

Enfield Looked After Children Strategy 2023-2028

Scope	This strategy sets out Enfield 's overarching vision and priorities for looked after children and care leavers.
Approved by	<i>Scheduled for approval at Corporate Parenting Group in March 2023</i>
Approval date	
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Foreword

In Enfield, we are committed to ensuring that children and young people in care and with experience of care, live healthy, happy and safe lives and go on to make positive contributions to society. The reasons for entering our care are varied and may be due to family breakdown, ill health of a parent/carer or having newly arrived in the country as an unaccompanied minor. As corporate parents, we recognise the individual impact this difficult time has on our children and young people and the importance of tailored, co-ordinated support provided by a competent team that always have the child's best interests at heart.

It is vital we work together to support children to develop meaningful relationships and skills that will sustain them into adulthood and enable them to lead successful, independent lives. This involves everything from monitoring their education and looking after their health and wellbeing to praising them when they do well and supporting them when they don't. By providing the level of care any good parent would for their child, we are empowering looked after children and care leavers to be confident and have high aspirations. By working with families to resolve challenges where we can, we will support reunification whenever this is possible and appropriate.

Central to this strategy and to everything that we do, are the views and opinions of the children and young people we care or have cared for. We listen when they tell us how we can make a difference to the quality of their lives and improve their experiences. We have highlighted in this strategy, some of the work we have done as a direct result of what young people have told us, and over the next three years, we will continue to engage and work closely with our Children in Care Council, and all looked after children and care leavers to ensure we provide them with the support and experiences they want and need. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the children and young people for the contributions they have made to this strategy.

We will continue to review our practices in line with any local or national changes in order that we meet our statutory obligations while remaining ambitious and innovative in the way we support children and young people in our care.

We are proud corporate parents of all children and young people in our care and it is our privilege to strive to achieve the best outcomes for them.

Councillor Abdul Abdullahi

Cabinet member for Children and Family Services

Introduction

Our vision is for **all looked after children to be supported to live in family homes where possible and treated as our own when in our care, ensuring they have safe, healthy and happy lives**. As Corporate Parents, we want the same outcomes for our children that any good parent would want for their child. This strategy sets out how we will work collaboratively with children, their families and our partners to achieve our vision for all children and young people in our care and those leaving care. It also provides a strategic overview of all the work we do across the council, our targeted interventions and projects aimed at helping us deliver our vision.

To achieve our vision, we have the following five priorities:

1. Work with families accessing our services to provide early help to keep them together and actively involved in any future decision making;
2. Children and young people in care are supported to be healthy and happy;
3. Children and young people in care and previously looked after children are supported to achieve good progress in education and are encouraged to make positive contributions to society;
4. Children and young people in care are listened to and their views and suggestions are heard and valued;
5. Care leavers are supported throughout the transition to independent living.

We take a strengths-based approach in delivering all our priorities - focusing on the assets as well as the needs and vulnerabilities of children, young people and their families. This enables us to work holistically with the child or young person, helping them to realise and build on their strengths and be actively involved in future choices. Our aim is to find resolutions and help families with complex needs stay together where possible.

The Corporate Parenting Principles

In delivering on our strategy, we will meet the following corporate parenting principles in relation to all looked after children and young people and care leavers.

We will:

- act in their best interests, and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing
- encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings
- take into account their views, wishes and feelings
- help them gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes for them
- support them to be safe, with stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work

- prepare them for adulthood and independent living

What have children and young people told us?

We keep the voices of children and young people at the heart of all the work we do and the decisions we make. We actively encourage our looked after children and care leavers to participate in decisions around their care, engage and collaborate with us and we listen, review our practice and feed back to them. Since our last Looked After Children Strategy was published, we have obtained the views of and engaged extensively with young people, in a variety of ways.

Note for Design and Print: Please include the following quotes on this page:

You said

We want to help design the Care Leavers Hub

We did

We had a working party on this and care leavers were part of the launch.

You said

As Care leavers we want support with mental health, welfare and financial entitlement, sexual health service and access to employment.

We did

We now have 18+ CAMHs therapist who spends every Thursday in the Hub for drop-in sessions.

You said

KRATOS to have a takeover session at Corporate Parenting including a workshop on apprenticeships and how they could be introduced for Enfield care leavers.

We did

We now have four leaving care apprenticeships at the Council.

Feedback from looked after children and care leavers:

- The recent Placement Survey in the summer of 2021 shows that over 82% of those who took part are either very satisfied or satisfied with their placement and 90% feel safe. 97% find their key worker supportive to their needs.
- As a result of feedback from Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, we developed a transition plan to ensure a supported return to school and good attendance following lockdowns during the pandemic.
- When asked during their PEP meeting, 91% of children and young people who took part said they felt they had enough consultation in their care planning

Collaboration with children and young people in care and care leavers:

- Our Children in Care Council, KRATOS have been consulted on and helped shaped 15 strategies, plans and projects between 2018-20
- KRATOS were involved in the co-production of a children's contextual safeguarding film for Enfield children.
- During mental Health Week 2021, KRATOS took part in a film "[How are you?](#)" which focused on how the pandemic affected young people's mental health.
- Care leavers informed the content of our Care Leaver's Pledge, which we launched in 2021
- Care leavers and looked after children take part in the pan London Children in Care Council, ensuring Enfield young people are represented in discussions about care across the city
- We have launched, in collaboration with care leavers, a Care Leavers Hub with professionals providing specialist advice on a range of topics

Note for Design and Print: Please include the following quotes on this page:

"As Care leavers we want support with mental health, welfare and financial entitlement, sexual health service and access to employment" Care leaver

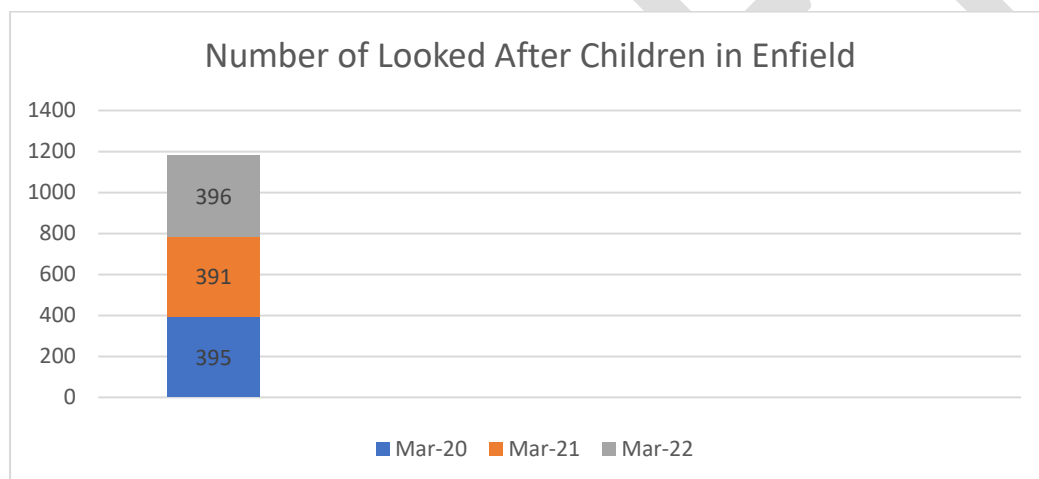
"Care leavers need life skills and continued support through to independence sexual health service and access to employment" Members of the Youth Leadership Academy

"Everyone has the right to share their views" Young Person, SENDIASS

What the National and Local research tells us

Nationally, there has been a consistent increase in the number of looked after children over the past 20 years, with the Department for Education reporting abuse or neglect as the most common reason - 63% of all cases - for entering care. In more recent years, this rise is in part due to an increased number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). Following a reduction in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children by 20% in 2020, largely as a result of travel restrictions, it has risen by 34% in the last year. Entries into the care system were lower than expected during the national lockdown restrictions and there was a decrease in adoptions by 18% in comparison to figures in 2015¹. This is likely due to slow or paused court cases. In 2022, there was an increase in Looked After Children and adoptions, both by 2% compared to 2021.

In Enfield we are currently corporate parents to 396 children and young people as of 31st March 2022, a small rise from 391 as at March 2021 and 395 as at March 2020.



The following headline stats will be presented as infographics:

- The highest proportion of looked after children are in the 10-15 age group at 35% and 16+ at 30% showing an over representation of adolescents.
- There is an over- representation of male looked after children at 58%. Males are also over-represented nationally at around 56%.
- Around 65% of children in care in Enfield were placed in foster placements in 2020 compared to around three quarters of looked after children nationally. Around 12% of Enfield's looked after children are in residential accommodation.
- 75% of children who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more have been in the same placement for at least 2 years as of April 2022, an increase of 5%

¹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2022>

on the previous year. This compares to 71% of looked after children nationally².

- 7.6% of looked after children made 3 or more placement moves as at March 2022. This is a reduction from 8.2% at the same time the previous year compared to 8.9% for England and 9% for London as a whole in 2021
- 46% of Enfield's looked after children are currently in placements outside of the borough compared to 43% in 2020/21. There has been a national increase in out of borough placements to around 41% due to a lack of suitable provision close to home.
- Looked after children in Enfield performed better at KS4 than the national average in 2021. In London, Enfield was the 4th highest performing borough for looked after children in this academic year³.
- Public Health England Fingertips reported in 2021 that 72% of looked after children in Enfield maintained good wellbeing with no cause for concern compared to 63% in England as a whole.
- Nationally, 55.9% of looked-after children have a special educational need compared with 14.9% of all children⁴. In Enfield, 32% of looked after children have a special educational need.
- 90% of Enfield's looked after children have had the appropriate medical assessments and 87% are up to date with dental check-ups

The majority of children who have been in care make positive contributions to society and say that they had good experiences (Biehal et al, 2014) however, statistically, outcomes for those children and young people remain poor compared to their peers:

- In 2021, around 12% of all 19- to 21-year-olds in England were known not to be in education, employment, or training (NEET). The percentage of care leavers in this category at the same time was 41% (24% of 17-year-olds) nationally and 38% in Enfield⁵.
- 25% of the homeless population in England have previously been in care⁶
- Nearly 25% of adults in prison have previously been in care⁷
- Almost 50% of under 21-year-olds in contact with the criminal justice system had previously been in care.⁸ In Enfield we practise 'Child First' justice which aims to reduce stigmatisation by treating young people as children and not 'criminals'.
- An enquiry by the Children's Society reports that 71% of police forces believe out of borough placements increase children's vulnerability to criminal or sexual exploitation⁹. Although some Enfield looked after children and care

² <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2022>

³ https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=11114&mod-area=E09000010&mod-group=AllBoroughInRegion_London&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

⁴ NICE guidance

⁵ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2021>

⁶ https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236816/the_hidden_truth_about_homelessness_es.pdf

⁷ http://www.antonioacasella.eu/nume/Berman_2013.pdf

⁸ <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CouldntCareLess.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.childrency.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-10/no-place-at-home.pdf>

leavers are placed outside the borough, they remain the responsibility of the Council and receive the same level of support and protection wherever they may live.

Our priorities

<p>Priority 1 Work with families accessing our services to provide early help to keep them together and actively involved in any future decision making</p> <p>We will work together across the council and with our partners to build resilience in children and their families by providing them with the right support at the right time to keep families together</p>	<p>Priority 2 Children and young people in care are supported to be healthy and happy</p> <p>We will protect children and young people in our care, provide them with stability and support them to make healthy choices and live well</p>
<p>Priority 3 Children and young people in care and previously looked after children are supported to achieve good progress in education and are encouraged to make positive contributions to society</p> <p>We will encourage all our children and young people in and leaving our care to have high aspirations for their future and support them with tailored support to achieve to the best of their ability and look to a positive future.</p>	<p>Priority 4 Children and young people in care are listened to and their views and suggestions are heard and valued</p> <p>We will develop more ways to listen to, record and respond to the voices of children and young people, and ensure they are empowered, included and respected</p>
<p>Priority 5 Care leavers are supported in the transition to independent living</p> <p>We will support young people to make a smooth transition to adulthood by providing them with good quality support, advice and guidance as they prepare to leave care</p>	

Priority 1

Work with families accessing our services to provide early help to keep them together and actively involved in any future decision making

We will work together across the council and with our partners to build resilience in children and their families by providing them with the right support at the right time to help keep families together.

Will be on right hand side of page when designed:

[Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

[Early Help For All Strategy](#)

[The Enfield Early Help Family Hub](#)

[The Threshold Document](#)

[Safeguarding Adolescents from Exploitation Strategy](#)

[Local Offer for SEND](#)

[Children's Portal](#)

[Joint Service for Disabled Children \(JSDC\)](#)

[Joint Working Protocol Youth Offending and SEND Services](#)

[Joint Working Protocol Youth Offending Service and Children's Social Care](#)

[Safeguarding Children Policy \(London Child Protection Procedures\)](#)

[Safeguarding Children's Board Threshold Guidance](#)

[The independent review of children's social care](#)

Enfield's Pledge

Our promise to children in care or leaving care, Enfield's Pledge, includes our commitment to:

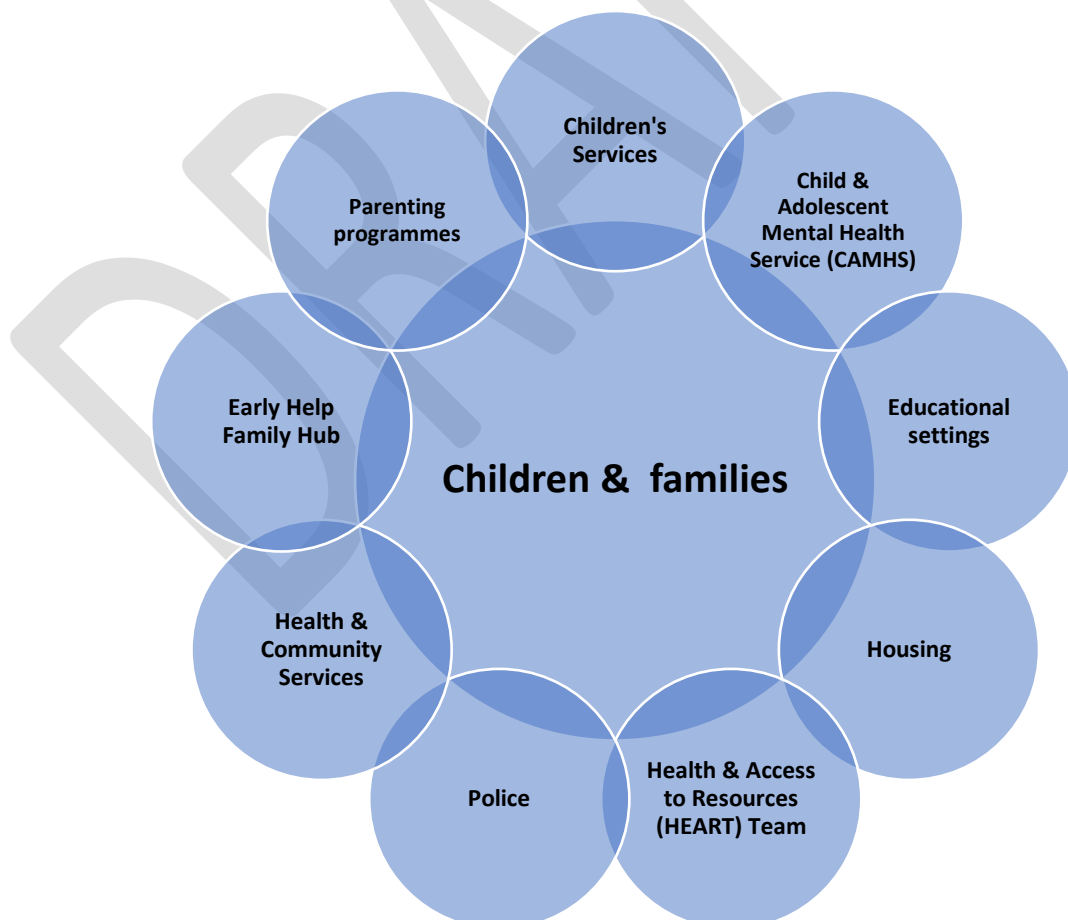
- Protect, promote and where necessary rebuild family and community connections and help those young people for whom we are responsible to understand their personal history
- Ensure care experienced people are regarded and treated as individuals worthy of respect and to promote that respect wherever we can, regardless of any discriminatory factor i.e., disability

Our ambition is to identify and work together with families that need early help, providing positive behaviour support to strengthen family relationships and prevent breakdown. We want to keep families together wherever it is safe to do so. We will work together across services, with our partners and with children and families to find solutions that always focus on the best interests and outcomes for children.

The House of Comms *First 1000 days of life* [report](#) emphasises how critical these early days are to a child's development. If a child's body and brain develop well from conception, up until the age of around 2, it improves their life chances. Unaddressed trauma experiences, such as witnessing abuse or conflict between parents, can have long term affects, cause harm to the child and may be passed onto the next generation.

At Enfield, we will ensure that all new parents have access to the right support and guidance to enable them to provide their children with the best start in life. We are committed to supporting children through all stages of childhood - from pre-birth, through infancy, pre-school and school and promote healthy choices for all.

Enfield's Children and Family Services provide a comprehensive package of support for children and young people who may be facing challenges at home. These include support for the family, focussed interventions and in some cases alternative care provision. Effective early help can help prevent families with universal or additional needs escalating to complex or critical levels requiring costly and distressing interventions. Similarly, effective support for families whose needs have already reached complex or critical levels can help them de-escalate and enable them to experience positive outcomes. Our diagram shows the dedicated team of services and practitioners who support families and children.



Early Help Family Hub (information in boxes will be presented as infographics)

The Enfield Early Help Family Hub works with the whole family to improve wellbeing, relationships, behaviour and communication by offering advice, support and direct interventions at any point in a child or young person's life, from pre-birth to adulthood. The type of support offered is tailored to the needs of the family. Our Early help quality of practice has been rated good or outstanding in 85% of audited cases.

New Beginnings

We launched the New Beginnings intervention project in December 2021 to support women who have experienced, or who are at risk of, repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. The aim of the project is to give women the support to engage with services and work on specific areas to enable them to break the cycle that causes both them and their children deep trauma. This includes supporting the women with a variety of tasks; such as housing, engaging with partner agencies, advocacy and supporting them in building their resilience. As at June 2022, we are working with 12 women.

How we will achieve this

We will:

- promote access to early **antenatal care services** along with healthy lifestyle choices before, during and after pregnancy and we will continue to encourage and enable parents to give children the best start in life.
- continue our efforts to **identify vulnerable children with safeguarding concerns** by working together as a Council, with communities and our partners.
- remain focussed, through our **Early Help Strategy**, on supporting families to build resilience and access help without delay.
- take a multi-agency approach to assess and support children and families with complex needs, including conducting in-house **family conferences** to make a plan to improve family relationships and resolve issues.
- prioritise **reunification** for looked after children where it is safe and in their best interests to do so, including supporting parents to address concerns and provide safe and protective environments that they can thrive in.
- continue to work with women through the **New Beginnings Project**, to help them to grow and increase their resilience.
- support, through our **Adolescent Safeguarding Team**, children and young people at risk of all forms of exploitation, children and young people at the

edge of care and 16 -17-year-olds at risk of homelessness to reduce risks of exploitation

- provide children and young people in our care with special education needs/ disabilities (SEND) with tailored support through our **Joint Service for Disabled Children** (JSDC) in partnership with the **Our Voice** parent forum, including through the provision of high-quality short breaks.
- continue to adopt **'Child First' Justice**, and treat children entering the Youth Justice System as 'children' rather than 'offenders' or 'criminals'.

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Priority 2

Children and young people in care are supported to be healthy and happy

We will protect children and young people in our care, provide them with stability and support them to make healthy choices and live well

Commissioning Framework

Placement Sufficiency Strategy

Fostering, Marketing and Recruitment Strategy

[Fostering Service – Statement of Purpose](#)

[CAMHS Health and Education Access and Resource Team \(HEART\)](#)

[Tracking Child Neglect Strategy](#)

[Loft Conversion and Home Extension Policy](#)

[Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

[Joint Protocol for Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children and Young People](#)

[Empowering Young Enfield](#)

Enfield's Pledge

Our Pledge includes our commitment to:

- Promote more love in the care system including displays of positive physical affection;
- Ensure that relationships are seen as central to all our policies and procedures to support children in care and care experienced people;
- Take clear steps to improve stability and continuity in the lived experiences of people in care;
- Emphasise the importance of working with our partners and young people to raise awareness of need and improve support for the mental health and well-being of children in care and care experienced people in our local area

Our ambition is to provide looked after children in Enfield with the same level of love, support and health care we expect for our own children and to identify and address their needs appropriately.

The NSPCC reports that children in care are four times more likely to experience mental health problems than children living with their birth families¹⁰. This may be due to experiences before going into care or the impact of going into care. Many children who enter care will have experienced trauma before the decision to put them in care has been taken – the most common reason for children in England entering care is abuse or neglect.

¹⁰ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1122/achieving-emotional-wellbeing-for-looked-after-children.pdf>

Children in care may also face additional challenges due to having special educational needs and disabilities - nationally, 55.9% of looked-after children have a special educational need compared with 14.9% of all children. These challenges include increased likelihood of facing discrimination and bullying which in turn can affect their confidence and ability to form relationships, leading to social exclusion and a higher risk of developing mental health issues¹¹

Entering care may also have an impact on the emotional wellbeing of a child, due to being displaced from family and friends, moving to a new home with unfamiliar adults and possibly changing schools. Additionally, two thirds of all looked after children have at least one physical health complaint. We are committed to working with our partners to ensure all children in our care are assessed and supported in the right way.

The significant emotional, behavioural and mental health needs of looked after children can put them at increased risk of being groomed or exploited. Moving between placements can further impact the wellbeing of children and young people in care and impact their ability to form protective relationships with trusted adults. This can also be the case for out of borough placements away from familiar family and social networks. We work with children and young people and our foster carers to minimise placement moves and provide stability. As at April 2022, 75% of children who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more have been in the same placement for at least 2 years, an increase of 5% on the previous year.

We will, as their corporate parent, guide children and young people through the initial stages of entering care and establish a stable and safe environment they are happy, healthy and confident in. We work with children, listen to their views and focus on their best interests when considering and securing placements, while aiming to provide placements within the borough whenever possible.

Dental check-ups and medical assessments

We are making every contact count to ensure all of our looked after children are up to date with dental and medical check-ups and immunisations after they were paused during the Covid-19 restrictions. Our frontline teams will continue to encourage children and young people and their carers to take up appointments. Our collaborative work has helped to drive and increase in assessments - 87% of looked after children have had dental check-ups as of March 2022, up from 33% the previous year, and 90% have had medical assessments.

¹¹ Falcounbrige, Hunt and Laffan, 2019

Increasing in-borough placements

We continue to work towards increasing placements within the borough; we recruited 17 new foster carers in 2020/21 and currently have 120 in the borough. We remain committed to increasing our pool of foster carers and the number of bedrooms through our Fostering Marketing and Recruitment Strategy and Loft Conversion and Home Extension Policy.

Taking a strength-based approach

We champion the **Signs of Safety Model**, a strength and relationship-based approach created by research into what works for professionals and families and builds safety for vulnerable children and young people. At Enfield Council, we incorporate the Signs of Safety model into all the work we do with vulnerable children and young people to ensure we create a safe environment and build trusting relationships with them. We work in partnership and collaboration to support children and their families, offer choices, look for detail and make small meaningful changes.

Enfield Trauma Informed Practice

As part of our partnership with all stakeholders, we are training all frontline staff including foster carers, social workers, police officers and education providers on **Trauma Informed Practice**. This is a whole system approach that promotes the emotional wellbeing of every child and young person. It involves everyone working in a trauma informed way with a response system that aims to understand the underlying reasons for challenging behaviours and effectively meet the needs of children and young people and their families while preventing re-traumatisation.

How we will achieve this

We will:

- provide more **in-borough placements** by increasing both the number of foster carers working with us and the number of residential settings our young people can access.
- conduct initial **health assessments** within 20 working days of a child entering care in order to identify, address and monitor specific health requirements
- ensure all of our looked after children are up to date with **dental and medical check-ups and immunisations** by making every contact count
- Provide bespoke help and intervention to support the emotional wellbeing and physical health of all looked after children, through our **Health and Access to Resources Team (HEART)**.
- keep an open dialogue with children and young people on all aspects of their health and educate them on issues such as **alcohol and drug misuse and sexual health**.

- encourage children and young people to make use of free leisure facilities within the borough to **keep fit** and active and promote **healthy eating and choices**.
- work with schools and council services to provide **Trauma Informed Practice** training and embed trauma informed approaches into everyday practice across services.
- provide ongoing support for foster carers via a dedicated supervising social worker
- **seek feedback** from children in care on how they're being supported to meet the health and wellbeing through annual questionnaires
- increase **staff retention** for consistency for children through the development of the Council's new Workforce Strategy, and reviewing pay, conditions and benefits for social worker
- Promote universal **youth services** to our looked after children. We have five youth centres where we provide leisure activities and mentoring programmes
- Work towards identifying revenue streams for providing looked after children and young people with **opportunities, support and services** to help them meet their aspirations and fulfil their dreams

Priority 3

Children and young people in care and previously looked after children are supported to achieve good progress in education and are encouraged to make positive contributions to society

We will promote high aspirations for all children and young people in and leaving our care and help them achieve to the best of their ability

[Virtual school](#)

[SEND Strategy](#)

[Local Offer for SEND – SEND Strategy](#)

[Fairer Enfield Policy](#)

[Autism Strategy](#)

[School White Paper - Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teacher for your child](#)

[Inclusion Charter](#)

Our Pledge

Our promise to children in care or leaving care, Enfield's Pledge, includes our commitment to:

- work together to support their educational success and their future
- give them clear information about the support they can expect if they choose further or higher education.

We are committed to ensuring all children and young people we are corporate parents of have access to good quality education and are supported to make positive contributions to the community and environment. We will promote high aspirations, and stability in their education.

The majority of schools in the borough are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' and a high percentage of our looked after children attend a good or outstanding school, either in Enfield or in another borough. Many looked after and previously looked after children and young people achieve well at school, however national data shows that they don't do as well as their peers.

Looked after children in Enfield made significant progress in KS4 attainment in 2021, making the borough the 4th highest performing of all London boroughs for looked after children¹². While there is still a gap between their performance compared to all

¹² https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=11114&mod-area=E09000010&mod-group=AllBoroughInRegion_London&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

children in Enfield, it shows the huge amount of work being done by our virtual school to support and improve the attainment of our looked after children.

We recognise that not all learning takes place in education settings and will continue to help our children and young people achieve through raising their expectations, supporting them to make good education progress through supported homework and arranging out of school opportunities to further themselves through their hobbies and interests.

Research has shown the Covid-19 pandemic has had a greater impact on disadvantaged children. Schools with high levels of disadvantage have experienced higher levels of learning loss than other schools¹³. In Autumn 2021, the average primary aged child had lost 1.9 months in maths and 0.8 months in reading. Disadvantaged children lost an additional 0.3 months in maths and 0.4 months in reading¹⁴.

Our aim is to close the gap further between the educational achievements of looked after and previously looked after children, and that of their peers and work together with our partners to minimise the negative impact being in care may have on a child or young person's attainment and future outcomes.

How we will achieve this

We will:

- allocate a school place in **'good' or 'outstanding' schools** for all our looked after children, where these schools are expected to best meet their needs
- support and guide all looked after children and Children in Need (CIN) in their educational settings through our **virtual school** headteacher
- complete detailed **Personal Education Plans (PEP)** and, where appropriate, education, health and care plans (EHCP), for every looked after child and young person, which reflect their own aspirational goals
- provide, through our **HEART team**, individual therapy and support to improve educational attainment and access to employment opportunities
- keep disruption such as school provision changes and exclusions to a minimum by obtaining appropriate, **stable placements** from the offset, including in the case of out of borough arrangements
- ensure professionals working with looked after and previously looked after children and young people have the appropriate **training and support** to recognise and meet individual needs
- work with schools to support them to use the **Pupil Premium Grant** to enhance the quality of education Looked After Children receive
- encourage Enfield schools, settings and colleges to sign up to and deliver the principles of the **Enfield Inclusion Charter**.

¹³ [Understanding progress in the 2020/21 academic year, Renaissance Learning, Education Policy Institute, January 2021](#)

¹⁴ DfE. Pupils' progress in the 2020 to 2021 academic year. 2022.

To ensure the best possible educational outcomes for care leavers we will:

- work with young people to complete detailed **pathway plans** ensuring they have support and guidance to make a successful transition from care to independent living
- work with partners and through our procurement practice to increase the range of available **education and employment** opportunities for young people leaving care
- provide a co-located support worker for young people in care who are **not in education, employment or training** (NEET) to help them access appropriate pathways –
- support care leavers to extend living with their former foster carer/s where possible, in line with Government's "**Staying Put**" framework while completing their education or training.

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Priority 4

Children and young people in care are listened to and their views and suggestions are heard and valued

We will develop more ways to listen to, record and respond to the voices of children and young people, and ensure they are empowered, included and respected

[KRATOS Children in Care Council](#)

[Youth Development Service](#)

[Youth Participation Policy](#)

[Empowering Young Enfield 2021 to 2025 \(Children and Young People's Plan\)](#)

Our Pledge

Our promise to children in care or leaving care, Enfield's Pledge, includes our commitment to:

- Make sure that young people in our care are routinely engaged, consulted and have a real say in their own lives prior to decisions being made (whenever possible) and provide them with opportunities for growth i.e., sporting activities, careers support;
- Ensure that young people in our care are properly and fully informed of their rights and responsibilities and offer advocacy to ensure they receive them;
- Listen to the voice of children in care and care experience people of all ages and always consult them about changes to services and support

Every decision we make about a child or young person in care, previously in care or a care leaver is based on the question 'is this good enough for my child?' and 'what are they telling us?'. Enabling children and young people to engage in the design and development of services that will directly impact them is essential in order to make sure the support offered is effective and meets their needs. It is vital for children and young people to know that their opinions matter and to feel empowered to be able to influence decisions that affect their lives.

Our Children in Care Council, **KRATOS**, is made up of children and young people in care and care leavers who work with great commitment and dedication to improve the experience of all looked after children. They have a variety of roles including:

- advising other children and young people who are known to Children's Services;
- inspecting children's services;
- helping us to develop and improve the way we provide support to looked after children – for example, we worked with KRATOS to develop our Enfield Pledge - our promise to children in care or leaving care on which this strategy has been based

- supporting the recruitment and training of new social workers and foster carers.

Care leaver's survey

Young people leaving care can help inform decisions by taking part in our **annual survey** and telling us how they feel about the different types of service we offer. The results of the survey are relayed to and discussed at the Corporate Parenting Board.

How we will achieve this

We will:

- support all children to express their wishes and needs in relation to their care by encouraging them to actively participate in their Looked After Children reviews, **Personal Education Plan (PEP)** and **Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** meetings
- ensure that all young people in our care fully understand and can exercise their rights if they feel they are not being listened to
- use Annual Achievement Day, a day we celebrate the achievements of our looked after children with their carers and peers, to obtain feedback from our young people to help inform our practice
- guide all our looked after children towards our **children's rights advocacy service** if they require support with getting their views heard on important decisions about their lives
- continue to help **KRATOS** promote the services they deliver to Looked After Children by utilising their peer mentoring skills.
- encourage looked after children and young people to play an active role in our **Youth Development Service** which promotes personal and social development through inclusive youth clubs and targeted mentoring
- use the **Care Leaver's Survey** results to inform our decisions around how we support young people leaving care.
- use our new **Youth Participation Policy** to enhance the inclusion of children and young people in consistent and meaningful consultation, engagement, and co-production.
- **continue to be flexible** with how we conduct meetings post pandemic, taking our cue from the children and young people we work with and always having their best interests at heart.

Priority 5

Care leavers are supported throughout the transition to independent living

We will support young people to make a smooth transition to adulthood by providing them with good quality support, advice and guidance as they prepare to leave care

Care Leaver's Strategy

[Local Offer](#)

Care Leaver's Hub

Housing Panel for Care Leavers

[My Life](#)

[Staying Put Strategy](#)

Our Pledge

Our promise to children in care or leaving care, Enfield's Pledge, includes our commitment to:

- Recognise in our daily work that the impact of care experience does not end at 18 or 21 or even 25. We will engage with you, seek your views and review our practice to remove age restrictions on support wherever we can.

Transition for a young person is the process of moving from a child focussed support system to adulthood. This can be a difficult time for all young people navigating moving from school to work, training or further education. For children in care, the process is even more complex, involving moving from a social worker to a personal advisor and from care to independent living. In 2021, around 12% of all 19- to 21-year-olds in England were known not to be in education, employment, or training (NEET). The percentage of care leavers in this category at the same time was 41% nationally and 38% in Enfield¹⁵.

With the right support, advice and guidance we can improve long-term outcomes for young people transitioning from care. We are focussed on supporting young people to make the transition as smooth a process as is possible by providing good quality, holistic support, empowering them to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives as independent, self-sufficient adults evidencing signs of success.

¹⁵ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2021>

Enfield's Local Offer

Our [Local Offer](#) sets out the types of support we offer to care leavers, from advice around employment, training and education to guidance with securing accommodation and wellbeing support.

The National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum

We are active members of this national forum is a network of over 100 local authorities working together to help develop good quality leaving care services with member authorities and partner organisations. Members strive for better outcomes for care leavers through a process of benchmarking and shared learning promoting consistency on a national level.

How we will achieve this

We will:

- start the process of preparing young people for leaving care through a sustained period, ensuring they have a **package of support** on leaving whereby we maintain contact and continue to guide and advise them
- provide care leavers with their **Health Passport** containing all their medical needs and details for further advice and guidance
- help care leavers with SEND make choices and decisions through our **Leaving Care Transition Pathway** for young people with SEND
- promote our **Care Leaver's Hub** which provides young people with advice and guidance from professionals with particular areas of expertise
- support care leavers to extend living with their former foster carer/s where possible, in line with Government's "**Staying Put**" framework while completing their education or training
- support care leavers seeking council or housing association tenancy by presenting cases to our **Leaving Care Housing Panel**
- support care leavers into employment, education or training, working closely with our partners including local colleges, **Job Centre Plus**, and the **Drive Forward Foundation** which works with care leavers to help them find sustainable jobs.
- continue to run an **apprenticeship scheme** for our care leavers, enabling them to work across the Council with different services, gaining valuable knowledge and new skills. At June 2022, we currently have 4 care leavers completing apprenticeships within the council.
- continue our attendance at the **National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum** to ensure we are always at the forefront of best practice

How will we track and measure our success?

Our ambition as corporate parents is to ensure every child or young person who is at risk of being taken into care, is in care and care leavers receives the same level of care we would give our own children. We want looked after children to have the same opportunities and life outcomes as their peers and understand that they may need additional support to access these. To ensure that we are having a positive impact, we will continually keep track of our progress across our priorities, enabling us to continue to improve support, opportunities and outcomes for looked after children.

The Looked After Children Strategy covers a range of areas under Children and Family Services and across the Council. A progress report for all actions in this strategy; and the latest key performance indicators identified for each priority, will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Board annually.

This report will also be shared with members of KRATOS, and their feedback, experiences and ideas regarding how delivery of the priorities will also be shared back with the Corporate Parenting Board.

Our key performance indicators (KPIs) and our performance for 2021/22 are summarised below:

Priority	KPI	2021/22
Work with families accessing our services to provide early help to keep them together and actively involved in any future decision making	Number of families identified and supported through early help	880
	Number of at risk adolescents prevented from entering the care system	Number out of referrals TBC (Karen to confirm criteria with Jo Stacey). Target 80%
	Percentage of women working with New Beginnings project per year who had proceedings prevented	100% of women who worked with project had proceedings prevented. Target 20%
	Number of children reunited with birth parents/ families during the year	105
	Number of Family Group Conferences where we were in Public Law Outline resulting in children remaining with families	7 cases – 5 remained with family
	Percentage of placements lasting 2.5 years or more	75% at March 2022

	Percentage of placements within 20 miles of Enfield	50 (199 out of 395)
	Percentage of up to date medical assessments	90% at March 2022
	Percentage of up to date dental check ups	87% at March 2022
Children and young people in care and previously looked after children are supported to achieve good progress in education and are encouraged to make positive contributions to society have access to good quality education and are supported to make positive contributions to society	Average Attainment 8 scores for looked after children	29.9
	Percentage of children and young people with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan	95%
	Percentage of looked after children permanent exclusions and suspensions	PX 1%
	Percentage of care leavers in post 16 education, training or employment	Year 12 – 73% Year 13 – 69%
Children and young people in care are listened to and their views and suggestions are heard and valued	Percentage of young people who felt they had enough consultation in their care planning (PEP meeting question)	94%
	Number of looked after children participating in positive activities including KRATOS, the Youth Development Service, youth centres	70
Care leavers are supported throughout the transition to independent living	Percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment at ages 19-21	75%
	Percentage of care leavers with SEND in education, training or employment at ages 19-21	5%

	Percentage of care leavers staying put	21
	Percentage of care leavers in higher education	9%
	Number of care leavers with their own tenancy	63 out of 309 supported by service
	Number of care leavers who have completed the Care leaver's survey	Still open, will update Jan 23

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Appendix 1

Definitions of terms

Corporate Parent: Corporate parenting refers to the shared responsibility across the council and with our partners to ensure children and young people in our care or leaving care have their needs met and are supported to thrive

Looked After Child: Under the Children Act 1989, a child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

- gets accommodation from the local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- is subject to a care order (to put the child into the care of the local authority)
- is subject to a placement order (to put the child up for adoption)

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC): Children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a local authority.

Care Leaver: The legal definition of a care leaver comes from The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 which states that a Care Leaver is someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday.

Care Plan: A plan of care is a presentation of information that easily describes the services and support being given to a person. Care plans should be put together and agreed with the person they focus on through the process of care planning and review.

Personal Education Plan (PEP): A PEP is a statutory active document for a looked-after child. It forms the education part of the child's Care Plan and sets out short and long-term goals.

Pupil Premium Grant: The Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is issued by the government to support and promote the education of children and young people in care. Children and young people are eligible for PPG as soon as they enter care and it must be used to improve outcomes for and raise attainment of the looked after child.

'Child First' Justice: This is an approach whereby children entering the Youth Justice System are viewed as 'children' rather than 'offenders'. This approach focuses on prevention, diversion and minimal intervention with the aim of reducing stigmatisation.

EHCP: Education, Health and Care Plans have replaced Statements of Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulty Assessments as the plan for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

Attainment 8: The Attainment 8 score aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school. We use this measure in the strategy as it is a value-added measure, meaning pupil's results are compared to results of other pupils with similar prior attainment.

Edge of care: Young people aged 11 years and over for whom entry into care has been considered but who are being supported, along with their family, through alternative services with the aim of keeping the family together and avoiding care proceedings.

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Appendix 2

Relevant legislation and guidance

The following additional primary legislation and guidance documents our duties and governs our practice:

- [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1985](#)
- [Children Act 2004 \(Every Child Matters\)](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Care Standards Act 2000](#)
- [Adoption and Children Act 2002](#)
- [If this were my child – A Councillor’s guide to being a good corporate parent 2009](#)
- [Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers: The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, 2010](#)
- [Children and Adoption Act 2006](#)
- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children 2010](#)
- [Guidance on the Provision of Accommodation for 16 & 17 year old young people who are homeless and/or require accommodation 2010](#)
- [Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2010](#)
- [Promoting the Educational Achievements of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 2014](#)
- [The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [NICE quality standard on the health and wellbeing of looked after children and young people \(NICE 2021\)](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Keep on caring: supporting young people from care to independence \(Cabinet Office 2016\)](#)
- [Care Leaver Covenant \(DfE 2018\)](#)
- [Staying put: arrangements for care leavers aged 18 years and above, DfE, DWP and HMRC Guidance, 2013](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)
- [Pupil premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2021 to 2022](#)
- [Pupil Premium: Overview](#)