



# **London Borough of Lewisham**

## **Children's Social Care Placements & Procurement Strategy**

### **LAC Commissioning Plan 2014 – 2016**

Reviewed December 2014

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This document should be read in conjunction with the Children and Young People's Plan, the Early Intervention Plan, the LAC Needs Analysis and the Action tool for Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.
- 1.2. Lewisham Council has a legal responsibility to provide a range and mix of service provision sufficient to meet the needs of children who are looked after and their families of origin, in accordance with the requirements of the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 and associated regulations and guidance.
- 1.3. This commissioning plan focuses on placements for Care Leavers and Looked After Children (LAC) and sets out how Lewisham intends to meet the Sufficiency Duty set out in Section 22G of the Children's Act 1989. It is used to understand the current needs of our LAC and Care Leavers and plan for the future needs that we anticipate.
- 1.4. This Placements & Procurement Strategy - Commissioning Plan is regularly reviewed, at least annually.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of the Children's Social Care (CSC) Placements & Procurement Strategy is to support us to achieve better outcomes for children and young people by making sure there are sufficient services available locally. This will involve ensuring:
  - A good range of high quality services for LAC and Care Leavers, including placements that meet the specific needs of our children and young people in Lewisham (our aim is 'local placements for local children').
  - All services are cost effective and represent Value for Money.
- 2.2. This strategy has been informed by the following:
  - Analysis of national and local data
  - Feedback given at workshops for independent sector providers held during summer and autumn 2011 and Lewisham foster carers in July 2014
  - Input from a range of professionals, including CSC managers and staff as well as CAMHS and YOS colleagues
  - Analysis and work undertaken by the Sufficiency Duty Task Group which focused on securing sufficient accommodation for LAC in line with Sufficiency Duty and Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.

## **3. Local policy context**

- 3.1. The approach taken to commissioning placements provision is consistent with 'Shaping Our Future: Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy' and the Council's corporate priorities. In particular, it is aligned with the Council's strategic priorities regarding Young People's Achievement and Involvement, the Protection of Children, and Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity. The high quality and varied provision that we have in place aligns with the Council's strategic priorities concerning the commissioning of services for Lewisham LAC by encouraging them to be ambitious and achieving, safer, empowered and responsible, healthy and active, living in high quality homes, all of which should enable them to feel supported and inspired to achieve their full potential. Improved placement stability for our LAC will better support them to achieve the life outcomes that we want for our young people.

- 3.2. The way that we meet the placement needs of LAC in Lewisham is consistent with the key areas of impact detailed in our Lewisham's Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2012-15; Make sure early intervention makes a difference, involve children, young people and their families, close the gaps and secure social mobility, ensure we have the best people working for our children and young people. These areas make a difference to the lives of children and young people living in Lewisham and we ensure that these are at the heart of how we meet the needs of LAC and Care Leavers in Lewisham.

#### **4. Summary of need**

- 4.1. Lewisham is the second largest inner London Borough, with the population of 255,000 which is expected to grow by 35,000 by 2026. The Borough has a slightly younger age profile than the rest of the UK, with children aged 0-19 accounting for 24.5% of the population. 19% of the total population are aged under 15. The 5-15 population in Lewisham is expected to show the highest percentage increase of all age groups during 2010-2015 (11.3% growth projected). This change is likely to result in increased demand for our CYP services, including CSC. The Borough has a very diverse population, with 40% of residents being from BME backgrounds. This is projected to increase to 44% by 2020. The % of BME rises to 72% within the school population. 170 different languages are spoken in Lewisham. Our placement provision needs to be able to provide a range of accommodation and support that meets our LAC cultural needs. There are high levels of socio-economic deprivation in the Borough, with household income being 6% lower than the London average. In 4 wards, it is 15% lower. Approximately 30% of children in primary and secondary schools in the Borough are eligible for free school meals. In summary there is high level of deprivation and poverty.
- 4.2. There are currently 497 LAC in Lewisham<sup>1</sup>. The number of LAC has shown an overall decrease from a high of 525 in 2010 and has remained very stable between 2012-14. This is despite the fact that the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan, which had previously remained stable, almost doubled between 2012/13 and 2014/15 and currently stands at 377. Nationally, by comparison, the number of children subject to a plan increased by 12.1% during this same period.<sup>2</sup> This demonstrates our success at providing support that families in crisis need, and finding alternative accommodation with other family members where the parents are unable to provide suitable care for their children. There has been a drop in the rate of LAC per 10,000 of the 0-18 population during 2010-14 from a high of 90 per 10,000 in 2010 to 77.3 per 10,000 in December 2014. This number is slightly above our target of 75, but is lower than our statistical neighbours as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014: Greenwich 85, Lambeth 87, Southwark 91 per 10,000 children aged under 18.

#### **5. Current LAC placement provision**

- 5.1. Lewisham has a wide range of placement provision in order to most appropriately meet the health, educational and social needs of our LAC. The service has the flexibility to meet the changing needs of individual LAC, as well as the changing profile of our LAC in the Borough. In determining which placements will best meet the needs of the individual child or young person we meet our sufficiency duties under Section 22C of the Children's Act 1989. Improving placement stability and most effectively supporting the transition to leaving care are central to the way that we operate.

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<sup>1</sup> As at 31.12.14

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/367877/SFR43\\_2014\\_Main\\_Text.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/367877/SFR43_2014_Main_Text.pdf)

## 5.2. Fostering

- 5.2.1. As at December 2014 77.9% of our LAC of our LAC were in foster care. This is below our target of 81%. The % of LAC aged 10-15 in foster placements or placed for adoption stood at 85.8%, just below our target of 86%. The % of LAC under 10 in foster placements has remained stable over the last 3 years and currently stands at 90.1%. This is slightly below our target of 92%. The % of these children that are placed in in-borough placements currently stands at 39.8%. This is above our target of 39% but is a drop from 41.9% in 2013/14. We are looking to further increase this.

## 5.3. In-house foster carers

- 5.3.1. We aim wherever reasonably practicable to provide placements for our LAC with Lewisham foster carers to enable them to maintain family and local networks and continue to attend local schools. This ensures that we meet our requirements under the Section 22C (8)(a) of the Children's Act 1989 to place the child near their home. We provide additional support where necessary. This approach is aligned with our corporate priority set out in the CYPP to place a greater number of LAC with Lewisham foster carers. This approach supports us to ensure placement stability and utilise cost effective placement provision.
- 5.3.2. Lewisham foster carers receive high quality training and support throughout their time as carers. Each carer is allocated a supervising social worker who completes 4-6 weekly supervision visits as well as aiming to complete 2 unannounced visits per year. Each supervising social worker has a caseload of 15-19 carers. We are continuing to work to build upon foster carer training and support to improve the quality of local provision.
- 5.3.3. We have been successful in increasing the number of in-house foster carers who are on our books. We adopted a new approach to recruitment in April 2010, outsourcing this service. We moved to a new provider (NRS) in November 2012 and they have proved very successful at foster carer recruitment. The number of carers recruited has increased significantly with 128 individual foster carers and 86 fostering households recruited since November 2012. This has had the effect of increasing our total pool of individual foster carers to 231 and the total number of households to 155, an overall increase of 77 foster carers and 51 households between April 2012 and present. We strive to most effectively support carers once they are recruited to reduce turnover. Our priorities for the future are to increase the proportion of LAC who are placed in in-house provision, most effectively utilising the carers that we have available, as well as recruiting carers who can meet specific needs that we have identified as requiring additional carers e.g. parent and child, CWCN, siblings and older children.

## 5.4. Staying put

- 5.4.1. Lewisham has a Staying Put process that meets the new duties towards Care Leavers in the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 (Regulations and Guidance). This provision is for young people who have established familial relationships with their foster carers, offering these young people the opportunity to remain with their current carers up until the age of 21(25 where in fulltime education).
- 5.4.2. Lewisham actively promotes the extension of foster care placements beyond a young person's eighteenth birthday for all of our LAC placed in in-house or IFA placements. This is done to ensure young people can remain with their former foster carers until they are prepared for adulthood, and experience a transition akin to their

peers, avoiding social exclusion and being better placed to avert a subsequent housing and tenancy breakdown.

- 5.4.3. The Lewisham Staying Put Policy and the process that we operate is designed to ensure that young person's Pathway Plan and Review process, planning meetings, and decision making is all carried out in a timely manner. This ensures that the process is smooth and well planned, thus providing sufficient time to make necessary arrangements and increasing the likelihood of a successful transition.

#### 5.5. Supported lodgings

- 5.5.1. Supported lodgings is a supported accommodation scheme for young people leaving care, aged 16–21, who are not yet ready to live on their own. This provision offers our young people the opportunity to live in the home of an approved person who will help them prepare for independent living. Living in this safe and supportive environment supports the young person to develop the practical skills and emotional maturity to move on and cope with living independently.
- 5.5.2. We currently have 9 young people placed in this provision and 16 carers in the carer pool (December 2014). Some young people who we currently place in semi-independence provision could be placed in supported lodgings if we could expand the scope of this scheme. As such, we have changed our approach to recruiting and training supported lodgings carers, with the aim of significantly increasing both the number of carers in our pool, as well as the number of young people placed in this provision.

#### 5.6. Lewisham Preferred Provider Framework (PPF) for Independent Fostering Agency (IFA), Residential and Semi-Independence Placements

- 5.6.1. Lewisham has operated a PPF for the provision of Residential placements since 2005, IFA placements since 2007, and Semi-independence placements since 2008. The current PPFs for these 3 services commenced in October 2013 and is valid for a period of 4 years, with the option of an extension of 2 years after that.
- 5.6.2. Providers were assessed on the quality of their provision and its cost.
- 5.6.3. The placement fees are all inclusive and were set at the same levels as the previous PPF. A Cost Volume Discount scheme ensures that we receive improved Value for Money with providers that we use regularly.
- 5.6.4. The framework provides provision that complements Lewisham run services, supporting the process of effectively finding placements for children and young people and reducing our need for additional spot purchasing. This approach enables us to ensure consistent quality of service provision whilst achieving Value for Money. We seek to place children in provision delivered by preferred providers on our PPF. Despite the range of provision on the PPF, to adequately meet the range of needs our LAC have, where our PPF options have been exhausted we do spot purchase placements from other providers.

#### 5.7. Independent Fostering Agency placements

- 5.7.1. There are 23 different providers on our IFA PPF framework. They provide a range of placements, including sibling placements, parent and child (low and high level), remand or complex needs and respite. We have 3 specialist providers who are able to meet the needs of children with particularly complex needs.

#### 5.8. Residential Placements

- 5.8.1. There are 8 different providers on our Residential PPF framework. The residential care providers range from children's homes located in Borough or within a 20 mile radius to specialist residential units that are located around the country. Education and therapeutic provision is available on the premises, or bought in as required. We have specialist residential units on the PPF that can cater for the needs of certain young people with particular needs.
- 5.8.2. Our priority it always to place LAC in foster placements or semi-independence provision. We recognise that there will always be a need for more specialist placements for some children whose needs are more complex and it may not be possible to provide these locally. For a small cohort of children there will always be a need for specialist residential placements if we are to provide stability for them.
- 5.8.3. Our policy is to place Lewisham children in service provision judged 'Outstanding' or 'Good'. Should a children's residential unit be downgraded by Ofsted subsequent to a Lewisham LAC being placed then Service Managers consider what is in the best interests of the child. Children are not necessarily moved if they are settled in placement. Instead we require the organisation to achieve a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' in the shortest timescale possible that Ofsted can conduct a follow up inspection.
- 5.8.4. The percentage of our LAC in residential accommodation has increased quite significantly since March 2014 where it was 11.6% of placements and currently stands at 16%<sup>3</sup>. This is significantly higher than our target of 11.5%.
- 5.9. Semi-Independent placements
  - 5.9.1. There are 14 different providers on our Semi-Independence PPF framework. This provision is for LAC aged 16-18 and provides accommodation and support to move towards full independence. We have a range of provision, in terms of size of units, demographics and levels of support available.

## **6. Effective early intervention, prevention and support for families**

- 6.1. A key priority for Lewisham is having services in place to support families with challenges that they are facing, before they reach the stage where CSC involvement is required.
- 6.2. Within our universal services we embed high quality targeted services for those children, young people and families who may have additional needs and challenges. These early intervention targeted services include Children's Centres and our Targeted Family Support Service. These services are set up to identify need early, deliver tailored, well coordinated and timely support across all relevant agencies. This approach reduces the likelihood of problems escalating up to the point where children are taken into care.
- 6.3. In cases where the level of need and support are higher, the Lewisham Family Intervention Project (FIP) is a specialist family support service for families experiencing a high level of need in a range of areas. The FIP has been in place in Lewisham since 2009 and will work with 95 families a year. Based on a 'one family, one worker, one plan' model of care, the service works intensively and holistically with families, primarily within the home, to reduce their needs over time. The key outcomes for the service are de-escalation of need, in particular, diversion from care; improved family cohesion, confidence and resilience; and improved

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<sup>3</sup> As at December 2014

engagement in education and employment for children, young people and their parents.

- 6.4. The Volunteer Supporting Families service provides a service on behalf of Lewisham which aims to support parents in 100 families per year that are involved with CSC. The project matches volunteers with families that have children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or have additional needs. CSV's volunteers provide support and encouragement to help these families address the problems they face and ultimately assist them in creating a happy, stable and safe environment in which they can thrive.

## **7. Placement Stability and Care Planning**

- 7.1. The success of Lewisham's preventative approach means that children who become looked after tend to be those with the most complex needs and challenging behaviour. For these children, for whom we are corporate parents, we aim to act positively to promote their life chances and we work intensively with our partner agencies to achieve that.
- 7.2. Placement stability for our LAC is a key priority in Lewisham. Stable placements enable continuity of positive relationships, community and education and provide the right conditions for maximising potential. As such, this is monitored and progressed at all levels. There are robust measures in place to find the most appropriate placement, regularly review it and provide support where needed to maintain it.
- 7.3. We seek to place LAC in the borough and failing that, within a 20 miles radius to enable them to sustain healthy relationships with their family and friends and to continue in same schools. This approach is in line with our duty in section 22 C (9) on the Children Act 1989. As at March 2014 14% of our LAC were placed further than a 20 miles radius from their home. This was better than our target of 15.4% but worse than our statistical neighbours (13%) and the national average (12%).
- 7.4. As at 31 March 2014 71.4% of our LAC aged under 16 who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years were living in the same placement for at least 2 years. This had increased from 67.5% in 2012, but had seen a drop from a high of 74.8% in the previous year. This was higher than our statistical neighbours (69.3%) and the national average (67%),<sup>4</sup> however was lower than our target of 73%. In relation to LAC who had been looked after continuously for at least 4 years, 65% had been in the same foster placement for over 2 years. This was some way below our target of 71%. It is however worth noting that the high number of adoptions in Lewisham, will have impacted on our performance here.
- 7.5. Wherever possible we strive to limit the number of placements that a LAC has. This supports them to settle into their placement and improves their outcomes and life chances. In some instances placements moves can be necessary for various reasons, some of which are positive e.g. to live with their adoptive families. We know however in other cases the challenging behaviours and complex needs of the child or young person leads to frequent placement breakdowns and moves. There has been an improvement in the percentage of LAC with three or more placements during the year, which stood at 11% in 2013/14. This was a drop of 0.9% since the previous year and was the same as the national average, but better than our statistical neighbours, which stood at 11.5%. However, this was above our target of 9%. It is encouraging that our performance on this indicator has recently continued to improve quite significantly, with it having fallen to 9.2% in December 2014. If

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<sup>4</sup> Statistical neighbour and national average performance as at 31 March 2013



instances where a child goes missing from their placement are excluded, the percentage falls to 7.4%.

- 7.6. Placement support meetings are arranged with carers to develop placement stability. These focus on the early identification and tracking of fragile placements, and the provision of multi-agency and multi-disciplinary support to carers to prevent breakdown. This support includes additional assistance in school and direct CAMHS consultation with carers. Carers are provided with strategies to reduce the impact of negative behaviour. A placement stability audit has been completed and an action plan is being developed.
- 7.7. The percentage of LAC in residential accommodation has increased by approximately 1% year on year since 2011/12 and stood at 11.6% for 2013/14. This was slightly above our target of 11.5%. We have seen a significant increase during this current year and it now stands at 16%<sup>5</sup>. One option that we are exploring to reduce the percentage of children we place in residential accommodation is more intensively supporting a pool of foster carers to provide placements for our LAC with particularly challenging needs and behaviours.
- 7.8. The percentage of LAC in foster care fell to 78.5% in 2013/14, a drop of 2.2% from 2012/13. We are striving to meet our target of 81%. To improve further in this area, we are taking steps to increase the number of high quality in-house fostering placements that we have available.
- 7.9. The Care Planning Panel was introduced in 2010 to reach a decision on the best placement for each LAC. It ensures that care plans are realistic and are being progressed. All requests for new placements and placement moves are brought to the weekly Panel. Existing placements return to Panel at agreed frequencies to receive an update on the placement, review its effectiveness and avoid placement drift. Checks are made to ensure that all preventative work has been done and all family members are considered. Children at immediate risk of harm are looked after immediately. The Panel challenges some placement moves and ensures that support has been put in place to support placements, with extra support packages discussed and agreed to prevent placements that are at risk from breaking down.
- 7.10. All LAC are presented to the Permanency Planning Panel, chaired by the IRO Team Manager, if they remain in care before their second looked after children review.
- 7.11. Social Workers and Team Managers identify fragile placements and implement action plans to support the child and placement as well as the carers.
- 7.12. An in depth review of placement stability undertaken in August 2014 demonstrated that looked after children aged 0 or over 12 are more likely to have a placement breakdown and those placed out of borough and in PVI placements are more at risk of placement instability. We also know that a placement is most likely to end between 0-6 months. 0-4 year olds are more likely to be placed out of borough (reflecting adoption data), as are those children over 12. LAC placed out of borough and over 12 are therefore more vulnerable to placement instability, and this must be our focus.

## **8. Adoption**

- 8.1. The number of adoptions of LAC increased from 23 in 2012/13 to 28 in 2013/14. We have imbedded a new assessment model, updated relevant procedures and training manuals and developed a matrix for effective matching. Moving forwards we need

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<sup>5</sup> As at December 2014

to develop our approach to fostering to adopt, as well as increase adopter availability for our harder to adopt groups (CWCN, sibling groups and older children).

## **9. Sufficient Placements for Care Leavers and support to independence**

- 9.1. It is very important that our young people who have been in care are fully supported to transition into independence successfully in a way that provides them with the emotional, practical and financial skills that they need to thrive. Planning for this transition is key and ensuring that pathway plans for our LAC are completed in a timely manner is very important. As at March 2014 100% of pathway plans were on time for eligible LAC aged 16-17, meeting our target, and 94.8% of pathway plans for our Care Leavers aged 18-20 were on time, exceeding our target of 87%. We will ensure that this high performance is maintained moving forwards.
- 9.2. Lewisham is committed to providing placements that provide suitable accommodation, with appropriate support to develop independent living skills and further educational, training and employment ambitions.
- 9.3. Before moving into their own tenancy, Care Leavers live with foster carers, supported lodgings carers or in semi-independent supported accommodation where they prepare for independent living. Through our Staying Put policy Lewisham promotes the extension of foster care placements beyond 18 up to 21 (25 where in fulltime education). This promotes a transition to adulthood akin to their peers and subsequent housing and tenancy management. For young people in residential placements, early transition planning is essential to achieve the same outcomes.
- 9.4. When Care Leavers are ready to move into their own private accommodation a well established protocol is in place between housing providers and the Children's Social Care Leaving Care Team to ensure that Care Leavers are provided with suitable tenancies. The success of this approach can be seen in the fact that in 2013/14 100% of Care Leavers were in suitable accommodation, exceeding our target of 94.5%. This was a significant increase from 87% during the previous year and demonstrated that this is an area where Lewisham is very effectively meeting the needs of our Care Leavers.
- 9.5. Care Leavers receive support from a personal advisor and this can remain in place up to the age of 25 if the young person is in education.

## **10. Supporting LAC education**

- 10.1. Our ambition as a corporate parent is to ensure that all LAC have access to appropriate high quality educational opportunities that help them to achieve the highest educational standards they possibly can. This includes supporting their aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. In seeking placements for our LAC we need to find placements that do not disrupt the child's education or training, in compliance with our statutory obligations under section 22C(8)(b) of the Children's Act 1989.
- 10.2. When placing children, it is a key priority that their educational needs are met through their placement. The Virtual Head/Deputy Virtual head sit on the weekly Care Planning Panel and ensure that children and young people's education is not adversely affected by care planning decisions. Where additional support or provision is required to support the carer or placement with meeting the child's needs this can be arranged.

- 10.3. Placing children in local foster placements best supports them to remain at their existing schools and receive continuity in their education. For the limited number of children who we place in residential placements, we ensure that education, delivered on site or locally, is of a high quality and is meeting the needs of the individual young person.

## 11. Commissioning priorities

11.1. Four commissioning priorities have been developed. These are as follows:

1. Ensure that we have a high quality in-house fostering service
2. Maximising the involvement of LAC and Care Leavers in the commissioning process
3. Continue to improve our understanding of the need for LAC placements
4. Increased choice and focus on matching

11.2. Ensure that we have a high quality in-house fostering service

<b>This includes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and retention of high calibre in-house foster carers, aiming for a total pool of 200 carers in 2015</li> <li>• Develop a specialist foster care service for teenage girls at risk of CSE, or those that are otherwise very vulnerable</li> <li>• Ensure that the foster carers we have are well used</li> <li>• Keep foster care vacancies to a minimum</li> <li>• Have foster carers available and use them to care for groups of LAC where we have particular need e.g. teenagers, sibling groups, parent and child, CWCN</li> <li>• Allocate a Supervising Social Worker to each foster carer</li> <li>• Ensure that 100% of foster carer annual reviews happen within the agreed timescales</li> <li>• Recruit a regular panel advisor</li> <li>• Increase the number of panel members to the central list</li> <li>• Review all in-house foster carers, to ensure that service is meeting demand</li> <li>• Increase the number of out of hours and EDT in-house foster carers and support</li> <li>• Further work on a more targeted marketing and recruitment strategy for Lewisham foster carers based on the analysis of supply and demand</li> <li>• Review of Lewisham existing bonus payment criteria for foster carers</li> <li>• Reducing number of placement disruptions and moves through timely placement support meetings.</li> </ul>
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11.3. Maximising the involvement of LAC and Care Leavers in the commissioning process

<b>This includes involving children and young people in:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving feedback about services</li> <li>• Specification for services</li> <li>• Ideas for planning and designing services</li> <li>• Specifying services</li> <li>• Selecting providers as part of competitive tendering processes</li> <li>• QA monitoring services</li> </ul>
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11.4. Improving understanding of the demand for LAC services

<b>This includes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of trends and projections</li> <li>• Detailed analysis according to local area and teams and other factors such as deprivation and family circumstance</li> <li>• Robust financial planning which matches budgets with care plans</li> <li>• Using information from assessment and care plans to inform strategic commissioning</li> <li>• Targeted active contract management against outcomes. Better defined requirements at the outset to avoid additional cost</li> </ul>
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#### 11.5. Increased choice and focus on matching

<b>This includes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the range and amount of provision needed</li> <li>• Designing services to meet needs</li> <li>• More effective placements matching and contract management</li> <li>• Sustaining and developing provider relationships</li> <li>• Outcomes-based contracting</li> <li>• Ensuring cost effective and added VFM services</li> <li>• LAC Commissioning responsibility to transfer to the Commissioning Team</li> <li>• Further development contract monitoring and management</li> <li>• Director/Service Managers to continue to visit residential placements to audit</li> <li>• Supported Lodgings carers recruitment and training to be commissioned out, with a focus on significantly increasing the use of this provision to reduce reliance of semi-independence</li> <li>• Ensure that providers are regularly submitting all monitoring information, including Ofsted report, Regulation 33 reports and updated statements of purpose</li> <li>• Further develop our staying put provision and transfer arrangements</li> <li>• Ensure that PPF is functioning most effectively</li> <li>• Exploring different foster care and residential service models including finding ways to create more opportunities for siblings to be placed together</li> <li>• Placement contracts for all leaving care placements</li> </ul>
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### 12. The journey to improve the choice and stability of placements and services for Looked After Children

12.1. A history of the main strategic actions taken to improve the choice and stability of placements for LAC and Care Leavers and to ensure children are appropriately moved out of the looked after system is set out below:

Service Manager with specific responsibility for Children's Social Care Placements & Procurement recruited Residential Care Preferred Provider Framework introduced	2004/2005
Cost volume discount scheme introduced as added value and sustained	2005
IFA Preferred Provider Framework introduced Residential Care Preferred Provider Framework first review	2007

Semi-Independence Preferred Provider Framework introduced	2008
Standardisation of Financial Scheme which ensures that children are not disadvantaged because of their status	2008
Supervised Contact Preferred Provider Framework	2009
Comprehensive training strategy developed and implemented for Lewisham foster carers, resulting in almost 100% completion of CWDC standards and Core training	2009
Outsourced and targeted approach to foster carer recruitment	2010
Establishment of Care Planning Panel replacing Complex Needs Panel	2010
Revised Kinship and Residence Order Policies in line with new legislation to ensure no financial disadvantage to children and their families.	2010
Preferred Provider Framework for IFA, Residential, and Semi-independence	2013
Review of strategic commissioning with the Joint Commissioning Team	2013
Secure Base Model approach commissioned	2014
'Staying Put' policy agreement for 18+ Care Leavers to remain in foster care until 21 years old (25 where in fulltime education)	2014

### 13. Actions for implementation

PROPOSED ACTION	TIMEFRAME
Roll out Secure Base Model to social workers, senior social workers and foster carers	July 2014
Develop EDT and out of hours fostering provision	July 2014
Develop a pool of carers and provide them with specialist support to enable them to care for teenagers	September 2014
Increase the number of in-house placements	October 2014
LAC commissioning responsibility to transfer to CYP Commissioning and Strategy Team	November 2014
Review Foster Panel	December 2014
Review foster carers who do not currently have children placed with them and establish reasons why. Confirm which LAC groups they are able to care for and request carers to return to panel where relevant	December 2014
Comprehensive review of all placements and costs, including establishing % on framework with % spot purchased. Action plan to be put in place where required	December 2014
Supported lodgings service to transfer to the Placement and Procurement Team	January 2015
External provider to deliver recruitment and training of supported lodgings carers	January 2015
Conduct analysis and develop provision for Care Leavers in relation to semi-independence provision	February 2015
Increase Foster Panel central list membership	March 2015
Placement responsibility for Care Leavers to transfer from the leaving Care Service to the Placement and Procurement Team	March 2015