

**London Borough of Southwark
Independent Reviewing Officers
Annual Report
2015-16**

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1. Introduction

An Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service for Looked After Children is required in accordance with guidance arising from The Adoption and Children Act 2002. The report has to be presented to the Director of Children's Services, the Lead member for Children and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

This report contains a summary of work completed by Southwark IRO Service for the period 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016.

2. Legal Context

- 2.1 Section 118 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 introduced the statutory role of the IRO; with a duty to monitor the Local authority's functions by means of regular statutory reviews of the Care Plan of looked after children. The IRO was given the power to refer a case to the Children's and Families Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) if any dispute could not be resolved within the Local Authority.
- 2.2 The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 expanded the role of the IRO from just reviewing the child's Care Plan to monitoring the child's case on an ongoing basis.
- 2.3 New regulations (Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations) were issued in 2010 and these are accompanied by 4 sets of statutory guidance including the 'IRO Handbook', which came into force in April 2011. All children in care including those on Adoption Plans or receiving short breaks are now covered by these regulations.
- 2.4 Every looked after child has a named IRO who has independent oversight of the child's case including:
 - Determining and representing the child's wishes and feelings
 - Ensuring their rights and interests are protected
 - Assessing whether the Local Authorities Care Plan for the child meets the assessed needs of the child within the timescale of the child
 - Negotiating with the social work team and managers on any identified issues arising from the Care Plan or implementation of the Care Plan and where necessary escalating unresolved concerns to an appropriate level in the Local Authority's management structure, and /or if necessary to CAFCASS.
- 2.5 The main forum through which the IRO carries out their monitoring role is the Statutory Looked After Review. These take place regularly at the following times
 - First Review within the first 28 days of the child becoming looked after
 - Second Review within 90 days
 - Subsequent Reviews at 180 day intervals
 - When a child or IRO asks for one
 - When significant events occur
- 2.6 The review should, wherever possible, take place at the child's placement. Parents, residential workers, foster carers and their support workers, social worker and the IRO are the expected attendees. Reports from other professionals such as Health, Education and CAMHS are also received. In some cases, it may be necessary to hold

a series of meetings to facilitate all professionals and views to be heard – for example where a child does not want their parents or another professional to attend a review.

2.7 The role of the IRO was reviewed by the Family Justice Review which reported in November 2011. Their conclusions in connection with IROs were as follows:

- The role of Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is important to local authorities and they would very likely recreate it were it removed from them. The priority should be to improve the quality of the function and ensure its effectiveness and visibility.
- We recommend that local authorities should review the operation of their IRO service to ensure that it is effective. In particular they should ensure that they are adhering to guidance regarding case loads.
- We recommend that the Directors of Children’s Services / Directors for Social Services and Lead Member for Children receive regular reports from the IRO on the work undertaken and its outcomes. Local Safeguarding Children Boards should also consider such reports.
- Courts would benefit from this information too alongside outcomes of care cases. The pilot recommended earlier (for courts to receive information about the outcomes for children and families on which they have adjudicated) should include information from the IRO.
- The courts and IROs need to develop more effective links. Guardians and IROs should strengthen their working relationship.

2.8 The LASPO Act 2012 came into force on 1/12/12. As a result all young people aged 16 and 17 who are remanded into custody are now regarded as looked after children. This has slightly increased the number of looked after children and has put additional pressure on the IRO service. As at 30/3/16 there were 4 young men on remand who were being reviewed out of a total of 474 looked after young people.

3. The Southwark Context

3.1 The census data in 2011 gave Southwark a population of 288,300.

3.2 Southwark is an extremely diverse borough with over 181 languages spoken in its schools (January 2008). The largest ethnic minority group is black African (mainly Nigerian and West African) which accounts for around 15.6% of the whole population. In 2010 it was estimated that 64.8% of the population was white.

3.3 Southwark has relatively high numbers of looked after children compared to other London boroughs although the number has been steadily reducing since 2013. On 30/3/16 there were 474 Children looked After in Southwark.

3.4 Southwark has an over-representation of black and dual heritage children in care. On 31/3/16 there were:

Asian	3%
Black/Black UK	46%

Dual heritage	16%
White/UK	31%
Other ethnic groups	5%

3.5 Key Challenges for Southwark Looked after Children Services

The key challenges for Southwark Looked After Children Services reflect many of the challenges faced by other Local Authorities and inner city areas.

- Following the Serious Case Review in Rochdale and other CSE cases around the country, there is increasing awareness of the risk of looked after children being targeted for Child Sexual Exploitation. This has meant that we are now reviewing the risks to all young people in care, especially where they are placed out of Southwark and where they are exhibiting other high risk behaviours such as criminal activity, running away or substance misuse.
- How to ensure that all looked after young people are in appropriate education or employment and in particular to ensure that children with Special Educational Needs receive the support and help that they need. This is especially challenging when young people are placed out of Southwark.
- The need to ensure that children are in permanent placements, including adoption, as soon as possible if they are not returning to their family.
- The need to identify sufficient local placements appropriate to the diverse needs of children and young people – especially for young people aged 16 plus.
- How to ensure that young people leaving care are fully equipped for independence and achieve good outcomes

4. Southwark IRO Service

4.1 The Southwark IRO Service is situated within the Quality Assurance Service. The Head of Quality Assurance reports to the Assistant Director, Quality and performance making IROs independent of the operational children's services management structure where allocation of resources lies. The team is based at Tooley Street.

4.2 In addition to the core function of monitoring and reviewing children's care plans, the IRO Service is also involved in:

- Meetings on individual cases
- Planning forums where policy and procedures are developed e.g. Health, Education, Participation and Professional Standards groups,
- Audit work in conjunction with other departments,
- Training and liaison with teams
- Assisting with Complaints
- Working with the commissioning team to monitor the quality of placements.

4.3 During the year IROs have:

- Assisted with development of several policies and procedures

- Provided induction training for new social workers around planning for looked after children.
- IROs have attended Health, Education, Participation and Adoption/Permanency groups.
- One IRO leads on Sexually Harmful Behaviour and chairs the SHB panel.

4.4 IROs highlight good practice by workers as well as reporting evidence of poor practice, poor standards of placements or safeguarding issues.

4.5 Permanent staff are line managed by the QA service managers. Between 2013-14 there was a service transformation and as part of this the job descriptions of chairs were revised. There is now a joint job description for IRO's and CP chairs. This means that some Looked after reviews are chaired by CP C. This is intended to reflect the journey of the child so that if a chair knows a family they can continue as an IRO if a child becomes looked after.

There are currently 13 sessional IROs who have long-arm supervision via telephone contact with the QA managers and regular group meetings.

Administrative support is provided by a full time executive officer managed by the QAU Admin Manager.

4.6 Staffing in 2015-16 consisted of:

- 5 directly employed permanent staff who act predominately as IRO's plus 6 CP conference chairs who carry out occasional LAC reviews
- 9 freelance self employed sessional workers funded by 3 full time equivalent posts. These have varying caseloads of between 14-70 children looked after.

5. PERFORMANCE

5.1 During 2015-16 the IRO team chaired and completed reports for 1235 reviews of children looked after as well as making representations, participating in staff induction and training, undertaking audits and undertaking a range of other tasks.

5.2 The IRO service makes an important contribution to good performance against key performance indicators in the National Indicator Set: C63 (Participation at Reviews) and N166 (timeliness of Reviews). They also contribute to other Performance Indicators through quality assurance and collection of data or raising issues on cases at appropriate levels to minimise poor outcome e.g. drift in care planning, placement stability, educational achievements, health appointments etc.

5.3 Performance data 2012-15

Year	2012-13	2013-4	2014-15	2015-16
Number of LAC Reviews	1599	1548	1377	1235
N166 Reviews in timescales	95.5%	96.5%	92%	87.8% (416)
C63 Participation at Reviews	95.8%	94%	94%	96.4% (1,190)

No of LAC at March 31st	565	550	503	474
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The number of looked after children continued to reduce from 2015 to 2016 and this is reflected in the reduction in looked after reviews held. The recorded performance in relation to reviews held within timescales 2015-16 was significantly worse than in the previous year. This is attributable to the impact of the change over from Carefirst to Mosaic data system in July 2015, which led to large numbers of LAC reviews being recorded on word rather than on the data system and so not included in the performance data.

5.4 PARTICIPATION

The Performance Indicator for child participation is based on the number of reviews where a child over 4 has not participated.

IROs always aim to spend time individually with children and young people prior to a review to determine their wishes and feelings, identify if they have any concerns and find out how they would like to participate in the meeting. If necessary or requested the IRO will ensure an advocate is provided to support the child or young person.

Where a child has not attended their review, the IRO will always arrange to meet children and young people at a different time, or speak to them on the phone to try and gain their views. Children or young people who have English as a second language will have an interpreter available. Children with disabilities or with communication difficulties will be supported to express their views with help of their carers or a specialist worker or advocate.

Southwark performance remains strong in involving young people in their reviews and ensuring that plans reflect their views.

In total, there were 45 reviews held in 2015-16 where a young person over 4 did not contribute to their review.

Participation at reviews 2015-16	Total
PN0 Child under 4 at date of review	159
PN1 Attendance	857
PN2 Attendance - views via advocate / IRO	19
PN3 Attendance - views via symbols	14
PN4 Attendance - without contribution	7
PN5 No attendance - views via advocate / IRO	28
PN6 No attendance - views expressed	106
PN7 No attendance - views not expressed	45
Total	1235

5.5 Distribution of review records

The statutory guidance indicates that decisions should be circulated within 5 working days and the full report within 15 working days. Distribution of Review records is the responsibility of the practice group co-ordinators within the practice groups.

6. REPRESENTATIONS AND ESCALATIONS

- 6.1 IROs seek to ensure good outcomes for children. They do this through their quality assurance role in LAC reviews e.g. by checking diets are healthy and culturally appropriate, medicals take place, foster carers attend parents evenings or read bedtime stories, check contacts with siblings take place.
- 6.2 IRO's will speak to the allocated social worker and review the Personal Education Plans (PEP's) and Health Assessments on file for children prior to reviews.
- 6.3 IROs often pick up on matters which make a difference to a child if they get overlooked for example ensuring sleepovers or school trips take place; passports are obtained so holidays are not missed; ensuring cultural and faith needs are met. They will normally do this through suggestions at reviews and encouraging carers and workers rather than via formal escalation processes and so this cannot always be visibly evident or easily quantified.
- 6.4 Where there are concerns relating to implementation of the Care Plan, resources or poor practice, IROs will initially liaise with the team and seek to resolve things informally – often by bringing reviews forward or participating in professionals meetings.
- 6.5 When a concern cannot be resolved informally each Local Authority must now have a formal 'dispute resolution' process through which an IRO can escalate their concern to the appropriate management level.
- 6.6 During 2015-16 there were 184 recorded representations and escalations to managers from IRO's concerning 178 children. The majority of the escalations were followed up within 24 hours and resolved quickly but in 9 cases the matter had to be escalated to a Head of Service or an Assistant Director to resolve.

A new data system, Mosaic, was introduced in July 2015. A feature of this system is that reporting is ordered into work flows which follow good practice guidance. This means that a LAC review cannot be written up until a Care Plan or Pathway Plan is completed. Also a Care Plan cannot be drawn up until previous documents have been completed and signed off. This has caused severe delay to IRO's and the vast majority of escalations and representations during the year have been linked to this problem. A total of 99 escalations were in connection with failure to complete a care plan or Pathway Plan – 54% of all escalations. Chasing this issue – which was often due to IT issues rather than social work issues took up a considerable amount of IRO time during the year.

The main themes of the representations made were as follows (N.B some escalations were about more than one issue) :

Care plans/pathway plans not completed on the system in good time	99
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Drift in care planning	18
Concerns re young person's safety – Missing/CSE/criminality	15
Infrequent social work visits	9
Issues around contact with family members	9
No allocated worker/sickness	8
Health issues	7
Concerns about the placement	7
Review decisions outstanding	4
Staying put arrangements	3
Life story work	1

There has been intensive work over the Summer 2016 to resolve the issues that have impacted upon LAC reviews and new, more user friendly, Mosaic forms are currently under development. These are due to come on line in Autumn 2016.

Case examples of IRO representation/escalations

- i) Child L, an unaccompanied asylum seeker, told her IRO that her social worker has not visited and she needed help with representation at appointments with the home office. The IRO reported this back and the social worker visited the young person within a day to offer assistance.
- ii) Child C was placed with extended family members. The IRO was concerned that there were multiple repairs required to the house which was undermining the placement. This was escalated up to the Director CSC and repairs were completed.
- iii) Child B has ASD and is placed in a residential unit. IRO was concerned that no life story work had been completed and requested funding to be agreed for this. In the end a social worker with life story work expertise was allocated to complete this work.

7. INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Speakerbox (Southwark children in care council) representatives continued to attend and contribute to the bi-monthly IRO meetings in 2015-16.

The children's rights service reviewed and updated the 'Golden rules' for social workers in 2016. This can be seen in Appendix 1. Copies of these rules will be used in social work training and have been circulated to the different service areas for display and discussion.

The Children's Rights service carried out two major consultations in 2016 – one around emotional health and resilience and another on 'Positive relationships'. These gave enormous insight into the issues that young people in care and care leavers face and were presented to the IRO group for discussion.

St Christopher's fellowship have provided a return interview service in Southwark since November 2014 and the lead workers of this project have met with the IRO group on a number of occasions.

Barnados provide advocacy for children in care and care leavers in Southwark. The advocates meet regularly with the IRO group in order to encourage IRO's to refer children where appropriate.

8. Education of CLA

The educational attainment of Looked after children is priority for the IRO service. Many of the informal and formal representations from IROs concern the provision of appropriate education to looked after children. As part of the Looked after review the IRO will always review the Personal Education Plan for the child or young person.

The CLA education team works closely with IRO's. The team attended a number of IRO meetings in 2015-16 to discuss how IRO's can work together with the education team to improve educational outcomes for children.

One area that continues to be problematic is the identification of education resources for children with Special Educational Needs where they are placed out of borough. In these situations the IRO's work closely with the CLA education team and the host authority but there is often a delay in identifying appropriate resources.

The completion of Personal Education Plans for children has continued to improve in 2015-16. There is a regular performance report sent out to all IRO's flagging up whether PEP's have been completed so that they can follow this up in reviews.

9. Health of CLA

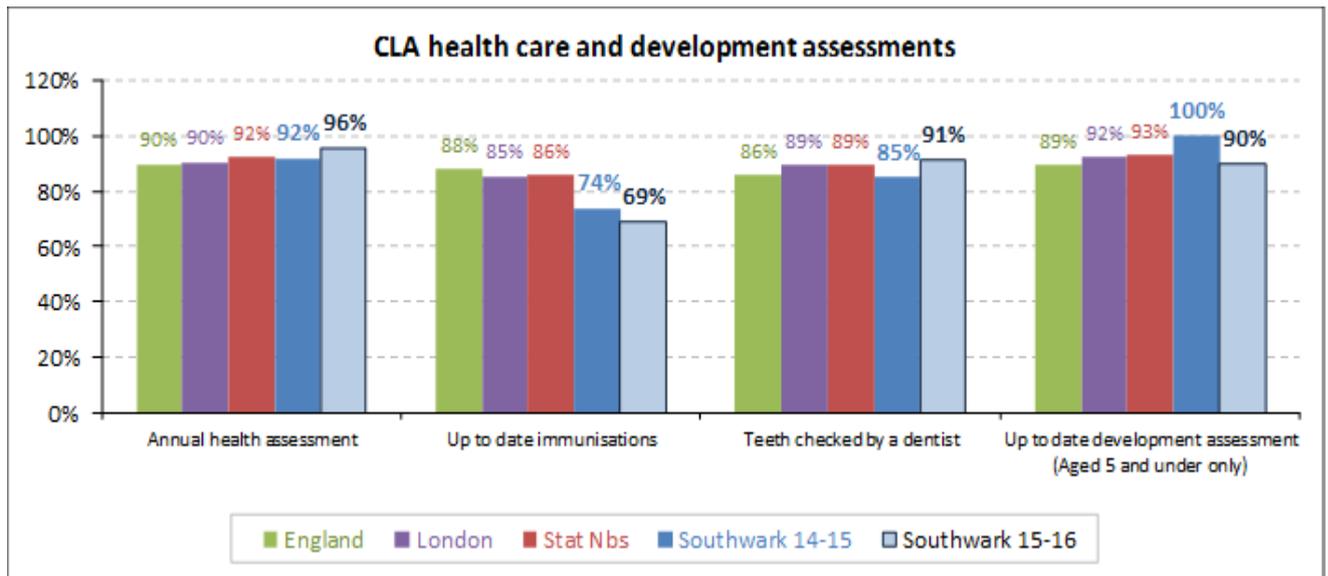
9.1 All Looked after children should have regular assessments of their health. This is monitored by IRO's in LAC reviews.

9.2 The LAC community child health service carries out initial and review health assessments and immunisations, where appropriate, to support the health of looked after children.

9.3 The children's rights service started to organise a monthly drop in at Talfourd Place in 2014 for looked after children and care leavers. Since Summer 2015 the specialist nurse for looked after children is attending each of these drop ins and offers informal health advice and advocacy for the young people. A number of sessions have also included the Young Minds group to discuss mental health issues.

9.4 The table below show performance in Southwark with regards to health in 2015-16 in comparison with England, London and Statistical neighbours. The proportion of looked after children with a health assessment and dental checks has improved significantly in the last two years. However there is still work to be done in connection with immunisations.

	England (%)		London (%)		Stat (%)		Nbs		Southwark (no.)			
	13-14	14-15	13-14	14-15	13-14	14-15	13-14	14-15	15-16	13-14	14-15	15-16
Cohort: children looked after at 31 March looked after for at least 12 months											363	340
Annual health assessment	88%	90%	92%	90%	94%	92%	91%	92%	96%	345	335	326
Up to date immunisations	87%	88%	84%	85%	86%	86%	70%	74%	69%	265	270	235
Teeth checked by a dentist	84%	86%	88%	89%	87%	89%	86%	85%	91%	325	310	311
Aged 5 and under											33	29
Up to date development assessment	87%	89%	93%	92%	96%	93%	92%	100%	90%	55	33	26



During 2016 our IRO group participated in a health profiling survey of Looked after children with the lead doctor. The report was submitted to the CCG board for their information. This profile will be developed and used to inform future strategic input to improve the health outcomes for Southwark's looked after children. Further work is planned to focus on those with disabilities as well as mental health disorders.

The findings for the 470 children reviewed are briefly summarised in the table below.

Age group	Autistic spectrum disorders		ADHD		ASTHMA		EPILEPSY		DIABETES		OBESITY/ Overweight	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 to 5	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
6 to 11	3	1	3	1	6	4	2	0	1	0	0	1
12 to 15	3	2	9	4	9	1	2	0	1	0	3	3
16 to 17	8	4	3	2	4	2	1	0	0	0	2	2
Total	15	8	15	7	20	8	5	0	2	0	5	7
Both genders	23		22		28		5		2		12	

The most common disorder noted was asthma, with autistic spectrum disorders and ADHD being the next most common disorders. It is hoped to build on this interesting study in the coming year.

10. Safety of CLA

During 2015-16 a total of 128 missing and/or absent episodes were recorded for looked after children – of these 74 were 'missing' episodes and 54 were 'absent episodes' (whereabouts known).

Southwark's recording of missing and absence has significantly improved over the last 2 years which has led to a marked increase in the numbers recorded. (Comparable figures in 14-15 were 50 missing and 20 absent). We have commissioned St Christopher's to provide independent 'return interviews' for children who go missing or absent. There are now accessible risk assessment tools for missing children and children at risk of CSE on Mosaic and this has much improved analysis of risk by social workers.

IRO's are always informed where young people looked after go missing and are invited to contribute to missing from care strategy meetings and planning meetings.

The Children's rights service led on research in 2014 into children who go missing from care. 15 young people were interviewed about their experiences and reasons for running away. One key finding of this review was that none of the young people who went missing recalled having a return interview to find out the reasons for their running away.

Southwark now commission St Christopher's fellowship to provide a return interview service for children missing from home and care. It is expected that this will strengthen the response to children who go missing and enable us to do more work to prevent running episodes.

There are a number of initiatives in Southwark to identify and work effectively with young people looked after who may be at risk of sexual exploitation:

Southwark is currently working with STEPS B on a research project to look at the effectiveness of multi-systemic therapy in working with young people exhibiting sexually harmful behaviour. An IRO sits on the steering group for this and links to the whole IRO group.

A CSE protocol has been rolled out with clear referral pathways. All young people who may be at risk of CSE are now referred into the MASH for full assessment and to ensure that their cases are effectively tracked.

11. Children placed out of borough

There continues to be focus on children who are placed in residential units out of London. Southwark has a high proportion of children who are placed more than 20 miles out of the borough. The Director of Children's Social Care has to sign off these placements and receives a regular report of these children. These placements are subject of careful scrutiny by the children's social workers and IRO's.

IRO's feed into this process by giving their views of the safety of the young people placed out of borough and to ensure that this is factored into the care planning process.

The Children's rights and participation worker visited a large number of children placed in distant residential units in 2014-15 to ensure that their voices are heard in this process.

A 'Young Inspectors project' was started in a partnership between the Commissioning service and the Children's Rights service in 2014. In 2015 a number of young people were interviewed by trained young inspectors about their placement in semi-independent accommodation and a report produced for management.

Following this a 16+ accommodation review was carried out with the assistance of the Children's rights service, looking at how Southwark can improve the commissioning of accommodation for older young people in care and care leavers.

12. Service transformation

Southwark Children's social care transformed the way that it works with children in 2014. The social work teams were re-structured into smaller, more responsive 'practice groups' and a 'systemic' way of working was introduced.

Whilst this does not directly impact on the statutory role of the IRO, we are looking at ways to ensure that the IRO service can be more closely aligned with the Child protection service. This is in order to ensure that CP chairs are more aware of issues around permanency and placements and conversely IRO's are more aware of risk and the history of children who are in care.

Both Child protection chairs and IRO's are encouraged where possible to participate in the regular group discussions that the new social work groups have about children in care.

Monthly systemic group supervision has been set up for all IRO's. This is chaired by a clinical practitioner and attempts to mirror the systemic discussions taking place in practice groups.

There is a joint IRO/CP job description for CP chairs and IRO's. This will mean for example that a CP chair who starts out reviewing a family where a child is on a CP plan will potentially be able to chair the looked after review of the child if s/he moves into care. It is hoped that this new arrangement will mean a better service for children who are in care or on the edge of care.

As part of this process IRO's have routinely met together with the CP chair group in 2015-16.

13. INSPECTION

Children's Services were last inspected in May 2012. Services for looked after children were judged by the inspectors to be 'good with good capacity for improvement'.

Specific findings were that:

'The overall effectiveness of services for looked after children is good. The local authority and its partners present as effective corporate parents.'

'Speaker Box and its range of activities presents the authentic voice of the child in care, is very influential, impacting across a wide range of issues.'

'Reviewing officers prioritise contact with children they are responsible for, seeking to establish a meaningful relationship according to the age and capacity of the child.'

14. Review of the IRO and CP chairing service

An internal review into the IRO and CP service was carried out between March-April 2015. A summary of the findings of this review was presented to the IRO group on 7/7/15 and an action plan has been drawn up to address the issues identified. In summary the review found that there were a number of positives about the service:

- Consistency of IRO service with most IROs working with young people for lengthy periods
- Advocacy available for looked after children and young people

- The percentage of children and young people participating in reviews is consistently high
- Looked after reviews are held regularly and most are held on time
- Some IROs have developed valued specialist expertise e.g. inter-country adoption
- IRO caseloads are varied but overall reasonable,
- There is some effective challenge by some IROs on individual children's cases
- Bi-monthly report produced by the Head of Service on IRO service

Areas where more action was required were:

- IROs need to be evidently more 'present' between statutory reviews – to clearly record escalations and representations as a case record
- IRO's to ensure more active involvement of children and young people in their reviews including chairing their reviews.
- IRO's to demonstrate more challenge of poor practice including escalating issues formally where necessary.
- There is a need to formalise the mechanisms for IROs to feed into brokerage and contract management processes
- There is a need to improve the links between the IRO and Guardians

A separate audit of LAC review records was carried out in July 2016. The audit reviewed the quality of recorded review records and focussed on participation and the voice of the child and the journey of the child in relation to permanence planning. The audit found that the review records were on the whole of good quality with evidence that young people had been spoken to on their own. However the auditors found that the 'young person's voice' did not always come through in the record and recommended increased use of consultation forms by social workers. In addition the audit found that the recording and use of Health assessments needs to be reviewed. At present health assessments are saved in 'Carestore' which is not accessible to many IRO's working from home. We are now recommending that social workers e-mail the health assessments to IRO's in advance of reviews to ensure that health recommendations come through in the review.

15. KEY SUCCESSES AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

Key successes in 2015-16 have been

- The standard of review reports remains high. Review reports provide a pen picture of the child, synopsis of family history and a good 6 monthly summary of the case, including assessed needs and action plan.
- IRO's have worked with the lead doctor in a profiling exercise of the health of looked after children. We are hoping to build on this work to improve the way in which we monitor and promote the health of Looked after children.
- IRO's have regularly attended the adoption working group to reduce delay in permanency planning and achieve better outcomes for Southwark Children Looked After.

- A standards document for LAC reviews has been developed for consultation in 2016. This outlines the expected standards of practice by IRO, social workers and managers and admin staff and will be used to drive improvements in the service going forward.

15.2 Key Priorities for the IRO Service for 2016-17 are

- To improve the recognition and risk assessment of CSE and ensuring a pro-active response to protect young people including response to running away
- To ensure that children placed in residential units out of London are safe and well cared for with improved plans for transition
- To work with the front line teams to improve the placement stability of children looked after
- To actively promote the health of looked after children and ensure that health assessments are more visible in LAC reviews.
- To continue to work with the Children's Rights Service and the Speaker Box Children in Care Council so that the looked after review process can be made more useful and relevant for young people.
- To continue to improve the IRO overview of the Personal Educational Planning process and co-working with the CLA education team to improve performance and drive up educational performance for looked after children
- To ensure that all children and young people participate in a meaningful way in their LAC reviews and are always spoken to separately by the IRO.
- To continue to improve Permanency Plans for Adoption or Special Guardianships and Long Term Fostering to ensure our children are in their permanent family at as early an age as possible through closer working with operational teams and Adoption and Fostering.

16. SUMMARY

The IRO Service has continued to provide an efficient and effective provision for reviewing and monitoring the Care Plans for Looked After Children during 2015-16.

The IRO service contributes to improved outcomes for Looked After Children through tight monitoring of permanence planning for looked after children in order to improve outcomes. IRO's facilitate the participation of children and young people in the decision making about their care as well as making independent representations to Operational Teams and Management on planning and practice issues.

Communication and relationships with teams are positive with the independent scrutiny valued by social workers and management.

A new standards document developed in 2016 will enable us to identify areas of challenge and drive service improvement.