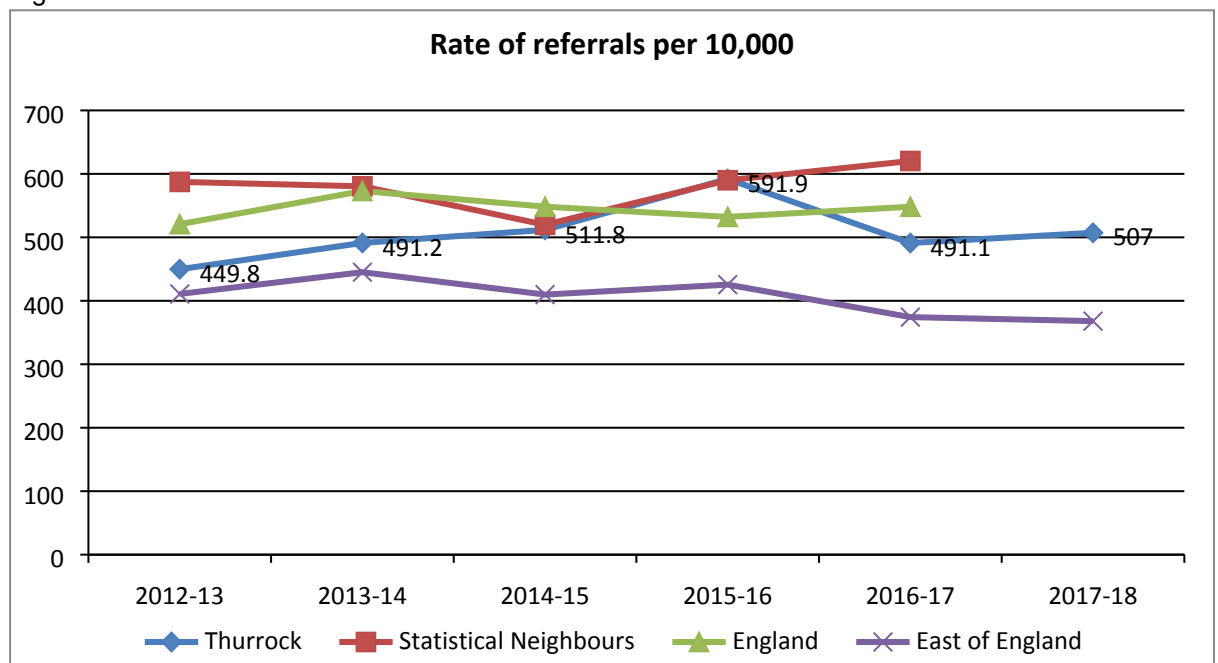
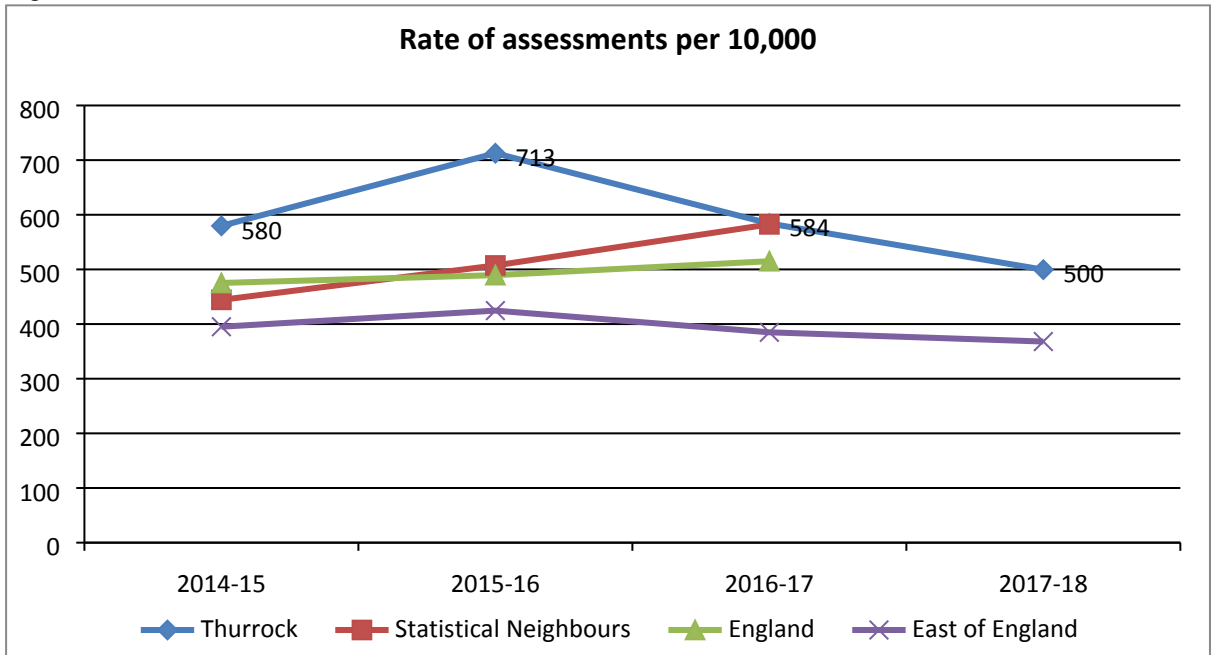
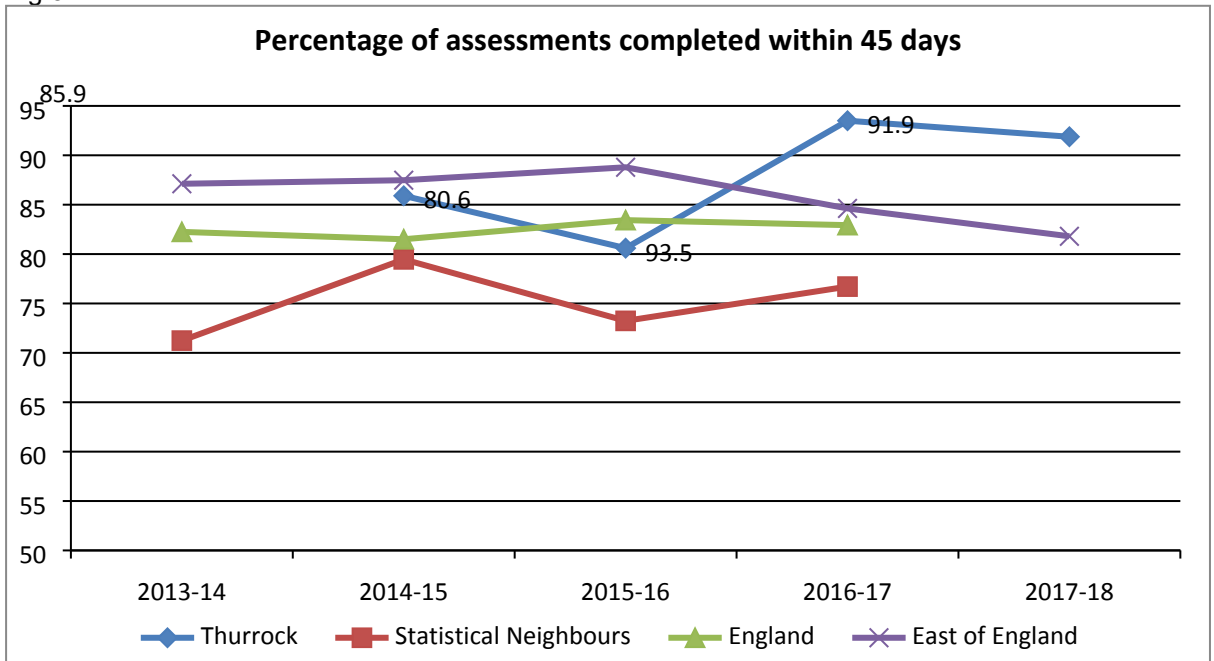


Fig 2



3.2 Thurrock is one of the best performing authorities in completing its assessments within timescale (see fig 3). It also has a low percentage of repeat referrals. In summary the front door of social care is being managed efficiently and work undertaken by the service to reduce demand has been reflected in the data.

Fig 3



### 3.3 Looked after children

3.4 The number of looked after children has reduced by 26 (see fig 4, 2016/17: 333, 2017/18 307) in comparison to the same position last year. This is partly attributed to a reduction in asylum seeking children reducing from 53 to 35 (see fig 5).

Fig 4

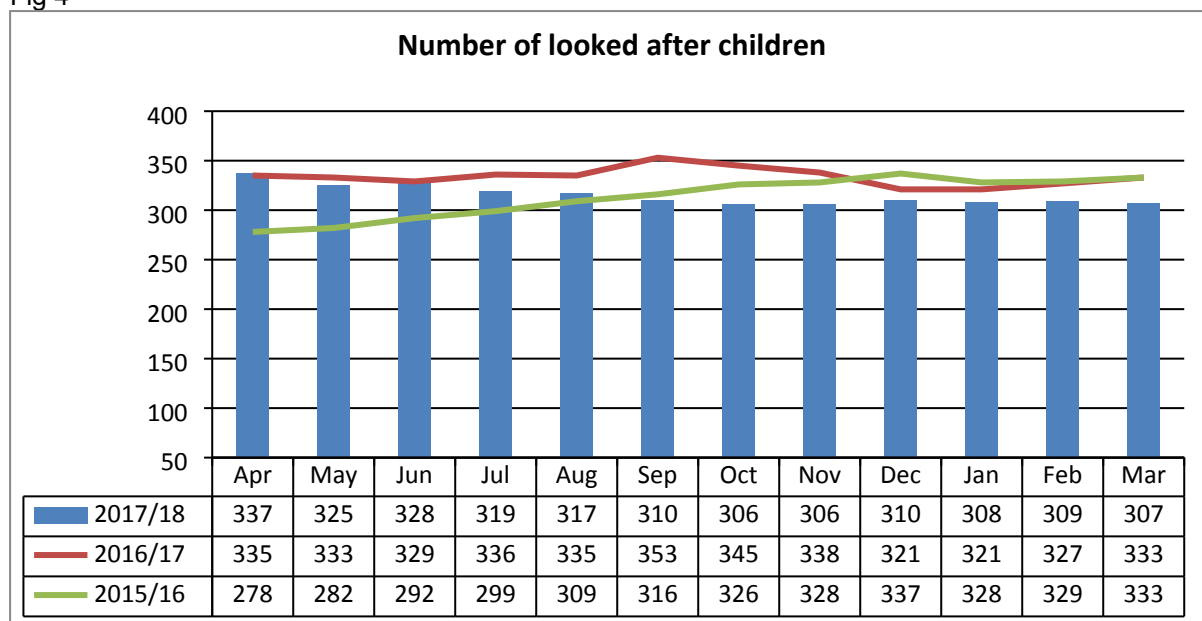
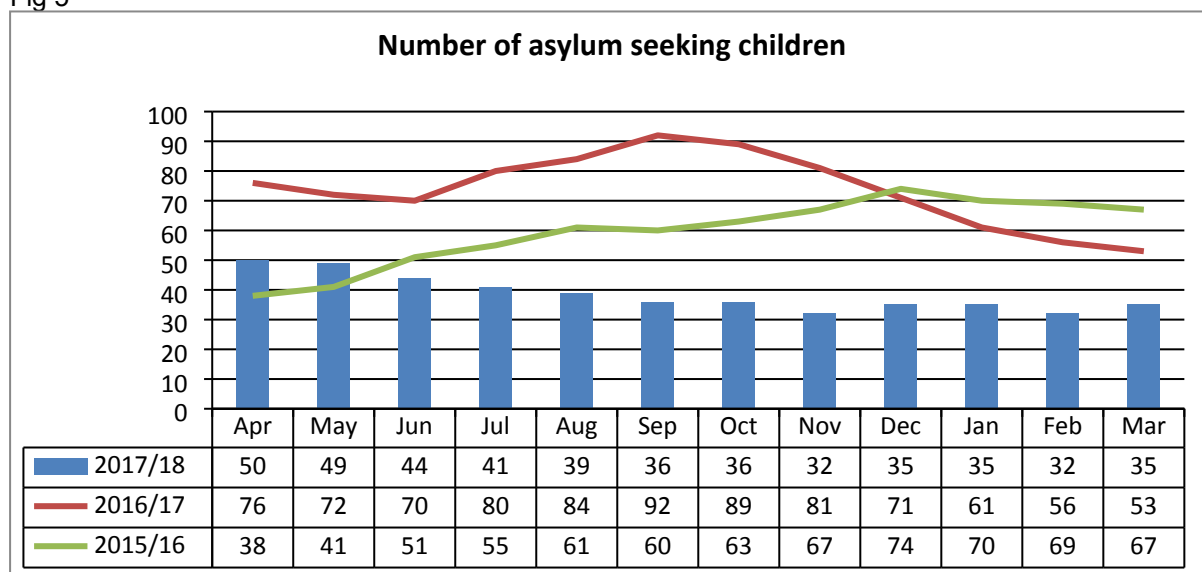
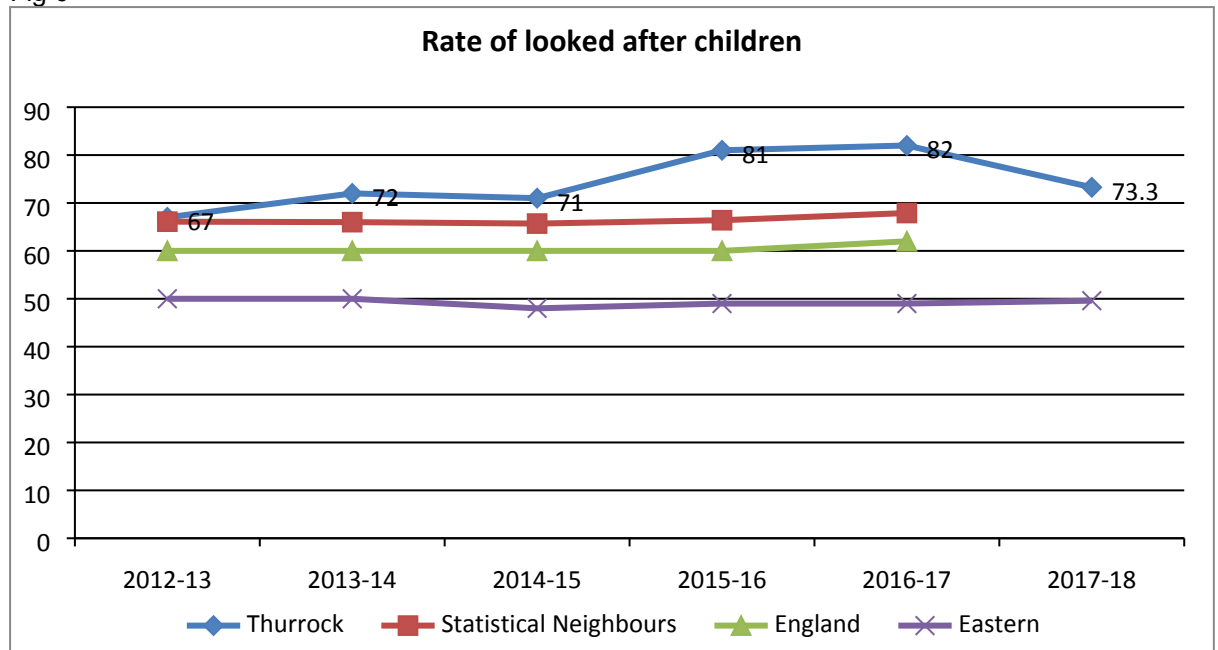


Fig 5



3.5 Thurrock is closing more looked after children cases than its comparator group and the East of England average. Given the high rate of looked after children this is a good position and helped reduced the rate from 82 in 2016/17 to 73 in 2017/18. However the rate of new looked after children is still higher than its comparator group. The service continues to monitor all new looked after cases ensuring correct thresholds are being applied and children are only being looked after where necessary.

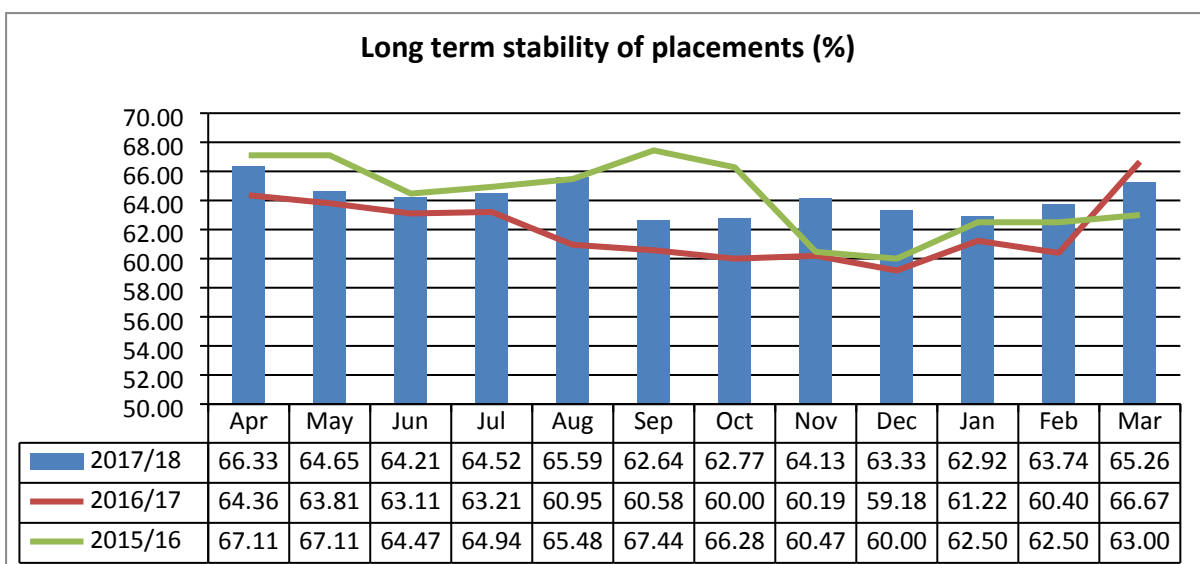
Fig 6



### 3.6 Placements

3.7 Thurrock performs well in placing looked after children in stable placements. In terms of long term stability, 65% (see fig 7) of looked after children under the age of 16 have been in the same placement for more than 2 years. This position is within the range of its comparator group.

Fig 7



3.8 Thurrock has made significant improvements in placing children within Thurrock. We now have 38% children placed within Thurrock, which is 6% higher than the position last year. This is both cost effective and ensures children are closer to their families and community where they also have access to good schools and other local services. Our target is to have at least 50% of placements within borough which will bring us in line with our comparator group.

### 3.9 Looked after children reviews

3.10 The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service provides a statutory function providing scrutiny, challenge and oversight for all children in the care of the local authority, where ever they may be placed in the country. Part of the oversight is achieved by chairing looked after children (LAC) reviews. This is a statutory requirement placed upon the local authority.

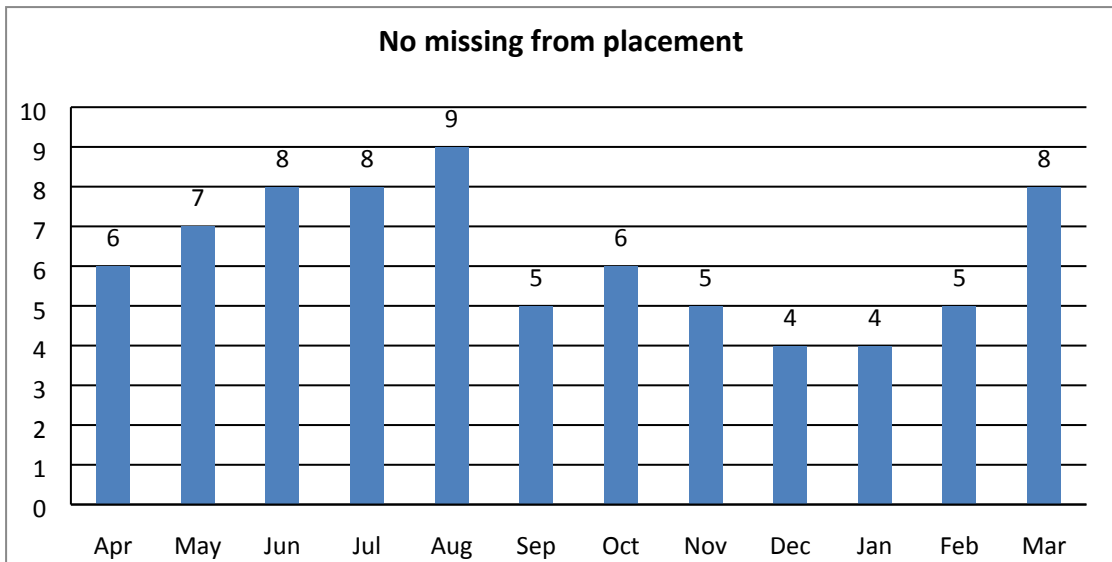
Statutory timescales are prescribed and all local authorities are required to adhere to these timescales, ensuring robust and timely oversight and intervention. The current performance for the service as recorded on the system of 14/5/2018 is 84% of reviews have been completed within the expected timescale. Although this is an improvement from last year, it is still below the standard that all local authorities are required to meet.

Close scrutiny is being focused on this performance indicator.

### 3.11 Looked after children missing

3.12 Thurrock had 8 looked after children missing from placement in March 2018 (see fig 8). There has been a reduction in the number of instances of missing children from 2017/18 – 291 compared to 2016/17 – 361.

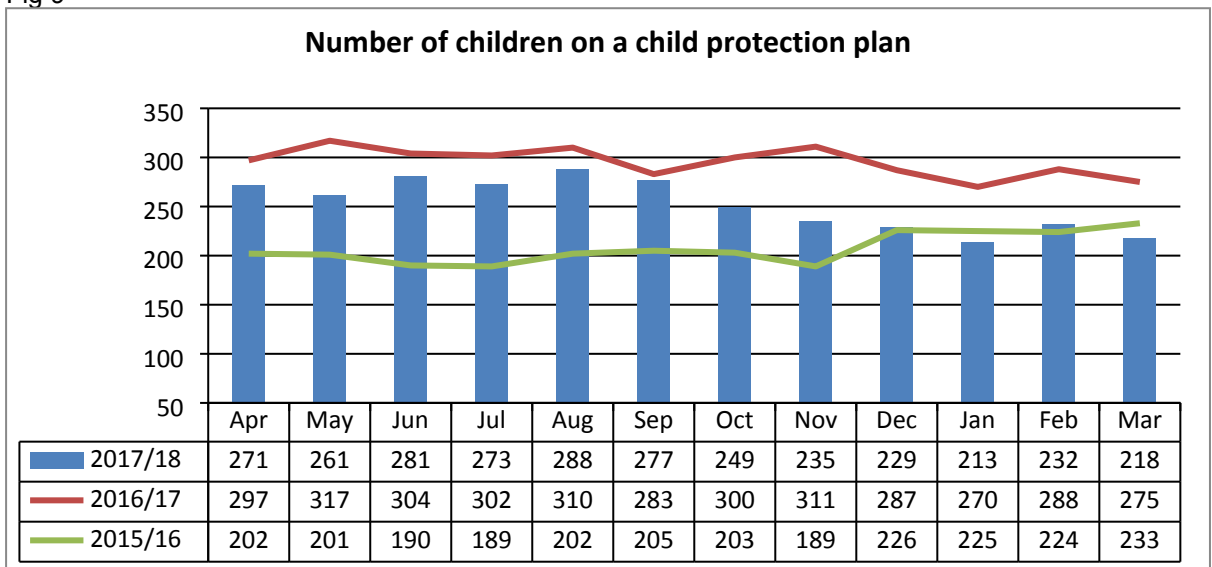
Fig 8



**3.13 Children on a child protection plan**

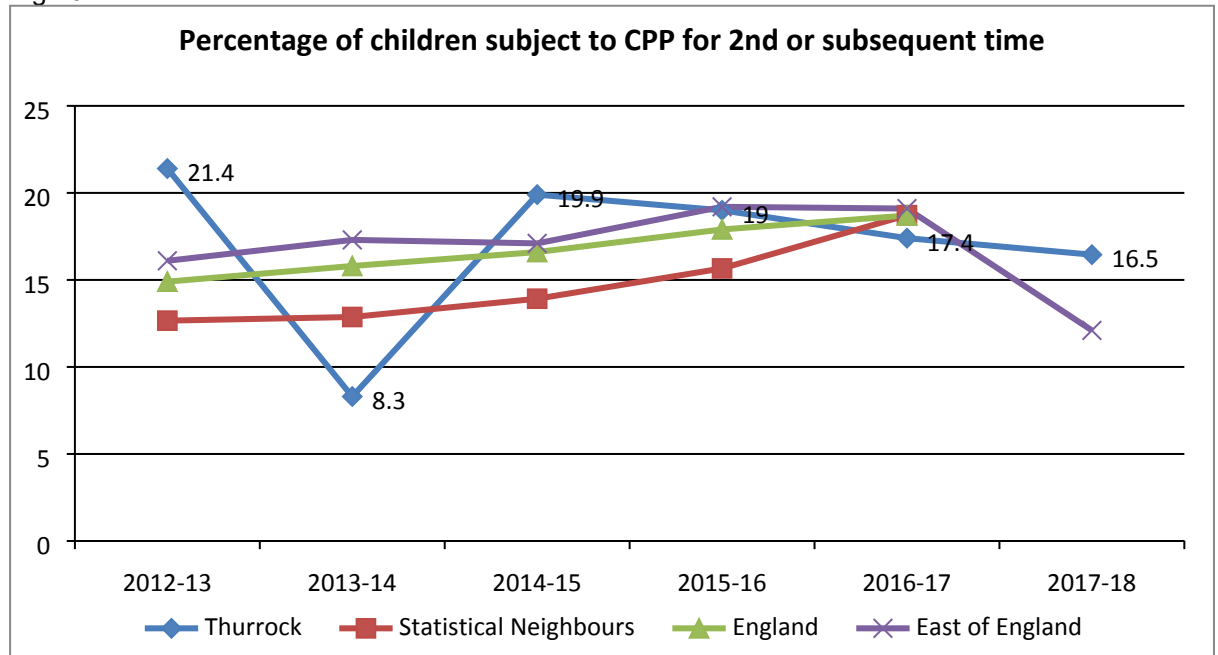
3.14 The number of children on a child protection plan has reduced by 57 (Mar 17: 275, Mar 18: 218) in comparison to the same position last year. This is attributed to a significant reduction in the number of child protection plans being started this financial year (2016/17: 329, 2017/18: 231). Given the previous high rate of child protection plans this is good performance.

Fig 9



3.15 Thurrock’s percentage of re-registrations has reduced to 16.5%. This is below our comparator group. The service will continue to monitor the re-registrations to ensure only children that are suitable are taken off a child protection plan.

Fig 10



### 3.16 Child protection reviews

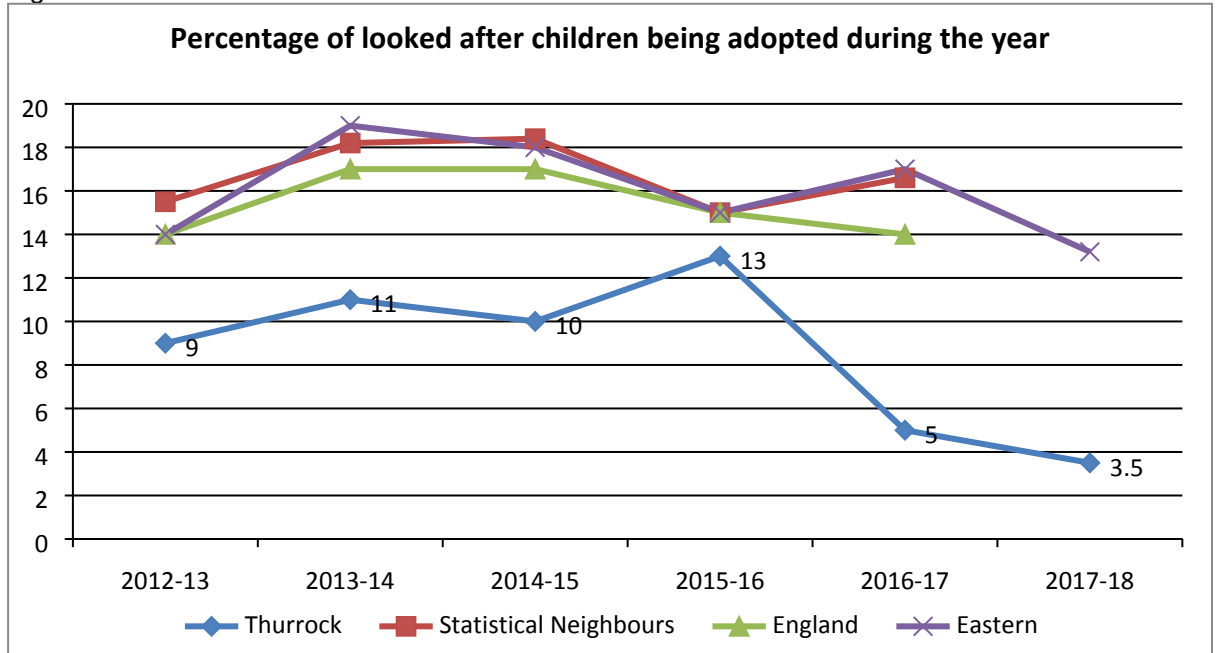
3.17 The number of statutory reviews completed within timescale at the end of 2017/18 was 96%. Although this is an improvement from last year, it is still below the standard that all local authorities are required to meet.

### 3.18 Adoptions

3.19 Thurrock's percentage of adoptions (see fig 11) is low and below its comparator groups. Thurrock adopted 7 children in 2017/18, against a statistical neighbour average of 30.



Fig 11



### 3.20 Care Leavers

3.21 We have continued to focus work on ensuring that the data sets have been refreshed and any inaccuracies have been removed from the system. As a result the percentage of care leavers in education, employment and training has improved to 61.5%. This is below the target of 70% and 16/17 position (61.9%). Similarly, the percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation has also reduced to 78.6%. This is below the position reported in 16/17 (85.3%).

3.22 The realignment of the aftercare service into the Inspire Youth Hub has seen a significant improvement in the number of young people in education employment and training. The On-Track Thurrock programme offers a bespoke programme to ensure that care leavers can access education employment and training. We have had considerable success with this and the figure is currently at 61.5% we recognise that this is below our very ambitious target of 70% but we are significantly above the eastern region at 53.1%. For many of our care leavers we provide our recently judged outstanding Prince's Trust programme which is a way in which we enable young people to build confidence. One example of that is the recent recruitment of one of our carer's leavers into an outdoor education apprenticeship at the residential centre that they attended during the 12 week programme. We actively seek apprenticeship opportunities for our care leavers and continue to provide a range of support programmes to enable them to engage fully in the local communities in which they live.

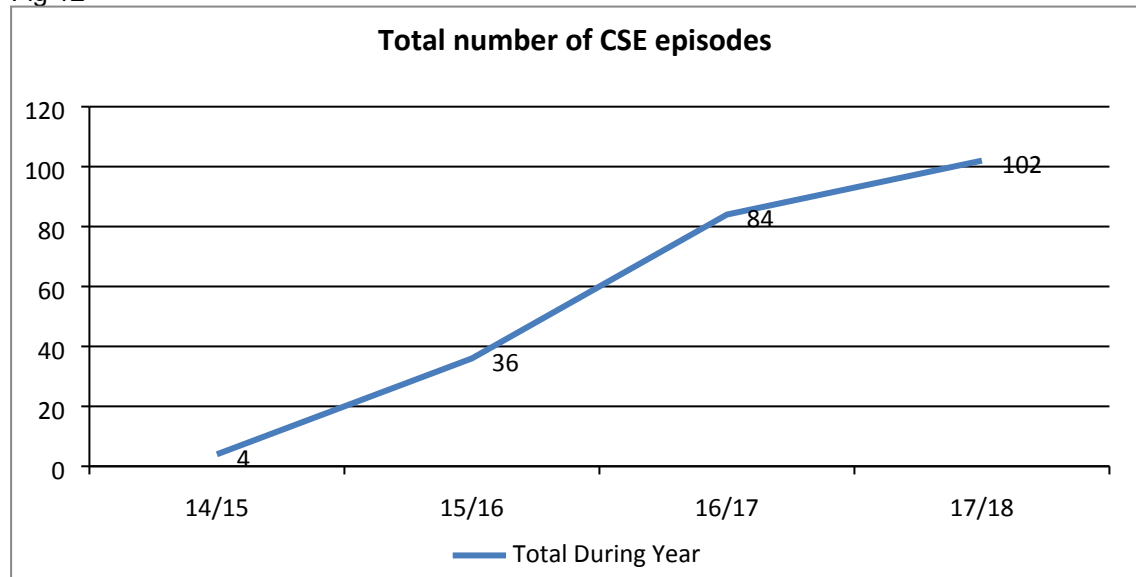
3.23 Housing remains one of the key challenges for young people who are Leaving Care, to address this we have further developed the Head Start Housing

Programme – which will look to support care leavers into a HMO. The aim of Head Start is to provide a holistic approach to supporting young people in both sourcing and sustaining tenancies. We recognise that one of the key barriers relating to this is budget management and to address this we have developed a budgeting programme to ensure that young people can manage finances. The current position shows that we have 1.1% of care leavers in unsuitable accommodation – the rest of the data relates to young people who have gone missing from the LA – a significant percentage of these are made up of our unaccompanied asylum seeking young people and this is recognised nationally as an issue.

**3.24 Child sexual exploitation**

3.25 Thurrock has seen an increase in the number of child sexual exploitation (CSE) incidents. In 2017/18 Thurrock reported 102 separate CSE episodes.

Fig 12



3.26 Thurrock has more girls (59%) than boys that are subject to child sexual exploitation, which is higher than the percentage of girls on a child protection plan (47%) and also higher than the percentage of girls being looked after (35%).

**3.27 Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS)**

3.28 The current single inspection framework (SIF) for children’s services ended in December 2017 and has been replaced with the new inspection of local authority children’s services (ILACS) framework, which started in January 2018. Under ILACS, local authorities are required to share their self-evaluation at the annual engagement meeting with Ofsted. Thurrock has completed its self-evaluation and shared this with Ofsted as part of the annual conversation.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 Corporate Parenting Committee to note and comment on current performance position.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 N/A

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 N/A

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Nilufa Begum**  
**Management Accountant**

No Financial Implications

##### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**  
**Deputy Head of Legal Social Care and Education**

No Legal Implications

##### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Strategic Lead Community Development and Equalities**

Individual needs of children and young people which include their gender, religion, language and disability are considered. There is also the need to consider risks to children and young people such as sexual exploitation, gang related violence and trafficking.

##### **7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)**

N/A

**8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

8.1 N/A

**9. Appendices to the report**

9.1 No appendices.

**Report Author:**

Iqbal Vaza

Strategic Lead, Performance Quality Assurance and Business Intelligence

Strategy, Communications and Customer Services

# Work Programme

**Committee:** Corporate Parenting

**Year:** 2018/2019

**Dates of Meetings:** 6 June 2018, 5 September 2018, 15 January 2019, 6 March 2019

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
<b>6 June 2018</b>		
Information on Recent External Placements for Young People	Janet Simon	Officers
Briefing Note – Attainment of Children Looked After 2017 Validated Data	Keeley Pullen	Officers
Social Care Development Plan: CLA Progress Report	Sheila Murphy	Officers
Children’s Social Care Performance	Sheila Murphy	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
<b>5 September 2018</b>		
Placement Updates of Care Packages	Janet Simon	Members
Annual Report on the Health of Looked After Children	Paula Gregory	Members
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
<b>15 January 2019</b>		
Children in Care Council Update	Children in Care	Officers
Virtual School Annual Report	Keeley Pullen	Officers
Placement Update of Care Packages	Janet Simon	Officers
IRO Annual Report	Neale Laurie	Officers

Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
<b>6 March 2019</b>		
Placement Update of Care Packages	Janet Simon	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
<b>New Municipal Year</b>		