

Lambeth Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023



Sufficiency Strategy

November 2020



1.Introduction

This strategy sets out how Lambeth will meet its responsibilities to commission and provide secure, safe, and high-quality placements for children who are looked after and care leavers.

The strategy recognises that a wide range of placement types and specialties are needed, to meet the varying needs of our children. It will also provide a framework to ensure effective co-ordination across Children's Services, to ensure the needs of Lambeth's children are met.

As corporate parents, we are committed to commissioning the right accommodation for our young people. We will commission services to ensure the best possible outcomes for every child and young person. This sufficiency strategy is underpinned by legislation and statutory guidance including: Section 22(G) of the Children Act 1989.

We also have considered other statutory requirements to support our young people including:

- The Concordat on Children in Custody (2017), requiring Local Authorities to review their arrangements for children in custody.
- The Local Offer (Covenant) to Care Leavers (Children and Social Work Act 2017).
- Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17-year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation, considering the Southwark Judgement.

We have combined these duties with our aspiration to be a child friendly borough, where we put children's rights into practice.

2.Our Ambition for Young People

Lambeth's Children and Young People's Plan was co-produced with families, children, and young people. This included engaging our children in care council, statutory partners, and the voluntary sector.

The document is owned by the Lambeth Children's Partnership Board and partners work collaboratively to deliver on the plan's ambitions. It sets out how we will ensure children and young people are able to achieve, stay safe and be healthy. The Children and Young People's Plan lays out our integrated approach, where statutory and non-statutory partners work together to achieve improved outcomes for our children, young people and families.

Engagement has been undertaken with partners and key groups to deliver on the differing components of the Strategy. The Fostering partnership have been actively engaged on the changes that are proposed, moving forward. The development of the South London Commissioning Programme has had wide and extensive consultation with health, social care and neighbouring authorities.

We have captured the voice of the child in developing this strategy, through feedback with young people. At our Corporate Parenting Conference this year, young people have fed back to us that families make a home. They also fed back to us that they want to be consulted when they change placements or move. We believe that family environments are the most supportive place for a young person to be and have factored that into our thinking in developing this Strategy.

3.Key Objectives for our Sufficiency Strategy

Our sufficiency strategy has 5 key objectives which will form the focus of our activity for the next three years, with a review to take place every twelve months. These objectives are based on the needs of children in Lambeth and will ensure we have the types of placements, residential provision, and infrastructure in place to meet our duties.

Objective 1: We will improve our placement commissioning arrangements, and sufficiency of placements, to deliver outcome-focused placements for children and young people.

We want to build stronger cross-borough partnerships with our London partners. We will commission a range of placements for our children, through the South London Commissioning Programme (SLCP) that have been vetted and quality assured. We will ensure these placements prioritise safe care and meet the needs of young people. If required, we will also use other London frameworks to help us gain increased access to a broader range of placements. This should enable us to reduce the spot-purchasing of placements through off-framework arrangements. This will help us to reduce expenditure and underwrite the quality of placements.

Objective 2: We will expand our in-house foster care service; reducing the demand on commissioned and out of borough placements.

We are committed to growing our own foster carer network. We have developed a new service offer as part of our Fostering Recruitment Strategy, to reverse the declining numbers of foster carers. We aim to provide more of our placements through our in-house fostering service, by redesigning the tiers of payments carers receive. We will also support carers with 24/7 wraparound support. We will also provide improved access to health and social care professionals, to support placement stability. Moving forward, we will roll out fostering hubs using the mockingbird model.

Objective 3: Establish a robust edge of care offer to provide support for children to remain at home where it is safe to do so.

We are in the process of establishing an Edge of Care Team, to work intensively with young people. The team will work with children aged between 11 and 17, who have been identified as being at risk of coming into the care system. Essex County Council will provide support under the *Partners in Practice* scheme, in the setting up of the service. Essex have a well-established university evaluated and evidence-based edge of care and reunification model, which has significantly reduced the numbers of children in care since the service began in 2012. The service will be designed with the needs of our community at the heart of our model.

Objective 4: Establish clear transition arrangements for our young people aged 16 years and over, to support a successful move into independence and adulthood.

We will ensure that all of our care leavers receive support, to help them transition into independent living with their own tenancy. We will do this in tandem with developing our “Staying Put” offer. This will provide support beyond the age of 18, for some of our young people who are in fostering placements. We will work with housing providers across the Borough to provide support for care leavers to access an appropriate tenancy and receive ongoing support.

Objective 5: Improve our performance monitoring systems ensuring information can be reliably used to inform service delivery.

Colleagues across Children’s Services will use the latest social care performance information, to help review our commissioned activity and service performance. This will be managed through our assurance board arrangements and placement reviews.

4. Understanding our Borough to inform our services

Lambeth has a large population of children and young people, with over 65,000 children growing up here in 2020. Like many inner London boroughs, we are a densely populated group of communities. We are the 5th most densely populated borough in the country. Alongside this, over a quarter of our children in Lambeth experience the challenges of poverty across its many levels of disadvantage.

Finding placements in the borough is extremely challenging for a myriad of reasons, including property prices, location and outdoor space availability. Where at all possible, we strive to place children and young people within our borough. However, we understand this may not always be possible. In 2020, 74% of our looked after children were placed out of borough. This proportion has increased from 72% in 2018.

5. Understanding the children in our care

Children who are looked after

Between 2010 and 2020, Lambeth has experienced a gradual decline in the number of children we look after. However, in 2020 we are seeing a reversal of this trend, seeing an increase in the numbers of children coming into care. We are also seeing an increase in the number of care leavers, from 395 in 2018 to 459 in 2020.

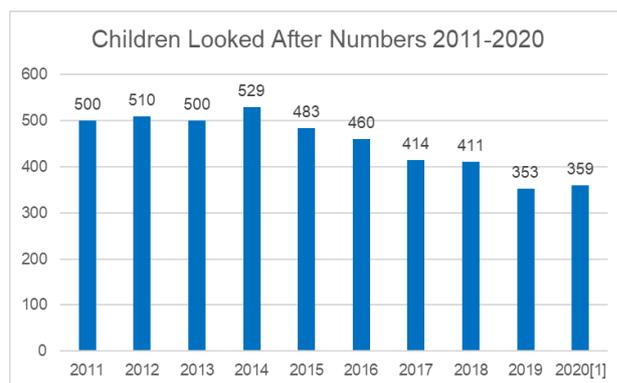


Table 1 Children Looked After Numbers 2011-2020

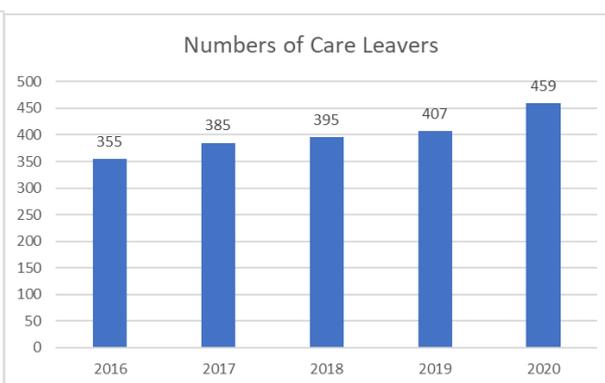


Table 2 Care Leavers Numbers 2016-2020

We have reviewed the projected numbers of children who may come into care. Over the next 3 years, we project that between 360 and 400 children will become looked after. We will need to ensure we are able to provide appropriate provision to support the needs of these children and young people.

We feel this figure is an accurate prediction, based on our current numbers of children coming through social care. This also takes into account Lambeth's appropriate use of Special Guardianship Orders, which places a young person with a family member or other connected person. This in turn reduces the requirement to find a suitable placement for a young person. Without these carers, these children would need to be placed with a foster carer or in a semi-independent or residential placement.

Age entered care	2017		2018		2019		2020	
Under 1	49	12%	50	12%	51	14%	37	10%
Age 1-5	70	17%	66	16%	65	18%	71	20%
Age 6-11	127	31%	132	32%	106	30%	104	29%
Age 12-15	119	29%	109	27%	86	24%	80	22%
Age 16-17	49	12%	54	13%	44	13%	67	19%
	414		411		352		359	

Table 3 Ages of Young people who have come into care 2017-2020

As can be seen from Table 3, the range of children who come into care varies. Since 2017, the percentage of young people coming into care aged 16-17 has increased from 12% in 2017, to 19% in 2020. We therefore need to plan appropriately, to meet the specific needs of this age group. Our approach in the first instance, is to place our children and young people in a family environment. This is normally through either an in-house fostering placement, or through an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placement. Where these are older children, this can be through semi-independent provision, residential placements or “staying put” foster placements.

The percentage of older children aged 16-17 who are looked after is increasing and these young people often have a range of social, emotional, and educational needs. Some of them are known to the Youth Offending Service and therefore have very specific needs.

Lambeth’s population is diverse. The young people who come into care reflect the diversity within our Borough, as table 4 below shows. Our children and young people in care are mostly of Black or Black British ethnicity. They account for over half of all our children who are looked after (51%). This group of young people is followed by children of Mixed Ethnicity (21%), who make up the second largest cohort. The third largest cohort of children who come into care are White British (18%).

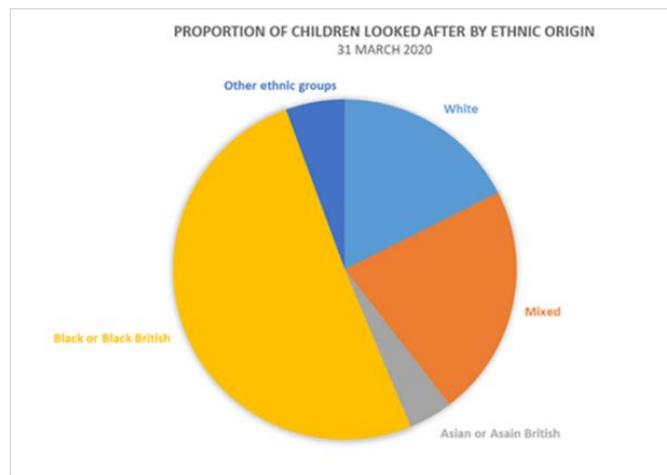


Table 4 Background of young people in Care 2020

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK. They have often experienced huge personal difficulty and have been separated from their birth parents or carers. We care for these children and young people while their claim is processed. The Council makes sure they are safe, and that they gain access to education and health care.

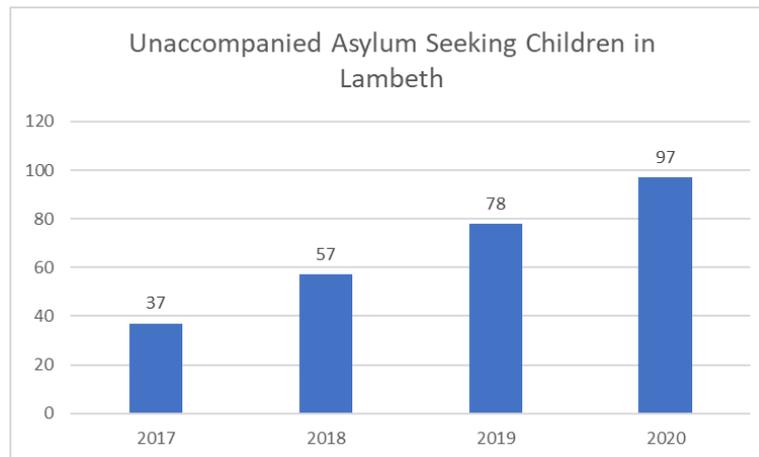


Table 5 Unaccompanied young people numbers 2017-2020

As of October 2020, we are looking after 97 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking children. Overall, this group of young people makes up 27% of the population of children in our care.

Edge of Care

Lambeth is implementing a strength and solutions-based approach, to support young people in the borough who are on the edge of care. The new service is going live in early 2021 and will support young people between 11-17 years old. The service will aim to improve long term outcomes for children and families, through diversion activities who may otherwise would come into care.

We are creating a system that uses a number of interventions, to support our young people and their families. This may include Family Group Conferencing, mediation, and further support for re-unification. The new service will also provide an out of hours service, to support families and young people in a time of crisis. The service aims in its first year, to support 50 young people alongside their dedicated social worker.

Special Guardianship Orders (SGO)

A Special Guardianship Order (often known as an SGO) is a legal order, where the court appoints a carer usually a relative as the 'Special Guardian' of a child until they turn 18. The Special Guardian then shares parental responsibility for the child with the parents.

In Lambeth, as of October 2020, 312 young people are supported in this type of arrangement. Over the past 4 years, Lambeth has successfully used SGOs to allow young people to stay with a family member or other supporting adult. Without these arrangements being in place, Lambeth would need to find appropriate placements for these young people.



Table 6 SGO Numbers 2017-2020

Adoption

Lambeth is part of the South London Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). They help young people who have a plan of permanence of adoption, find forever homes.

Lambeth is currently on an improvement journey, to improve its Adoption services. The Local Authority has been prioritising its improvement, to ensure children are adopted quicker where a plan of permanency supports adoption.

Lambeth joined the local RAA in September 2019. Children’s Social Care have been working to support the development and embedding of new practices, to improve outcomes for young people where it is in their best interest to be adopted. Over the last 3 years, there has been 26 young people adopted in Lambeth.

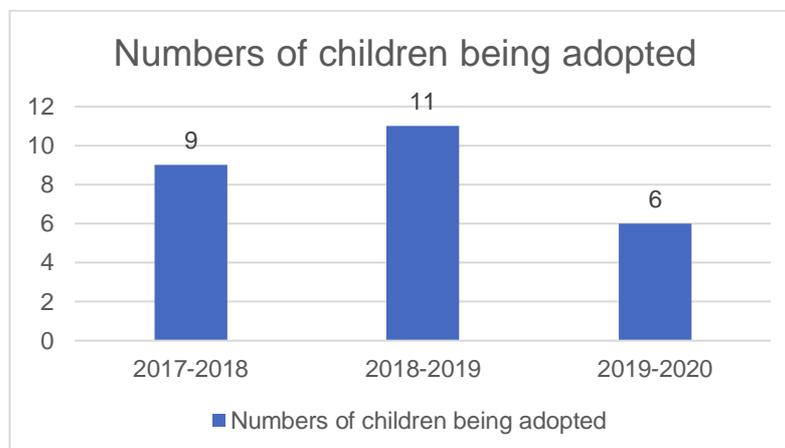


Table 7 Numbers of young people being Adopted 2017-2020

Educational Needs

Ensuring all children are able to succeed is a priority, when exploring placement options for our children who are looked after. 2.8% of our 0-24 population have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), compared to a national figure of 2.3% for all children. A further 14.6% of our young people require specialist SEN Support. While these children do not meet the threshold for an EHCP; they require additional interventions and support to make progress, such as Speech and Language Therapy and curriculum adaptation.

In summary, we are now starting to see an increase in the numbers of children who are coming into care after years of reducing numbers. This includes a particular growth in the numbers of 16 and 17-year olds who will have left, or are about to leave statutory schooling. We are also seeing increased numbers of care leavers in the Borough. The young people who come into our care, represent the demographics of the communities in Lambeth. Overall, we have large numbers of young people who are on an Education, Health and Care Plan who require extra support, to meet their potential.

6. Health Needs of young people in Lambeth

One of the key alliances in the Lambeth Together programme, is the Children and Young People's Alliance. This has been developing during the latter part of 2020, and suitable governance is now beginning to embed itself.

This brings together all system partners to ensure we are able to better integrate services across the health, education and social care arenas for our children, young people and families. Workstreams below the alliance are emerging and will be led by key individuals from across the statutory and community partnership.

All children in care in Lambeth up to the age of 18, receive a holistic health assessment that includes a review of their physical, emotional, and mental health. Our health care provider Evelina London (part of Guys and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust), provide both Initial and annual Health Assessments for our children.

These health assessments help to form individual Health Care Plans. These help to ensure that the health needs of children and young people are met. These needs are considered when we match and place children in individual placements.

Partnership working between the designated clinical professionals, alongside children's social care and commissioning, has seen improvements to the turnaround-time for initial health assessments (IHAs) in 2020, as can be seen from table 6 below.

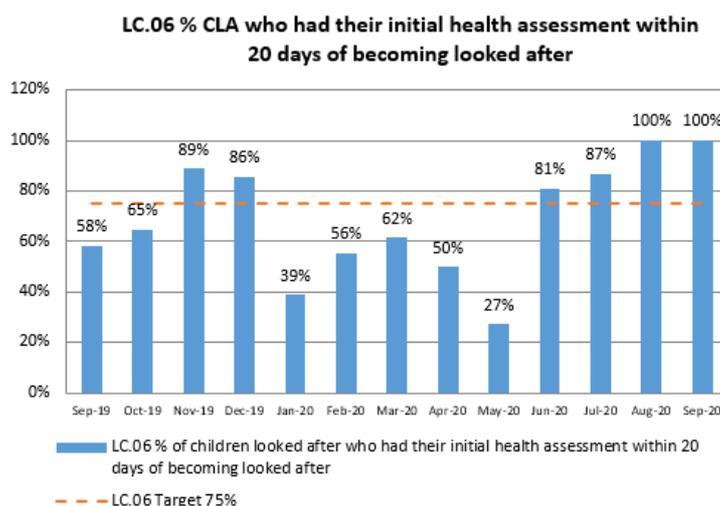


Table 6 Initial Health Assessment 2019-2020

Lambeth CAMHs is provided by South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM). They support children, young people, and their families where there are concerns about emotional or mental health difficulties. CAMHS staff include a wide range of clinical specialists, who support our young people across a variety of emotional health and wellbeing needs.

CAMHs services offer assessment and therapy for children and young people. Research has consistently demonstrated, that Children Looked After are at greater risk of developing emotional and behavioral disorders and have greater exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACES).

The Children Looked After Mental Health Service (CLAMHs) team is a specialist service commissioned, to address the emotional health and wellbeing needs of our children looked after. As at quarter 1 20/21, the caseload for CLAMHS was 59 children. The ages of young people seen by the service, was between 3 and 17 years old. All of the young people were seen within the agreed waiting times, in the first quarter of 20/21.

A significant proportion of the CLAMHs caseload are young asylum seeking children. This group of young people are typically adolescents and largely male. They frequently present with symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, as well as social difficulties adapting to life in this country after traumatic journeys and experiences.

We also provide support for our young people to access drug, alcohol, and sexual treatments services up to 25 years of age.

7.Lambeth’s placements and the future approach to meet sufficiency needs

In Lambeth, we use a mixture of in-house and commissioned services. These are provided through our London alliances, frameworks and in-house foster carers service.

Lambeth is part of the South London Commissioning Programme (SLCP) CLA workstream, alongside 6 other South London boroughs.

The South London Commissioning Programme, has set up an Approved Provider Panel Agreement (APPA) for residential and foster care provision. This will provide standard, specialist and emergency placements. This arrangement has been agreed for a 3-year term, with the option to extend for a further 5 years.

Being a part of the SLCP will improve the range of placements available to us, as well as provide increased value for money. The Programme will also enable us to work better with the market, through working with sub-regional partners. The SLCP also has a rigorous quality assurance process. Over the course of this Strategy, we will strive to use the new framework as opposed to spot purchasing arrangements.

We are also making changes to the way we approve placements in Lambeth. A review of panel processes is taking place, with all new placements now being approved through updated placements panels. This will ensure all placements continue to meet the needs of young people.

Our current mix of placements shows most of our children are placed with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) and in Semi-Independent placements. This is a financially challenging model and one which we need to change in order to achieve financial sustainability.

Placement Type (Aug 2020)	Number
Children’s Residential Provisions	16
Independent Fostering Agencies	142
Semi-Independent Placements	130
Inhouse Fostering Placements	80

Table 8 – Mix of Placements by type August 2020

Fostering (In House)

The Fostering Network (the national association for all foster carers) reports that, there is a shortfall of approximately 7,200 foster carers nationwide. They go on to report that fostering services in some parts of the country, have no available foster carers. Reports also show there are specific shortages of households being willing or able to provide specialist placements.

These national shortages are reflected in Lambeth. We know we need to ensure we have enough foster carers, to meet the shortfall of key groups. We currently experience shortages in placement sufficiency with:

- Foster families for adolescents, including those with challenging behaviour
- Foster families that can support emergency placement requests
- Permanent foster families for children
- Parent and baby placements
- In-borough foster families

As of 2020, Lambeth has 84 households registered to provide in-house foster carer placements across our Borough. We currently have sufficient carers and connected carers to look after 112 children and young people at any given time. Currently, not all households are providing placements due to age, health issues, the covid pandemic, placement matching, or availability grounds. Currently, 29 households do not have a young person placed with them for these reasons.

Since 2017, there has been a 9% reduction in the number of households that are registered for fostering in Lambeth. We know that there are a number of Lambeth foster carers who are over 65 years old. This means we need to consistently attract new carers of all ages, to help ensure we have a sustainable model of in-house foster care and sufficient capacity for our looked after population.

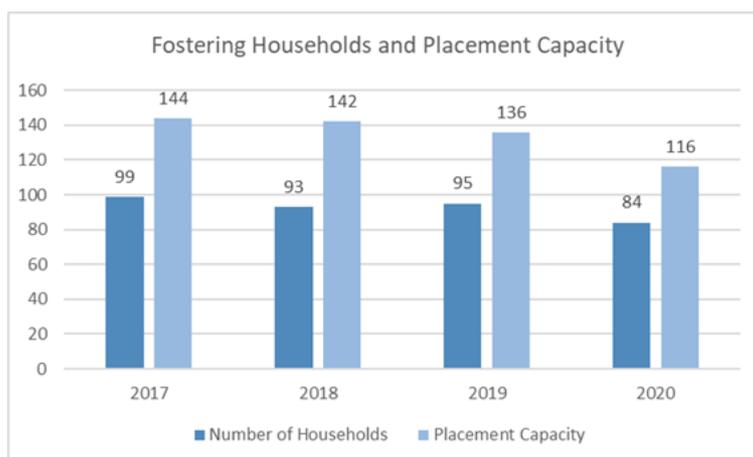


Table 9 – Numbers of Households / Placements 2017-2020

Despite recruitment campaigns targeting foster carers to support 10-15yr old's, there continues to be a local and national shortage of foster carers for this age group. Consultation with front line social workers has indicated that, our older children can bring additional challenges that many foster carers may struggle to manage. This can include challenging behaviour that can lead to exclusion or potential involvement in the criminal justice system. Some of our young people also have emotional and physical health needs, which provide additional complexity.

We are clear that we need to support our foster carers given these issues. To meet this challenge, we are launching a new fostering recruitment strategy in November 2020 and redesigning our Foster Carers service. We will prioritise doing the basics well within the first year, aiming to help to reverse the trend of carers leaving our service, in parallel with developing our new service model.

Our new structure focuses on immediately putting in place, a 24-hour support line for foster carers. We are also putting in place a wraparound support structure to carers, who need support in times of crisis. We have also refreshed the foster carer handbook. The new handbook outlines our wider offer, taking on board the views of the foster carer network. This includes proposing to increase the rates of pay and support foster carers receive. We are ensuring that we are competitive on both pay and support with neighbouring boroughs. We are also prioritising the recruitment of supporting therapeutic roles, to help improve placement stability.

We have also started training our in-house foster carers, to provide mother and baby placements. We will be uplifting the rates of pay for Mother and Baby placements, to reflect similar pay from other providers.

We will be looking to strengthen our 'Staying Put' offer in the winter of 2020. This will provide the processes to encourage more staying put placements and allow young people to stay more frequently with their foster carers up to the age of 25 where appropriate.

Overall, we want to increase the numbers of in-house foster carers through this new offer. Our aims are to recruit a net increase of 20 foster carers per year, over the next three years. By the end of this strategy, we hope to have increased the number of foster carer households to deliver 160 in house placements at any one time. This will be done through a widened service offer, that will include the use of a well-known hub model. This will provide wraparound support that will include access to therapeutic support for foster carers and the young people placed with them.

Independent Foster Care Placements (IFA)

In Lambeth, we commission IFA placements where our in-house carers are unable, or do not have the capacity to provide placements for children in our care. This also includes mother and baby placements and some specialist placements. We also make this type of placement where a young person may need to be placed out of Borough for their own safety.

There are over 100 Independent Foster Agencies that Lambeth places children with nationally. In 2019-2020, Lambeth used 54 different agencies. However, five agencies out of this total provided 30% of our placements.

Placements with private fostering agencies usually last for a longer duration, compared to our in-house foster provision. This may in part be attributable to the younger ages of children being cared for in-house. This also takes into consideration the greater likelihood of returning home, or achieving permanence through Adoption, Special Guardianship, or other means. The average length of stay in an IFA placement is over 2 years, but nearly half of all children and young people stay in their placement for 2 years or longer.

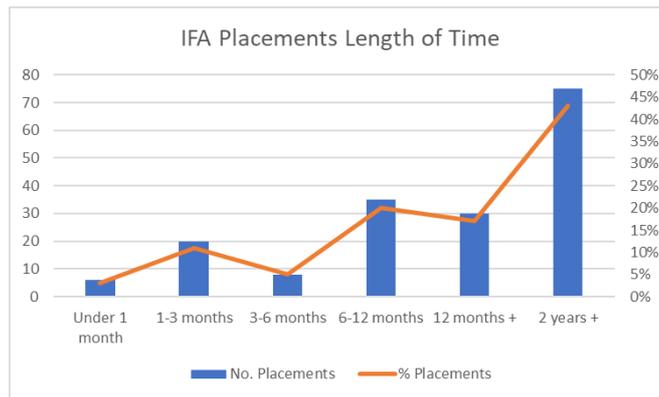


Table 10 – IFA Placements by length of time

Moving forward, we want to commission less IFA placements than those provided in our in-house foster carer service. We accept however due to the London market, that we will always need this type of placement as part of a placement mix. We also recognise that some children may require specialist support, that cannot be provided in house.

We want to reduce the number of mother and baby placements we make through IFA providers. As earlier mentioned, we have started training our in-house foster carers to provide mother and baby placements.

We want to only place children with IFA providers, that are rated as Good or Outstanding. In the vast majority of cases, we are achieving this ambition. As of October 2020, over 95% of placements are meeting these criteria. Where ratings for providers fall below 'Good', Children's Social Care undertake the necessary risk assessments working with these providers.

We will be actively engaging our IFA carers, to see if they wish to move to our in-house service. We propose to match their agency rate, in the first year of their transfer. We hope to see 10% of our IFA carers, join us in our new Foster Carer service by 2023.

By 2023, we hope to have in the region of 160 in house foster carer placements, and approximately 100 IFA Placements to meet our needs.

Residential Services

Children's Social Care in Lambeth do not operate any of their own children's homes. All our residential placements are commissioned through external providers, using framework and spot purchase arrangements. These are commissioned using our London based frameworks.

Residential care homes are predominantly owned and operated by private sector providers. In the main, these providers find central London to be a less attractive location given property prices and therefore are based out of our borough. Unfortunately, all of our children in residential care are placed outside of Lambeth.

As of August 2020, 16 children and young people were placed in differing residential care homes. Of the care homes where our young people were placed, 4 were rated as outstanding, 9 were rated as 'Good' and 3 were rated 'Requires Improvement' by Ofsted.

Our children and young people in a residential care placement are aged between 6 and 18 years old. Most children placed in a residential home have a residential plan of permanence, due to issues around their treatment by their birth families.

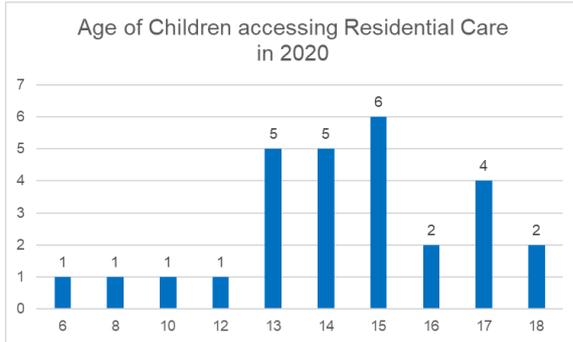


Table 11 Age of Children in R-Care

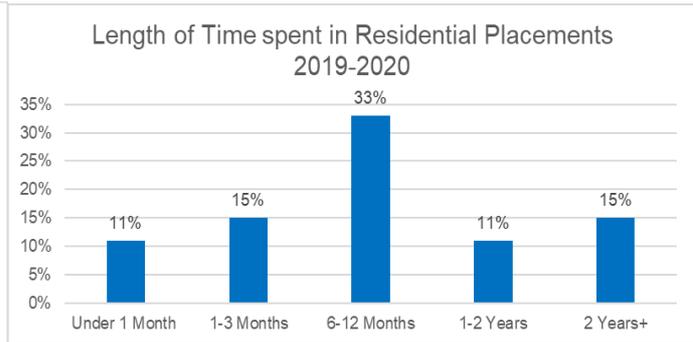


Table 12 – RS Placements by length of time

The table above shows the age range of children who at some point have accessed residential provision in 2020. In some circumstances, some younger children have accessed residential care temporarily, in lieu of a step-down placement being found for them.

Residential accommodation presents the highest weekly cost across all placement options. The total spend in 2019/20 for young people in children’s residential homes was £6.1m. Where at all possible, we try and place children within 20 miles of Lambeth. Of our 16 young people accessing residential placements, 10 are placed more than 20 miles from Lambeth (42%), owing to:

- The young person’s level of risk by remaining in the area
- Needing to be placed in specialist provisions, which were outside of London
- Lack of available options within London.

For the majority of children who access residential placements, they stay on average for less than 1 year (59%). On average a young person is in placement for 6-12 months. On a small number of occasions (15%), a young person stays in residential accommodation for 2 years or more.

We want to reduce the number of external and out of borough residential placements we make. Instead, we wish to use our in-house foster care service in the majority of our cases. We see a home environment as being preferable for any child in Lambeth. Fundamentally, we do not see residential provision as a long-term destination for any of our children. We will continue to review a young person’s plan of permanency and consider alternatives such as Long-Term Fostering, Special Guardianship Orders, and re-unification on a regular basis.

Where we need to commission a residential placement for a young person, we will review this environment holistically. Overall, we need to make sure that any residential placement provides our young people with the right physical environment, alongside the therapeutic support they need. We will be actively monitoring this against our performance indicators and will manage placements appropriately over the course of this strategy. Where a placement is not offering the levels of quality care we expect, we will work with providers to improve the quality of care. Where this is not possible, we will move young people to other placements accordingly.

Over the course of this Strategy, we intend to use the South London Commissioning Programme (SLCP) framework, to increase the range of residential placements that we can access. Lambeth will continue to commission Residential care from the LCS Framework, where the South London Commissioning Programme does not meet our needs, creating more options and flexibility. We will also be exploring other opportunities with neighbouring Local Authorities, to potentially expand our access to residential placements over the course of this Strategy.

Semi Independent Placements

Lambeth commissions Semi Independent Provision for our young people over the age of 16 and supports them to move into independent living. In order to prepare some of our young people for independence, a number of our care leavers spend a period of time in semi-independent/supported accommodation.

As of September 2020, we have 144 young people who access Semi-Independent Provision. The age range for young people accessing this type of placement varies. The majority of our young people who access this accommodation, are aged between 17 and 19 years old.

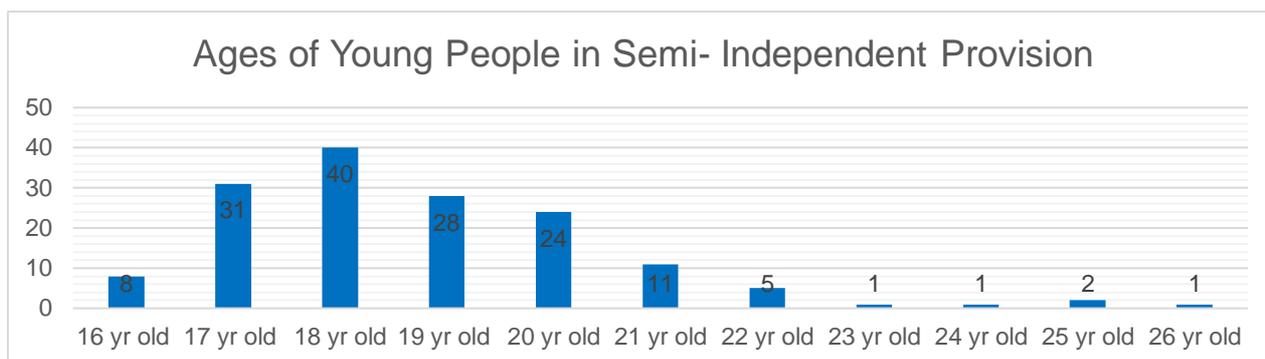


Table 13 – Ages of young people in Semi-Independent accommodation

Of the 144 young people placed in this type of accommodation, 106 (75%) were placed with a preferred provider and 38 were purchased off our wider housing provider framework. Moving forward, we wish to ensure the majority of our accommodation for Semi-Independent provision is made with preferred providers.

We will, over the lifecycle of this Strategy, be re-tendering our Semi-independent provision. The exercise will also see a focus on ensuring that young people over the aged of 21, move into their own tenancy. This will be done through a new supported housing pathway. This will help our young people understand other accommodation options as they leave care.

We will be working with housing partners, to ensure care leavers are supported in their first tenancy. We will support our care leavers with money management support and access to appropriate benefits. We will also support care leavers on other education, training, and employment matters through their personal adviser.

Young people who are 16 or 17 will be encouraged to move to a home environment. We will consider moving these young people to our in-house foster carer service, where it is in their best interest.

Alongside our Semi-Independent provision, we will develop a virtual landlord function to minimise the risk of 16/17 year old homelessness. This will also help our young people find suitable accommodations, across a range of private and public sector providers.

Currently, 86% of our care leavers reside in 'Suitable Accommodation'; our ambition is for this to be 100%. We define "suitable accommodation" as our Semi-Independent living accommodation, a council owned property or 'Stay Put' arrangements with a Foster Carer. Lambeth's rate is slightly higher than our statistical neighbours, where on average 81% of authorities report their care leavers are in suitable accommodation.

Overall, we see the numbers of young people using Semi-Independent accommodation fall as young people over the age of 21 move to independent accommodation. We expect by 2023, to see 90-95 young people per year in semi-independent accommodation in Lambeth.

Specialist Placements

We provide specialist provision for young people, where they are either in the criminal justice system or require specialist medical provisions to support their welfare.

Lambeth is seeing more children remanded into its care by the courts. In 2018, 18 young people were remanded into care. This increased in 2019, with 23 young people held on remand. This increase in numbers seems to reflect local and national trends, associated with increasing levels of youth violence. Young people will stay an average of 14 weeks in a remand placement. (Youth Justice placements).

Analysis produced by the London Secure Children's Home Review addressed concerns around availability, distance travelled, outcomes achieved and the high cost of secure placements. Analysis suggests, an estimated average of 33 children and young people from London were accommodated in secure children's homes at any point of time. The young people in this group, were placed in these types of specialist placement on average of 192 miles from home. This creates geographical barriers, to work with families and local services.

Equally, there is a gap in provision for those on the 'edge of secure' where early and intensive intervention, may prevent a secure placement being required. There is growing evidence that secure provision alone is not enough and that a whole pathway approach is required. We intend to review this approach. We will look to provide a new pathway for this type of placement within the first year of this strategy being produced.

Lambeth will continue to support its young people who are required to stay in secure accommodation. We will ensure that the appropriate support and accommodation is provided, where these are required. We currently have a small cohort of foster carers, who can provide placements for young people in custody that may require accommodation. When a young person is placed in custody during the day, Lambeth offers a Liaison and Diversion service to support a young person's mental health and wellbeing needs.

We are reviewing our current secure arrangements, to ensure that our young people who require this accommodation are having their needs met. We will also ensure that these young people still have access to educational opportunities within these types of placements.

Through the SLCP framework, we will be able to obtain remand placements through IFA providers. We do accept however, that further work is required to identify specific carers that can work with children that appear in custody overnight.

Our aim over the course of this Strategy, is to ensure there is sufficient specialist accommodation, for young people on remand or who are in custody. This will be done in conjunction with extending our in-house provision, so this offer can be made more locally.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

We have developed a new performance framework to help us understand what placements we need. This will also ensure, these placements meet the needs of our children and young people.

The Supporting Us Framework will help us to understand the usage of our placements. The framework will also let us know where we need to work with providers and young people, to improve outcomes for our young people.

New Performance booklets for Fostering, Residential, Semi – Independent and Specialist provisions will help us undertake deep dive reviews, into the overall quality and usage of our

services. This will allow us to monitor our commissions and directly delivered services. We hope to launch the framework in the Autumn of 2020.

9. Conclusion

We are now bringing to life the proposals that we have set out in this Strategy. We will be regularly updating our Children in Care Council, Corporate Parenting Board and elected members / senior officers on the progress we will make throughout the next three years on the objectives and activities contained in this strategy.

We will be focusing on ensuring we do the basics well in our first year. We know that we need to further support our foster carers and change our purchasing options, to help provide better foundations for our commissioning activities. We will reduce the amount of spot purchases we make and move to procuring placements off our frameworks where at all possible.

We are launching new projects over the life of this strategy. These will help us deliver on the ambitions set out in this document. We will make sure that we report in and check with stakeholders regularly on the delivery of these projects. We will also be testing across our services and providers, to ensure our new approaches are helping to improve outcomes for our children and young people.

The initial actions to mobilise this strategy are set out in the table below.

Initial Mobilisation planning for Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023

Action	Owner	Deadline	Progress
1) Launch of New Sufficiency Strategy	Director of Commissioning	Q3 2020	Draft Strategy produced for consultation with senior colleagues and partners for approval
2) Launch of Fostering Strategy	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	Q3 2020	Draft Fostering Recruitment Strategy to be approved before Christmas 2020. Drafted and in current consultation with partners
3) Launch of 24/7 support model for Foster Carers	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	Q3 2020	New 24/7 helpline in design to be launched for end of Q3 2020.
4) Launch of new support Model for Foster Carers	Assistant Director Corporate Parenting	Q4 2020	New support model to be rolled out by the end of 2020
5) Review of housing options for care leavers	Corporate Parenting Lead / Housing Commissioning Lead	Q4 2020	To review young people who are care leavers to ensure they have appropriate housing support and access to tenancies.