

# London Borough of Enfield

## Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

## Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board<sup>1</sup>

**Inspection date: 20 January 2015 to 11 February 2015**

**Report published: 27 March 2015**

### The overall judgement is that children's services are good

The local authority leads effective services that meet the requirements for good. It is Ofsted's expectation that, as a minimum, all children and young people receive good help, care and protection.

The judgements on areas of the service that contribute to overall effectiveness are:

<b>1. Children who need help and protection</b>	Requires improvement
<b>2. Children looked after and achieving permanence</b>	Good
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
<b>3. Leadership, management and governance</b>	Good

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<sup>1</sup> Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

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## The local authority

### Summary of findings

#### **Children's services in Enfield are good because:**

##### *Leadership, management and governance*

- Enfield's senior managers and leaders have a strong track record of making significant improvements to the lives of vulnerable children and young people. This is in the context of a rapidly changing environment characterised by high levels of child poverty, a transitory population due to relatively low housing costs, gang violence and increased prevalence of female genital mutilation.
- Strong partner agency support and political commitment are making a positive difference to children's outcomes.
- The workforce strategy is highly effective, ensuring well-trained and motivated staff teams. A determination to achieve manageable caseloads means that social workers have time to get to know children and protect them more effectively.
- Partnership arrangements to safeguard children and young people from child sexual exploitation ensure that individual children and young people who are considered at high risk of sexual exploitation are effectively safeguarded.
- Corporate parenting is well embedded across the local authority. Members of the award-winning children in care council (known as KRATOS, meaning power) told inspectors that staff listen to them and take action, which is making a positive difference to the lives of children in care.

##### *Social work practice*

- Most children and families receive the right support at the right time. However, during the inspection, the local authority was asked to consider a small number of children's cases as inspectors found that their needs were not being met effectively.
- Child protection arrangements are effective. Families and children are clear about the concerns for their family and know what needs to change.
- Looked after children and care leavers receive good care and are supported by staff who are determined that they achieve good outcomes.
- The local authority and partners have well-developed knowledge and understanding of the diverse needs of local groups and communities.
- Adoption performance is good. High priority is given to children achieving timely permanence through adoption, and timeliness is improving.

## **What does the local authority need to improve?**

### **Priority and immediate action**

#### *Leadership, management and governance*

1. Ensure that the profile and data of children at risk of sexual and gang exploitation, and/or missing from home, care or education are cross-referenced on a regular basis, analysed by senior managers and the learning disseminated to social workers and partner agencies.

### **Areas for improvement**

#### *Leadership, management and governance*

2. Prioritise the planned integration of the Single Point of Entry (SPOE) with the Referral and Assessment Team, so that referral pathways for children in need and those in need of protection are rationalised and better understood alongside the planned review of early help.
3. Improve the electronic social care record system so that it delivers accurate and timely data and performance information and combine this with auditing activity outcomes to enable senior and frontline managers to improve the quality of service.
4. Ensure that the annual reports of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the independent reviewing officer (IRO) meet the requirements of the relevant statutory guidance, provide a critical analysis of their respective services and identify specific areas for improvement.
5. Improve local placement choice so that more young people can be looked after close to their homes, unless this is not in their best interest.

#### *Quality of social work practice*

6. Ensure that return interviews for looked after children are carried out in accordance with the policy and procedures, and that findings from all return interviews are analysed and aggregated and also shared with social workers to assist with risk assessment and care planning.
7. Improve management oversight of children in need cases and those at potential risk of sexual exploitation, so that they consistently receive the appropriate level of protection and support.
8. Ensure that initial strategy discussions include relevant professionals to inform decision making during child protection investigations.

9. Improve the quality of care and pathway plans so that they are consistently of a good standard and meaningful for children, young people and their families. Improve the quality of chronologies and ensure they are used to inform assessments and decision making.
10. Ensure that all supervision takes place in accordance with the stated policy and that records are of a consistently good standard.
11. Ensure that children who are privately fostered are visited in accordance with statutory timescales, and that the assessments of carers are of high quality.

### **The local authority's strengths**

12. The local authority benefits from consistent and stable leadership and strong partnership arrangements. Senior managers are very experienced; they provide clear strategic direction and are highly visible. Safeguarding is a key priority for the local authority and is underpinned by effective governance and strong partnerships.
13. Complex or serious cases are referred by children's services practitioners to a risk management panel, chaired by the Director of Schools and Children's Services (the DCS), providing effective management oversight and ownership in high risk safeguarding matters.
14. Elected members demonstrate strong political commitment to children's services. Although savings are required by the local authority, increased resources have been secured for schools and children's services. Additional funding has been agreed to establish a dedicated child sexual exploitation team. In response to national concerns about sexual exploitation, a member-led task group has been established to improve scrutiny.
15. Enfield is one of 30 local authorities identified as being at higher risk from radicalisation. There are effective partnership arrangements to raise awareness across schools, colleges, governing bodies and faith groups. Effective joint work takes place between the Community Safety Partnership, the Metropolitan Police Prevent team and the local police. Monthly meetings focusing on individual young people have identified 12 people at risk of radicalisation in the last 18 months, four of them less than 18 years old. The local authority has appointed a 'faith officer', who successfully engages with local community leaders.
16. The borough's challenging demographic profile has prompted the authority and its partners to plan a holistic, multi-disciplinary preventative service called the Family and Accommodation Support Hub – FASH. The intention is that social workers will carry out intensive work with families using the team around the child/family approach, and act as lead professionals. Funding has been agreed for this new service and has a focus on diverting young people and their families away from negative choices.

17. Social work practice is clearly child centred, and this is demonstrated in casework and planning. Managers and staff are passionate about improving outcomes for children and young people. Continued investment in high quality training and support to staff has resulted in excellent workforce retention that has been sustained over many years. Low staff turnover, combined with manageable caseloads, means that social workers have time to get to know their children well, and delays are minimised.
18. Direct work with children is supported by the online Social Work Resource website, which contains a range of age-specific direct work tools and video vignettes of professionals using the tools with children. Inspectors saw evidence of improved analysis as a direct result of the use of online information.
19. Managers actively lead and participate in a number of inter-borough and regional work programmes that are making a positive difference. For example, the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium is successfully increasing the number of carers for children with complex needs. Innovation is evident in effective partnership work to tackle gang involvement, de-radicalisation and the accelerated response to child sexual exploitation child and female genital mutilation.
20. The Joint Service for Disabled Children provides a comprehensive range of universal and specialist services, which means that disabled children and their families receive integrated support at the point of need.
21. The voice of children and young people is given a high priority. This is demonstrated by a highly effective and award-winning children in care council, known as KRATOS, and children's views are clearly recorded in social work visits, assessments and surveys.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

22. The last Ofsted inspection of Enfield's safeguarding arrangements and looked after children services was in May 2010, when the local authority was judged to be good for overall effectiveness. All recommendations have been addressed, although the quality of chronologies remains variable.
23. The current DCS has been in post since 2009, and has worked tirelessly with his staff and partners to ensure that children and young people continue to be provided with good services in a climate of rapid change, despite additional demand on resources. The success of the SPOE in bringing partner agencies together at the 'front door' is ensuring that most children requiring help to prevent concerns escalating are identified and provided with services that meet their needs. The number of re-referrals to social care has reduced over the past two years. Improving assessments, earlier and better intervention and good knowledge of pathways, both within the authority and with other agencies, help to ensure that outcomes for most children are improving.

24. Enfield is an ambitious and innovative local authority that actively forges joint initiatives. For example, the Tri-Borough Care Proceedings Project with Barnet and Haringey, led by Enfield, is successfully reducing the duration of care proceedings.
25. A longstanding and highly effective workforce strategy is in place, ensuring a stable staff group who are supported and trained to improve outcomes for children and young people. This means that children benefit from having the same worker over a considerable period of time. Managers are permanent and provide good oversight of case progress. Staff morale is high and staff told inspectors that they are proud to work in Enfield.
26. The participation and engagement of children and young people have increased dramatically since 2013; examples include the Youth Parliament, the Young Inspectors programme and Young Carers. KRATOS has engaged with 102 looked after children and care leavers in the past 12 months and has led the development of the safeguarding champions programme on behalf of the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board.
27. Enfield's Parenting Strategy helped 248 parents to complete the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting course between April and December 2014. Parents reported that the course had increased their confidence in their ability to manage their anger, and that they were more likely to ask their children for their opinions about a range of topics, including gangs.
28. Partnership work is well embedded; the local authority has a track record of delivering good services to some key groups of vulnerable children. It has been increasingly proactive in developing awareness of, and services for, children and young people in gangs and those children at risk of child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation.
29. The local authority and its partners commissioned an external evaluation of their effectiveness in protecting children and young people at risk from sexual exploitation in October 2014. An action plan and task and finish group are driving the improvements. This work is aligned to the Trafficked, Sexually Exploited and Missing (TSEM) work stream and its impact is monitored by the safeguarding sub-group.
30. A number of joint initiatives aimed at raising awareness of child sexual exploitation in primary and secondary schools include, 'Making Safer Choices' which is delivered by the police, safer school officers, social care and youth engagement officers. Designated teachers have a specific training module which focuses on children at risk of sexual exploitation and missing.

31. The learning from recent serious case reviews has been good, with significant improvements being made by all agencies to divert young people away from gang related activity and to support parents and siblings of gang members. Gang workshops are delivered to targeted schools by the police and social care. '2Risky', an Enfield resource targeted for young people engaging in risk taking behaviour, includes workshops for girls involved in gangs. This training has been rolled out to all Enfield secondary schools.



## Summary for children and young people

- Senior managers have a strong and well established track record of making improvements in services for children and young people. They are aware of the strengths and the areas for development in these services, which provide good support for children and young people at times of their lives when they experience trauma and great change.
- Most children and young people get the right sort of help from the right people when they need it. In most cases their circumstances improve as a result of the support they get from social workers and other professionals. Those most at risk are protected by different agencies working well together. However, some information on children who go missing from home, care or education is not shared between agencies. This limits the effectiveness of the work to help these children and young people to keep safe.
- Children and young people have a strong voice in developing services. KRATOS, the children in care council, is very successful in involving looked after children and care leavers in a wide range of activities. Managers take the views of children and young people seriously and act on them to improve services.
- Social workers really care about the children and young people they work with. Young people told inspectors that they have good relationships with social workers, who visit them regularly and listen to their views and concerns.
- The adoption team works well to find permanent families for those children who cannot stay at home. They act in the best interests of children and ensure that they move to families who can meet their needs well.
- Social workers and personal advisers provide good support to young people who are leaving care. They contact them regularly and help them prepare to live independently and to move successfully into education, employment and training.
- Social workers and other professionals keep in close contact with looked after children and young people and know them well. Wherever they live, children and young people receive good support and as a result their health, education and welfare needs are met.

## Information about the local authority area<sup>2</sup>

### Children living in this area

- Approximately 80,400 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Enfield. This is 26% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 37% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
  - in primary schools is 22% (the national average is 18%)
  - in secondary schools is 22% (the national average is 16%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 77% of all school children living in the area, compared with 28% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Turkish, Black African, Caribbean, White Eastern European, Greek Cypriot, Nigerian and Bangladeshi.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:
  - in primary schools is 48% (the national average is 19%)
  - in secondary schools is 43% (the national average is 14%).
- The borough has the seventh highest number of households in temporary accommodation in England (December 2013), unemployment levels consistently above both London and national averages, and the 17th highest notifiable crime rate in London (2012–13).

### Child protection in this area

- At 31 March 2014, 2,012 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is an increase from 1,929 at 31 March 2013.
- At 31 January 2015, 234 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is an increase from 182 at 31 January 2014.
- At 3 February 2015, 14 children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is the same number as at February 2014.
- Since the last inspection, six serious incident notifications have been submitted to Ofsted and two serious case reviews were in progress at the time of the inspection.

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<sup>2</sup> The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data where this was available.

## **Children looked after in this area**

- At 31 January 2015, 340 children were being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 41.8 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 291 (36.2 per 10,000 children) at 31 January 2014. (Please note that the DfE population estimate of 81,400 is used for 2015 and 80,400 for 2014.) Of this number:
  - 166 (or 49%) live outside the local authority area
  - 16 live in residential children’s homes, of whom 100% live out of the authority area
  - 10 live in residential special schools<sup>3</sup>, of whom 100% live out of the authority area
  - 219 live with foster families, of whom 43% live out of the authority area
  - five live with parents or another person with parental responsibility, of whom 60% live out of the authority area
  - 41 are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
  - there have been 19 adoptions
  - five children became the subjects of special guardianship orders
  - 181 children ceased to be looked after, of whom 11% subsequently returned to be looked after
  - 39 children and young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
  - no children and young people ceased to be looked after and are now living in houses of multiple occupation.

## **Other Ofsted inspections**

- The local authority operates no children’s homes.

## **Other information about this area**

- The Director of Schools and Children’s Services has been in post since January 2009.
- The Chair of the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board has been in post since September 2010.

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<sup>3</sup> These are residential special schools that look after children for 295 days or less per year.

## Inspection judgements about the local authority

Key judgement	Judgement grade
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Enfield’s Single Point of Entry (SPOE) co-locates professionals from across the multi-agency partnership to manage referrals and identify services for children who would benefit from early help. Early help and social work assessments are robust and help is provided quickly through the Team Around the Family (TAF) arrangements. Management oversight and quality assurance of the SPOE require improvement to ensure that thresholds are applied consistently.</p> <p>Children and young people referred to children’s social care receive a good service. This includes timely response to referrals, holistic assessments which take children’s views into account, and effective multi-agency child protection investigations for those identified as potentially being at risk of significant harm. Planning to improve outcomes and reduce risk for children receiving a social work service is robust, and regular reviews ensure that progress is measured and risks are reduced for the majority of children. For some children, including those privately fostered, monitoring of their progress requires improvement to ensure that intervention is escalated to the correct level if their needs and risks increase.</p> <p>Social workers and managers demonstrate good analysis and sensitivity to ethnicity and racial, language and cultural needs. Interpreters are used when required, and translation of key documentation for families within legal processes is undertaken. Children with disabilities and their brothers and sisters receive good specialist services, co-ordinated through the Children with Disabilities Team.</p> <p>Children at risk of sexual and gang exploitation are identified early, and those most at risk receive a good multi-agency service that seeks to reduce their vulnerability. Those at lower levels of risk require improved co-ordinated services to prevent escalation and ensure that risk is managed at the appropriate level.</p> <p>Most children who have been missing from home are provided with the opportunity to discuss their reasons for going missing on their return, with an independent person. The information from these missing episodes is not routinely shared with their social worker, so co-ordination of intervention and support to them is not fully informed by their experiences. Information about children missing from home and education, and those at risk of sexual and gang exploitation is collated but not systematically cross-referenced within social care, so emerging issues for individual children and wider issues and trends within the local authority area are not fully identified and analysed.</p>	

32. For the majority of children, the co-location of professionals within the SPOE enables good information sharing between agencies and robust decision making for children when needs and concerns are first identified; this leads to support for children and families at the earliest opportunity. The use of the early help form for referral into the SPOE has been successfully implemented across the partnership, with the majority of referrals being detailed and clear.
33. Effective, focused multi-agency meetings on set days consider all referrals for different cohorts of children and young people. For example for adolescents, under-fives or children living in households with domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health and/or substance misuse. This ensures that a wide group of relevant professionals are successfully engaged in sharing information and reaching timely decisions for children. However, inspectors saw a small number of cases where thresholds were not effectively applied and needed to be escalated for social care intervention. While performance information is utilised by managers to monitor quality, planned improvements to the electronic recording system are intended to improve efficacy.
34. The referral pathway for those children and young people in need of protection is well established within the local authority's guidance and protocols. Timely referrals into the Referral and Assessment Team and swift triage by a team manager ensure a prompt response for children. A very small number of contacts are subject to 'duty visits', to establish whether an assessment is required. The local authority accepted inspectors' views that this led to unnecessary duplication in the assessment process and has ceased this practice.
35. The majority of the early help cases considered during this inspection are being held appropriately with early help professionals. In most cases there is evidence of children's outcomes improving. When early help is not making a positive difference to children, processes to escalate the level of intervention are followed in almost all cases, including step-up to children's social care and escalation to legal action.
36. The Parenting Support Unit (PSU) works with the more complex cases; the local authority acknowledges that within this service some plans for these families are more focused on the parents than on outcomes for children. The PSU currently operates a waiting list; while step-downs and self-referrals are prioritised, the waiting list is not kept under regular review. The local authority is currently recruiting a social work-qualified deputy manager to increase capacity and ensure sufficient and robust management oversight of this work.
37. The local authority and its partners have introduced a vulnerability measure to evaluate outcomes for children receiving early help services, although this tool is not yet fully embedded. Their audit of early help services, conducted during the third quarter of 2014–2015, to which 37% of lead agencies responded, highlighted a need to ensure that TAF meetings were being held on all cases.

38. Multi-agency meetings – such as team around the family (TAF) meetings, network meetings to review children in need, and child protection conferences – are a particular strength in the borough. Meetings are well attended by all relevant professionals and, when unable to attend, professionals submit a report to the meeting. Children are also supported to attend and participate within their meetings. Meetings observed during this inspection were chaired well and ensured that all attendees contributed relevant information and views.
39. Timely strategy discussions are routinely held by team managers and the police. Almost all initial strategy discussions do not include other professionals and, while this did not adversely affect the outcomes on cases sampled, this practice does not comply with '*Working Together 2013*' nor fully consider background information held by partners. Subsequent strategy meetings do include information from other agencies.
40. In the majority of cases where children are considered to be at risk of significant harm, including harm from neglect, section 47 child protection enquiries are undertaken in a timely way. Good joint working with the police was seen by inspectors and, in cases sampled, police accompanied social workers on the majority of child protection enquiries. The decisions to progress to section 47 enquiries are proportionate and children are not subjected to formal child protection investigations unnecessarily. However, in a small number of cases, there are delays in escalating concerns to formal child protection processes which impede the implementation of multi-agency plans to reduce risk. During this inspection, six cases were formally referred to the local authority; five of these were as a result of delay in progressing from children in need to child protection processes.
41. The majority of children and families assessments seen by inspectors were comprehensive and included information from relevant professionals and key factors affecting children's lives. The consideration of history and use of effective analysis, including specific tools used by social workers in assessing neglect, lead to appropriate outcomes and decisions for children and their families. The voice of the child and their experiences within their family are fully considered within assessments, and this is used to inform outcomes and recommendations.
42. Child in need plans and child protection plans are clear and robust. They are reviewed regularly and contain a range of appropriate, outcome-focused actions for children, parents and professionals to achieve, although timescales are not consistently included. At the time of inspection, there were 230 children subject to child protection plans: 103 under the category of emotional abuse, 102 for neglect, 13 for physical abuse and four under the category of sexual abuse, with eight children under multiple categories. Families spoken with during the inspection understood the concerns and plans for their family, and knew what needed to change to reduce risk. The rate of children on child protection plans is 34.5 per 10,000, which is lower than the England average of 47.4 per 10,000.

43. Almost all child protection plans cease appropriately when risks have reduced for children. In 2013–14, only 4% of children had become subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time within the previous two years. Where a decision is reached to either step-up or step-down a case between early help and children’s social care, this is effectively undertaken through a meeting between professionals and the family; this ensures that plans and contingencies are clear.
44. Children are supported to develop meaningful relationships with their social workers, and changes in worker are kept to a minimum. Staff spoken to all know their children well, regular visits are undertaken and workers ensure that children’s views, wishes and feelings inform decision making and planning.
45. Direct work with children is supported by the online Social Work Resource website, which contains a range of age-specific direct work tools and video vignettes of professionals using the tools with children. Children spoken with during this inspection said they have good relationships with their current social workers.
46. In December 2014, 77% of children subject to child protection plans were living in households where parental mental ill-health, substance misuse, alcohol misuse, domestic abuse or a combination of these factors were present. The partnership provides a comprehensive range of services to support families experiencing these issues and these services effectively engage with parents and children to ensure that risks are minimised.
47. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provide a prompt and effective service that promotes the mental and emotional health needs of children. A monthly forum ensures that children with higher level mental health needs are prioritised. There is also a specialist arm of CAMHS – SAFE, which undertakes work with adolescents. The local authority has been successful in protecting the resource for SAFE.
48. Good evidence was observed within the SPOE of intake workers being diligent in identifying issues of child sexual exploitation. Those children considered to be at the highest levels of risk are protected through the effective multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) arrangements. These arrangements are well embedded and are a key strength for the local authority. At the time of the inspection, 29 young people were deemed to be actively at risk. Action is taken to disrupt known perpetrators. This includes the use of abduction notices, and there is also good cross-borough information sharing, and sharing of disruption activities by the police. Analysis from the local authority’s own evaluation found that practice is more variable where the evidence of sexual exploitation is less obvious. As a result, a specific identification and assessment tool was introduced in December 2014, but it is too soon to evaluate its impact.

49. Strong, innovative, multi-agency partnerships identify, intervene with and support young people who are associating with gangs, for example, through the use of Gang Courts (specific courts for considering gang-related activity) to secure collective responsibility within gangs for criminal acts. Gang workshops being run for parents of young people involved in gangs are highly valued. Parents told inspectors that 'It's great to know that others are going through the same and you are not alone'. The Gangs and Providers Meeting ensures that there is effective multi-agency mapping of hot-spots, and partners hold each other to account for the safety of young people, including those living away from their home local authority. Work at these meetings is also cross-referenced with the multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) group, ensuring effective communication and a joint approach to child sexual exploitation and gangs.
50. An independently commissioned service, based in the SPOE, conducts interviews with children who go missing from home. This service undertakes ongoing work with children who frequently go missing and/or who are at risk of child sexual exploitation. The service does not routinely share records of their interventions with allocated social workers. This means that for some children, their social workers are not able to respond promptly to missing episodes. Information is not well collated or aggregated to inform the identification of trends.
51. The local authority maintains an up-to-date list of children missing education (CME), as well as those whose parents choose to educate them at home. At the time of the inspection there were 147 children missing education and 148 being educated at home. The Education Welfare Service has a daily presence in the SPOE. All vulnerable children of school age, referred through the SPOE, are automatically cross-referenced by the education welfare officer to the CME list. Thorough checks are carried out, for example of council tax and benefit records and GP registrations, to establish the whereabouts of children.
52. In 2014, just over half of all children missing returned to school; around a fifth of cases were closed by the CME forum after checks had been exhausted, a further fifth of children moved to or were referred to other boroughs and a small number moved abroad. In the cases sampled, oversight, tracking and monitoring were mostly good. Data on children missing from home and education and those at risk of sexual and gang exploitation is collated but not systematically cross-referenced within social care.



53. Effective work is undertaken by the behaviour support team and education welfare service to support children at risk of exclusion. The 'fast track to attendance' programme helps improve children's attendance at school. When children miss education, appropriate checks are undertaken to ascertain their whereabouts. All children who do not attend a mainstream school attend registered alternative provision and receive 25 hours or more education per week; most attend regularly. Last year, only three CME forum meetings took place, with a gap of seven months between the first and second meeting. Not all agencies were present and the police representative failed to attend any meeting. Reporting to the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board is in place, but it does not provide robust challenge to the effectiveness of the work.
54. There is good oversight of children whose families choose to educate them at home, and the vast majority engage well with the local authority. All families receive an initial visit and are visited annually by the elective home education officer. Reports on the progress of children and the suitability of their education are good.
55. Assessments for 16- and 17-year-old homeless young people cover a wide range of issues including health, offending and substance misuse. The Family Accommodation and Support Team (FAST) is increasingly effective in identifying young people's welfare needs, and this is reflected in the increase in the number of referrals to social care, from six in 2013 to 21 between June and December 2014. The FAST team has responded well to the increasing number of homeless 16- and 17-year-olds (160 in 2013–2014), and provides effective mediation to support these young people to return home. This means that fewer young people (40 in 2012–2013, dropping to 20 in 2013–2014) have needed supported accommodation. Accommodation for young people in an emergency is available through Nightstop. Bed and breakfast accommodation is only used as a last resort (once in the last 12 months) and in such circumstances 'floating support' is put in place.
56. The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) considers cases of children living in households where there is domestic abuse. It is well established and attended by partner agencies. From July 2013 to July 2014 the MARAC received an average of 38 referrals per conference; conferences are held on a three-weekly basis. The number of referrals fluctuates month by month. There has been an increase in referrals as a result of the police revising their processes to ensure the referral to the MARAC of repeat victims (three police calls or more in a 12-month period). This positive change enables the MARAC to identify and support more repeat victims.

57. The work of the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) is effective in safeguarding children and young people out of normal office hours. If a missing young person returns out of hours then EDT is informed and this is noted on the electronic recording system and copied to the relevant team manager. Legal advice is available to the team and there are clear criteria for authorisations, for example regarding independent fostering association placements for children needing accommodation. EDT staff have access to social work records but not those in the early help service, which means that they may not always have the full information that they need when making decisions out of hours.
58. Children and young people subject to child protection plans have access to advocacy services. Since September 2014 a total of 43 children have received independent advocacy: 24 children subject to a child protection plan, 16 looked after children or care leavers, and three unaccompanied minors.
59. Where there are concerns that a professional or carer may present a risk to a child, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) ensures that allegations are investigated thoroughly. Risk is understood and appropriate action is taken. While the annual report lacks analysis of service effectiveness, there is evidence of the service being responsive. Targeted training has resulted in an increase in the number of referrals, for example in relation to in-house foster carers.
60. There are currently 14 children who are privately fostered within the borough, with 22 new fostering arrangements beginning in the reporting period 1 April 2014 to 3 February 2015. Children who are privately fostered have their needs assessed and receive visits from their social workers. However, a significant number of visits are completed out of timescales. Assessments of carers, and exploration of how they manage without parental responsibility, are less well developed and the local authority accepts that this is an area for improvement.
61. Case files in children's social care services demonstrate good analysis and sensitivity to ethnicity, racial, language and cultural needs. Interpreters are consistently used when required and translation of key documentation for families within legal processes is undertaken. Children with disabilities and their brothers and sisters receive effective specialist services, coordinated through the Joint Service for Disabled Children. The local authority's offer for families with disabled children is well developed and ensures that a wide range of services is available to them.

Key judgement	Judgement grade
The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence	Good
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Children in care achieve good outcomes from their starting points. Children are only looked after when it is in their best interests. The progress of children throughout their time in care is tracked by the placements panel, providing a good strategic overview that prevents delay and ensures that children who cannot return to their families find suitable permanent homes. High priority is given to children achieving timely permanence through adoption.</p> <p>The quality of practice with children looked after is good. Social workers know their children well and this is reflected in their assessments. The quality of assessments and reports for court in care proceedings is good and the Parental Capacity Assessments (PCAs) are particularly thorough.</p> <p>The looked after children health team ensures that children’s health needs are promptly assessed and met, including for children who live at distance from the borough and cannot access local services. Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are highly responsive, and can commence treatment within five days of the referral if needed. The vast majority of children looked after attend good or outstanding schools. Educational outcomes are good, with most children making good progress. The virtual school monitors the progress and achievement of young people well.</p> <p>The independent reviewing officers (IROs) bring rigour and challenge to care planning. Recommendations arising from the regular reviews provide a good overview of progress made and action needed, which ensures that drift is avoided in most cases. A very high proportion of children take part in their reviews.</p> <p>When children go missing from care a ‘need to know’ alert is sent to senior managers and tracked by the Head of Service. Children and young people are spoken to on their return to identify any concerns. The performance team compile a monthly report on missing episodes that is shared with senior officers and council members, but formal independent return interviews are not consistently offered, therefore trends are not fully analysed.</p> <p>Care leavers have a strong voice in Enfield, being the driving force behind the vibrant Children in Care Council (KRATOS), and effectively influencing service development. The proportion of care leavers in education, employment or training has been consistently high and almost all (94%) are in suitable accommodation. The majority of pathway plans seen require improvement.</p>	

62. Decisions to look after children are timely and are made only when it is in their best interests. All requests for admissions to care are considered by the weekly placements panel and the few emergency admissions are approved by a senior officer. The placements panel continues to track the progress of looked after children throughout their time in care, providing effective case tracking and monitoring, and preventing drift in finding permanent homes for children and young people. The panel is chaired by the Assistant Director for children's services and comprises the relevant senior managers, resulting in timely decisions made at the appropriate level.
63. The placements panel decides whether cases should be managed under the Public Law Outline (PLO) and oversees the progress of this activity, ensuring that PLO cases are kept on track. PLO meetings observed by inspectors were well run. Parents understood what they needed to do and agreed that the proposed written agreement was reasonable and achievable. Good practical support is offered by the Fresh Steps service to help parents to achieve improvements. Family Group Conferences, involving the wider family group, are used to help explore options for support in a timely way.
64. Planning is thorough when children return home under the placement with parent regulations or by court direction. However, in a small number of cases seen during the inspection, children placed in an emergency were too quickly returned home to parents without a robust assessment or clear plan of support. This left children without their needs being met and at potential risk. The local authority is taking part in a pilot project with the NSPCC of a model designed to improve risk assessment, promote transparent decision-making and consider all aspects of support for those returning home.
65. The authority closely tracks the progress of cases in care proceedings and has a good understanding of the reasons for delay, some of which are unavoidable. The latest data (April to September 2014) show the duration of care applications by the local authority is 37 weeks, which is above the 26-week target and seven weeks longer than the national average. The local authority is improving year on year, and has significantly improved from 60 weeks in 2011–12; its current performance is in line with the average for all applications in the West London Family Court.
66. The quality of assessments and reports for court in care proceedings is good. One local authority solicitor said: '[The looked after children team] has really excellent report writers – it's a joy sometimes. They remind you what good professionals are'. Manageable caseloads of 10 to 15 children in the looked after children team enable social workers to see children regularly, get to know them well and understand their wishes, feelings and needs. This enables them to report confidently on children's views within their assessments.

67. The looked after children health team provides a good service to children and young people, with good performance on the completion of annual health assessments, dental checks and immunisations. Robust systems ensure that children placed at distance from Enfield receive regular health assessments. For children looked after with emotional health needs, CAMHS assess and can commence treatment within five days of the referral.
68. In 2013–14, for five to seven-year-olds at Key Stage 1, most children achieved well in mathematics, reading and writing. For seven to 11-year-olds at Key Stage 2, achievement for this small cohort varied between subjects, but most achieved well in reading and writing. At Key Stage 4, achievement of five good GCSEs with English and maths has been consistently good over time, and better than looked after children elsewhere. In 2013–14 performance dipped, but still remains above the national average for looked after children. Over a three-year period, 26% of looked after children gained five good GCSEs including English and mathematics and 42% gained five good GCSEs.
69. Between Key Stages 1 and 2, the majority of looked after children make the progress expected of all children. In 2013–14 most looked after children made the progress expected of them between Key Stages 2 and 4 in English. Their progress compares well to that of looked after children nationally and is comparable to that of all children. They attend well and develop their personal interests and social skills, and benefit from additional support.
70. The vast majority of children have an up-to-date personal education plan (PEP). Target setting is always specific enough to reflect the individual needs of pupils, and the views of children and young people are often well represented in plans. In most cases sampled, pupils were achieving either improved or good outcomes. Attendance, for example, was almost universally good.
71. The virtual school ensures that the pupil premium is closely linked to supporting the educational and personal targets of children as identified in the PEP. Staff monitor the use of the pupil premium effectively and withhold funding where there is not a clear link between a child's learning and development and the purpose of the funding. Good examples were seen where funding was used well to develop children's personal interests, social skills and academic abilities.
72. The virtual school monitors the progress and achievement of young people well. Staff know the children and young people's circumstances and understand their needs. There is an increased and improved focus on 16 to 18-year-olds, with careful tracking and monitoring arrangements of their progress. Most young people continue in education and training beyond 16. The virtual school knows the whereabouts of all young people, including the small number in registered alternative provision. The virtual school takes effective action to support children back into school when they miss education. Most return to education within 10 days, and 70% within 20 days.

73. Attendance of looked after children has been good, but dipped a little on the previous year's performance to 86% in 2013–14. The virtual school is swiftly alerted where there are attendance concerns. Careful monitoring of all young people is in place and the virtual school operates an 'attendance risk register' for all pupils up to 18 years old where there are concerns. Fixed term exclusions of looked after children are reducing steadily, and there have been no permanent exclusions of looked after children since 2008.
74. The vast majority of looked after children attend a good or better school. All those who started secondary school at the start of the 2014–15 academic year started at a good school. A close eye is kept on the progress of all children, whatever school they attend.
75. IROs routinely check that PEPs are up to date, discuss and record the educational progress and record this at reviews. They challenge social workers and managers when care planning is not effective and seek additional support from the virtual school when needed.
76. The local authority has an anti-bullying strategy, and encourages children to report bullying or other forms of discrimination to their social workers and carers; this issue is routinely explored in the annual health assessment. Enfield has introduced 'Viewpoint', an online survey tool, and is beginning to capture the views of looked after children and other groups about bullying in this way.
77. Young people misusing drugs and alcohol have access to commissioned services to help them reduce risks. Effective action is taken to identify and tackle risks associated with offending. Senior managers have a good overview of all those in care who are known to the youth offending service, and have ensured that suitable support and diversionary activities are in place for each individual young person. During 2013–2014 only five young people who had been in care for a year or more were convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year.
78. Children looked after who are at risk of child sexual exploitation or gang exploitation are protected through the robust arrangements within the MASE and gangs meetings. This includes children who go missing from care and are considered at risk of sexual exploitation. In one case, a sexually exploited young person with numerous missing episodes was purposefully placed outside London. When interviewed by an inspector, they reported that their life was turned around and they felt safe.
79. When a child goes missing from care a 'need to know' alert is sent to senior managers. Missing episodes are then tracked by the Head of Service. At the time of inspection, one 17-year-old young person was missing. Enquiries were made which established the reason for going missing.

80. The performance team compiles a monthly return on missing episodes that is shared with senior officers and council members. While the local authority has not ensured that formal return interviews are routinely offered to children who go missing from care, inspectors sampled six cases of children who had frequent missing episodes. All of the children had had regular visits from their social workers, who recorded the reasons for their absence. For those children at high risk, a strategy meeting was convened. The authority accepts that, in addition to acquiring information on a case-by-case basis, the collation and analysis of information from missing episodes would enable them to gain a broader overview of trends in the area.
81. An analysis of placement stability for Enfield looked after children completed in 2014 identified that young people who enter the care system as adolescents, are already exhibiting the most disruptive behaviour. Of particular concern is the area of sexual vulnerability in relation to girls in the older age group. Of the 45 children and young people who experienced three or more placement moves, 29 were female and 16 were male. These young people came from chaotic backgrounds, were beyond parental control and all had behavioural problems. As a result, published data for 2013–14 showed a decline on placement stability compared with other local authorities nationally. As at 31 March 2014, all the Enfield children in residential care were over 11 years old.
82. The authority has taken robust action to improve placement stability, such as introducing a new CAMHS 'In Step' programme and improved training for in-house foster carers to help them manage complex and challenging placements more effectively. Analysis of unplanned placement changes has enabled better targeted support to those who are more at risk of placement breakdown. There has been a substantial increase in support available to 16- and 17-year-olds in semi-independent living provision. Local data for the year to date shows that action has been effective, resulting in a considerable improvement in placement stability.
83. A high proportion (17%) of children looked after live more than 20 miles outside the borough. This is in line with the average for all London boroughs. The authority cites increasing numbers with complex needs, the need for residential school placements, remands to care, and the need to move children to break links with gang activity and protect them against child sexual exploitation, as reasons for making placements away from Enfield. Nevertheless, senior managers recognise that there is a need for more local placements, particularly for teenagers and sibling groups. The placements panel, which is attended by representatives from health and education, ensures that any child in care moving to live outside the borough boundary will have arrangements made for immediate access to health and education services.

84. In April 2014, Enfield had 153 fostering households, including 22 family and friends and short break foster carers. In 2013–14 the service approved 14 new foster carer households and de-registered 15, resulting in a net loss of one household. This pattern has been maintained in the year to date: 13 new households being approved and 16 being de-registered. Exit interviews with foster carers are not routinely included in de-registration reports, although DfE categories are being applied and recorded, allowing for some analysis as to why carers cease to foster for Enfield.
85. At the time of the inspection there were 11 vacancies in fostering households, all limited to babies or younger children, meaning a lack of local availability or choice for children and young people over the age of 11. The service has been targeting recruitment, and 16 assessments are in progress and listed for the fostering panel over the next three months, 11 of which are for teenagers.
86. Foster carers feel supported by their supervising social workers and managers, although some carers report several changes of workers during a recent restructuring. Despite this, training, reviewing and development programmes have been maintained, with the fostering panel impressive in its oversight and execution. Recently recruited carers report excellent experiences, from initial contact through to presentation at panel, and ongoing support.
87. In case files seen by inspectors, appropriate foster care agreements, checks and references are in place and arrangements for delegated authority are clear. Records demonstrate regular and meaningful supervisory visits. Children and young people are invited to express their views in preparation for foster carer reviews, and report being well supported in their foster homes. Reviews have all been completed within the last 12 months.
88. Permanency planning is good, with permanency planning meetings routinely held before the second looked after reviews. In all cases seen, permanency planning was timely and effective. Good practical and financial support is available to families when a special guardianship order is made.
89. IROs bring rigour and challenge to care planning. Recommendations arising from the regular reviews provide a good overview of progress made and action needed, which ensures that drift is avoided in most cases. A review for a looked after young person observed during the inspection was skilfully chaired by the IRO, who made sure that the young person was fully involved throughout. All relevant areas were considered, including health, educational progress, contact and Staying Put arrangements. However, the quality of the written care plans is not consistently good. Some plans have insufficient information, are not up to date or do not contain specific, measurable and time-bound actions.



90. Almost all reviews are carried out on time and the participation rate by children and young people in their review is very high. IROs sometimes use a series of meetings to form a review, so the young person can participate without feeling uncomfortable about having to share their private feelings in a wider meeting of involved professionals. IROs prioritise their monitoring of cases in accordance with the needs of the child.
91. The annual IRO report is of poor quality. It provides no information or analysis on the progress of children looked after and offers no recommendations for improvement that the authority could make as corporate parents. It offers no information on the impact that the IRO service has made, and it does not meet the requirements set out in the IRO Handbook.
92. Case summaries at the beginning of each child's record are almost all up to date, and provide a valuable overview of the history, current issues and plans. Case recording in the looked after children team is good and was up-to-date in the vast majority of cases seen, although the quality of chronologies was variable.
93. The participation and engagement of looked after children and care leavers, both strategically and in individual care planning, have increased dramatically since 2013, when the youth service was commissioned to: increase engagement, ensure that children and young people have a voice and make sure that this drives improvement in practice and outcomes. KRATOS has engaged with 102 looked after children and care leavers in the past 12 months. Approximately 25% of these were White British, with the others from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. KRATOS has led the development of the safeguarding champions programme on behalf of the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board.

**The graded judgement for adoption performance is that it is good**

94. For most children, adoption is considered at the earliest stage where a return to their family would be unsafe or would not meet their needs. Permanency Planning meetings are consistently convened prior to the second Looked After Children's Review, and are attended by a representative from the adoption team, so that delay in family finding is reduced.

95. Permanency Planning and Family Finding Meetings effectively ensure that information is updated, and cases are tracked. Meetings are chaired by a manager, take place frequently and are clearly recorded. Difficult decisions about separating brothers and sisters are only made after appropriate consultation and assessments have been undertaken, and when in the best interests of the children. The adoption cases seen by inspectors had benefited from having consistent and experienced workers.
96. Child Permanence Reports, which are essential documents to ensure matching and to give prospective adopters information about the child, are of a variable quality. A small number seen by inspectors lacked analysis and were not up to date, although this did not lead to unnecessary delays for these children. Good quality life story work is being undertaken pre-adoption within the Looked After Children teams and by the adoption workers following the making of the order.
97. Work to find adoptive families for all children, including those with complex needs, is undertaken with persistence and creativity. In addition to possible in-house carers, the local authority will explore consortium options through the monthly Family Finding Working Group. It also uses the Adoption Register and Adoption Link, sends out profiles, creates DVDs, and attends exchange and activity events.
98. The progress of children being matched to carers is carefully tracked. The most recent Family Finding Briefing (January 2015) produced for senior managers confirms that adopters were being considered for most of the children whose plans for adoption had been agreed by the Agency Decision Maker. In one case a match had not been identified, though every effort had been, and was continuing to be, made to find a placement.
99. The adoption scorecard information for 2011–14 confirms that, while matching is an area of strength for the local authority, overall timescales for achieving adoption were significantly higher than the England average. The average time between receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match for 2011–14 was 166 days, only 14 days above the national threshold and impressively 51 days less than the England average. However, the average time between children entering care and moving in with their adoptive family was 672 days, 125 days longer than the national performance threshold and 44 days longer than the England average. Significantly, only 43% of the children waited less than 18 months from entering care to moving in with an adoptive family compared to 51% nationally. Importantly, the local authority is reporting an improvement in the overall time taken from entry to care to a child being placed, which, for the first 13 adoptions in the current year, is averaging 546 days.

100. Good use has been made of the Adoption Reform Grant to increase family finding capacity, improve oversight of cases that are in proceedings and to develop thinking in relation to concurrency. Effective collaboration established through the North London Adoption Consortium is leading to improved recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters, ongoing training and an increase in adoption support.
101. The Adoption Team is made up of experienced, skilled workers. Managers from the team provide strong leadership and individual workers have been encouraged to develop areas of expertise such as life story work, concurrency and fostering to adopt. There are good working relationships between the Adoption Team and the Looked After Children Team workers, which directly contribute to the timeliness and the quality of the work carried out.
102. The local authority is currently piloting new adopter recruitment arrangements in order to generate a sufficient number and range of carers so that their strong matching performance is maintained. Improved marketing strategies are in place, aimed at recruiting more carers from Black and minority ethnic heritage. It is too early to assess the success of this piece of work. On the 30 January 2015 there were 24 children with plans for adoption agreed by the Agency Decision Maker and there were 20 adopters waiting to be matched to children.
103. In 2012–13, 19 children were adopted, the current target is 20. The authority is reporting a smaller percentage of children adopted than average for statistical neighbours and England. In 2013–14 the authority reported that 11% of the children who ceased to be looked after were adopted – a figure below both that of its statistical neighbours (14%) and the average for England (17%).
104. Adopter case files are of a good standard. Adopters spoke positively about their experiences. They told inspectors that the assessment process is extremely informative, proceeding at a pace that is helpful and appropriate. The adopters spoken to felt that their individual workers were open and approachable, and they viewed the support offered as genuine.
105. Matches are effectively scrutinised by an experienced adoption panel and agency decision maker. There is good challenge by the adoption panel, which is appropriately constituted. A Panel Business Meeting takes place every six months, the minutes of which show that the panel takes account of departmental priorities.

106. Adoption support plans are clear and tailored to the individual needs of the child and their adoptive parent. There is a good range of effective pre- and post-adoption support provided by the in-house workers, the North London Adoption Consortium and through commissioned services. The two workers in the adoption support team have between 35 and 40 open cases at any one time and do not operate a waiting system. The local authority reports low levels of adoptive placements which breakdown and adopters spoke highly of the support being provided. Letter box and face to face contact is comprehensively overseen within the adoption team and this service is provided to all children living away from their parents.

**The graded judgement about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it is good**

107. Workers make considerable and successful efforts to maintain contact with care leavers, sometimes using creative means such as a trusted professional. Consequently they are able to provide ongoing help and support. Currently there are only four young people (1.5%) not in touch with workers.
108. Young people receive regular visits from their workers, who know them well. Support is being provided to engage them in education, employment and training. Most young people are being assisted by their personal adviser, foster carer or key worker to develop independent living skills such as cooking and budgeting, which are aimed at assisting them to make the transition to adulthood. Young people informed inspectors that they felt safe in their accommodation and that being in care had provided them with opportunities to develop their lives. There is good engagement with young people to support future arrangements, including housing and jobs, and work in these areas is contributing to improved outcomes for young people. While care leavers are being well-supported and pathway planning reviews take place regularly, some recording is not up-to-date and some plans are not sufficiently detailed.
109. Care leavers receive good support to take up education, employment and training (EET) opportunities. The average proportion of care leavers in EET was 72% in 2012, rising to 78% in 2013. The figure for 2014 was adjusted to include 20 and 21 year olds, and has dropped to 59%; comparisons with other local authorities are currently not available.
110. An EET action plan is reviewed quarterly by the virtual school and senior managers for looked after children. In addition, termly reports by the head of the virtual school and the head of behaviour support are presented to the DCS and his departmental management team for scrutiny and challenge. This ensures that the educational attainment and engagement of the local authority's care leavers receive the highest priority and that all possible opportunities to improve outcomes are identified and utilised.

111. Well-conceived and effective programmes such as Care2Work and the 18 Programme deliver good outcomes for young people. For example, from the last Care2Work programme, almost all candidates progressed well and achieved positive next steps, including gaining an apprenticeship place within the local authority or employment elsewhere. There are currently eight care leavers undertaking apprenticeships; one young person told inspectors that it had 'turned their life around'. Access to higher education is promoted and 20 care leavers are attending university. Young people spoken with confirmed that they had been supported by the local authority with their education.
112. Since April 2014, 84% of care leavers turning 18 had a final health assessment. The level of information depends on the length of time the young person has been in care. It is not always possible to retrieve a full health history on unaccompanied asylum seeking children as their early lives were spent overseas. Young people have been involved in developing a health passport, and these have been issued to all children in care.
113. Care leavers' accommodation needs are appropriately prioritised. A very large majority were in suitable accommodation as at 30 September 2014. There is a range of accommodation options available to young people, and good partnership working is taking place with commissioners and community safety to ensure that young people are not placed in areas where they will be unsafe.
114. Care leavers are supported to remain living with their foster carers, with 17 young people currently in Staying Put arrangements. The local authority is looking to increase this number and has recently signed off a newly developed Staying Put policy and pathway, both of which have had input from young people. Seventy-eight young people are in semi-independent accommodation, comprising both small units with key worker support and individual arrangements for young people with higher levels of need.
115. Young people are being supported to obtain their own tenancies, with clear protocols in place with the Housing Department which prioritise the needs of care leavers; 58 young people have their own flats. Workers recommend them to a panel when they can demonstrate key independence skills. There has been a significant increase in these arrangements over the last year (34), after the application forms for the panel were changed to better represent the independence skills of the young people.
116. There are currently no young people in bed and breakfast accommodation, though this type of accommodation was used in an emergency once in the last year. There are currently no young people in multi-occupancy accommodation, and none are deemed to be homeless.

117. There are nine care leavers in custody, four sentenced and five on remand. The care leaver service continues to be provided throughout the period of incarceration, and supports their discharge. In one case a placement was kept open for a young person throughout the time that they were in prison, on the basis that it had been providing for their complex needs previously.
118. Young people spoken with were either aware of their entitlements or clear that attempts had been made by their workers to raise awareness. Care leavers are familiar with the Pledge, but not with the details contained within it. Passports and other significant documents are not being provided on a systematic basis, but all the young people spoken with had the documents they required at the current time.
119. Care leavers are actively involved in service development; they undertake interviews of prospective employees, deliver training to staff and Members, and design booklets/materials for children in care. They have a strong voice in Enfield, being the driving force behind the vibrant Children in Care Council, KRATOS. One young person told inspectors that her request to retain the same social worker was agreed when she left care, and she has kept the same worker for six years.
120. The young people spoken with talked positively about their workers. In most cases they were able to describe tangible ways their workers had assisted them in their lives, typically in relation to education and accommodation. Similarly, there was enthusiasm amongst staff to do the best for their young people.

Key judgement	Judgement grade
Leadership, management and governance	Good
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Leaders and managers are highly ambitious and have a clear and enduring determination to provide high quality services for children and young people in Enfield. They have a good understanding of the main challenges for children and their families and of the strengths and areas for development in the services they provide. The Director of Schools and Children’s Services and his senior team provide strong and stable leadership. Partnership work is well embedded and demonstrable in casework and planning. The local authority has a track record of delivering good services to key groups of vulnerable children. It has been increasingly proactive in developing awareness of, and improving services for, children and young people in gangs and those children at risk of sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation.</p> <p>Enfield is an innovative local authority, developing and promoting effective approaches to practice in collaboration with its partners, for example through its successful gangs strategy and its external tri-borough review of the effectiveness of arrangements to protect sexually exploited children. The authority continually demonstrates its commitment to children, young people and families through its investment in staff to ensure that caseloads are manageable. A highly effective workforce strategy is in place, ensuring the stable staff group are supported and trained to improve outcomes for children and young people. Staff morale is high and staff are proud to work in the borough.</p> <p>Systems to monitor performance are in place, and provide a range of performance data to front line and senior managers. Analysis of the quality of practice carried out through audits is used to drive improvement. However, this is not routinely brought together with performance data to create a more rounded analysis of the effectiveness of services to inform improvement.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has recently reviewed its priorities on key areas of performance. Inspection findings and national events have led to immediate steps being taken to ensure that the quality of the work of children’s services is properly understood. There is a dedicated, member-led task force set up to monitor all strands of child protection in the borough.</p> <p>Corporate parenting responsibilities are well-understood across the service. Regular management reports to the Corporate Parenting Board enable members to have an effective oversight of services to looked after children and young people and care leavers. Services to looked after children are of good quality. The local authority work hard with care leavers to ensure good outcomes. Further improvements are needed to increase the number of suitable foster placements for older children.</p>	

121. Sound governance arrangements ensure that senior managers and independent board chairs work together to achieve improvements across children's services. Local authority senior managers, leaders and elected members discharge their individual and collective statutory responsibilities effectively. There are well-established lines of communication, which include regular meetings between key personnel. Senior managers are visible to staff, respected and take an active role in quality assurance and practice issues when required. Senior managers have good awareness of the strengths and areas for development of children's services within the borough.
122. The DCS and several of the senior leaders have been in post for several years and have been effective in driving sustained improvement in children's services. Thresholds, agreed with partners, have been established to ensure that services can respond to the needs of the sustained influx of families to the borough. Early intervention is well-embedded, with the effective use of TAFs making a positive difference to children at the earliest opportunity. Innovation is evident in work with gangs, de-radicalisation and the accelerated response to child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation, and a wide range of early help services has been developed.
123. There is strong political commitment to children's services and, despite budget pressures, increased financial commitment has been secured for schools and children's services. This is to be used to address demand, including placement choice for looked after children. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has recently reviewed its priorities on key areas of performance. Inspection findings and recent national events have resulted in immediate steps being taken to increase the breadth and depth of the scrutiny function. Core safeguarding activity now features routinely in the forward plan.
124. Effective governance arrangements are in place. The local authority has established links between the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children's Trust and the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). Both the DCS and the Independent Chair of the ESCB attend all three of these meetings, ensuring that work streams are aligned though not duplicated. The children's plan is at the end of its cycle; the plan is currently under revision and new priorities are being identified, based on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. These include vulnerable children in care, those who are at risk of sexual exploitation, involved in gangs, and who are neglected.



125. Children, young people and their families are well supported by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 'Local Offer' which is articulated clearly in a booklet produced in partnership between the local authority, the NHS and parents and young people. This promotes service users' and associated professionals' awareness of resources and entitlements for families of children with special educational needs and/or a disability. Partner agencies work well together and achieve improved outcomes for children and young people, as demonstrated by the highly effective work of the Joint Service for Disabled Children.
126. Private and voluntary sector representatives are also actively engaged in a range of strategic and working groups that enable them to contribute richly to the development of children's services. The sector provides an extensive tapestry of services that support children and families.
127. Partnership work has been proactive in developing awareness of, and services for, children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation. The local authority and its partners commissioned an external evaluation with two other London Boroughs of the quality and effectiveness of their services in identifying and protecting children missing and those at risk of sexual exploitation, and preventing such incidents. A robust task and finish group to take forward the recommendations provides details of leadership oversight of frontline practice, and actions to improve communication, standards and a consistent response to sexually exploited and missing children.
128. The monthly Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) group observed during the inspection, and attended by senior managers from children social care, provided evidence of effective multi-agency engagement, and inspectors also read the previous six months' meeting minutes. There is a robust tracking system, with details on all young people known to be at risk. This ensures that an effective audit trail is in place, records are updated and matters brought forward. Cases are escalated if risk increases, and stepped down following intervention to reduce risk. There is evidence of cross-borough communication and mapping of hotspots and perpetrator activity. For example, three young women at risk of sexual exploitation (two in care to neighbouring local authorities) were effectively linked, with joint work in place between the police, local authorities, parents and carers to protect the girls. These arrangements are well embedded and demonstrate effective joint working for young people at risk of sexual exploitation and gang related activity.
129. Early intervention services are being developed, drawing on the effective use of TAFs. Further work is required to ensure compliance with policies and procedures on missing looked after children. Inspectors found that these were not uniformly followed to include return interviews. Once aware of this, the local authority took immediate action to reinforce policy and procedures in this area. The deficit in this process was mitigated by purposeful casework practice, and inspectors saw no cases of missing looked after children where young people were at risk of immediate harm.

130. There is an established performance management, information and scrutiny cycle to provide information to senior leaders. A health check on the current ICS system was recently undertaken that has resulted in a corporate action plan of improvement and investment, with activity scheduled for completion by July 2017. Key data, agreed by senior managers and strategic boards, is routinely collated and reported to departmental management groups, the ESCB and the Lead Member. Some analysis of data, including trends and issues arising, is provided to senior managers, though this lacks robust analytical commentary.
131. Management oversight of practice is established, including scrutiny by senior managers. Managers at all levels routinely undertake audits of work for which they are directly responsible. Most social workers receive effective and timely supervision, although records do not always demonstrate that sufficient time is given for reflection. Decisions within casework are recorded on the child's record, ensuring that children's progress is effectively monitored. Social workers told inspectors that they feel supported by permanent managers who know their cases well. Audit findings are not yet being used effectively to drive improvements in practice, but thematic audits occur regularly and these are considered routinely by the ESCB.
132. The complaints resolution process is highly effective, and findings contribute to organisational learning. This learning is powerfully enriched by the impressive and valued engagement with children, young people and their families. Examples include the Youth Parliament, the Young Inspectors programme and Young Carers. Six parental engagement panels are used effectively across the borough to inform service planning and promote engagement with hard to reach communities. There is good recognition of equality and diversity issues within the borough, and the workforce broadly reflects the diversity of service users.
133. The local authority has a broad range of commissioned and in-house services for young people and families. Strategic commissioning is informed by a well-developed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which includes key information on safeguarding issues and vulnerability. There is a focus on strategic planning for children's services, and the authority has established aligned budgets with the Clinical Commissioning Group, for example to provide multi-systemic therapy and a bespoke adolescent service through CAMHS. Contract arrangements demonstrate a link between commissioned and statutory services, for example by including an expectation regarding FGM reporting within contract specifications. Commissioned services are required to report quarterly on progress and more frequently if there are concerns or if targets are not met. The local authority has developed links with consortia, and leads the North London Children's Efficiency Programme which is also involved in an ambitious project to build a residential facility for those hard to place, in order to increase sufficiency of local placements.

134. Corporate parenting is very well embedded across the local authority, with a strong commitment to the needs of looked after children, led with vigour by the Lead Member with other elected members and senior leaders. The established Children in Care Council (KRATOS), is well supported and visibly active. Young people in care and care leavers are well represented on the corporate parenting panel. The panel has been influential in challenging performance, leading to improved outcomes, for example, improving looked after children documentation and the Viewpoint consultation tool. There is a meaningful pledge for young people in care as well as for care leavers, and the authority is in touch with almost all of its care leavers. Educational achievement for looked after children is overseen effectively by the virtual school, and attainment is consistently above that of statistical and national averages.
135. There has been considerable investment within the Borough to ensure that caseloads are manageable and all work is allocated. This work has been successful in ensuring that the average caseload in most teams is about 15 cases. This supports the delivery of good social work practice, characterised by sound assessments, appropriate analysis and child-centred work that is both planned and purposeful. There remains some variability in practice, and it is not yet uniformly good. A small minority of cases seen were poor, with the common factor being too great a delay in escalating cases to child protection from child in need cases.
136. The workforce strategy is highly effective, and appropriately focused on developing and retaining strong frontline services. For this reason, the workforce is skilled and well supported at all levels. Social workers and managers, through a 'Grow your own' scheme, have an established career structure and increasing opportunities for group and reflective supervision. Learning and training opportunities are identified through annual appraisals, and are very well met through comprehensive and flexible training that is assessed to measure impact over time. Social workers report that they feel well supported by managers who are knowledgeable and accessible. These factors contribute to a workforce that is highly motivated, evidencing high morale. The local authority reports that vacancy levels at the time of the inspection were 7%, which compares well with the 2013 national average of 14%. At 2%, the local authority's figure for turnover of staff was also markedly lower than the national average of 15% in 2013.
137. A clear professional development framework is in place for newly qualified social workers' assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE). This includes a range of mandatory training, and opportunities to gain advanced qualifications. Arrangements for additional support include mentoring and reflection time. Newly qualified staff interviewed during this inspection confirmed that they had reduced and manageable caseloads and reported feeling very well supported in their work. The proportion of newly qualified social workers across all teams is 16%.

138. The local authority reports serious incidents appropriately. Two serious incident notifications were received by Ofsted between 31 March 2013 and 1 April 2014; one has resulted in a serious case review (SCR) being commissioned by the ESCB.

## The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

### The Local Safeguarding Children Board is good

The arrangements in place to evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and board partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are good.

### Summary of findings

#### The LSCB is good because:

##### *Partnership arrangements*

- Strong and effective partnerships mean that partners are holding each other to account for the delivery of good multi-agency services to children and families in need of help and protection.
- Thresholds are understood, embedded and applied well by partner agencies. They are supported by an escalation policy that is well understood.
- The Board is pro-active in seeking to work with neighbouring safeguarding boards to protect vulnerable children and young people most effectively. The two most recent serious case reviews (SCRs) have been undertaken in partnership with neighbouring LSCBs.
- The multi-agency training plan is comprehensive and well evaluated. Training is responsive to emerging need, including learning from SCRs.

##### *Scrutiny and challenge*

- Annual Section 11 audits are conducted well. They feature peer review and challenge to identify gaps in agency safeguarding practice, policies or procedures. Gaps are addressed effectively.

##### *Policies and procedures*

- ESCB policies and procedures are routinely updated and responsive to local and national developments. A recent focus on child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation has accelerated and improved practice in these domains.

##### *Children's views*

- The ESCB ensures that the views of children and young people play a pivotal role in the work of the Board and have influence over service developments.

## **What does the LSCB need to improve?**

### **Priority and immediate action**

There are no priority actions.

### **Areas for improvement**

139. Ensure that the ESCB robustly monitors, evaluates and influences the effectiveness of early help services.
140. Improve the scrutiny of multi-agency audit activity to evidence effective oversight of the Board's priorities.
141. Ensure that the current data set is refined to provide analytical commentary from contributing agencies and the quality assurance sub-group, so that the Board will be better able to identify themes and trends and take necessary actions as required.
142. Ensure that the Board demonstrates influence with Enfield Council to use its powers under the Licensing Act 2003 so that taxi companies and taxi drivers are subject to appropriate scrutiny.

### **Inspection judgement about the LSCB**

143. The governance arrangements of the Board are good, and effective in ensuring that the Board complies with its statutory and regulatory responsibilities. The Board is well attended by partner agencies, including representatives from the third sector. The Board has two lay members who demonstrate both commitment and independent challenge to the Board on behalf of children and young people. Board members are of sufficient seniority to be able to commit resources to support the work of the Board. All sub-group chairs are members of the main board. The Board is well managed financially and contributions are proportionate.
144. The Board benefits from having a respected and dynamic chair who has effective links with the Health and Wellbeing Board and Enfield Adults' Safeguarding Board, and with neighbouring Local Safeguarding Children Boards. As such, concerns are shared on issues such as child sexual exploitation and gang activity that cross local authority boundaries.
145. There are clear lines of communication between the Enfield Council Chief Executive, the Director of Schools and Children's Services, other senior managers and the Board Chair. This ensures that safeguarding activity remains core business and is effectively managed. The Chief Executive undertakes a formal appraisal of the Board Chair each year.

146. The Board and the Chair demonstrate effective challenge to agencies. For example, a Board-level concern was raised about the lack of FGM referrals from health; health partners were asked to consider the matter, and the subsequent action plan has led to a direct increase in FGM referrals. Board members are actively involved in visiting partner agencies and meeting frontline workers to assure themselves that safeguarding practice is well understood and part of their everyday thinking.
147. Child sexual exploitation is a priority for the Board and the local authority. The Board and its partner agencies have a strong grip on these issues and make a clear link between child sexual exploitation, children missing from home and care, and gang activity. The Trafficking, Sexual Exploitation and Missing (TSEM) subgroup of the Board was set up in February 2012. It is a multi-agency group which coordinates and oversees Enfield's operational and strategic response to child sexual exploitation including the implementation and monitoring of the child sexual exploitation strategy, the action plan and MASE. Meetings provide a forum for agencies to evaluate progress, share operational issues and highlight any specific areas of risk.
148. The Board ensures that Section 11 audits are undertaken and, to ensure additional oversight and scrutiny, the Board convenes a Section 11 challenge panel. The panel is chaired by the ESCB Chair and is attended by other Board members, including the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding, Enfield's Head of Safeguarding and a lay member. An action plan is drawn up for the agency identifying where improvement and/or clarification are required. This process has been used effectively to improve safeguarding practice by Board member agencies.
149. The Board has an agreed data set, though it lacks analytical commentary both from contributing partner agencies and the quality assurance sub-group. This undermines the Board's capacity to identify if there are any emerging themes or trends in the data.
150. The Board oversees peer audits and case audits through the work of the quality assurance sub-group. This has resulted in improvements to practice, such as ensuring that the probation service was firmly linked to the SPOE. Similarly, when it became apparent that health visitors employed by the Mental Health Trust could not access information about parents with mental health difficulties, an information protocol was established. This now enables more effective discussions about thresholds for services and sign posting to the most appropriate service for children in need.
151. The Board uses a tracker report to examine the impact of auditing activity, with a colour coded system to easily demonstrate impact on practice. For example, an audit of child sexual exploitation referrals identified that thresholds for accessing a statutory service were high. Practice has now developed to ensure that all referrals where risk of child sexual exploitation is identified are allocated to a lead professional or a social worker.

152. The Board's oversight of early help provision is less well developed. The Board has plans to undertake a 'deep dive' audit of TAF processes to reassure itself of partner understanding and compliance of work in this area.
153. The Board's business plan 2014–16 is comprehensive and sufficiently detailed. It effectively identifies improvement priorities, such as work on female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation, children and young people's further participation, and joint working with other boroughs.
154. A comprehensive range of free training is free to all partner agencies including the voluntary sector. Serious case reviews, both local and national, influence learning, as well as being driven by key local issues such as FGM. Training is well attended by partners and the Board monitors attendance. Evaluation returns indicate training is highly valued. Social workers who spoke with inspectors during the inspection reinforced this. Training is evaluated over time, and this is a strength in ensuring that it has impact and is cost effective. Two learning events are scheduled for the near future, a conference on female genital mutilation in March 2015 and learning from local SCRs in April 2015.
155. Policies, procedures and protocols are overseen by the quality assurance sub-group, which ensures that procedures are up to date and fully compliant with legislation. Currently the Board operates on an 18-month cycle of reviewing and, if necessary, updating procedures which, once ratified, are disseminated to partner agencies. The policies are then published on the Board website, which has recently been revamped.
156. The annual report of the Board is thorough, and comprehensively covers all board and sub-group activity. It provides information on audit activity and makes reference to engagement with young people and how it has responded to Enfield young people's concerns.
157. Enfield has a shadow board of trained young people (who are known as Safeguarding Champions), who make an active contribution to board activity and ensure that the voice of young people is heard in the Board. They bring challenge to the Board and have been commissioned to complete a piece of work, including a DVD and posters, on the dangers of young people becoming involved in drug dealing.
158. Safeguarding Champions have been trained to act as peer trainers to other young people. They have also been trained to take part in interviewing staff, and were involved of the interview process that appointed the current ESCB Business Manager.



159. The Board liaises effectively with Enfield's Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP). It is well attended by appropriate professionals. Reports to the main Board have led to local health campaigns, for example, a safe infant sleeping campaign on the risks of parents sleeping with an infant. The CDOP chair also attends the SCR sub-group to ensure that cases and concerns are not discussed in isolation. The lessons from the serious incident notifications have been disseminated. When the two current SCRs are published, learning events will be arranged for all staff groups.
160. As part of the approach to tackling child sexual exploitation, the Board has reviewed local authority licensing activity. However, it cannot currently assure itself that taxi companies and taxi drivers have meaningful and effective scrutiny. The Board is aware of this and is taking steps to monitor this activity.

## What the inspection judgements mean

### The local authority

An **outstanding** local authority leads highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** local authority leads effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and those who are looked after and care leavers have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a local authority that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the authority is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children, young people and families.

A local authority that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after or care leavers not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

### The LSCB

An **outstanding** LSCB is highly influential in improving the care and protection of children. Their evaluation of performance is exceptional and helps the local authority and its partners to understand the difference that services make and where they need to improve. The LSCB creates and fosters an effective learning culture.

An LSCB that is **good** coordinates the activity of statutory partners and monitors the effectiveness of local arrangements. Multi-agency training in the protection and care of children is effective and evaluated regularly for impact. The LSCB provides robust and rigorous evaluation and analysis of local performance that identifies areas for improvement and influences the planning and delivery of high-quality services.

An LSCB **requires improvement** if it does not yet demonstrate the characteristics of good.

An LSCB that is **inadequate** does not demonstrate that it has effective arrangements in place and the required skills to discharge its statutory functions. It does not understand the experiences of children and young people locally and fails to identify where improvements can be made.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This also includes children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the local authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the local authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of local authority functions and the review of the local safeguarding children board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of six of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted, and two additional inspectors.

### **The inspection team**

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