

Newham
Children in Care Sufficiency
Strategy
2022-2025

1 Background and purpose

- 1.1 This strategy sets out the needs of our children in care and care leavers and our commissioning intentions to meet these needs. Our aim is to secure a range of stable and suitable homes for our children in care that will support them to thrive. The supports our vision in the Corporate Parenting Strategy:

The London Borough of Newham is committed to being an effective, caring and ambitious corporate parent and we will show this through our love, our language and our actions. We will do everything we can to make sure that our children in care and care leavers are set up for life.

We are loving parents and we care about our children and young people, not just for them. We will ensure the same standard of care as any good parent, which means we will have high aspirations for our children and will be strong advocates for them.

We will do everything we can to equip the children and young people with the skills needed to live a fulfilling, successful, and rewarding life that is full of love.

- 1.2 As part of co-producing the Corporate Parenting Strategy, young people have identified the following areas that relate to homes and support for young people and will be addressed in our strategy:

- Housing and clarity about council flat allocation
- Accommodation standards
- Placement suitability and choice
- Support to remain connected with family and friends
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Access to education
- Support for Education, Employment and Training/Enrichment
- Recognising and celebrating the achievements of young people
- Homes and carers that build good relationships

2 The Newham strategic context

- 2.1 The detailed sufficiency needs assessment is set out in **Appendix A**. This highlights that Newham has a young, diverse and mobile population with some significant challenges related to deprivation, including limited supply of affordable accommodation and high numbers of families in Temporary Accommodation. The numbers of children in care has grown over the past few years, with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) accounting for a significant proportion of the growth. Compared to the general Newham population and to National and London children in care averages, there is a disproportionately high number of adolescents in care. Whilst the rate of children in care is still below the rates for England and statistical neighbours, the rate has grown to 47 per 10,000 which is now in line with London.

2.2 To address these systemic issues, this strategy sits alongside the Early Help Strategy, Corporate Parenting Strategy, Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy. The Early Help Strategy priorities address how preventative services and effective family support will be delivered through:

- Providing easy access to information, advice and support to families across the age range.
- Responding early to adolescent safety and the context of harm, up to age 25
- Developing programmes and strengthening existing services that address the impact of wider determinants of health.
- Have a targeted response to children and young people with SEND
- Embed the Thrive model to address emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.
- Ensure Newham is an inclusive environment for all and provide a space that promotes and supports diversity.
- Actively challenge gender stereotypes and ensure working with fathers and significant males is integral to our approach.
- Respond to Adverse Childhood Experiences with a targeted focus on violence against women and girls.

2.3 A robust approach to corporate parenting across all directorates and partners is essential to improving the experience of our children in care and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Strategy pledges that:

- The voice of children and young people will be at the heart of service design, delivery and evaluation, including democratic decision-making processes.
- The responsibility for ensuring that looked after children and care leavers achieve good outcomes lies across the whole of Newham Council, as well as with partners.
- Wherever safe and possible, children and young people should live with their family. We will ensure that the children in our care are only those who need to be in care.
- Prevention and early intervention is a central element of our support for children and families to give them every opportunity to stay together. Where care becomes necessary, we will explore options for living with wider family and friends' networks wherever possible.

- We will always strive to provide the best quality homes possible, that meets each child's needs and offers stability.
- Children in care have the right to access the best education possible and the support they need to meet their full potential.
- We will secure permanence and belonging for children. We will support and help strengthen the relationships that are important to children and help them stay connected to those that they love throughout their childhood and into adulthood.
- We will champion and support young people as they leave our care and start to live independently, doing everything we can to make sure they are set up for life.

2.4 To address the housing challenges in the borough, Newham's Housing Delivery Strategy aims to:

- We are committed to eliminating homelessness and overcrowding;
- Cater to a diverse population whether that is older people, extended families, single people or people with specialist needs;
- The Private Rented Sector should be well regulated so that tenants have secure, quality homes;
- Upgrading housing stock to tackle poor health and the climate emergency is a priority;
- Newham's housing stock should be managed in a way that puts the experience of tenants first, using it effectively and improving how front-line services are delivered;
- Housing should work as an integral part of a wider council programme to tackle poverty as well as race inequalities that exist. This would include support to improve health outcomes, improving access to employment, education and skills opportunities, and providing greater financial security;
- Our housing programmes will strengthen community wealth building and remake Newham in the longer term so that it is a beautiful, green, healthy, child / family friendly place to live.

3. Needs analysis and commissioning intentions

3.1 This section sets out our commissioning intentions in response to our needs analysis and emerging trends and issues. Based on this analysis, our sufficiency priorities are:

- Prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children return home where appropriate.
- Transform Foster Care in Newham, extending the range and numbers of carers available.
- Commission specialist provision and support.
- Improve and embed the accommodation and support pathway for care leavers.
- Manage our external market.

The full sufficiency action plan is set out in **Appendix B**.

3.2 Prevention and Edge of Care: there are a range of preventative services available in Newham to support family stability and resilience and provide targeted support to young people with emerging risks, including early help and parenting services, youth services and the multi-agency approach to adolescent exploitation. Newham's Edge of Care services are delivered through Divert, a multidisciplinary service that works intensively with children who are at risk of extra familial harm in the community and/or at risk of entering care. The team works closely with partners including education and CAMHS to bring about positive change and enable children to remain safely with their families and in their communities. A review of 33 cases on the Divert tracker identified that the age of children referred to Divert has decreased, probably due to improved early risk identification amongst the professional network. Of the 33 cases, 24 (73%) of interventions resulted in avoidance of escalation to care, with an average placement cost avoidance between £2,400 and £3,000 per week, depending on the age of the child. We plan to grow this successful approach and embed the practice model.

Commissioning intentions for prevention and edge of care

We aim to prevent children entering care and increase support to families to help children return home where appropriate. We will do this through reviewing and co-ordinating our prevention offer, including family support, youth services, and Edge of Care.

We will review our Edge of Care Practice Framework and developing targeted family support, including for reunification.

Through our adolescent exploitation strategy we will continue the work of the Preventing Child Exploitation and Harm Hub (PCEHH) to provide early support and intervention to children and young people with emerging risks and complete the Newham Information and Intelligence Partnership pilot (LBNIIP) to improve information gathering and inform the early response to risk.

We will continue to deliver a universal and targeted youth offer across Newham through in house and commissioned services and aim to engage as many young people and their families as possible in positive activities and social and emotional learning.

We will embed family support in family hubs, piloting the first site in 2023 and enhancing the range of services available locally.

3.2 Foster Care: A large proportion of our children in care benefit from living as part of a family, with 69.4% in foster care or kinship care as of March 22, a slight decrease from April 21 (72%). Of this cohort, 60% of all foster/kinship care is supplied through Independent Fostering Agencies and 39% through in house carers. The weighting towards IFAs increased slightly since April 21, when IFA placements made up 54% and in house carers made up 36.5% of foster/kinship care placements. In house foster carer numbers have been affected by covid; challenges with housing size and

supply in Newham, a number of foster carers retiring and a need to review the full benefits and support package available. Whilst the overall number of UASC children in care has grown, the number accessing foster care has decreased, indicating a lack of capacity. There has also been a small number of children placed in residential care because of insufficient specialist foster care. There is a need to grow the number, support and training to in house foster carers in order to increase capacity to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities; adolescents including UASC and to provide emergency and respite placements. On some occasions, matching children to a foster carer of the same cultural background has been challenging, due to the diversity of our care population. There is a need to recruit foster carers from a wide range of ethnicities.

Commissioning intentions for foster care

Our fostering transformation programme will increase the number, range and diversity of our in house foster carers and offer a comprehensive benefits and support package to recruit and retain them. Through embedding training, peer support and our practice model, we will increase the capacity of foster carers to support children with SEND; UASC and adolescents with more complex needs.

We will build the infrastructure available to support foster carers through a capital grants programme for repairs and conversions and best use of allocated council houses.

We will commission Independent Foster Agencies through our Pseudo-Dynamic Purchasing System (PDPS), focusing on quality, range of placements available and cost transparency. We will review innovation and best practice with neighbouring local authorities and providers, including opportunities to develop a residential step down scheme and potential joint approaches to foster care recruitment/training

We aim to increase the overall % of children in care placed in a family environment and significantly increase the proportion of foster care placements delivered in house.

3.3 Semi-independent living: the number of semi-independent living placements for 16-17 year olds has grown between 2019 and 2022 with most of the change relating to the increase in the number of UASC and the most significant increase between 2021 and 2022. The total number of placements rose to 73 (59% UASC) by end March 2022, compared to 47 (13% UASC) in end March 2019. We aim to build a wider range of accommodation and support options for 16 and 17 year olds and ensure that where semi-independent accommodation is used, there is consistent, good quality support available that focuses on developing a young person’s skills, independence and confidence. There continues to be variability in quality of provision and skills and stability of staff, therefore risk assessments, monitoring, development of the market and quality improvement are priorities.

Commissioning intentions for semi-independent placements and 16-17 year olds

We will commission alternatives to semi-independent placements for UASC/those ready to live more independently, including a supported lodgings scheme and additional local placements available for young people known to youth justice through the Local Accommodation Pathfinder (LAP).

We will continue to focus on quality improvement and high standards of accommodation and support for semi-independent placements. This includes clear standards for on boarding providers onto the PDPS; roll out of training for providers and maintaining our quality assurance and monitoring framework.

We will submit a business case to convert/purchase a property for use as semi-independent living and commission a preferred provider to deliver support, testing the benefits for young people in terms of stability and outcomes and the financial benefits.

We will finalise and roll out an independence toolkit. setting out a consistent approach to planning for independence from as early on as possible.

3.4 Residential care and specialist provision: the numbers of children in residential care has decreased overall since 2019, from 49 children to 39 children in 2022, although numbers rose slightly between 2021 and 2022. Most children are placed in or near Newham, with 73% placed within 20 miles of home. However, there are still insufficient local places for children and young people with multiple and complex needs, including those at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, those at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation, young people with disabilities and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, particularly those with complex Autism. There are no secure placements available in London at present. These factors have resulted in some young people being placed at a distance, some challenges in finding suitable education for young people with additional needs placed at a distance, placement instability, challenges to avoid overnight stays in custody and an increase in use of DOLS for young people.

There have been delays for some children and young people in stepping down from Tier 4 placements or hospital stays, due to a lack of suitable therapeutic provision.

The use of residential parenting assessment places is low, but there have been challenges in securing good quality, timely reports and recommendations and delays in stays. There is a need to secure consistent provision and assessments and support step downs for parents.

Commissioning intentions for residential care and specialist provision

We will continue to commission a range of residential provision, including specialist support for young people with complex needs through the PDPS.

We will increase the number of residential placements in and near Newham available through the North East London Consortium from 20 – 35, including provision of solo and dual units.

We will submit a business case and bid to DfE for capital funding for an overnight respite home for children with SEND.

We will recommission Independent Visitors for Looked After Children.

Through the Pan London placements vehicle, 24 secure placements will be created in London, including 6 step down placements.

We will participate in Pan London work on developing options for additional Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision in London, starting with a review of best practice and options appraisal.

We will recommission short breaks, overnight respite and packages of care for disabled children and young people.

We will increase the number of school places available in Newham for children with complex needs, including those with complex autism. This will reduce the number of children requiring residential places outside the borough.

We will participate in Pan London work on developing an approved list of residential parenting assessment providers, creating consistency of standards and approach. In addition we will review options for improving the approach to community parenting assessments, building capacity and practice within social work teams.

We will work with the multi- agency Mental Health Partnership Board to embed the Thrive model in Newham and improve emotional wellbeing and mental health outcomes for children and young people. This includes the 'getting more help' group who need extensive and specialist help.

3.5 Care leavers: Whilst care leavers in Newham achieve relatively well in Employment Education and Training and access to University, there are significant challenges to housing supply in Newham and London, including a shrinking private sector market, insufficient affordable accommodation, a lower LHA rate for Newham care leavers compared to neighbouring areas and insufficient supply of council flats. This has led to a significant number (63) of older care leavers aged 21+ remaining in more expensive supported accommodation even when they are able to live independently. A significant proportion (over a third) of these older care leavers are UASC.

There are around 65-70 care leavers turning 18 every year, most of whom have low to medium level needs and will be able to manage within shared supported

accommodation, with a focus on developing independence skills for later life. A very small proportion have higher level needs including learning disabilities and mental health needs and will need additional support and planning to transition to adult life and adult services.

Commissioning intentions for care leavers

We will commission a range of care leaver accommodation and support options for young people care leavers aged 18-21, including supported lodgings, floating support and a range of supported accommodation from 3 hours to 24 hour support depending on need.

Through the PDPS, we will work with Registered Providers to increase the number of affordable shared supported accommodation available to care leavers. We will submit a capital business case to develop suitable properties for these schemes.

We will complete the move of 30 care leavers to Terry Waite House, which provides self-contained accommodation with housing related support. We will review the effectiveness of this joint scheme with housing and use the learning to create additional smaller units for care leavers.

We will work with adults services to identify children in care/care leavers who will require support as an adult as early as possible and plan a smooth transition into the adults services pathways.

We will continue to work with housing to embed a joint approach to identifying and meeting housing needs for care leavers approaching 21/ aged 21+: including maximising the allocation of 62 council flats a year, making decisions at the joint Move on Support Panel, supporting moves into the Private Rented Sector for care leavers with low level needs and agreeing a consistent rent guarantee scheme to incentivise private landlords.

We will continue to promote the importance of prioritising care leavers in the council's regeneration plans and planning policy.

3.6 Market development: Newham currently has 11 residential providers with 64 homes signed up to the PDPS and 5 semi-independent providers signed up. More will be on-boarded as the PDPS is regularly re-opened, including for IFAs and supported lodgings providers. In addition to these preferred providers, a wider range of providers are used in order to secure the range of placements needed. Variability in quality and costs are an issue. Regular provider forums are held to discuss sufficiency challenges and good practice and providers have raised recruitment and retention as significant issues for the sector. Newham is affected by the national challenges identified in the independent review of children's social care, including:

- Inconsistent quality of support and accommodation offered by unregulated provision.

- Too few suitable homes, or staff with the multidisciplinary skills, to meet the needs of children who may be a danger to themselves or others, or who are being exploited, resulting in an increased use of DOLS.
- There is a lack of flexibility in existing care standards and regulations allowing for the creation of bespoke packages of care.
- Limited national oversight of the market for residential children’s homes and foster care.
- The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has expressed concern about the risk of unmanaged exit by large children’s home providers due to their levels of debt and dominance of the market. With over 83% of the residential care market owned by the private sector, and within that a majority of homes being owned by a few very large providers (CMA, 2022), many children are at risk of being affected by Southern Cross type collapse.
- Whilst the fostering market has different risks to the children’s residential home market, fostering is on the same trajectory of becoming increasingly privatised and consolidated in the hands of a few large providers (CMA, 2022). The market share of independent fostering agencies (IFAs) is 41%, and the top six IFAs account for 51% of all foster homes that are through an agency and 18% of all fostering households nationally (Ofsted, 2020).
- The CMA has highlighted the scale of high cost and high profit margins in the children’s social care market: “For the children’s homes providers in our data set we have seen steady operating profit margins averaging 22.6% from 2016 to 2020, with average prices increasing from £2,977 to £3,830 per week over the period, an average annual increase of 3.5%, after accounting for inflation. In fostering, prices have been steady at an average of £820 per week, and indeed have therefore declined in real terms, but profit margins of the largest IFAs appear consistently high at an average of 19.4%” (Competition and Markets Authority, 2022)

To address these issues, we will continue to promote cost transparency and oversight through the use of the DPS and participate in pan London work on creation of a joint dynamic sufficiency tool that will track and benchmark placement usage and costs across London and the creation of a Pan London Vehicle (PLV), which will be used as a joint placements commissioning platform. We will regularly engage with providers to address our local sufficiency and quality challenges and report regularly to the Sufficiency Board on placement trends and costs.

Market development intentions

We will continue quarterly provider engagement sessions to discuss good practice and joint approaches to challenges.

We will roll out affordable training and development for providers through Newham Safeguarding Children Partnership, including: safeguarding; criminal exploitation; complex and contextual safeguarding; trauma informed practice and safe recruitment.

We will continue to develop the relationship with the preferred residential provider through the North East London Consortium.

We will obtain cabinet agreement to join the Pan London Vehicle for placements commissioning.

We will track and manage placement spend and effectiveness through the Senior Leadership Team placement panel (SLT), the pan London dynamic sufficiency tool and our in house tracker.

We will address accommodation cost and quality challenges through creating business cases for capital investment in supported living, residential care and care leaver accommodation.

APPENDIX A: LAC SUFFICIENCY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

1. The Newham Context

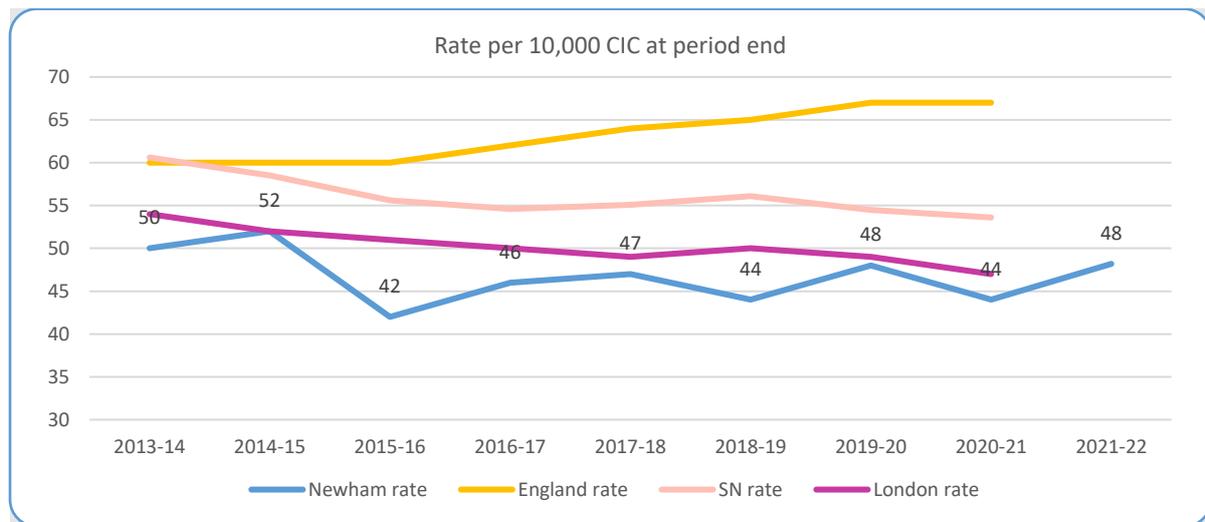
1.1 The CYPS JSNA was refreshed in 2021 and sets out some of the demographic trends and factors affecting children and families:

- Newham has one of the youngest populations in England, with a median age of 32.3 years compared to 35.6 in London and 40.3 years in the UK
- 0-25 year olds account for 37% of the Newham population
- 52% of the 0-25 population are male and 48% female
- It is anticipated that the 0–25-year-old population will increase by 18% by 2030
- Newham has a diverse ethnic population, with a high proportion of Black African, Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi residents compared to London
- Deprivation in Newham is high, with the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation score in 2019 showing Newham as the 3rd most deprived London borough overall.
- For the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), in 2019 the overall score ranked Newham 11th out of all London boroughs
- 27% of residents in Newham are paid below the London Living wage, which accounts for around 36,000 residents
- Average rent represents around 65% of average wages in Newham compared to 30% across the UK
- Demographics such as deprivation have resulted in Newham being disproportionately affected by Covid-19, with benefit claimants doubling during the pandemic
- 1 in 5 adults with children in Newham are over-indebted, which rises to 1 in 4 where there are 3 or more children in the family
- There is a rich diversity of over 200 different languages spoken in Newham, however this can present problems such as access to services and awareness of what is available
- The Newham population is highly mobile
- There are over 10,000 children and young people aged 0-25 living in Temporary Accommodation, which can affect quality of life
- There is a high number of children with social, emotional and mental health needs, with the increasing complexity and numbers of CAMHS referrals outstripping capacity
- The overall incidence of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is increasing, with a high prevalence of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

2. Numbers of children in care and future projections

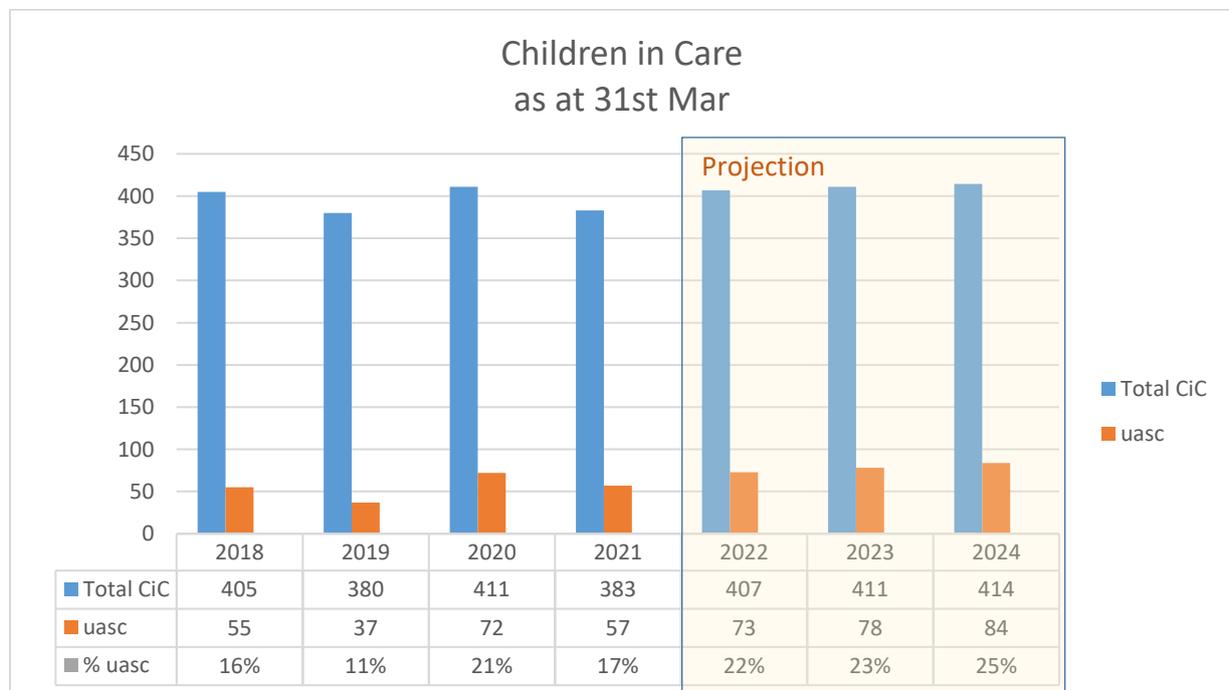
2.1 Figure 1 shows that Newham rates of children in care have remained lower than statistical neighbours, London and England comparators for some time. As a result of demographic growth; a recent increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) over the past few months; and potentially, increases in risk factors on family stability, including deprivation, it is projected that there will be an increase in the number of children in care in the coming years.

Figure 1: trends and comparisons for rate per 10,000



2.2 Three modelling scenarios have been developed to forecast the population of children in care for the years 2022 to 2024. Figure 2 uses the projected growth in the population of Newham children aged 0-17 year old as the basis for the forecast. This scenario indicates an increase to 414 children in care by 2024.

Figure 2: Children in care projections with demographic growth only



2.3 Scenarios two and three are modelled for 3% and 5% growth, as a lower and higher range to account for additional factors that might affect future trends,

including the growth in children in care in our statistical neighbours and the increase in the UASC population. This is shown in figures 3 and 4 below.

Figure 3: Children in care projections with 3% additional growth

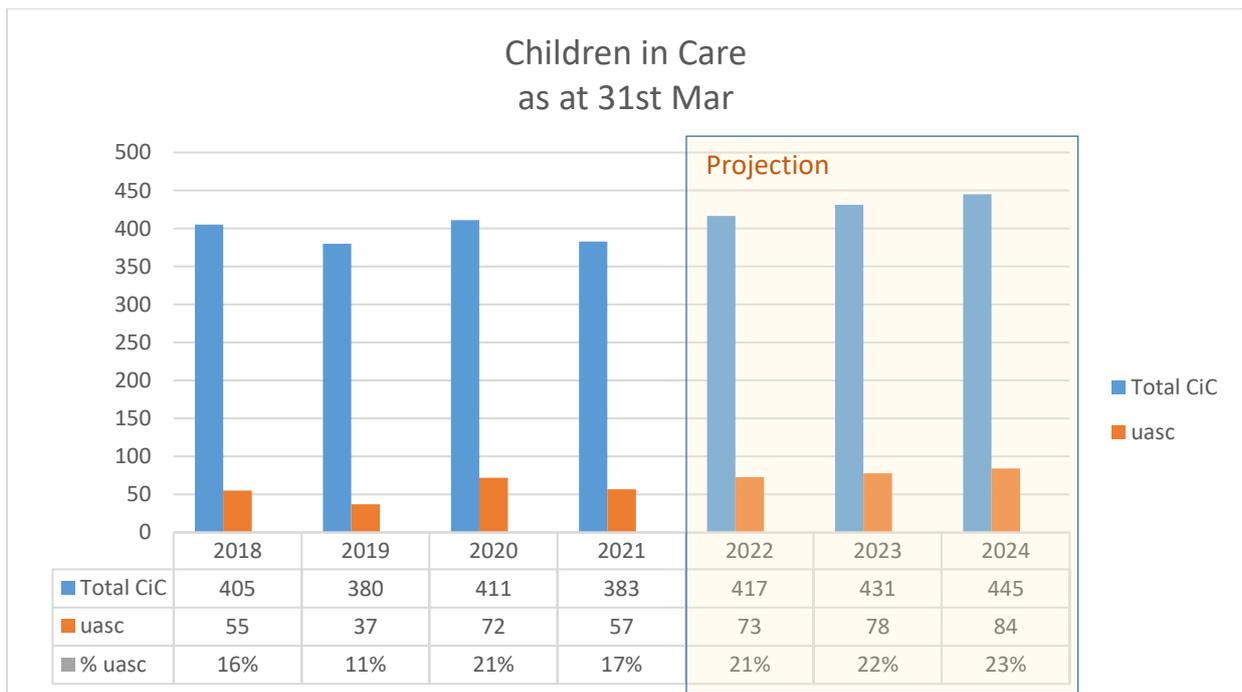
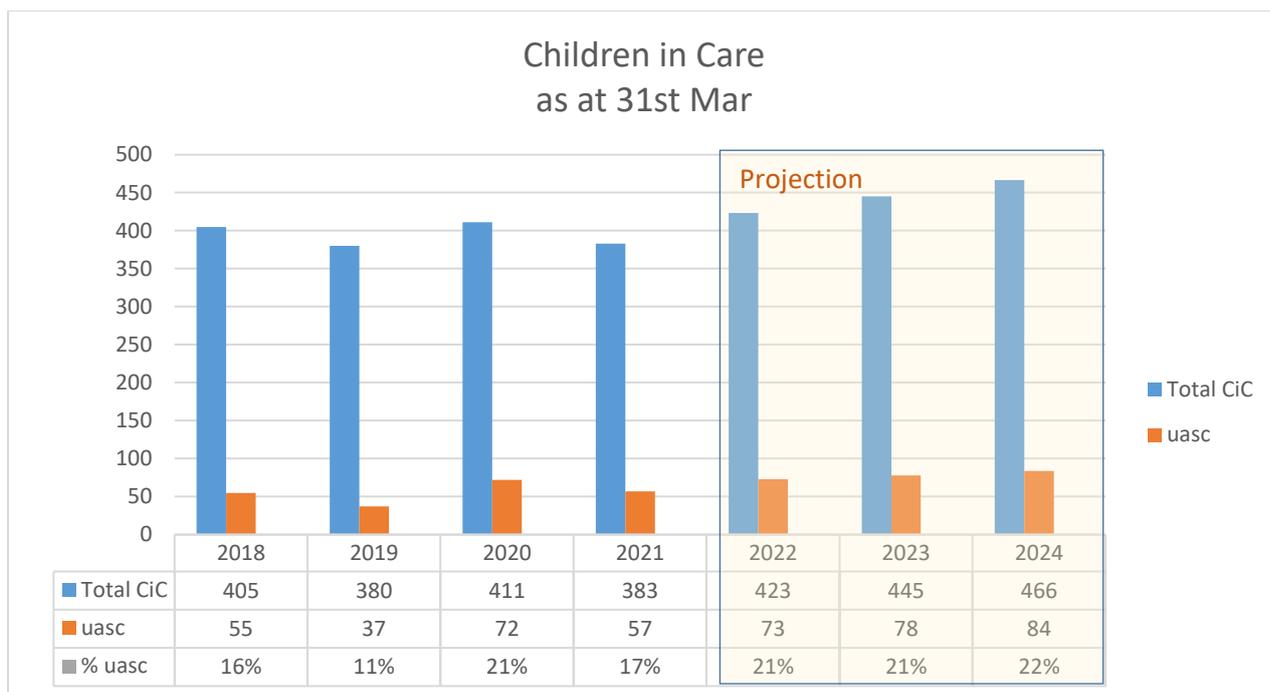


Figure 4: Children in care projections with 5% growth



2.4 The three models suggest the growth of the children in care population will vary between 414 and 466 by 2024. This is a large range and the actual growth against this range will be monitored regularly through the LAC Sufficiency Board.

2.5 Figure 5 shows fluctuations in the net number of leavers and starters over the last three full years. There has been an upward trend in 21/22 in the first 2 quarters but the full picture will not be known until the end of the year. The recent upward trend is likely to relate to the recent increase in UASC numbers.

Figure 5: Children in care becoming looked after/leaving

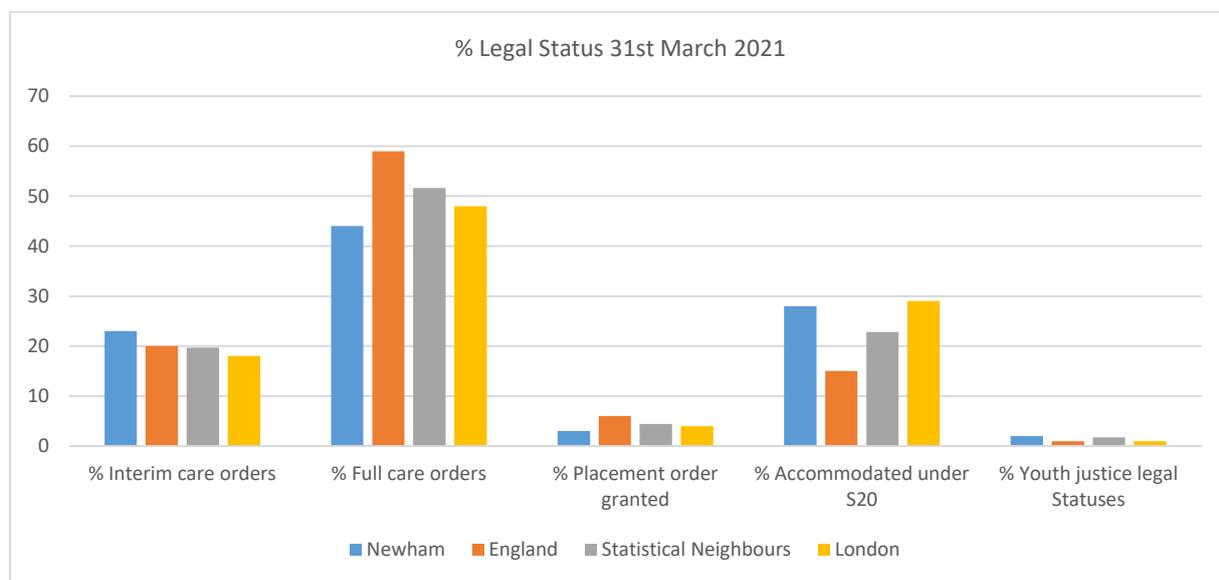
	Became Looked After	Left	Net loss or gain
2018-19	232	258	-26
2019-20	203	192	+12
2020-21	194	221	-27
2021 2qrts	134	109	+25

2.6 Figures 6 and 7 show the legal status of children in care in Newham. The percentage of children with a care order as their legal status has increased over time and the percentage accommodated voluntarily through S20 has declined. There are still slightly more children accommodated through S20 and slightly fewer on a care order than statistical neighbours. This relates to an increase in the number of asylum seeking children.

Figure 6: Legal status of children in care

	Total in care	Care order (C2 C1)	%	V2 Sec 20	%	Other - NK / Remand	%
2017/18	406	234	58%	146	36%	26	6%
2018-19	380	245	64%	115	30%	20	5%
2019-20	411	255	62%	124	30%	32	8%
2020-21	383	260	68%	106	28%	17	4%

Figure 7: Legal status, comparators



3. Demographic trends of children in care

3.1 Age: The age distribution of children in care has not changed significantly over time in Newham although the proportion of children in care aged 10-15 and 16+ is higher than in the general Newham population and the England average. The proportion of 16+ in care is also higher than the England comparator for children in care. This is likely to relate the historical treatment of 16 and 17 year olds who are homeless in Newham, increasing number of UASC and historic challenge around preventative services and alternative accommodation options.

3.2 CYPS and housing have developed a joint protocol for homeless 16 and 17 year olds, including preventative support and agreed a Move On Support Protocol (MOSP). Higher proportions of older children in care affects future numbers of care leavers. The recent increase in the number of UASC in Newham will be kept under review, as this affects numbers of older children in care.

3.3 Figure 8 shows that the proportion of 1–4-year-olds and 5–9-year-olds in care in Newham is lower than the England care average and lower than the proportion in the Newham population whilst the number of children under 1 is the same. The percentage of children in care aged 16 and over is more than three times the proportion in the under 18 population in Newham. Figure 9 shows the age of children in care in Newham over time. Age distribution has not changed significantly over the past 7 years, with 10-15 year olds and young people aged 16+ consistently being the largest proportion of children in care.

Figure 8: Age of children in care in Newham and comparators

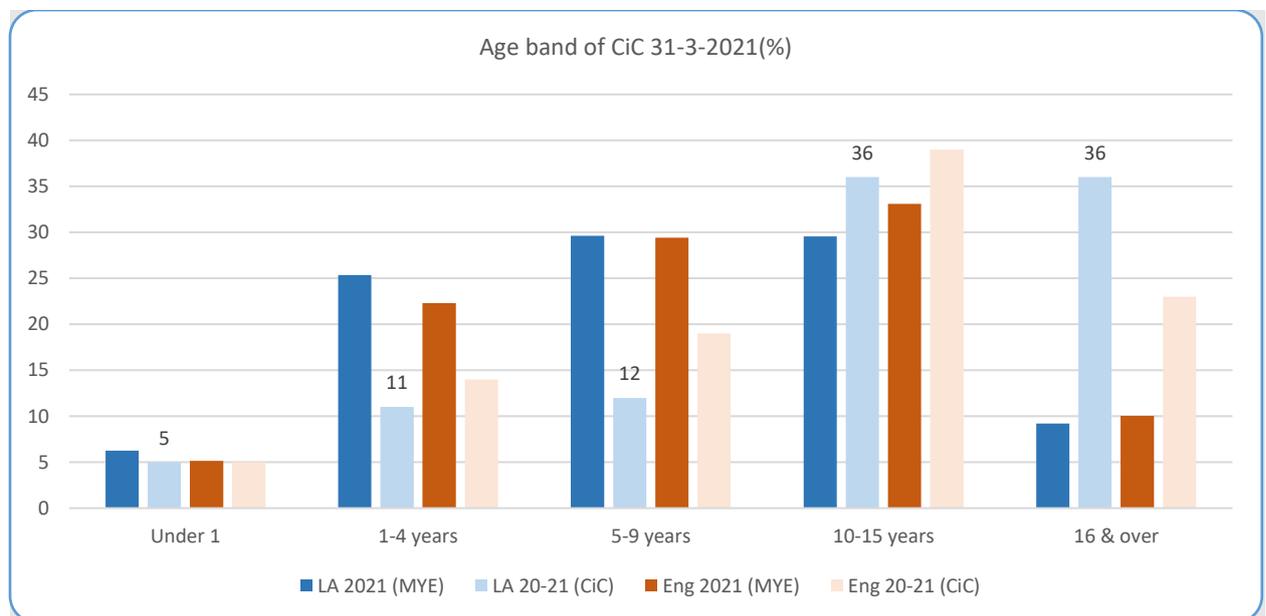
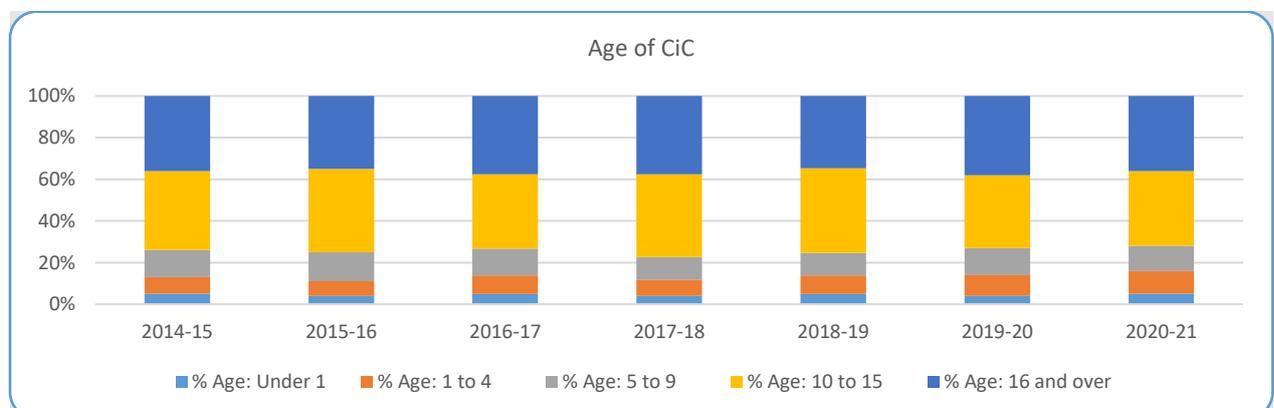


Figure 9: Age of children in care over time, Newham



3.4 The age profile for children at the point of entering care indicates that Newham (figure 10) has a larger proportion of older children and a smaller proportion of babies and children aged under 10 when compared to England (Figure 11). Newham's profile is closer to that of London (figure 12) and our Statistical Neighbours (figure 13), with approximately 60% of children in Newham entering care aged 10 or older.

Figure 10: age of children starting in care over time, Newham

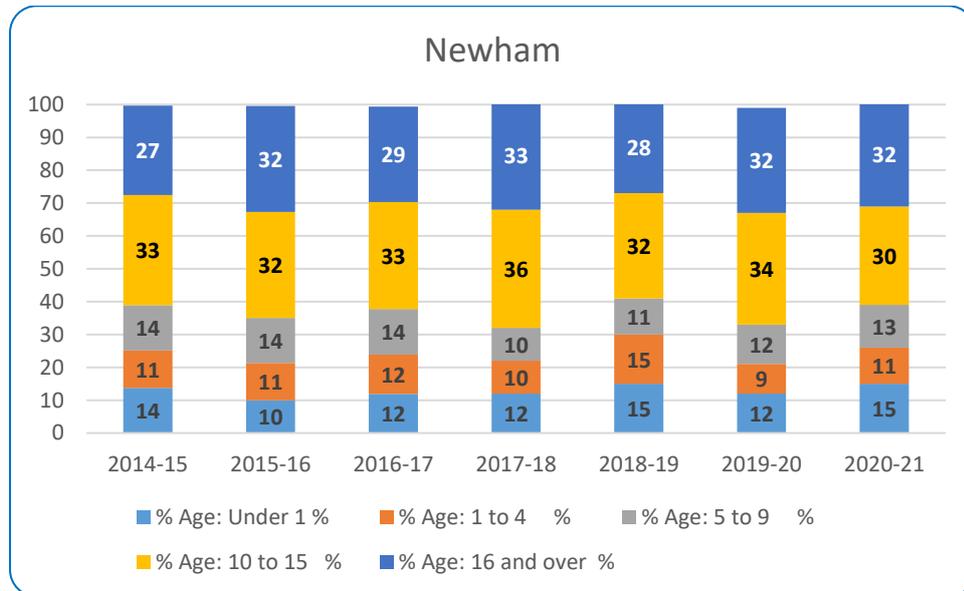


Figure 11: age of children starting in care over time, England

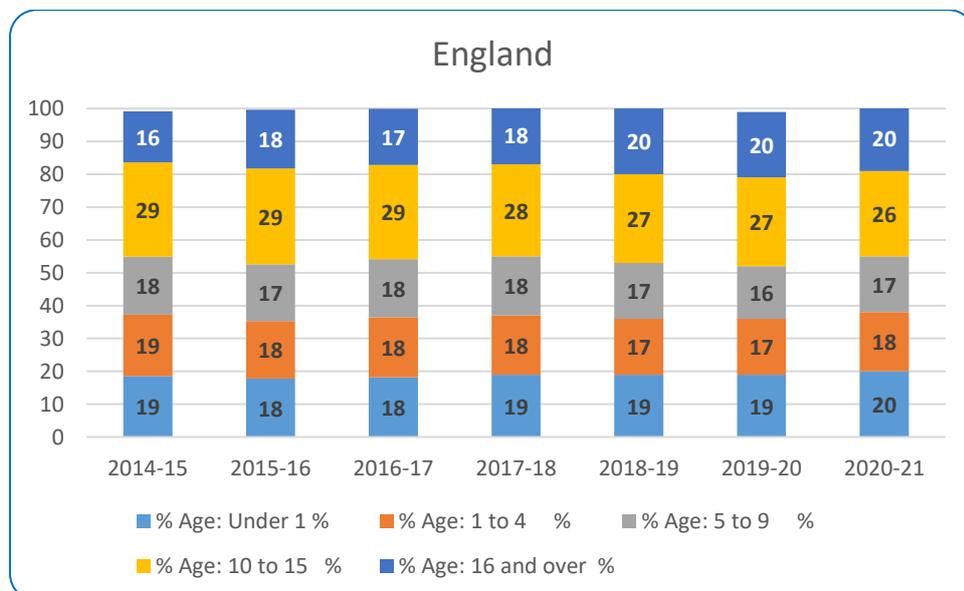


Figure 12: Age of children starting in care over time, London

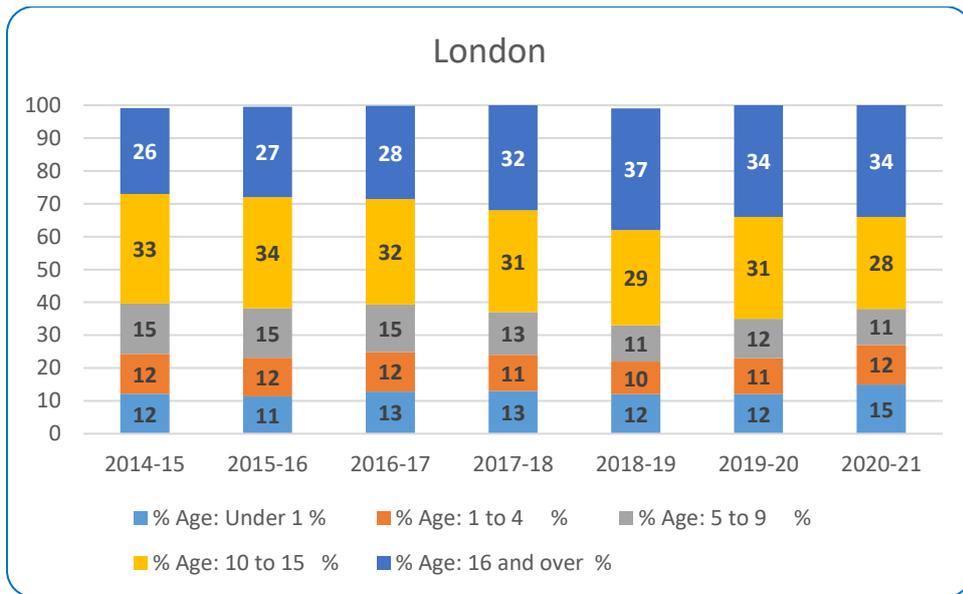
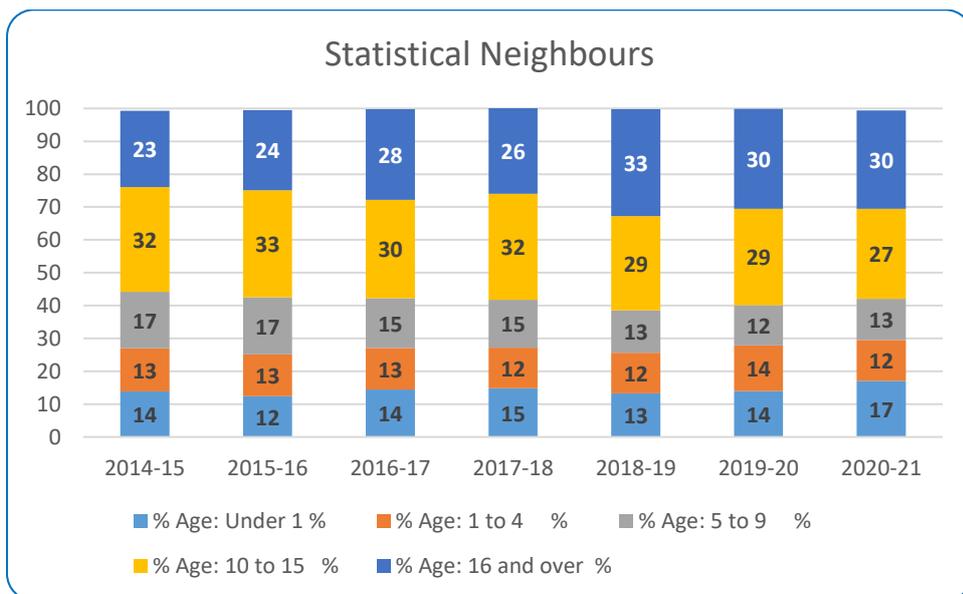
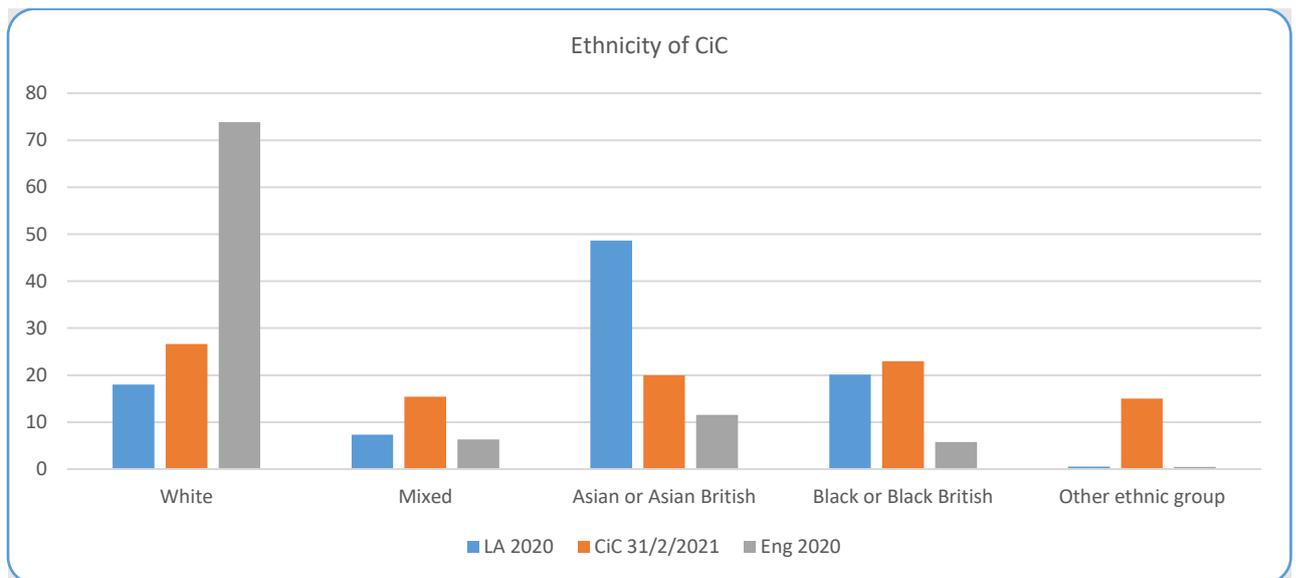


Figure 13: Age at starting in care (Statistical Neighbours)



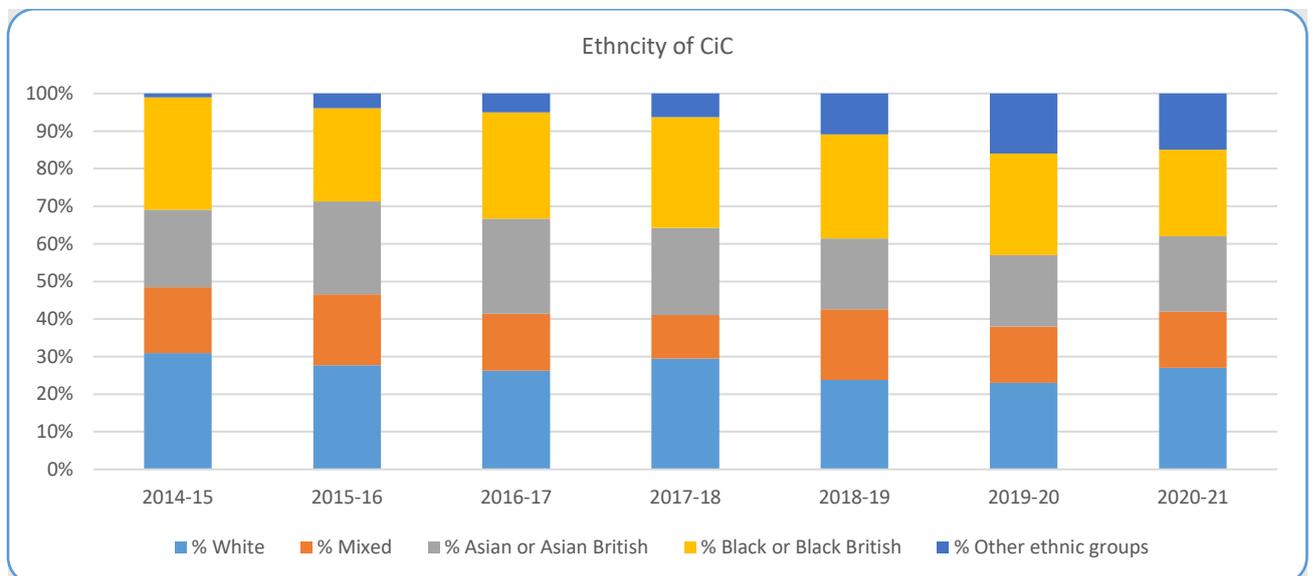
3.5 Ethnicity: Figure 14 shows that when compared to the Newham child population, White, Mixed and Black or Black British children are over-represented in care and Asian or Asian British children are under-represented.

Figure 14: Ethnicity of children in care, comparators



3.6 The proportion of children in care named as 'other' ethnicity has grown over time, as a result of the increase in the number of UASC, with no clear trends for other ethnic groupings (figure 15).

Figure 15: Ethnicity of children in care over time

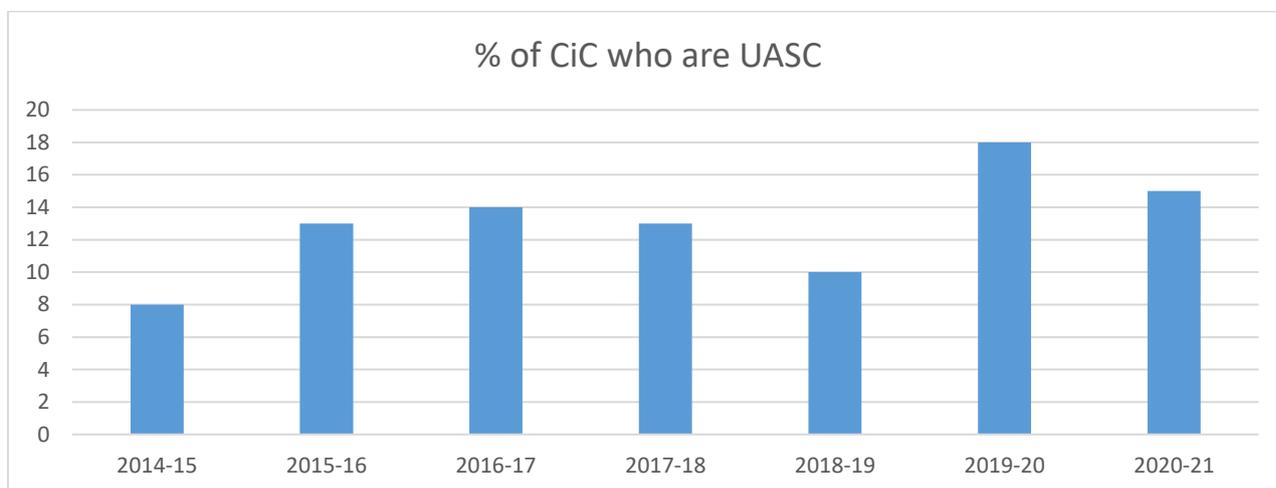


3.7 The gender of children in care has remained broadly at 55-60% boys over the past few years.

3.8 The number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) has increased over time, with a significant increase since September 2021. The

percentage of UASC as a proportion of the overall care population is projected to increase slightly over the next few years, creating a need for commissioning suitable provision, including supported lodgings and in house foster care.

Figure 16: % of children in care who are UASC



4. Placement types

4.1 As at 31 March 21, foster carers of all types and connected carers represented 76% of all placements (figure 17). This is a significant proportion of all placements, indicating that most of our children in care can be supported within a family environment. Over time however, the use of IFA placements has increased whilst the use of in house foster care has decreased, with in house foster carers representing only 38% of all foster care placements in the same period. There are a number of factors affecting this split, including:

- challenges recruiting in house foster carers and fully utilising in house foster care placements during covid,
- some challenges with availability of larger housing stock in Newham
- and the age profile of Newham's carers

Figure 17: Placement types and location at 31 March 2022

Latest Commissioning Placement Category	Less than 20	20 plus	Newham	Total	% of placements
Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)	111	20	24	155	43.0%
In house foster carers	33	1	62	96	26.6%
Semi independent	29	1	5	35	9.7%
Children's home	12	16	3	31	8.6%
Connected carers	7	3	14	24	6.6%
Placed with parents	1	0	9	10	2.7%
Family Centre	5	0	0	5	1.3%
Secure, YOI or Prison	0	3	0	3	0.8%
NHS/ Health Trust	1	0	0	1	0.3%
Residential Schools	0	1	0	1	0.3%
Grand Total	199	45	117	361	

4.2 Whilst figure 18 indicates projections for in house foster care continuing to decrease if nothing changes and historical trends continue, there is a Foster Care Transformation programme in place that seeks to reverse this trend through recruitment, training and an improved offer and support to foster carers. Following covid recovery, the proportion of in house foster care placements as a proportion of all foster care placements has improved recently, from 38% in 2020/21 to 55% in 21/22. The in house service has continued to offer a relatively steady number of placements to UASC.

4.3 Based on historical trends (figure 19), the use of IFA placements is projected to grow until the fostering transformation programme is implemented. Financial analysis and benchmarking has indicated that the average costs of IFA foster carers is higher than the cost of in house fosters and so provides less value for money. The fostering transformation programme will increase the range and number of in house foster carers, thereby reducing the demand for independent foster care placements.

4.4 Overall, total foster care placements as a percentage of all placements has increased at the last year, representing 70% of all placements in 2022, compared to 67% in 2021.

Figure 18: historical trend and projections for in house foster care

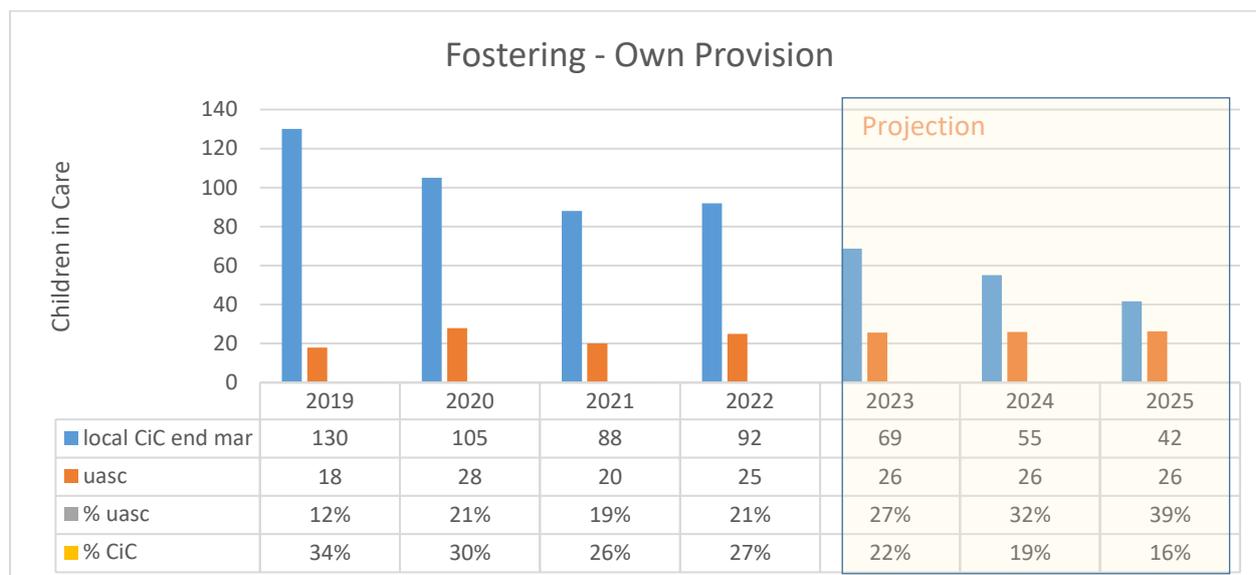
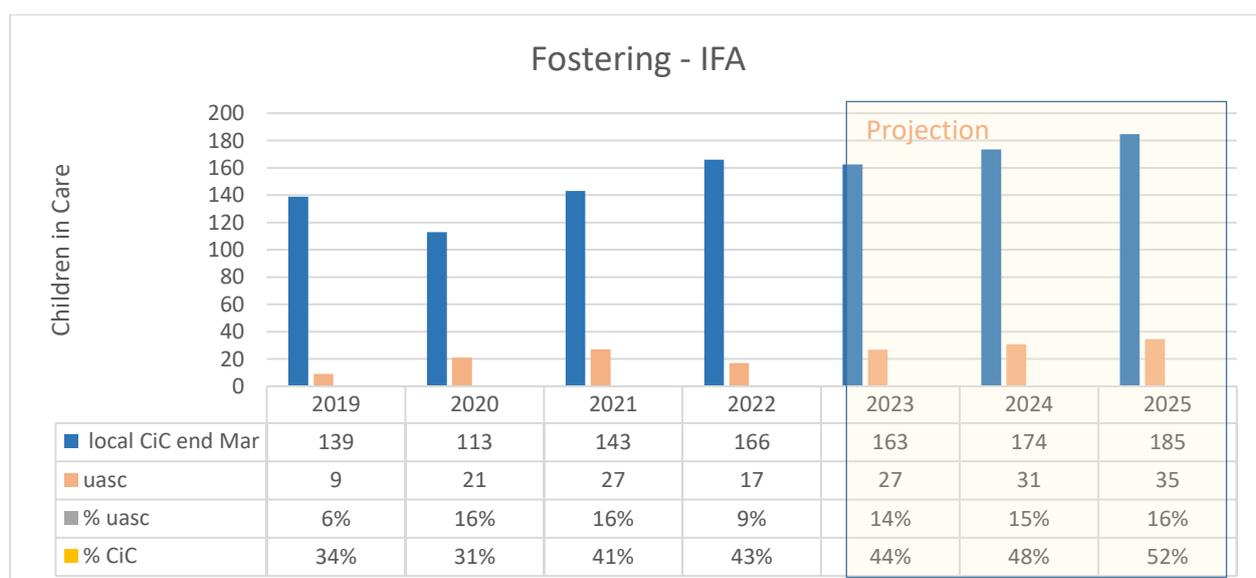
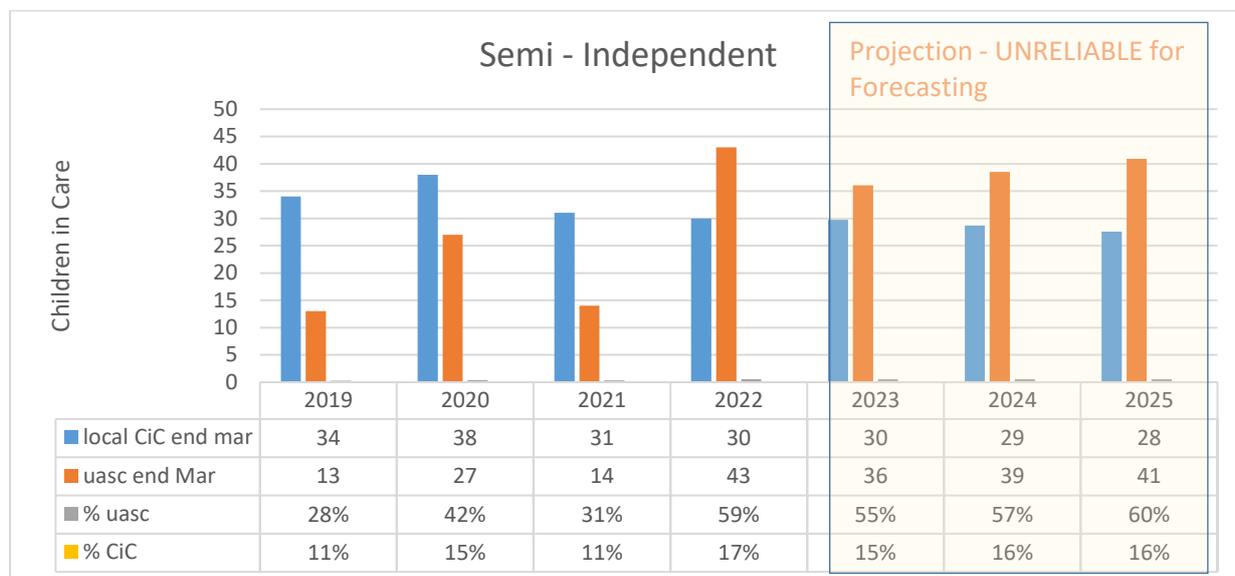


Figure 19: Historical trends and projections for IFA placements



4.5As figure 20 shows, the number of 16- and 17-year-olds in semi-independent accommodation has varied over time, with a spike in 2021/22. Whilst the number of local children in care using semi-independent accommodation has remained stable over the past 2 years, there has been a significant increase in the number of UASC placed over the last year. This is due to the increase in UASC and the limited availability of in house foster care placements as one of the alternatives to SIL. There are a limited number (4) of high cost SIL placements within the current cohort, where young people require higher support packages, including where they have additional needs.

Figure 20: Trends and projections for use of semi-independent accommodation



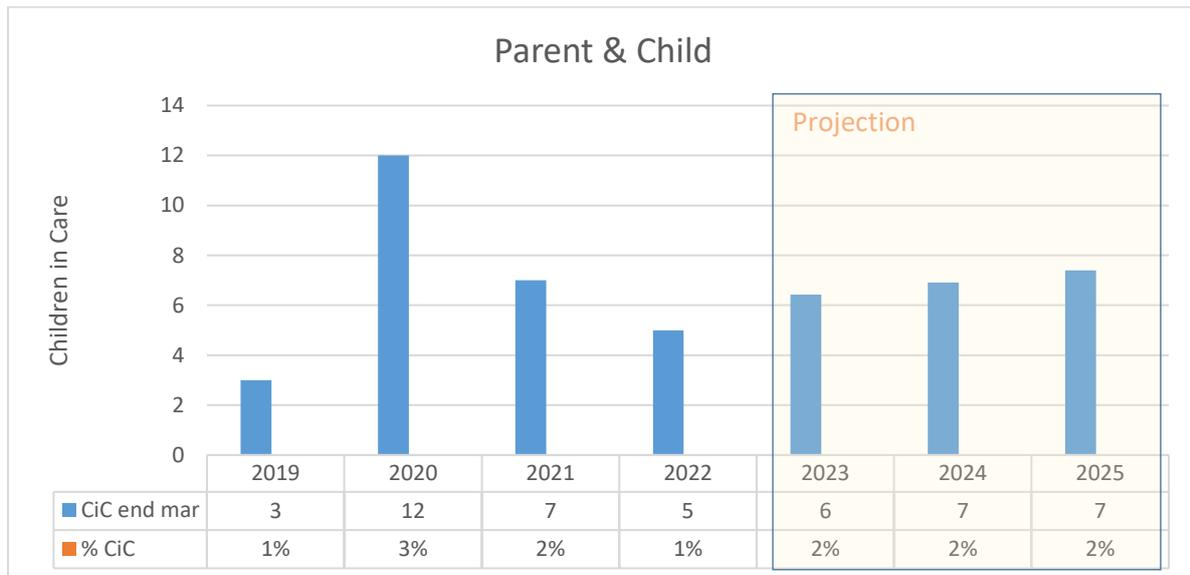
4.6 Figure 21 shows that the number of children in residential care has decreased overall since 2019, as review processes have been strengthened and alternative options been explored. Numbers have risen slightly over the past year. This is due to some children with multiple and complex risks such as Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) requiring higher level support than available through foster care.

Figure 21: Historical trends and future projections for residential care



4.7 Parent and child placements are low numbers so predictions are to be treated with caution (Figure 22). Some of the rise in 2020 is related to some delays in assessments due to covid and assessments related to more than one child. Residential assessments placements will continue to be used where court ordered, but the service considers community-based assessments and early support for families where this will support them.

Figure 22: Historical trends and future projections for parent and child placements



4.8 The number of children in care in residential special schools are low so predictions of future demand have not been made. Newham is undertaking a high needs review of children in out of borough placements, to inform planning of resourced provision within Newham. This should support more children and young people to stay within the borough in the future.

4.9 Similarly, no predictions are made for future secure placements due to low numbers. At present there is no London based provision of secure welfare beds which means that young people can be placed at a distance. Availability of secure placements is low and matching young people can be challenging due to individual risk factors. This means that Newham on occasion has to create bespoke placements for young people known to the youth justice system that can be high cost. The pan London commissioning programme includes joint plans to create additional welfare and justice secure placements within London.

Figure 23: Historical Figures for Residential School and Secure placements

Children in Care: residential school and secure placements		
End of March each year	Residential Schools	Secure
2019	2	3
2020	2	
2021	2	1

Placement stability

5.10 The stability of children in care in Newham has fluctuated more than statistical or England comparators over the past few years, although the number of children with 3 or more placements is reducing overall. Long term stability of children in placement for 2.5 years or more has remained similar at 63% since 2017/18 and is lower than statistical and England neighbours.

Figure 24: Children in care with 3 or more placements, comparators

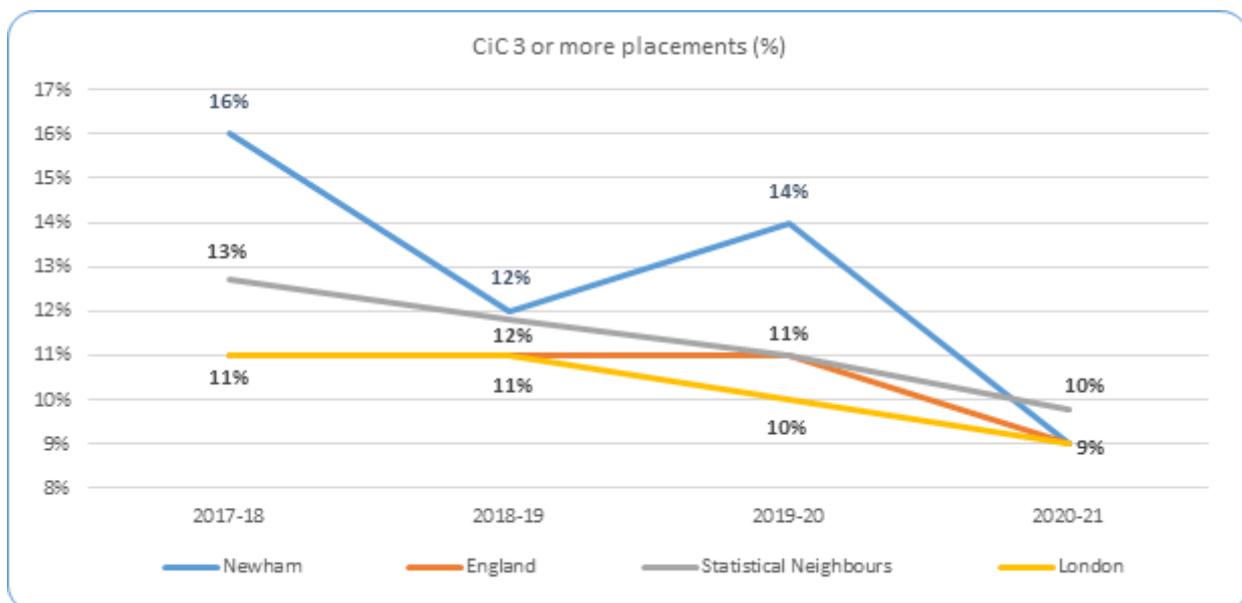


Figure 25: long term placement stability

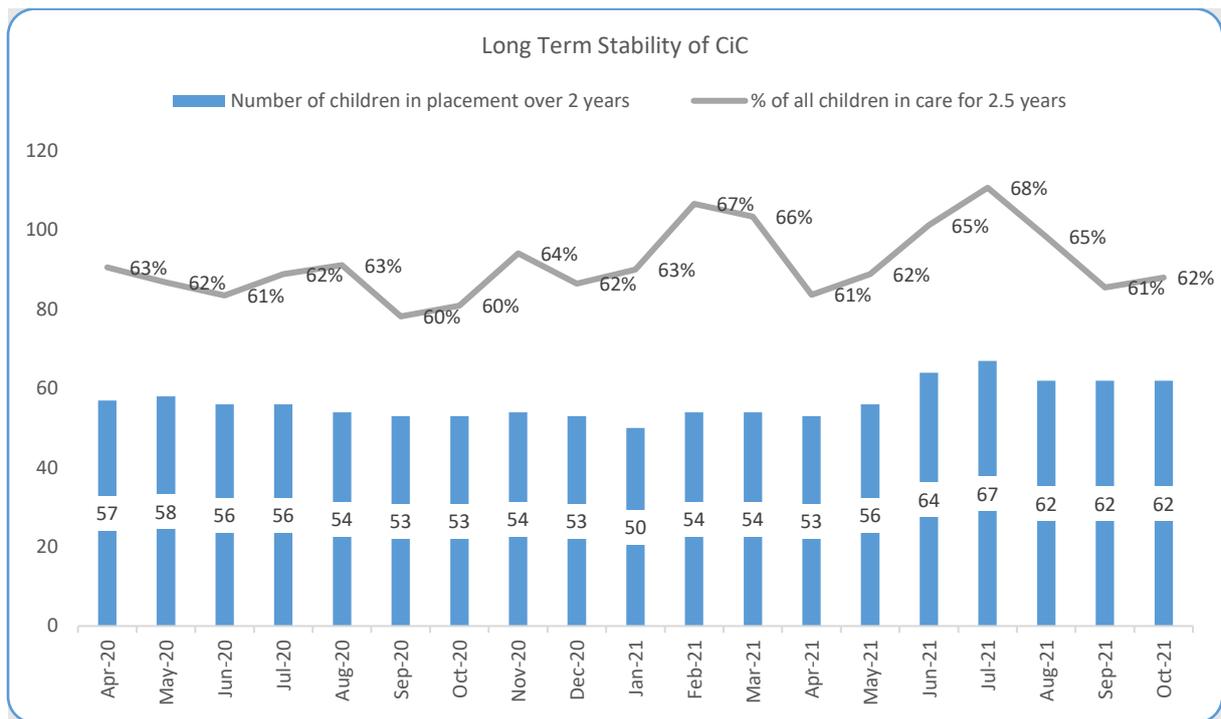
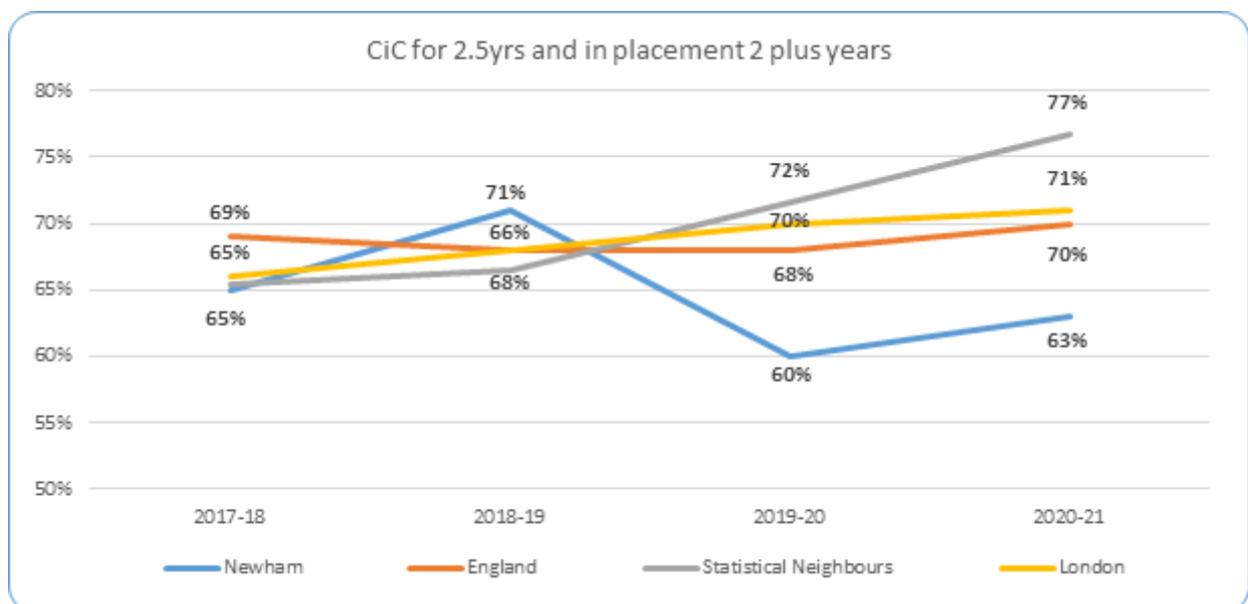


Figure 26: long term stability, comparators



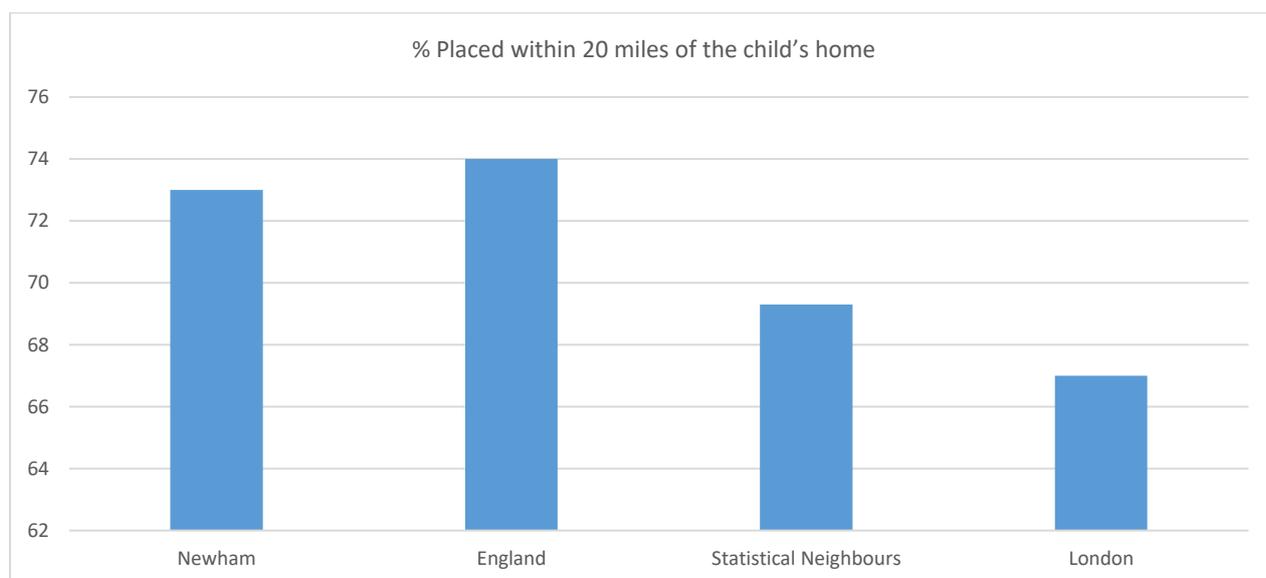
4.10 Of the children placed more than 20 miles from home (figure 27) most are teenagers. A very small minority required a placement at a distance due to specific risk factors including CCE that would affect a local placement, but for the majority, the challenge has been to find a local placement that can meet their complex needs.

Figure 27: characteristics of children placed more than 20 miles away

Child Age Band	Female	Male	Grand Total
Under 1		1	1
1 to 4	3		3
5 to 9		3	3
10 to 15	10	7	17
16 to 18	7	14	21
Grand Total	20	25	45

4.11 Figure 28 sets out the % of children placed within 20 miles of home in Newham, compared to national, London and statistical neighbour comparators. 73% of children were placed within 20 miles of home, which is higher than London and statistical neighbours.

Figure 28: children placed within 20 miles from home, comparators



5. Needs of children and young people:

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

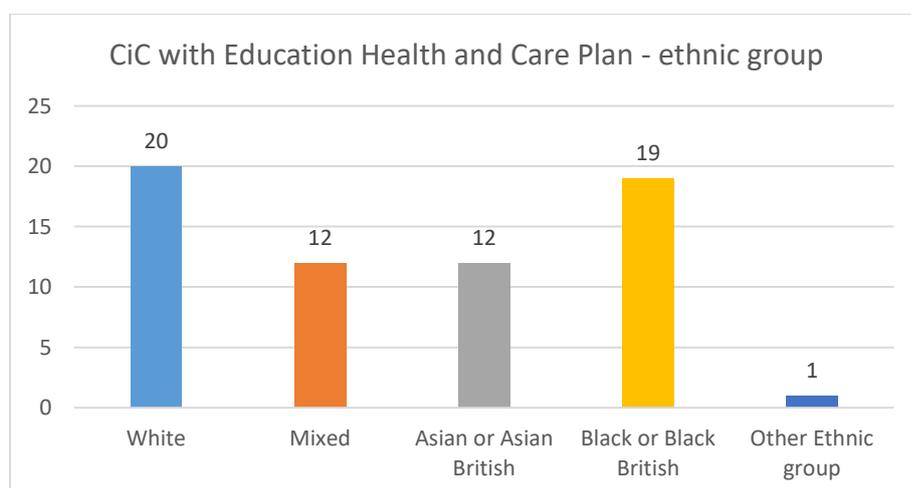
5.1 There are 64 children in care with education health and care plans (EHCP). Figure 29 shows the age and gender breakdown. Males make up 71 per cent of the children in care with EHCPs with half in the 10 to 15 age group.

Figure 29: CiC with Education Health and Care Plans - age / gender

Age band	Female	Male	Transgender	Grand Total
5 to 9	3	9		12
10 to 15	11	21		32
16 to 18	3	16	1	20
Grand Total	17	46	1	64

5.2 The ethnic profile of the group shows 31 per cent are white with 30 per cent from black backgrounds. Both are higher than their proportions in the children in care population.

Figure 30: CiC with Education Health and Care Plans – ethnicity



5.3 Figure 31 shows that the most common SEN type is social, emotional and mental health (39 per cent) followed by autistic spectrum disorder (19 per cent), moderate learning difficulties (11 per cent) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (11 per cent). These four areas represent 4 out of 5 of the children with EHCPs. Services commissioned for children with these needs require specialist knowledge and skills to ensure they meet the needs of the young people.

Figure 31: CiC with Education Health and Care Plans – Current Special Education Need Type

Current SEN Type	Number	Number
Social, Emotional & Mental Health	25	39%
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	12	19%
Moderate learning difficulties	7	11%
Profound and multiple learning difficulties	7	11%
Severe learning difficulties	4	6%
Physical disability	3	5%
Speech, language and communication needs	3	5%
Hearing Impairment	2	3%
Complex Learning Needs	1	2%
Grand Total	64	100%

5.4 The predominant group of SEND children is boys aged 10-15 with social emotional and mental health needs and mental health. When commissioning it is important that there is specialist provision able to meet the needs of these young people.

5.5 SEND children are more likely to be placed in foster care than any other placement type. However most of these are with foster carers from independent fostering agencies suggesting that in house foster carers are not currently able to meet the needs of our SEND children in care. More children are placed in children's homes than with in house foster carers.

Figure 32: CiC with Education Health and Care Plans – Placement Type

Latest Commissioning Placement Category	Number	%
Independent Fostering Agencies	27	42%
Children's home	15	23%
In house foster carers	12	19%
Connected carers	4	7%
Semi independent	3	5%
NHS/ Health Trust	1	2%
Residential care homes	1	2%
Secure, YOI or Prison	1	2%
Grand Total	64	100%

5.6 Figures 33 and 34 show that Newham has a lower proportion of children in care with identified special education need or an Education, Health and Care Plan

than its statistical neighbours, London and England. Trend data over the last 6 years show the proportion of Newham population is consistently lower than that of its statistical neighbours, London and National.

Figure 33: % of children in care with identified special educational need

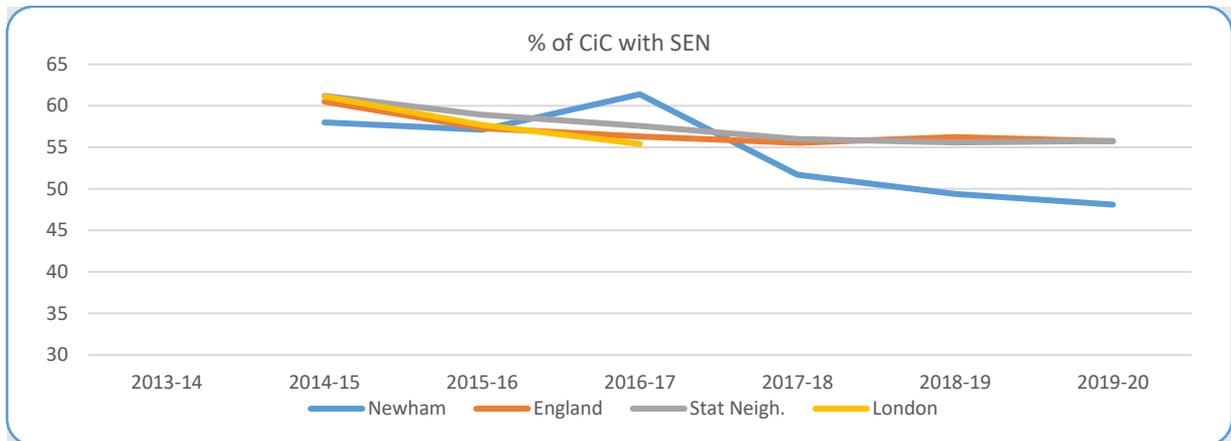
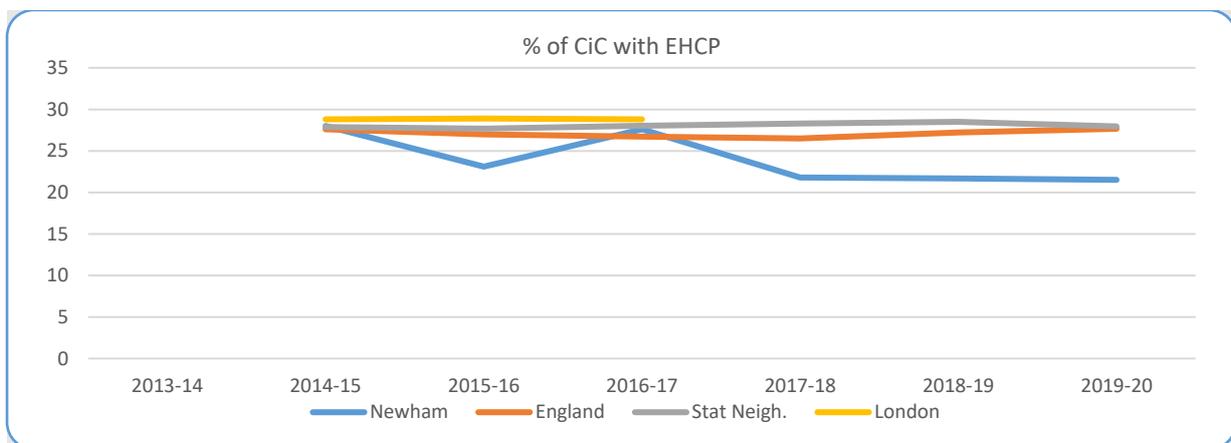


Figure 34: % of children in care with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)



5.7 There are more children in care with EHCPs who have been in care for at least 2.5 years who have been living in the same placement for at least two years (64 per cent compare to 62.6 per cent). However a greater proportion of children with EHCPs have had 3 or more placements in the last 12 months than the general children in care population (10.9 per cent compared to 8.8 per cent)¹.

¹ Based on the performance indicator as at 31st January 2022.

Needs of children and young people: review of high-cost placements

5.8A senior manager's review panel has been in place since 2021 to review placement decisions for high needs young people, ensure best use of resources and support step down where appropriate. The panel reviewed 49 children by December 2021 and this indicates:

- 8 were in a high-cost semi-independent placement
- 2 were in hospital for a period of time
- The remainder were in residential care, with 11 requiring joint funding from education and/or health, indicating complex SEND/medical needs
- 25 were aged 16+; 12 were aged 14-15; 7 were aged 12-13 and 5 were aged under 12. Younger children were in high-cost placements due to complex medical needs and/or health needs/ complex behavioural needs linked to multiple placement breakdowns and/or SEND
- 11 required 1:1 support and 10 required 2:1 support for a period.

5.9 The needs most requiring high-cost placements include:

- Child criminal exploitation, sometimes requiring the child to be placed at distance from Newham and requiring a skilled provider and care workers to support the young person to engage in positive activities and education/employment or training. The children affected by CCE tended to be older teenagers aged 16 plus although a minority were aged 13+
- Child sexual exploitation, again requiring skilled provision and care to develop positive relationships and identity
- Complex SEND, most often Autism and/or ADHD, with co-occurring behavioural needs
- Social Emotional and Mental health needs, with effective therapeutic support and approach required
- Multiple and complex needs with co-existing complex SEND and Mental health/CCE/CSE/medical needs
- For several children, engagement in education had been erratic, due to placement moves, covid and occasionally, challenges in finding appropriate education provision for those with SEND.

5.10 Other factors include the lack of tier 4 provision and secure welfare capacity for some children and young people – meaning that an increasing numbers of children and young people over 16 are subject to DOLS in unregulated provision.

6. Care leavers

6.1 Newham has a relatively high number of care leavers for whom it continues to provide a funded service, related to its relatively high number of 16+ in care and to some historic challenges regarding housing supply for care leavers ready to step down into independent living. Figure 35 shows the total number of care leavers who receive funded support from CYPS. There are other care leavers not shown in these figures who are managing in employment and independent

living and do not require additional funding from LBN. For example, most care leavers who access council owned care leavers flats do not require additional funding. There is a quota of 62 council flats available to care leavers every year, 50 of which are single bedroom flats. Take up varies but is around 40 per year.

Figure 35: Numbers of children in care and numbers who are UASC

Care leaver age	Care leaver total numbers	UASC/limited leave to remain
21+	84	36
20	66	25
19	69	28
18	68	26

6.2 Of the care leaver population receiving ongoing funding for accommodation and support, 84 (as of Jan 2022) are aged 21+, with most remaining in supported living arrangements and a small minority remaining in staying put arrangements beyond 21. This is shown in figure 36. In a very small minority of cases, there are additional needs including mental health and learning disabilities where a transition to adult services is under review. There is also a significant % (42.8%) who are UASC. In a small number of cases, referrals to NASS/decisions on leave to remain or appeals are delayed. Another group of older care leavers are at university and accommodation is funded through historical arrangements for the course of their studies up to age 25/end of university course.

Figure 36: Accommodation use by care leavers aged 21+

Accommodation type	No of care leavers	UASC
Staying put	8	3
Private rented/council flat	13	6
Supported living	63	26
total	84	36

6.3 The majority however are ready to move on into independent living, but housing has not yet been sourced. The new care leavers offer published in 2021 has clarified the new offer for care leavers the range of accommodation that will be sourced for them, including: limited support for care leavers at university during holiday periods; care leavers flats for more vulnerable young people, supported

lodgings; support to move into private rented sector; and new provision being developed for self-contained units in Newham. The new joint CYPs and Housing move on panel meets regularly to review move on options and support older care leavers to find more sustainable accommodation. As this support is embedded, it is expected that future numbers of care leavers aged 21+ with a continued need for funded accommodation and support will significantly reduce.

6.4 As of Jan 2022, there were 203 care leavers aged 18-20 and 38.9% are UASC (figure 37). The majority have low to medium levels of need, with 31 in staying put arrangements and 117 who are in supported housing with low-medium support. A new programme for preparation for independence for children in care from 16 onwards is in development. Consistency of independence planning plus timely support from the Moving on Panel will support these young people to access the accommodation range identified above and plan for move on as they reach 21.

6.5 The remaining 54 care leavers are in higher cost supported accommodation with higher levels of support. A minority of these young adults have significant additional needs and may require ongoing support from adult social care. Others within this cohort are having their support needs and accommodation options reviewed and are likely to be ready to step down to lower levels of supported accommodation.

Figure 37: Accommodation use by care leavers aged 18-20

Accommodation type	No of care leavers	UASC
Staying put/fostering	31	9
Private rented/council flat	7	2
Residential home	2	0
Supported living	158	68
Shared lives	5	0
Total	203	79

