

Corporate Parenting Committee

Tuesday 12 July 2016

2.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room GO2c, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Membership

Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)
Councillor Evelyn Akoto
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Eliza Mann
Councillor Helen Dennis
Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Kieron Williams
Barbara Hills (Co-opted Member)
Florence Emakpose (Co-opted Member)

Reserves

Councillor Adele Morris

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Access to information

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Contact

Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395 or email: paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

Eleanor Kelly

Chief Executive

Date: 4 July 2016



Corporate Parenting Committee

Tuesday 12 July 2016
2.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room GO2c, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Order of Business

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MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones should be turned off or put on silent during the course of the meeting.

PART A - OPEN BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

A representative of each political group will confirm the voting members of the committee.

3. ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR

To elect a vice-chair for the 2016/17 municipal year for the corporate parenting committee.

4. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear days of the meeting.

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Members to declare any interests and dispensations in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.

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6.	MINUTES	1 - 7
	To approve as correct records the minutes of the open section of the meetings held on 23 February and 22 March 2016.	
7.	SOUTHWARK'S ALL AGE AUTISM STRATEGY AND HOW THIS IMPACTS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - UPDATE	8 - 9
8.	FOSTER CARE TRAINING	10 - 21
9.	UPDATE ON CARE SERVICE RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED BY SPEAKERBOX	22 - 24
10.	INNOVATIONS PROJECTS	25 - 28
11.	VERBAL UPDATE TO ISSUES ARISING FROM 22 MARCH 2016 PRESENTATION TO COMMITTEE - PLACEMENT STABILITY	
	The issues arising from the corporate parenting committee held on 22 March 2016, are set out in the minutes included as part of this agenda (item 6).	
12.	CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE - WORK PLAN 2016/17	29 - 31
	ANY OTHER OPEN BUSINESS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT.	
	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	The following motion should be moved, seconded and approved if the sub-committee wishes to exclude the press and public to deal with reports revealing exempt information:	
	“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1-7, Access to Information Procedure rules of the Constitution.”	
	PART B - CLOSED BUSINESS	
	ANY OTHER CLOSED BUSINESS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT	

Date: 4 July 2016



Corporate Parenting Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Tuesday 23 February 2016 at 2.00 pm at the Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)
Councillor Evelyn Akoto
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Eliza Mann
Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Kieron Williams

OFFICER SUPPORT: Alisdair Smith, Head of Service Permanence, Children's and Adults' Service
Liz Britton, Lead Officer, Secondary & Further Education, Employment & Inclusion, Children's and Adults' Services
Tasneem Mueen-Iqbal, Policy Officer, Children's and Adults' Services
Simon Mitchell, Senior Commissioning Manager, Children's and Adults' Services
Richard Kusi, Schools Preference Advisor, Children's and Adults' Services
Paula Thornton, Constitutional Team

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Barbara Hills and Councillor Lorraine Lauder.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members listed as present were confirmed as the voting members for the meeting.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

No urgent items were identified.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

6. ANNUAL VIRTUAL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. That the virtual headteacher's report for Southwark Looked After Children set out at Appendix 1 of the report be noted.
2. That a report is received back to the Autumn meeting for key stages 1 and 2 which should also include comparative data (statistical neighbours and progress for looked after children in Southwark schools over a five year period).

7. SOUTHWARK'S ALL AGE AUTISM STRATEGY AND HOW THIS IMPACTS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

RESOLVED:

1. That it be noted that officers will undertake an audit to understand the numbers of Southwark looked after children and care leavers with autism. The audit will then be followed by a review of the support needs of those children, and the support and training needs of those providing the support.
2. That an update report is received at the July 2016 committee to show progress and the timeline to achieve targets. Report also to identify key 'headline' information and to include health and the numbers of looked after children with autism.

8. CHILDREN MISSING FROM CARE: UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. That the information presented in the report from St Christopher's Missing Children Service which provides independent return interviews to looked after children who go missing from home and care be noted.
2. That with regard to the various agencies referenced in the report, that officers provide members of the committee with a diagram to illustrate how these all fit together.

9. UPDATE ON CARE SERVICE RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED BY SPEAKERBOX

RESOLVED:

1. That the issues and concerns raised by Speakerbox at its meeting with corporate parenting committee on 27 October 2015 be noted.
2. That the action taken by the service in response to the concerns be noted and that progress continues to be monitored through its termly meetings with Speakerbox.
3. That Councillor Victoria Mills write to the children's rights officer on behalf of the committee to outline their response to the issues raised at the Speakerbox meeting held on 27 October 2015 and as set out in the report.
4. That an update report on progress be received to the July 2016 committee as outlined in the minutes for item 12 (to also include sibling contact, quality of placements and training).

10. PRESENTATION: PLACEMENT STABILITY AND UPDATE ON STATISTICS

The committee received a presentation from the assistant director, corporate parenting in respect of placement stability and an update on statistics. The committee heard details of a number of case studies in respect of a number of stable and unstable placements.

RESOLVED:

That an additional meeting of the committee be set up in order to discuss the detail provided in the presentation and receive feedback.

11. PRESENTATION: SOUTHWARK INFORMATION ADVISORY SERVICE

The committee heard a presentation from the Southwark Information Advisory Service providing an overview of the law for children looked after, special educational needs and disability (SEND). The officer outlined the support in place for looked after children and carers providing an example of a case study. The local offer for this group was explained and alternative provisions. The officer explained the work that was undertaken with the young people and care leavers, including focus groups with young people and their representatives.

12. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE: WORK PLAN 2015/16

RESOLVED:

1. That it be noted that the committee will receive the 2016/17 work plan at its next meeting.
2. That the committee receive the following items to its July 2016 meeting:
 - Foster care training available, including foster carers experience

- Transition from care to independent living – report back on outcome of review of semi-independent living/supported housing
 - Innovation projects
 - Update on autism report outlined in item 7 of the minutes
 - Report back on Speakerbox item (to include sibling contact, quality of placements and training).
3. That the committee receive the following items to its Autumn 2016 meeting:
- A readiness for school evaluation and the clarification at the point at which the child/young people enter care
 - Report from virtual headteacher outlined in item 6 of the minutes.

The meeting ended at 5.00 pm.

CHAIR:

DATED:



Corporate Parenting Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Tuesday 22 March 2016 at 3.00 pm at the Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH.

PRESENT: Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)
 Councillor Evelyn Akoto
 Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE
 Councillor Eliza Mann
 Councillor Kath Whittam
 Councillor Kieron Williams
 Florence Emakpose (Co-opted Member)

OFFICER SUPPORT: Rory Patterson, Director, Children's Social Care
 Paula Thornton, Constitutional Team

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Barbara Hills.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members listed as present were confirmed as the voting members for the meeting.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

No urgent items were identified.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

None were declared.

5. **PLACEMENT STABILITY AND UPDATE ON STATISTICS: MEMBER FEEDBACK TO PRESENTATION HEARD BY THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE ON 23 FEBRUARY 2016**

Corporate parenting committee received a presentation on stability and an update on statistics at the 23 February 2016 committee. The committee met on 22 March 2016 to give feedback and comments to the presentation.

RESOLVED:

That the following summary of issues raised by the committee receive an officer action and response:

- There are crosses on the grid for the section on carer training and early intervention; what do they represent and mean?
- What would good early intervention look like for older children and how can the current Southwark offer and performance be improved for this group?
- The committee requests that officers work to develop high quality and consistent training focusing on supporting adolescent LAC. This should be offered to parents, carers and social workers.
- Disability. The assumption made by the committee is that young people and children with physical disabilities are more likely to be in stable placements. The committee wanted further clarification on whether this was in part due to a better initial assessment or better and clearer support for foster carers who look after disabled LAC. In addition, the committee asks how can the initial assessment be made more holistic so that all needs identified can be met regardless of the varying needs of all LAC.
- Social worker moves/reallocation in cases. The committee wished to know if any 'special' measures or actions are implemented when social worker moves occur in cases that appear to be in 'crisis' and where children and families are likely to be particularly vulnerable to any such changes. The committee also queried how and how much communication and support with the child or young people happens when social worker moves occur. Could any improvements be made?
- Reunification. The committee requests clarification on the data and what tick means on this group; has reunification been attempted?"

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved, seconded and

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in category 1 of paragraph 10.4 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Southwark Constitution.

Details relating to individual cases were discussed in the closed section of the meeting. A full summary of the general issues arising and decisions are set out under item 5 of the open minutes.

The meeting ended at 4.35pm.

CHAIR:

DATED:

Agenda Item 7

Item No. 7.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 July 2016	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Southwark's All Age Autism Strategy and How this Impacts Looked After Children - Update	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		ALL	
From:		Senior Commissioning Manager	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That a review of the support needs of the 23 young people identified as looked after with a diagnosis of autism be undertaken. This review will include any other young people who are looked after or care leavers who are subsequently identified that have not been included in the report below.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. At the corporate parenting committee in February 2016 it was requested a desktop review be undertaken to identify the numbers of young people who are looked after and / or care leavers that are known to have a diagnosis of autism.
3. This report is to update the committee on the findings of the desktop review, including the challenges presented in pulling together the information included below.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. There has been no simple way in order to collate information on the numbers of looked after children and or care leavers who have a diagnosis of autism provided by our current information systems.
5. The core database for all social care information does not systematically record this information that is then able to be collected or reported on. Different teams also hold information in different places.
6. The information provided below has had to be collected from across a number of different service managers within children's social care and education teams. At this point in time there is no guarantee that these numbers are mutually exclusive and there is no double counting. No information regarding care leavers has been identified by the time of producing this report.
7. Within the children with disabilities team there are 11 looked after children, of which 8 are known to have a diagnosis of autism.
8. Within the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) team, there are 43 children with a known autism diagnosis, 15 of whom are known to be looked after.
9. Currently, more information is known about the children within the SEND cohort to be able to report on, with a third of those children living in Southwark or a close-by borough. The remainder are living outside of London (the majority being Kent).

Resource implications

10. In order to undertake a needs assessment, a significant amount of time will be required by an analyst working with social workers to have access to care records for each of the identified young people. This will provide a better understanding of the specific needs of Southwark children in care or care leavers with a diagnosis of autism.

Community impact statement

11. The autism strategy and action plan will affect people across the borough from all equality groups, with a particular focus on disability, gender and age. However, the aim of the strategy is to improve access to diagnosis and support. The intention is to improve the life outcomes achieved by residents with autism, thereby increasing the independence, inclusion and wellbeing of these equality groups.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
All Age Autism Strategy (Cabinet, December 2015, item 10)		
Web link: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=5142&Ver=4		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Peta Smith, Commissioning Manager	
Report Author	Simon Mitchell, Senior Commissioning Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	28 June 2016	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	29 June 2016	

Item No. 8.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 July 2016	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Foster Carer Training	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Children & Families	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the corporate parenting committee notes the foster care training report and receive feedback from the committee.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. In November 2014 the council introduced a significantly improved payment scheme for foster carers, a key element of which was linking payment more closely to skills development alongside learning and training. The main purpose of this was to incentivise foster carers to develop their skills and capacity to care for children and young people, increasing the quality of care they receive, thus significantly contributing to improved outcomes.
3. In the same month the fostering service changed to a systemic social work practice model and began a process of improvement as part of the wider Social Work Matters transformation in Children’s Social Care.
4. January 2015, at a fostering service development day, a short statement of its purpose “to provide high quality care for children in safe, secure and nurturing families, by means of recruiting and developing highly skilled foster carers supported by reflective challenging and enabling social workers – in order to give children and young people the best possible childhood to help them become valued members of society, maximising their life-long opportunities.”
5. In April 2015 a new training program for Southwark foster carers was launched which supported the new payment approach more closely with clearer development pathways for foster carers. The program was developed to integrate a systemic and therapeutic approach to support and enable foster carers to look after children who require more than “ordinary” parenting. Much of the training is underpinned by the Secure Base Model as a foundation, and the more advanced Empathic Behaviour Management. The aim of the two models is to help foster carers feel confident and equip them with the right skills and techniques to help children experience safe and secure care.
6. In October 2015, Southwark corporate parenting committee and Speaker Box heard from a care leaver about their poor experiences of living with foster carers. While this was an experience of one care leaver, it is not representative of Southwark Fostering Service, nonetheless it was one care leaver too many. The corporate parenting committee and Speaker Box requested a spotlight on the quality of training given to foster carers. The corporate parenting committee maintains a key interest in Southwark fostering and how it develops and evolves to meet service demand.

7. In February and March 2016, Southwark corporate parenting committee looked closely at placement stability for children in care and an area for further exploration was the link between stability of placement and the training of foster carers. This report gives an opportunity to look at that particular issue in more depth.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Training for prospective Foster Carers

8. All prospective foster carers who make an application to foster are required to complete a preparation course entitled Skills to Foster as part of the assessment process. This is an accredited training program and Southwark use this nationally recognised best practice model developed by Fostering Network. The program informs part of the applicant's assessment to be a foster carer. This along with applicant's in-depth assessment report is presented to Southwark's Fostering Panel for recommendation for approval to foster. Once approved the foster carer will attend the core training set out below to equip them with more of the basic knowledge and skills to foster for Southwark.

Training for approved Foster Carers

9. Southwark's Fostering Service recognises **three levels of foster carers**, each level related to: the skills and experience of the carer; their learning and development; and demonstrating how each of these impact positively on the quality of care they give to children
10. In maintaining the approval level or progressing to a higher level, foster carers need to provide evidence of continuous learning which is reviewed monthly with their supervising social workers and annually as part of the review process. Foster carers who are unable to meet the required standards as part of the statutory regulations will be performance managed where necessary.

Level 1

11. A newly approved foster carer is approved on the understanding that they have attended the Skills to Foster training, and undertake to complete the post approval core training program in their first year of fostering. This training will provide the evidence they need to complete the Training, Support and Development (TDS) Standards required by the Department of Education to be met during the first year of fostering, or 18 months for friends and family foster carers. Foster carers complete a workbook and gather evidence to show how they meet each of the standards. A portfolio of evidence is validated by the supervising social worker and their manager to confirm the foster carer has met and understands the standards.
12. Southwark's post-approval core training standards are set out below and a comprehensive training and learning program for carers gives extensive opportunities for to take such learning and use it in the day to day caring.
 1. Working with the Department
 2. Attachment, Child Development and Secure Base
 3. Active Listening Skills (Responding effectively to challenging behaviour)

4. On-line Safety
5. Safeguarding: Recognition & Referral, Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children
6. Safe Caring, Recording and Allegations
7. Promoting the Health of Looked After Children
8. Supporting the Education of Looked After Children
9. Transitions – helping children when they must move
10. The Voice of the Child

Level 2

13. Once a foster carer has been approved for a minimum of 2 years, they can progress to the Level 2, provided they have completed the TSD standards and the Secure Base training. The foster carer and their supervising social worker will need to provide detailed evidence at the carer's review that the carer is using and applying the Secure Base model, before approval is given for progression. Supervising social workers will use visits to observe practice, and validate the carer's understanding of this. Level 2 carers should also undertake training in Empathic Behaviour Management.

Level 3

14. Level 3 foster carers offer specialist care and can demonstrate through their training and practice that they are able to meet the needs of children with complex needs. This may include children and young people with exceptional emotional, learning or behavioural difficulties, as well as children with physical disabilities, who require significantly higher than average levels of supervision and care. At this level carers are expected to be able to parent with sensitivity and authority, and may be required to work as part of a therapeutic team around the child. They will be expected to have acquired skills and knowledge in Empathic Behaviour Management and implement this consistently to a high level make a difference to children's lives.

Secure Base: A Therapeutic Model of Care Giving

15. Southwark has chosen the **Secure Base Model** as its framework for therapeutic caregiving by foster carers, which helps infants, children and young people move towards greater security and build resilience. The model focuses on the interactions that occur between caregivers and children on a day to day, minute by minute basis in the home environment. It requires carers to adapt their parenting so that they build trust, reduce anxiety and increase security, thereby helping children to form healthy new attachments. It can be used with children and young people of all ages and different cultures.
16. The Secure Base Model has been developed through a range of research and dissemination projects led by Professor Gillian Schofield and Dr Mary Beek from the Centre for Research on Children and Families at the University of East Anglia. It was launched in Southwark in September 2015 at a conference for foster carers and adopters at the Unicorn Theatre. It is widely regarded as the leading model of its kind in the UK. Since being launched, the model has been incorporated into other training, such as therapeutic play, caring for

unaccompanied minors and safeguarding children who go missing. The model underpins social work practice and is used in many different ways, for example to strengthen the matching process, enhancing placement stability, and to empower carers to respond more effectively to behaviour difficulties.

17. The ongoing implementation of the Secure Base Model is subject to regular dialogue with Professor Schofield from University of East Anglia on its effectiveness and impact. This model has been incorporated into the re-drafting of the foster carers handbook and across other training. A workshop is planned with Southwark Virtual Schools to share the model and its relevance for looked after children in education. Many children with attachment difficulties struggle with concentration, conforming to rules, organisation skills and managing relationships. The aim is to promote greater collaboration between professional partners in enabling children to achieve their potential. If professionals in school understand this approach and can provide a *secure base* for young people, the child's anxiety is likely to lessen and their learning and behaviour improve. Appendix 1 provides an example of the Secure Base Model.

Empathic Behaviour Management (EBM): Strategies that work for Foster Families

18. **Empathic Behaviour Management** is a more advanced approach to caring for children who have been traumatised by the pre-care experiences and are emotionally insecure as a consequence and show this different forms of challenging behaviour. It builds on the foundations laid by the Secure Base Model to enable carers to provide a higher quality form of parenting to give children and young people the skilled caring help they need to develop better emotional health. It is based on the work of Clinical Psychologist Dr Amber Elliot and uses her book "Why can't my child behave" as a core guide. It is deeply skills and knowledge based but starts always from the point of view of the carer and the behaviour.
19. The approach to EBM in Southwark has been led by a full time systemic therapist embedded in Southwark Fostering Service. Foster carers receive two days initial training followed by six reflective practice sessions over a period of 3 months where carers can reflect with other carers on the meaning of children's behaviour, how it affects them and what responses are most effective. This is facilitated by the systemic therapist in an approach designed to consolidate skills and learning to maximise the ability of carers to use advanced skills in their day to day caring.

Caring for Adolescents

20. Caring for teenagers can be a challenging task that requires experience, insight and a different skill set to parent teenagers with authority as well as warmth to maintain placement stability. More recently sections on teenage brain development have been introduced to the child development training to help carers understand the reasons behind some typical adolescent behaviour. Carers of teenagers are also adopting the Secure Base model to build resilience and hope, at a time when it is easy for professionals and carers to "give up" on young people. It is widely accepted that foster carers require specialist parenting skills to care for older children who would reflect a Level 3 carer in Southwark.
21. Some of the core training offer is specifically aimed at carers of teenagers. This includes particularly training in sexual health and relationships, as well as Child Sexual Exploitation. Empathic Behaviour Management covers specific

behavioural issues that can be experienced by teenage foster carers including challenging behavior, self harm, and stealing. Further exploration is required to develop specific parenting skills training, for example helping carers manage difficult situations through de-escalation techniques, non-violent resistance and mindfulness.

22. Supporting the most traumatised teenagers through well supported foster care moves beyond training to the coaching and situation specific support and learning a carer needs to care well for a child. The Fostering Service uses their systemic therapist for this purpose as well as Carelink (CAMHS for Children in Care) but it is an area that needs further development to enable the needs of the most traumatised teenagers to be met.
23. The **full range of training for Foster Carers** is set out in Appendix 2.

Engagement of young people in foster carer training

24. Care experienced young people have contributed to foster carers training to help prospective foster carers gain an insight into the needs and wishes of young people. Young people will be invited to share their foster care experience and provide an opportunity for prospective carers to understand it from a young person's perspective.
25. Post approval training incorporates a module specifically on the voice of the child to ensure children and young people are at the heart of the fostering. Children placed in foster carer have an opportunity to feedback and share their placement experiences as part of the statutory LAC review process and also contribute to the foster carers annual review process, a form of feedback that while not directly commenting on training is an important guide to quality of care. Impacting on this is of course the main purpose of all learning and development.
26. Care experienced young people will be invited to help deliver a key part of the preparation for independence program that equips foster carers with greater understanding and skill in helping young people make the transition to independence.
27. Areas for development for 2016/17 will extend to care experienced young people to attend information sessions for prospective applicants interested in fostering, in addition to video clips of care leavers' experience of foster carers being embedded in the fostering web pages. The foster carers' handbook is currently being updated and soon to be opens for consultation with Speaker Box.

Monitoring the effectiveness of foster care training including placement stability

28. Learning and development plans are completed with foster carers upon their approval, and once a year as part of their annual review of approval. Part of the supervising social work role is to refresh their learning and development plans pertaining to the particular placement needs. There is mandatory training outlined at each of the three levels as set out above that includes creative learning methods to maximise carers' learning and how it impacts on the quality of care they give children.
29. Since the implementation a systemic model of social work practice through the Social Work Matters transformation, as well as a therapeutic model of caregiving, carers are telling us that they are thinking differently about children's

behavior, understanding that a behaviour has a context and a meaning, which may have helped the child cope with difficult circumstances in the past. The Secure Base and EBM approach is designed to build resilience and capacity in carers to care for children and have a direct impact on placement quality and stability.

30. 44 foster carers been trained in EBM since the first course in October 2015. Social workers have given feedback on their observations on the way foster carers perceive behavioural difficulties differently following EBM and that carers 'react' less, but rather stop and think about what the child communicates through their behaviour. One social worker spoke about the foster carer who was driving with a sibling group in the back of the car who was starting to argue and fight amongst each other after a long day at school followed by contact. Instead of just telling them off, she stopped the car and got them out to have a group hug – she realised that they were feeling tired, anxious and perhaps a need to be reassured. The feedback / evaluation of impact is very positive but largely anecdotal and observational from supervision social workers, independent reviewing officers and foster carers themselves around carer's changes in thinking and behavior.

"... an outburst may not be 'about me' – don't take it personally, but stop and think what things mean from the child's point of view"

31. Placement planning meetings set out the expectations and outcomes of any placement from the outset and happen if possible prior to any placement but no longer than 5 days of the placement commencing. Stability and quality of the placement is reviewed as part of the child's LAC review taking account of the child's experience of the placement.

Mental Health

32. Many of our children and young people are at a higher risk of developing mental health difficulties due to their traumatic early life experience and genetic disposition. Educating foster carers about the sign and symptoms of mental illness is critical in their day to day care of caring for young people. Adopting the therapeutic and systemic approach to fostering is a central part of supporting foster carers to offer specialist placements for children with higher support needs around their mental health and emotional wellbeing. Southwark Carelink (CAMHS) Service for children in care works with the Fostering Service to assess, intervene and provide therapeutic support for looked after children and their carers.
33. The foster carers' development program incorporates mental health in various guises from self harming behaviours to hoarding food, managing challenging behaviour etc. The foster carers handbook is currently being updated which will be a useful resource for foster carers in this and other areas. Specific training has been delivered on supporting mental health in the past year and will continue to be offered. This was the most popular training during 2015/16 with 23 foster carers attending.

CONCLUSIONS

34. The current training program has been running for approximately a year. Indications are that it is a positive and constructive approach to improving the quality of care that children receive and experience. The feedback from the Fostering Service in the preparation of this report would suggest the quality of

training and systemic approach to foster caring has significantly improved over the last 18 months. Both staff and foster carers have verbally shared that they are better informed to understand the needs of looked after children in providing them a secure and safe base to grow and develop.

35. Southwark's fostering payment model consists of three levels of foster care which is related to the skills and experience of the carer. This payment model has been implemented since November 2014 with the new training offer in place from April 2015 incorporating a more robust post approval training programme for newly approved foster carers. Learning and development plans for carers enable the service to transition to skilled specialist foster carers to meet Southwark's placement needs. This is achieved by offering a comprehensive training programme that includes financial incentives for foster carers to upskill and progress to level 3 carers.
36. Feedback from staff and foster carers for the purpose of this report has welcomed this payment model as an attractive development both to incentivise their learning and improve their financial situation. It has helped to focus carers on the importance of training linked to the quality of care for children and young people.

Community impact statement

37. Foster care training is an important aspect of Southwark fostering provision both as a recruitment incentive to attract prospective foster carers but also to equip our carers with the right skills and experience to foster children in the borough. Where appropriate children who require fostering are best placed to remain in their borough or within a 20 miles radius of their home where they have an identity and sense of belonging, of which contributes to placement stability. It is hoped that a good training and support offer for foster carers makes an important impact on the community enabling more children and young people to be cared for within or near those communities.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Case Scenario by a Supervising Social Worker
Appendix 2	Foster Carer Training Program 2016/17

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children and Families	
Report Author	Vanessa White, Head of Service, Permanence	
Version	Final	
Dated	30 June 2016	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	30 June 2016	

APPENDIX 1

Case Scenario from a Supervising Social Worker who supported Foster Carer in implementing secure base strategies into day to day fostering.

Child A is an 8-year-old girl who became looked after due to neglect. Child A had one previous placement before a planned move to a newly approved fostering couple who have no children of their own. She has been with the couple since May 2014 and are currently in the process of preparing Matching panel for Child A to become a long-term placement.

The Secure Base Model has been used from the beginning even before Child A was placed with the couple. This helped to prepare the couple gain a better understanding of the model. We were able to look at Child A's history and what it might be like for her coming into the family. We discussed the fears and anxieties, uncertainties that she might experience.

As the couple had not parented together, exploring their life experiences and how they experienced a secure base was key. Using the star approach, we were able to look at all the dimensions and how they might apply them to Child A. By using scenarios we were able to come up with different strategies.

When Child A was placed the couple felt more prepared and were able to build on all the foundations laid. A particular area we worked on was how Child A really wanted to feel part of the family, with particular emphasis on acceptance from the male carer. We discussed how Child A needed to feel valued and for him to accept her and what behaviours were being presented.

We were able to look at his feelings and how fostering was an enormous learning curve that was forever changing. We looked at his strengths and skills and nurtured his confidence. The male foster carer was then empowered to take on roles that the female foster carers usually did, to help Child A feel accepted by him. We changed the routine so that the male foster carer now takes Child A to school and has more roles including taking her to CareLink sometimes. He is more equipped to help with her self esteem and show her that she is valued within the family.

The supervising social worker has been able to see the confidence grow in the family and how Child A now addresses herself as part of the family. She is always keen to share her family experiences and achievements. The Secure Base is such a fluid model that can be applied to all areas of the caregiving cycle whether the issues arise with the children or the caregivers.

The Foster Carers attended The Secure Base conference and fed back that they felt proud that they have been using the model.

APPENDIX 2

Foster Carers' Training Programme

SEPTEMBER 2016- SEPTEMBER 2017 (provisional)

Date	Learning Event	Level	Facilitator	Time and Venue
September	Post-Approval Induction Training – Session 1 Working with the Department			
	Safeguarding and Safe Care (London)			
	Safeguarding and Safe Care (Kent)			
	Empathic Behaviour Management (Two day course followed by 6 reflective learning sets of two hours)			
	Controlling Behaviour – reflective workshop			
	Blood born infections – HIV, Hepatitis			
October	Post Approval Training – Session 2 Attachment and Child Development using the Secure Base model			
	Supporting children with Mental Health problems and self-harming behaviours			
	Parent and Child Placements – four day training			
	Therapeutic Play for Foster Carers			
11.10.16	Mental Health First Aid: Youth - Two days			
	Caring for Unaccompanied Minors			
November	Post-Approval Induction Training – Session 3 Safeguarding and Safe Care			
	Safeguarding and Safe Care (evening workshop)			
	Preparing Young People for Independence			
	E-Safety : protecting children from online exploitation			
	Delegated Authority			

Date	Learning Event	Level	Facilitator	Time and Venue
December	Post-Approval Training – Session 4 Fostering in the Digital Age – online safety			
	Caring for Unaccompanied Minors			
	Managing contact with birth families			
	Saying Put and Supporting care leavers			
	Therapeutic Play for Foster Carers			
	Hoarding and gorging food - reflective workshop			
	Preparing young people for independence - in conjunction with Speaker Box and the Care Leavers' Team			
January 2017	Post-Approval Induction Training – Session 5 Active Listening Skills – responding to challenging behaviour			
	Advanced Safeguarding (Level Two and Three carers)			
	Violence and Aggression – reflective workshop			
	First Aid			
	Life Story Work for Foster Carers			
	Empathic Behaviour Management (Two day course followed by 6 reflective learning sets of two hours)			
12.1.17	Mental Health First Aid: Youth - Two days			
February 2017	Post-Approval Induction Training – Session 6 Promoting the health of Looked After young people			
	Child Development and Attachment using the Secure Base Model			
	Lying and Stealing – reflective workshop			
	Therapeutic Play			
March 2017	Post-Approval Induction Training – Session 7 Helping your child with Education and PEP's			
	Safeguarding and Safe Caring (for male carers)			
	Sexualised Behaviour – reflective workshop			
	Therapeutic Play			
	Child Sexual Exploitation			
April 2017	Post-Approval Induction Training - Session 8 Helping children with Transitions			

For more information about individual courses, and to apply, please log on to
MyLearningSource@southwark.co.uk Research in Practice : <https://www.rip.org.uk>

Item No. 9.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 July 2016	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Update on Care Service Response to Issues Raised by Speakerbox	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Children & Families	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the corporate parenting committee accepts the further response of the Care Service to the issues raised by Speakerbox at its meeting with corporate parenting committee on 27 October 2015.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The corporate parenting committee meets termly with Speakerbox for the purpose of elected members hearing directly from young people in care and for care leavers to establish what the most important issues are for them. These are usually facilitated by Lucy Milich, Children’s Rights Officer and attended by key officers responsible for services for children in care and care leavers.
3. On 9 February 2016 the council’s cabinet agreed the Children in care and Care Leavers Strategy 2016-19. The first priority of this is “children and young people have a say and their voice is heard”.
4. This report covers the key themes from the meeting on 27 October 2015 that Speakerbox shared with elected members and the response of the Care Service to date.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The first theme was family, particularly sibling contact.

“sometimes we just want to see our siblings and no one else from the family”

“in LAC Reviews we should get to decide how much we want to see our siblings”
6. A workshop on sibling contact took place on 11 March 2016 facilitated by Celia Parker, Principal Social Worker for Children and Lucy Milich, Children’s Rights Officer. 18 social workers attended. The feedback was very positive. There is a commitment to run 2 further workshops this year, the next one planned for September 2016 once the new Principal Social Worker for Children has settled into their role.
7. It is planned that Siblings Together, an organisation dedicated to promoting contact with siblings in care through holidays or weekend events, has been invited to meet with the Care Service management group with the intention of promoting this as a more flexible fun way where siblings can spend more time together. The organisation is already used by social workers for their sibling

groups, for example one group of 4 siblings in 2 different placements have been booked for a holiday together this summer.

8. It should be emphasised that sibling contact should be assessed as being in a child's best interests and there is a duty upon the social workers to promote such contact.
9. The second theme was communication between social workers, personal advisors and young people. The area of privacy was a particular concern.

"right to privacy"

"location where we meet....consider location"

10. A short film is being commissioned through Catch 22 with the purpose of engaging social workers and personal advisors on the importance of privacy and relationships to use as a tool to influence them to think more about the impact on children and young people and be used as a regular part of induction. The first meeting about this is planned for 20 June 2016.
11. Training was run for 15 social workers in their first year post qualifying (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) on communicating with children in care in February 2016.
12. A feature article was put in the Speakerbox magazine which goes out to all children in care and care leavers about what to do if they don't feel listened too and how to contact an advocate or make a complaint.
13. Feedback about Personal Education Plan meetings and young people's experience of them as feedback to the Virtual School Head who reports she discussed issues of communication with young people fully within her team meeting.
14. The children's rights worker has to date attended four social work group meetings to share YP feedback .
15. The Care service is eagerly awaiting the refreshed Golden Rules set by children in care for how social workers work with them. Promoting these and measuring our Care Service against these rules is seen as a very important way to improve how we work in this area.
16. The third theme was placements. Particularly the standards and training of foster carers and how they are monitored.

"standards for foster carers"

"importance who you are living with"

17. The fostering service has renewed its approach to recruiting, training and supervising foster carers. The training aspect is set out in detail in another report for the July Corporate Parenting Committee.
18. The Young inspectors project is established – 6 young people have been recruited and linked with the lead of this project in Commissioning. This project is going to arrange for young people in care and care leavers to visit properties

(mainly semi-independent) and to rate them and feed back comments to commissioners.

19. There is now an agreement with the care service and housing department that wherever possible young people should be seeing property before they are placed there.
20. The children's rights service will be helping the fostering team to develop a new foster care guide with input from young people.
21. Children's rights co-ordinator is a member of the 16 plus accommodation group that feeds into the overall approach to improving young people's accommodation in Southwark. Southwark Commissioning Unit are undertaking a consultation event this summer with young people on a possible new model and approach for identifying and supporting young people in accommodation.

Community impact statement

22. Southwark is committed to ensuring children's voices are heard whatever part of the community they are from. The council has a dedicated children's rights team committed to making this voice heard.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children & Families	
Report Author	Jackie Cook, Head Of Social Work Improvement and Quality Assurance, Children's and Adults' Services	
Version	Final	
Dated	30 June 2016	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		30 June 2016

Item No. 10.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 July 2016	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Innovation Projects	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Children & Families	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the corporate parenting committee notes the work of these two Innovation Projects and consider their evaluation at the November corporate parenting committee.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. In October 2013 the Department for Education (DfE) launched the Social Care Innovation Fund and associated Programme to act as a catalyst for developing more effective ways of supporting vulnerable children. The programme was seeking to inspire whole system change so that in five years' time we achieve:
 - **Better life chances** for children receiving help from the social care system;
 - **Stronger incentives and mechanisms** for innovation, experimentation and replication of successful new approaches; and
 - **Better value for money** across children's social care.
3. On 9 February 2016 the council's cabinet agreed the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2016-19. The first priority of this is "children and young people have a say and their voice is heard".
4. Applications for a further round of funding for this fund close on 7 July 2016 and Southwark is involved in 3 possible bids.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. Southwark has implemented two major Projects through the Social Care Innovation Programme: Keeping Families Together and The Pause Project.

Keeping Families Together

6. Keeping Families Together (KFT) is a new social work unit embedded within the Specialist Family Focus Team. Southwark was one of five local authorities in partnership with Morning Lane Associates which piloted the Keeping Families Together teams from June, 2015 –April, 2016 initially. The Project is currently funded by the Council having demonstrated initial impact around financial sustainability through the outcomes it has achieved.
7. The primary aim of KFT is to prevent family breakdown, working with families where there is a young person between 11 and 17 who is at risk of coming into

care, or is in care with the possibility of being rehabilitated at home. Using multi-modal interventions, the unit works collaboratively with service-users to enable change so that far more children in Southwark remain safely with their families, rather than going into care. This will also mean that if Southwark is spending less money placing children in care, it can spend more on supporting families in the wider system.

8. Multi-modal interventions aim to address whichever aspects of the person's environment are sustaining the problem, rather than focusing solely on the individual as the focus for work. This could include trying to impact on a young person's behaviour through approaches such as parent coaching, family therapy, individual work, and even organising a new bedroom door if this is assessed as directly contributing to the risk of breakdown within the family. The work derives from the same overarching analysis of the problem, and is overseen by an Advanced Practitioner within a small tightly supervised unit. The team includes social workers, family therapists and family practitioners with a wide range of skills and intervention approaches with a particular expertise in working with teenagers.
9. KFT offers an intensive 3-6 month intervention focused on a single set of goals agreed collaboratively with the family and other stakeholders. They aim to deliver as much of the work as possible using the skills and specialisms of unit members rather than referring for interventions from many different sources which may at best be ineffective and at worst work against one another.
10. Whilst in every case the aim is for young people to be able to remain at home with their families without statutory intervention, there is a recognition that for some young people the work may have highlighted that it is not safe or in their best interests for this to be the case. In any event, the KFT unit are consistently working towards stability for the family after the work is completed, delivering the best that social work can offer, working in partnership with families and professionals to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people in Southwark.
11. All referrals to the team are made via the Resources Panel. There have been 23 cases referred to KFT, of which KFT have worked with 17 families (26 young people) to date and so far have closed 5 (7 young people); their maximum capacity due to the intensive nature of the multi-modal intervention is 12 families. There is evidence that the overwhelming experience of the child whether they have returned home or remained in care has been extremely positive – T came to KFT after being placed in care (CSE concerns, self-harm, drug use, offending, alleged associations with gang members, suggestions that she was involved in prostitution, carer for her Mother with mental health issues who was sectioned just prior to KFT involvement), and not engaging with any professionals and being abusive to them as she felt completely let down by the whole system. She is now lead actor in a theatre production. She has spoken very emotionally and positively about her experience of KFT, her engagement with the Youth Offending Service and the support of her IRO. Her self-esteem and confidence is increasing and her Father (a pastor in the local community with very high expectations) has now told her he is proud of her and the relationship is growing and becoming more positive and she now has hope that they will be reunited.

The Pause Project

12. Pause originated in Hackney as an initial pilot to test the Pause methodology. Southwark Pause is funded by the Social Care Innovation fund until end March 2017 to test the methodology as one of six other locations (Doncaster, Hull, Newham, Southwark, Greenwich and Islington). It will be independently evaluated over the testing period and this means that it is particularly important to replicate the model including the criteria for women to be included to see if it works in different local authorities. This evaluation is due to report in September 2016.
13. The criteria is:
 - Women who have had 2 or more children permanently removed from them and have no children in their care.
 - Last child removed up to 5 years ago (since 1.11.2009)
 - Women of child bearing age where further pregnancy possible and likely
 - Women consent to long acting reversible contraception (implant, injection, IUD or IUS)
14. Priority is being given to women who live in Southwark. Women meeting the criteria have been identified via care proceedings tracking and the legal data-base which preceded this. The Project has been receiving referrals from professionals working with women whose children were removed by other local authorities but who are now living in Southwark.
15. Pause is practice group managed within Southwark Children's Permanence Service but located at Tooley Street and offers an innovative, dynamic and creative solution designed to address the needs of these women. The service is offered on an assertive outreach basis with an intense programme of therapeutic, practical and behavioural support through an integrated model. Each woman has a bespoke programme designed around their needs looking at the various elements of their system.
16. Pause aims to break the cycle of repeat removal by intervening at a point when the women have no children in their care and offers them a chance to take a pause from the usual periods of chaos, anger and reaction to care proceedings in order to be supported to reflect and develop new skills and behaviours.
17. Pause does not define women in relation to any one presenting social issues such as substance misuse. Instead Pause helps the women to focus on themselves with the purpose of supporting them to take control of their lives. To do this they are required to take LARC (long acting reversible contraception) during the intervention, thereby creating a space to pause, reflect, learn and aspire.
18. Pause is staffed to work with a maximum of 20 women and is currently working at this limit.

Community impact statement

19. These projects impacts positively on all communities that the families and women live within, enabling them to be able to remain within those communities and to be a more positive constructive part of them.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children and Families	
Report Author	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children and Families	
Version	Final	
Dated	30 June 2016	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		30 June 2016

Item No. 12.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 July 2016	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Corporate Parenting Committee – Work Plan 2016/17	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Children and Families	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the corporate parenting committee review the work plan for 2016/17 as set out in paragraph 4 of the report.
2. That the committee identify any further items for consideration in the work plan for 2016/17.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Role and function of the corporate parenting committee

3. The constitution for the municipal year 2016/2017 records the corporate parenting committee's role and functions as follows:
 1. To secure real and sustained improvements in the life chances of looked after children, and to work within an annual programme to that end.
 2. To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy and work plan.
 3. To seek to ensure that the life chances of looked after children are maximised in terms of health, educational attainment, and access to training and employment, to aid the transition to a secure and productive adulthood.
 4. To develop and co-ordinate a life chances strategy and work plan to improve the life chances of Southwark looked after children.
 5. To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all council departments, schools and the voluntary sector to lead towards better outcomes for looked after children.
 6. To ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable looked after children and young people to play an integral role in service planning and design, and that their views are regularly sought and acted upon.
 7. To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes for looked after children.
 8. To receive an annual report on the adoption and fostering services to monitor their effectiveness in providing safe and secure care for looked after children.
 9. To report to the council's cabinet on a twice yearly basis.
 10. To make recommendations to the relevant cabinet decision maker where responsibility for that particular function rests with the cabinet.
 11. To report to the scrutiny sub-committee with responsibility for children's services after each meeting.
 12. To appoint non-voting co-opted members.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. The corporate parenting committee review and update the work plan each meeting.

12 July 2016

- Foster care training available, including foster carers experience
- Innovation projects
- Update on autism report
- Report back on Speakerbox item (to include sibling contact, quality of placements and training)
- Feedback on issues arising from 22 March meeting (placement stability).

8 November 2016

- A readiness for school evaluation and the clarification at the point at which the child/young people enter care
- Report from virtual headteacher.

1 March 2017

- Items to be confirmed.

Item/s to be scheduled

- Transition from care to independent living – report back on outcome of review of semi-independent living/supported housing.

Corporate parenting committee meetings with SpeakerBox

5. SpeakerBox, established in 2005, ensures that the views of looked after children and care leavers are used to influence decision making that affects their care and support. Representing children and young people between 8 and 24 years, the group also provide a peer to peer networking support system for looked after children. The programme is operated independently and run by the young people themselves, although it is supported by the council's children services team, senior managers and councillors.

Community impact statement

6. The work of the corporate parenting committee contributes to community cohesion and stability.

Resource implications

7. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Minutes of meetings of Corporate Parenting Committee	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395
Web link: http://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=129&Year=0		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director of Children and Families	
Report Author	Paula Thornton, Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	29 June 2016	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	29 June 2016	

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