

SUFFICIENCY AND COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS IN THE CITY OF LONDON

2018-21

About this document

Title	Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care and Care Leavers in the City of London.
Purpose	The Sufficiency Strategy has been produced to set out how the City of London Corporation will meet its duty of sufficiency. This version of the document includes the mid-term review.
Updated by	Head of Strategy and Performance
Approved by	Director of Community and Children's Services
Date	2019
Version number	1.5
Status	Final
Review frequency	Three-yearly with annual review.
Next review date	April 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Vision	4
Local Context	4
Commissioning Placements – Options Appraisal	7
Reviewing the Strategy	12
Concluding Remarks	12
Appendix 1: Legal Context	13
Appendix 2: Responsible Procurement	15
Appendix 3: Fostering Monitoring Form	16
Appendix 4: Semi-independent living Monitoring Form	16

Tables and Diagrams

Figures 1: Numbers of Looks After Children in the City of London	5
Figure 2: Ethnic Diversity of Children Looked After Population at 31 December 2018	6
Figure 3b: Ethnic Diversity of Care Leaves Population 31 December 2018	6
Table 1: Fostering Placements – Options Appraisal	10
Table 2: Semi-Independent Living – Options Appraisal	11

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The City of London Corporation's (City Corporation) Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care and Care Leavers draws together the findings from research into the needs of children and young people in care. It analyses need presenting to the City of London, helps us to assess future placement requirements, and sets out options and explains our approach. This strategy should be read alongside other key strategies. These include the City's *Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy*, *the Joint Mental Health Strategy*, *the Education Strategy*, *the Children and Young People Plan* as well the City of London Police's *Vulnerability Strategy*.
- 1.2 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough placements within their geographical area to meet the needs of looked after children. The City of London covers one square mile and there are no foster carers within this geographic area (March 2019). Due to the comparatively low number of children residing in the City of London it has not been considered feasible to provide an in-house fostering service.
- 1.3 The City Corporation has one generic children's team which provides a full range of services including permanence, early help, and support for children with disabilities, children in need, child protection, looked after children and care leavers. The number of City of London resident children who have become looked after is very low. Most children who are looked after by the City Corporation are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). The size of the children's team, the low numbers of looked after children and the predominance of UASC determines the distinct approach to placements that we take in the City of London.
- 1.4 The City Corporation is committed to ensuring that children and young people can remain safely within their own families wherever this is consistent with maintaining and promoting their wellbeing. This is supported through a "Think Family" approach, whereby all services involved with the family work together to prevent children coming into care.
- 1.5 We are also improving the range of support services available to children with disabilities and their families, again to ensure that this group of children and young people remain within their families wherever possible. This is achieved through supporting children and families in accessing targeted and early help services, in addition to "short breaks".
- 1.6 We ensure that only those children and young people for whom care is essential come into care while enabling all others to be supported to remain within their extended families. Where children and young people need to come into care for their own safety and protection, we will seek to ensure that they remain placed as close as possible to their home, community and school, when this is in accordance with their best interests.
- 1.7 For young children who are unable to safely return to their birth or extended families, we will seek permanency for them through adoption wherever possible. Adoption is

associated with the best outcomes for children unable to remain within their own birth families, where this is not possible the City has sought to achieve permanency through a Special Guardianship Order.

2 Vision

- 2.1 This strategy reflects and will support the delivery of the vision and priorities set out in our *Children and Young People's Plan 2018-21*.
- 2.2 The Vision is 'to be the best place possible for children and young people to grow up. We will work in partnership to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all our children and young people, regardless of background and circumstance, feel they belong. We will provide high quality services, world-class education and excellent opportunities that enable them to live healthily, develop resilience, access meaningful employment, achieve their potential and thrive'.
- 2.3 The five priorities are:
 - **Safe** - Our children and young people are safe and feel safe.
 - **Potential** – Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well-prepared for adulthood.
 - **Independence, involvement and choice** - Our children and young people are co-producers of cultural and support services and they will have the resources to develop independence and the empowerment to play an active role in their communities and exercise choice over their services.
 - **Health and wellbeing** - Our children and young people enjoy good health and wellbeing.
 - **Community** - Our children and young people grow up with a sense of belonging as part of cohesive and resilient communities. They are able to create and participate in the cultural and creative opportunities available in the Square Mile.
- 2.4 Our Children and Young People's Plan supports the delivery of the aims set out in the City Corporation's *Corporate Plan 2018-23*, particularly to 'contribute to a flourishing society' where people are safe and feel safe, enjoy good health and wellbeing, have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential and live in communities that are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

3 Local Context

- 3.1 As can be seen from Figure 1 (below) the majority of the looked after children cared for by the City Corporation are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) hence why the City has explored many options for semi-independent living which is the preferred placement option of UASC according to consultation with them. This contrasts with other local authorities, where the majority are residents in the local authority. This brings its own unique challenges for the City Corporation in terms of finding suitable placements that meet the diverse cultural needs. In addition, while comparatively low, the number of looked after children doubled between 2018 and

2019, as did the number of care leavers, and we have needed to respond to the additional demand for placements.

Figure 1: Numbers of looked after children in City of London

Figures at 31 March 2019		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
No of Looked After Children (LAC)	Local Authority	7	8	11	12	10	20
LAC at 31 March - Rate per 10,000 CYP population (<18yo)	LA - actual	84	84	101	103	80	159
	LA – rounded DfE rate	95	92	108	109	80	
	SN	48.8	48.7	48.1	48.6	48.6	
	Inner London	64	60	57	58	58	
	England	60	60	60	62	64	

	LAC June 18	LAC Dec 18	LAC March 19	Care leaver Dec 18	Care leaver March 19
No of open cases	10	16	19	22	21
No of UASC	9	14	17	21	20

KEY FACTS

In March 2019, the City Corporation was caring for 20 young people, of whom 17 were UASC.

This is nearly double the number of cases in June 2018, when there were 10, including 9 UASC.

This is a rate of 159 per 10,000 children under-18 in the City, significantly higher than the London average of 58 per 10,000 at March 2019.

2 out of the 20 were female, 13 were black or black British, 1 was Asian, 1 was mixed ethnicity, 1 was white and 4 were from other ethnic groups.

Of the 20 living in care 13 were in foster care placements, 6 were living in semi-independent residential accommodation with 24/7 support 1 in children's homes subject to children's home regulations was living in a children's home

During 2018-19, a total of 23 young people aged 18 to 24 were receiving care leavers services, of whom 16 were UASC.

All care leavers were between 16 to 24 years old.

At March 2019, 21 young people were engaged with the City Corporation's Care Leaver service of which 20 were former UASC. This is more than double the number for June 2018.

2 out of 21 were female, 4 are Asian, 3 white, 13 black African and 1 white.

1 were in semi-independent living projects; 1 were in 'staying put' arrangements and 19 were independently living in local authority tenancies

- 3.2 Figures 2 and 3 show the ethnic diversity of the looked after children and care leaver population supported by the City Corporation. Our approach is to meet the diverse needs of our children and young people, ensuring that they have the support of foster carers who know and understand their needs and journey. We seek to secure the best match for the young person in their placement through reviewing and assessing a range of carers with similar backgrounds to the young people (see Section 4).
- 3.3 Due to the diverse nature of this population it is important that we have a range of carers from varied backgrounds, given the size and demography of the City of London it is difficult to meet these needs in the Square Mile.
- 3.4 Most accommodation used for those who are transitioning to leave care delivers some support to our young people and reflects their needs on transitioning to independence. The City Corporation anticipates that UASC will continue to be the significant majority of those for whom we provide care. As such our future need will continue to require a high proportion of semi-independent living accommodation that provide support.

Figure 2: Ethnic Diversity of Looked After Children Population at 31 December 2018

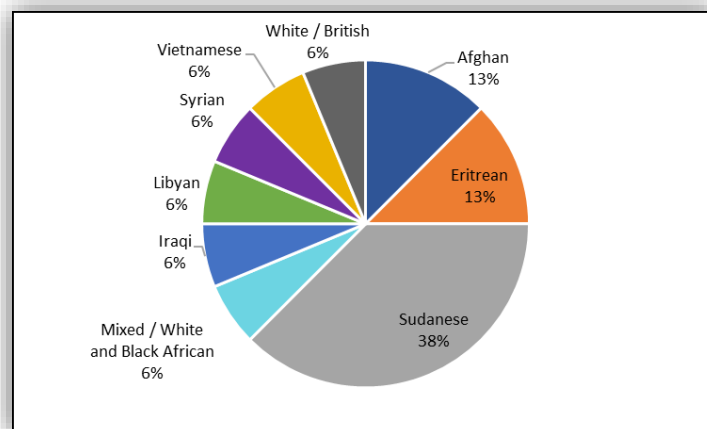
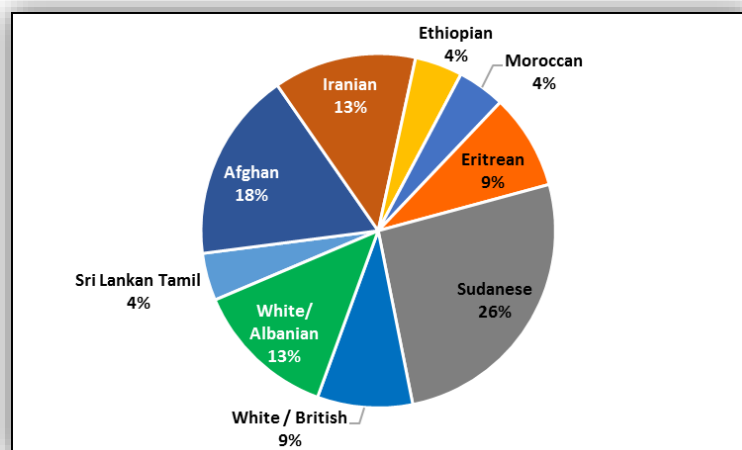


Figure 3: Ethnic Diversity of Care Leaves Population 31 December 2018



4 Commissioning Placement – options appraisal

- 4.1 Our approach to commissioning services for looked after children and care leavers is shaped by the evidence-base for what works, by best practice and by the voices of children and young people.
- 4.2 A sufficiency strategy for the City of London also needs to take account of the specific characteristics of our locality and our cohort of looked after children and care leavers.
- **Our size.** We have a comparatively small resident population (around 8,000) and much fewer children and young people in care and leaving care than other local authorities.
 - **Our looked after and care leaver population.** The children and young people in our care are mostly UASC. They tend to be older and are a highly diverse cohort who may have strong ethnic, cultural and religious identities. They prefer semi-independent living.
 - **Our assets.** For example as a strategic housing authority we have accommodation both in the City of London and across six other London Boroughs.
 - **Our values.** A placement is only as good as the social work practice that supports it – for example, after three months in placement we offer a specialist mental health assessment. We are strongly committed to co-production: treating children and young people as partners; finding out about their individual needs, assets and aspirations, and involving them at a strategic level (e.g. through our Children in Care Council).

Some assumptions

- 4.3 Our placements commissioning strategy assumes that:
- Foster care placements will usually be best for looked after children who are under the age of 18 (except the youngest children, where adoption may be best).
 - The option of remaining in a successful foster care placement should be available for older children. We are committed to providing continuity for children beyond 18 wherever we can.
 - Semi-independent living may be suitable for older children in care, but for 16 to 18-year-olds (subject to assessment) this would need to come with 24/7 onsite staffing and access to specialist support.
 - Semi-independent living is a good alternative option to foster care for young people leaving care and UASC who are used to fending for themselves.
- 4.4 It also assumes that:
- A placement in or near the City of London may be best for children with a local connection

- A placement taking account of the individual’s ethnic, cultural and/or religious identity is usually beneficial for UASC.

Option assessment

4.5 The City Corporation has focussed on six key criteria in making our initial options assessment:

1. *Are placements available in the City of London?* This is beneficial for some children.
2. *Are placements subject to regular and rigorous quality checking?*
3. *Does our approach to placements provide us with enough capacity of the right sort to meet changing need?*
4. *Does our approach meet the diverse needs of our children and young people?*
Recognising that this is not going to be possible within the City of London itself.
5. *Does our approach provide stability, and minimise placement breakdown?* This is difficult to assess directly. For us, if we are meeting criteria 1-4, then placements will tend to be stable, so long as they are supported by good social work practice.
6. *Do placements provide ‘value for money’?* How do the costs compare with alternatives of similar or better quality and with those of other local authorities?

4.6 Finally, we need an approach that enables us to work **flexibly**, so we are not exclusively reliant on one option, are managing risk and can meet the diverse needs of the children and young people looked after and leaving care (e.g., by having options in the City of London, while also being able to cast the net wider to match children to placements appropriately).

4.7 As noted, the success of any placement depends on the quality of support provided. We ensure that a high level of in placement support is available both from the child’s social worker and an independent reviewing officer, for care leavers in City accommodation our tenancy sustainment officers also have a key role to play.

4.8 The outcome of the evaluation is provided in Tables 1 and 2 (see pp. 10 and 11).

- **For foster care:** We will continue to work through the Pan-London Care Services Portal, co-ordinated by London Councils. While we have had limited success in matching children to placements through the portal’s in-built tool, we have been successful in placing children by using it as a directory that supports our commissioners to work proactively with providers to secure placements. However, the portal may be discontinued. To manage this risk we are investigating the options for a ‘joint framework of providers’ with other London Boroughs.¹ We seek to secure foster carers who are willing to enter into ‘staying put’ arrangements to provide stability for those leaving care and transitioning to adulthood.

¹ We also provide free training for all foster carers who are involved in caring for City of London children and young people.

- **For semi-independent living:** Our current spot-purchasing arrangements perform well against our six criteria, but negotiating placements can be a resource intensive business, and – in this sense – may not provide best value. We have secured accommodation in the City for care leavers and are prioritising them in our Housing Allocation policy. We now have developed an accredited provider list and are investigating being part of a joint provider framework for semi-independent living because we know this type of placement is the preferred option of UASC.
- **Adoption** is generally the best option for younger children who cannot return to their birth or extended families. The City of London has a Memorandum of Understanding with five local authorities to form a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), led by the London Borough of Harrow. **Residential services** are available through the Pan-London Care Services (and would be part of a new Joint Framework).

4.9 In addition, the City's offer includes:

- Additional free training for foster carers who care for City looked after children
- A high level of support for all children and young people in placement from their social worker and independent review officer
- A specialist mental health assessment offered to all children and care leavers after three months, to ensure their needs are identified and responded to in a timely manner, recognising the higher risk of trauma among UASC.s.

4.10 The City of London Corporation started a programme of reviewing the semi-independent provision that was being provided for looked after children and care leavers. The purpose of this review was to establish the quality of the services being provided, and gain assurance that young people were not at risk in the local authority areas in which they were being placed. Standard checks were made on the services being provided by the semi-independent provision in relation to the quality of support being offered to young people in respect of life skills, health, cultural needs, education and accessibility to facilities, such as Mosques, Churches, shops and leisure facilities.

4.11 The locality of the semi-independent placement was also reviewed, looking at the level and types of crime occurring in the area, in comparison to other London Boroughs. The information from these visits is shared with the Children and Families Team so they can make an informed decision on placing a young person in the area.

Table 1: Fostering Placements – Options Appraisal

	Placement in the City	Quality Control	Capacity to meet need	Diversity and choice	Placement Stability*	Value for Money+	Preferred Options
<p>In-House Fostering Service: Foster carers recruited and supported by the City of London</p>	✓	✓	X	X	?	X	X
<p>COMMENTARY: An In-House service could help to strengthen connections to the City of London. Children from the City could be nearer to home if placements were available. But most children in our care are UASC, not from the City and few (if any) residents are able and willing to be foster carers.</p>							
<p>Pan-London Care Services (PLS) Our subscription to PLS is via an SLA and gives access to quality assured and cost-checked services.</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>COMMENTARY: We subscribe to the portal. London Councils benchmark the costs and monitor quality and we only place children with agencies rated ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted. This gives access to a range of placements (e.g. for cultural diversity). Using the portal flexibly as a tool/directory has enabled us to secure placements. There is a risk it will be discontinued.</p>							
<p>Joint Framework of Providers We are exploring the option of jointly commissioning a framework of providers with one or more London Boroughs</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
<p>COMMENTARY: This could work alongside the PLS or provide a similar replacement if the PLS was discontinued. We would have a direct role in benchmarking and quality control. While there would be advantages in this there would also be cost and resourcing considerations.</p>							

NB If required, residential placements are also available through the PLS and could be accommodated within a Joint Framework of Providers.

* Placement Stability. Whether a placement is stable or not will depend on the needs and expectations of the child and the quality of social work. As a rule, we assume that placements are more likely to succeed and be stable where they are of high quality, meet need and respond to the specific needs and profile of the child (e.g., diversity).

+ Value for Money. For the purposes of this options appraisal we rank an option as providing VfM based on benchmarking comparisons with: (i) the costs of other options for CoL and (ii) costs in other local authorities.

Table 2: Semi-Independent Living – Options Appraisal

	Placement in the City	Quality Control	Capacity to meet need	Diversity and choice	Placement Stability	Value for Money	Preferred Options
<p>Spot-purchasing We currently spot purchase from a list of quality checked providers in various locations where weekly prices are known to us</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>COMMENTARY: Value for money is achieved by pre-agreed prices on the list of providers. Further small discounts may sometimes be achieved through negotiation e.g if COL have more than one placement with a provider. There is a range of available provision on the list. Prices are bench-marked with other local authorities and through a soft market testing exercise which compared rates and levels of service offered by providers.</p>							
<p>Retain a bed (single provider) This would involve paying to keep a bed available for placements</p>	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
<p>COMMENTARY: The price would be unacceptably high given uneven demand for semi-independent living. Nor would this enable us to accommodate two or more placements at a time. Where demand was higher, additional bed(s) would need to be spot purchased.</p>							
<p>Accredited provider list/Joint Framework Under investigation. Next steps could be to identify LB partner(s) and agree accreditation protocols</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>COMMENTARY: Accrediting a list of quality-assured providers would enable us to access beds quickly and with confidence and to cater for diversity. Regular and effective quality checking would need to be funded and resourced, but this would provide better value for money than the first 2 options.</p>							
<p>Dedicated supported housing Accommodation has been secured in the City at Middlesex Street and at the YMCA</p>	✓	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓
<p>COMMENTARY: The City's Housing Allocation scheme gives priority to care leavers, with additional support from a tenancy sustainment team. This option will not be suitable for young people aged 16-18 who require access to 24/7 support, but is a good transition option for older care leavers. The value for money will come from making best use of existing capacity (e.g., for tenancy support).</p>							

5. Reviewing this Strategy

- 4.12 This strategy sets out our commissioning intentions to ensure that we have sufficient placements of the right kind and quality to meet the needs of children and young people in care within the City of London.
- 4.13 Central to this strategy is children and young people and the support they need to thrive, develop and reach their full potential. This means considering their health, education, connectedness and emotional wellbeing when reviewing how we meet their placement needs.
- 4.14 We are committed to ensuring that children and young people have their views taken into consideration; this will be achieved by consultation through and engagement with forums including the Children in Care Council and the Youth Forum.
- 4.15 The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that our approach and commissioning intentions are effectively meeting the needs of children looked after in the City of London. Review will also take account of any complaints or complements regarding placements.
- 4.16 This strategy runs until 2021, and will be reviewed annually, with the next review in April 2019.

5 Concluding Remarks

- 5.1 The sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for children in care and Care Leavers sets out the City Corporation's intentions in providing services for children looked after in the City, which meets their needs in relation to quality and diversity. The uniqueness of the demography in the City of London is not currently conducive in meeting these needs and therefore the City Corporation commission's independent fostering agencies through the Pan London agreement and uses an approved list of several providers for LACs over 16, Care Leavers and UASC but also aim to place them in City of London estates when appropriate
- 5.2 The Children and Young People's plan sets out our overarching vision, priorities and activities, which provide the context for this strategy. We will continue to provide preventative services through Early Help to prevent children and young people coming into care. This supports the City Corporation in maintaining low numbers of City of London children coming into care. A significant proportion of the City Corporation's looked after population are UASC. A key area of development has been to bring both City of London resident children and UASC together to ensure that they have a say in the development of services for children in care. This has been achieved through the Children in Care Council and opportunities for children in care and care leavers to be involved in the monitoring of commissioned services.

APPENDIX 1 – The Legal Context

1. Since the implementation of the Children Act 1989 local authorities have been required to take steps that secure, so far as is reasonable and practicable, sufficient accommodation for children looked after within their local authority area or ‘the sufficiency duty’ (s. 22G, Children Act 1989, as inserted into the Act by s. 9 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008).
2. The Statutory Guidance on *Securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children* (2010) sets out best practice, which includes the following:
 - That all children are placed in appropriate placements with access to the support services they require in their local authority area, except where this is not consistent with their welfare;
 - That the full range of universal, targeted and specialist services work together to meet children’s needs in an integrated way in the local area, including children who are already looked after, as well as those at risk of care or custody;
 - Where it is not reasonable or practical for a child to be placed within her/his local authority area, there are mechanisms in place to widen the range of provision in neighbouring areas, or a region which is still within an accessible distance, while still being able to provide the full range of services to meet identified needs;
 - That partners, including housing, work together to secure a range of provision to meet the needs of those who become looked after at the age of 16 and 17 years, and support the continuity of accommodation beyond the age of 18 years;
 - In addition to meeting relevant national minimum standards, services are of high quality to secure the specific outcomes identified in the care plans of children looked after.
3. The Statutory Guidance states that ‘Local authorities must be able to show that at a strategic level they are taking steps to meet the sufficiency duty, so far as is ‘reasonably practical’.’ It further explains what is meant by ‘reasonably practical’, and it includes the following:
 - that it is a general duty that applies to strategic arrangements, rather than to the provision of accommodation to an individual child;
 - it does not require local authorities to provide accommodation within their area for every child they look after;
 - there may be a significant minority of children for whom it is not ‘reasonably practical’ to provide a certain type of accommodation within the area;
 - in accordance with section 22C (5) of the 1989 Act, the overriding factor is that the placement must be the most appropriate placement available;
 - the local authority must give preference to a placement with a friend, relative or other person connected with the child and who is a local authority foster parent [section 22C (7) (a)].

4. The term 'looked after children' as defined in the 1989 Act refers to all children and young people being 'looked after' by the local authority. These may be subject to Care Orders or Interim Care Orders; placed or authorised to be placed, with prospective adopters; voluntarily accommodated including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), subject to court orders with residence requirements i.e. a secure order or remanded to local authority accommodation.
5. The term 'care leavers' as defined in The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 amends the Children Act 1989 to include the following definitions of 'eligible', 'relevant' and 'former relevant' children:
 - Eligible children are those young people aged 16 and 17 who are still in care and have been 'looked after' for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14 and including their 16th birthday;
 - Relevant children are those young people aged 16 and 17 who have already left care, and who were 'looked after' for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14, and have been 'looked after' at some time while they were 16 or 17;
 - Former relevant children are those young people aged 18, 19 or 20 who have been eligible and/or relevant.
6. The *Children and Social Work Act 2017* introduced Corporate Parenting Principles to ensure all staff and departments in local authorities consider the impact of their work on those children and young people for whom the local authority is the corporate parent, as well as for care leavers up to the age of 25. There is a focus on encouraging children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings and taking these into account, ensuring they have stability and preparing them for adulthood and independent living. The Act also requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers.
7. *The National Transfer Scheme for Migrant Children* was set up by the Home office and Department for Education in 2016. It is a voluntary transfer arrangement between local authorities for the care of unaccompanied children who arrive in the UK to claim asylum. The scheme was set up to encourage all local authorities to volunteer to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) which a more even distribution of social care responsibilities across the country. Under the scheme a child arriving in one local authority area that is providing care at or near capacity for UASC may be transferred to another council with more capacity. This is a voluntary arrangement, and, London local authorities continue to support higher numbers of UASC than local authorities outside London, which puts pressure on the resources of social care teams in London.

APPENDIX 2 - Responsible Procurement

1.1 The City Corporation's Responsible Procurement Strategy sets out how we will balance best value for money with good market stewardship in the procurement of goods, services and works. Our three pillars of responsible procurement are:

1. **Social Value:** Leveraging service and works contracts to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of local people and the local environment, providing skills and employment opportunities and promoting the local economy.
2. **Environmental sustainability:** Minimising environmental impacts, promoting animal welfare and improving efficiency throughout the supply chains of all goods, services and works procured by the City Corporation.
3. **Ethical Sourcing:** Ensuring that human rights and employment rights are protected throughout the City's supply chains and encouraging responsible business practices

APPENDIX 3 – Fostering Monitoring Form



Fostering Monitoring Form

Fostering Provision.....**Date seen**.....

Present.....

Contract Review

Pan London/ Organisational contract in place.....Yes/No

Individual child contract in placeYes/No

Last Reviewed.....Date.....

Last Monitoring Meeting.....Date.....

Ofsted Inspection

Last Ofsted Inspection Outcome.....Date.....

Outstanding Actions Progress.....Date.....

Children Placed

Name.....Date Placed.....Foster Carers.....

Name.....Date Placed.....Foster Carers.....

Name.....Date Placed.....Foster Carers.....

Name.....Date Placed.....Foster Carers.....

Name.....Date Placed.....Foster Carers.....

Current Placement Costs/ Reviewed

Cost.....Reviewed.....

Cost.....Reviewed.....

Finance Review/

Comment.....

Placement	Evidence	Checked By	Comment
Is there someone that the child can speak to if they are worried or concerned?			
How do foster carers promote the child identity and individual needs?			
What support and training do staff have in promoting positive behaviour and relationships?			
Safeguarding Children – Training, LADO procedures and reporting mechanisms.			
Does the agency have clear policy and procedures in place in relation to children missing from care/ are foster carers aware,			
How often are placements checked/reviewed in regard to Health and safety, what training is available for foster carers?			
Placement suitability in regard to leisure, contact and supporting educational needs.			
Feedback from children and young people on placement, provider and commissioned service.			
Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care- How is this supported.			
Recruiting, selection and assessing of foster carers.			
Information on agency decision maker and fostering panel.			
Fostering agencies statement of purpose and children’s guide.			
Stability of work force, safer recruitment processes			
Learning and development of foster carers, sample of training opportunities available, and frequency.			

Supervision and support for foster carers. Out of normal working hours support.			
Handling of professional allegations and suspicions of harm. Policy and procedures.			
Notification of significant events LA's, Social Worker, Safeguarding Board.			

CSE / Radicalisation and Prevent agenda (obtained from LSCB/Police)

Intelligence on prevalence where children and young people placed;

CSE..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Radicalisation..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Foster Carers have had training on;

CSE..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Radicalisation..... Yes/No (delete as required)

Actions outstanding/ review date

.....

Copy of Form sent to agency...Yes/ No.....Date.....

Next Review Date.....

APPENDIX 4 – Semi-independent living Monitoring Form

Post 16 Supported Accommodation – New provider Quality Assurance

Provider name

Property address

Number of current placements

What other Local Authorities does the provider have placements with?

Reason for visit

New provider initial visit	
Annual review (planned)	
Exceptional visit (announced)	
Exceptional visit (unannounced)	
Other (state below)	

Visit undertaken by – Staff names, Job titles

Provider Representative(s)

Date

Young People's Files

CLA documentation / IPA / risk assessment / care pathway plan on file

Support for Young People

Staff roles

Proximity and Details of local amenities. GP, shops, leisure.

Transport links

Education options. Local colleges. Details of attendance at school/college / evidence of being EET and where not action plans to address/ progress at school/college

Preparation for work / assistance with CV's and applications – evidence of support for young people

Budgeting and finance / support / access to benefits

Sexual health / personal relationships - support

Substance misuse awareness / support

Exploitation, CSE and gang awareness / support

Radicalisation awareness / support

Evidence of engagement in interests, sports

Involvement in cultural activities where this is the choice of the young person

Support for young people for whom English is an additional language

Emotional wellbeing and mental health awareness, self-harm / support

Healthy eating / cooking

Evidence of bullying within the placement and how this is dealt with

What is the staff to young person ratio on the day / how does this differ at night and on weekends

Support to ensure accommodation is kept clean and tidy including own rooms

Support with immigration issues

Missing episodes

Procedure – when reported – how – to who - recording – evidence of regular police visits to property - **staff knowledge**

Accommodation

No rooms

Room size

Lockable doors – lock from outside and twist to open without key from inside

Suitable bed and bedding

Suitable wardrobe, storage and seating

Communal area with TV

Private space for social work visits away from the bedroom

Separate staff areas including separate bathroom for staff

Internet access

Equipped kitchen (all facilities including oven gloves)

Suitable bathroom facilities – how many – how many young people in the accommodation

Washing machine / ironing

Controllable heating and ventilation – gas safety certificates

General cleanliness – all areas / general state of repair – all areas / how quickly are repairs undertaken

Fire extinguishers / fire blankets / fire signage / smoke detectors/CO2 alarms (hardwired to electrical system) / adequate means of escape / inspection by fire service – are young people aware of the procedure for escape from all levels of the building / has there been a recent evacuation drill / are staff trained in fire safety

Fire doors with smoke seals

Emergency lighting

CCTV on external doors and hallways only

HMO certificate / insurance certificate / Health & Safety poster / Fire Safety notices and plans / complaints procedure displayed

Electrical safety checks (whole system check - NICEIC) and PAT testing annually

Are hazardous cleaning materials stored safely

Is there any evidence of drug / alcohol use in the accommodation – how is this managed

What is the process for young people leaving the accommodation / is there a deadline for return in the evening and for making visits to friends/relatives which involve overnight stays

Is there an accident reporting procedure and record book

Are staff first aid (inc paediatric) trained – check certification / are there adequate first aid kits

Security of front door / rear doors

Do staff know their designated safeguarding lead

Staff knowledge on following areas: warning signs / gang exploitation – warning signs / self-harm / sharing of information / process for recording a disclosure / process for reporting safeguarding concerns

Staff training in respect of safeguarding and associated areas such as gangs, self-harm / what level is s/g training at– it is refreshed at least every 3 years

Do staff know of the whistleblowing policy and who to report concerns to

Is safeguarding a standing agenda item in staff supervision

Do staff know the process in respect of storing information – electronically and paper based.

Safe recruitment process – check: references (one from previous employer) are written references followed up verbally / ID verification (2 forms) / DBS (**enhanced with checks on barred list for children and adults**) / robust application and recruitment process which is recorded / gaps in work history checked / staff have the right to work in the UK / staff qualifications are checked and copies held on file

Are there records of escalation of alerts to social care / EDT

What recording system is used / can all staff access YP details easily / is there a daily log and incident log – what is the quality of these and where safeguarding concerns are identified are these followed up with formal reports

Staff knowledge of confidentiality and data protection – systems in place re: secure email/leapfile/encryption

Staff files

Check staff regularly supervised and quality of sessions and recording

Are staff having an annual appraisal and any development issues taken up

Do staff have a contract of employment

Are there any outstanding disciplinary issues

Is there evidence of staff induction

Staff qualifications

Do staff have Health & Safety training

Policies

The following policies should be made available (emailed electronically if more appropriate to review in the office):

Insurance in place and up to date (buildings, employer, public and professional indemnity)

Cars used for transporting young people – insured (for business use), MOT, roadworthy and taxed – risk assessments conducted

Policy name	Checked by commissioning/social worker (enter date checked)	Has provider reviewed in last year (enter date reviewed)	Has provider updated in last 3 years (enter date updated)
Health and Safety policy and evidence of risk assessments			

Equality and Diversity policy			
Safe recruitment policy			
Business continuity plan			
Supervision policy			
Safeguarding policy			
Missing policy			
Anti- radicalisation policy			
Event & Notification policy			
Whistleblowing			
Safe Internet use			
Visitor policy			
Medication policy			
Complaints policy			
Insurance certificates 1. Employers Liability 2. Public liability 3. Professional indemnity			
Business Continuity plan			

ACTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

Action required	Responsible	Date due	Date complete

