

Joint area review

**London Borough of Lambeth Children's Services Authority
Area**

Review of services for children and young people

Audit Commission
Healthcare Commission
HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
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Introduction

1. The 2007 Annual Performance Assessment (APA) for Lambeth judged the council's children's services and its capacity to improve as good.
2. This report assesses the contribution of local services in ensuring that children and young people:
 - at risk, or requiring safeguarding are effectively cared for
 - who are looked after achieve the best possible outcomes
 - with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve the best possible outcomes.
3. The following investigations were also carried out:
 - the impact of the partner's strategy on improving provision of child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
 - effectiveness of inter-agency cooperation in tackling youth crime and behaviour.

Context

4. Lambeth is a complex and challenging inner London borough that stretches from the South Bank and Waterloo through Brixton and Clapham to the more residential suburbs of Norwood and Streatham. The borough's population of 272,000, of which 67,000 are children and young people, is diverse and highly mobile. Lambeth is the fourth most densely populated borough in the country and has the second highest total migration in inner London. The population is predicted to grow by nearly 17% from 2001 to 2028 and substantial growth in the child population is predicted particularly in the age group 0–9.
5. Thirty-eight per cent of Lambeth's population are from Black and minority ethnic communities. However, 58% of the resident child population and 74% of the children in Lambeth schools are from Black and minority ethnic communities. In addition to English, over 150 languages are spoken in Lambeth. Lambeth has approximately 20% population churn each year and is often described as an escalator borough where new communities settle when they first arrive in Britain before they move elsewhere. There is a significant refugee population which contributes to these high mobility rates. Pupil mobility in primary schools is 10% and in secondary schools is 6%, although the rate in some individual schools is substantially higher.

6. Although unemployment rates are falling, in 2006/07, 67% of residents of working age in Lambeth were classified as employed, compared with 69% across London and 74% nationally. One quarter of families living in Lambeth are lone parent families and one in seven children is deemed to be living in poverty. It is the 19th most deprived borough in England, although it also contains areas of great affluence.

7. One in four children has some form of special educational need. At the time of this review there were 247 children who were the subject of a child protection plan and 546 children were looked after by the local authority, including 60 who were unaccompanied asylum seekers. Seventy per cent of children and young people who are looked after are in foster placements in neighbouring authorities.

8. There are 26 designated children's centres in Lambeth with an additional two centres being developed. The borough maintains 85 schools: five nursery schools, 61 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, five special schools and three pupil referral units. There are also two academies. Recently opened schools include a parent promoted secondary school and Lambeth's second Islamic voluntary-aided primary school. There is a significant shortage of secondary school places and high numbers of secondary aged pupils attend schools outside of the borough.

9. Post-16 education and training is provided by Lambeth College and six school sixth forms. Many young people resident in Lambeth attend provision in neighbouring boroughs, particularly St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College in Wandsworth. Entry to employment is provided by three providers (NACRO, TGB Learning, and Roots and Shoots). These providers and the Peabody Trust support young people who are not ready to progress to Level 2 provision, apprenticeships or employment, with 674 places in total. Adult and community learning are predominantly provided by the local authority.

10. Primary health care services are provided by Lambeth Primary Care Trust (PCT); acute hospital services are provided by Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and mental health services are provided by South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

11. Early intervention and prevention services are provided through three area-based multi-agency Teams Around the Child (TAC). Children's social care services are provided by the local authority and a range of local providers, including 115 registered foster carers, supplemented by independent foster agencies. There are 15 field social work teams.

12. Services to children and young people who are at risk of offending or have offended are provided through the Lambeth youth offending service (YOS). There are no secure units for young offenders in the area.

Main Findings

13. The main findings of this joint area review are as follows:

- Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Effective multi-agency partnerships with strong leadership provide excellent early intervention and prevention and ensure child protection processes are sound. Arrangements for identifying children who are missing and the safe recruitment of staff are secure. Shortages of social work staff have a negative impact on the timeliness and continuity of support for some families.
- Support for looked after children and young people, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Effective partnerships and targeted intervention enable children and young people to remain with their families where possible and ensure good outcomes for many children and young people who are looked after and care leavers. Corporate parenting arrangements are outstanding, and children and young people make a good contribution to shaping the delivery of services. Further improvement is needed in the numbers of children achieving permanent families through adoption or special guardianship orders.
- Provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Effective multi-agency working supported by a comprehensive strategy and a strong commitment to inclusion secures good provision, continuity of care and good educational progress. There is good support for parents and carers and sound arrangements are in place to ensure that their views and those of children and young people inform service planning. Some parents and children wait too long to access social care provision and too many children with special educational needs are excluded from school.
- The impact of the partners' strategy on improving provision of CAMHS is good. Joint strategic commissioning of services is well established and grounded in robust needs assessment. The focus on prevention, early intervention and multi-agency working is good and has improved access to services. There is excellent access to most specialist CAMHS services and much improved waiting times for others, although a waiting list is starting to develop for the new early intervention service. Good progress has been made on the recommissioning of substance misuse treatment services.
- The effectiveness of inter-agency cooperation in tackling youth crime and behaviour is good, with excellent practice in some areas. Outstanding partnership work, effective and inter-related multi-agency strategies, an effective YOS and a broad range of innovative

projects are reducing the rate of offending among young people and improving behaviour. Good progress is being made in improving educational attainment and reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training. Fear of crime in the local community, although reducing, is still high and too many young Black men are involved in crime as perpetrators and victims.

- The management of services for children and young people and the capacity to improve further are good. Outstanding partnerships based on excellent shared ambition prioritise the needs of children and young people well. The needs of the area's many diverse communities are prioritised and children and young people are extensively involved in service planning and delivery. Capacity to respond to Lambeth's many challenges is good despite difficulties in staffing some key posts. Financial planning is good. Performance management is also good across the partnership, although hindered at times by targets and milestones that are not always sufficiently specific.

Grades

4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall
Safeguarding	3
Looked after children	3
Learning difficulties and/or disabilities	3
Service management	3
Capacity to improve	3

Recommendations

For immediate action

The local partnership should:

- ensure that an appropriate way is found for the successful dissemination of the findings of this report to children and young people in the area
- ensure the impact of staffing shortages continues to be minimised across the partnership.

For action over the next six months

The local partnership should:

- improve the use of children in need plans to maximise the use of family support to reduce, where appropriate, the need for child protection plans at a later stage
- increase the number of looked after children who are adopted or the subject of special guardianship orders and improve the timeliness of adoptions
- reduce waiting times for initial and core assessments for some families with disabled children and improve direct payments
- improve the stability of the social care workforce to secure the timeliness and continuity of support to children and their families
- reduce the high rates of exclusion for pupils at school action plus and with statements of special educational needs
- evaluate the impact of new CAMHS provision for children from refugee and asylum seeker families and unaccompanied minors
- ensure the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and all service and action plans have precise targets, milestones and named responsible officers.

For action in the longer term

- Reduce rates of offending among young people, particularly Black young men.

Equality and diversity

14. Ensuring equality in improving outcomes for Lambeth's diverse and often deprived communities is taken very seriously by the partnership and strongly permeates its strategic and day-to-day work. The council's children's services have reached Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and are working towards Level 4, the highest level. Raising awareness of cultural diversity, community cohesion and tackling racism are high priorities across the partnership. The CYPP addresses equality and diversity directly and appropriate emphasis is given to the needs of particular groups of children and young people with poorer outcomes. The partnership strives hard to close the gap in outcomes for vulnerable groups; many good initiatives have been implemented and detailed analysis of the impact of these demonstrates success, particularly in closing the educational achievement gap. Service development and delivery are well targeted to ensure that provision is sensitive to the needs of specific groups with good use being made of specialist services commissioned from the voluntary and community and faith sectors. Children and young people from a

wide range of minority ethnic and vulnerable groups are fully involved in consultations and contribute to decisions that affect them.

Safeguarding

Inadequate ☐

Adequate ☐

Good ☒

Outstanding ☐

15. The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people at risk, or requiring safeguarding is good.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Excellent early intervention and preventative provision supported by good use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and TAC.</p> <p>Good multi-agency action to support families affected by domestic violence.</p> <p>Effective action to tackle bullying and racial harassment in schools.</p> <p>Strong leadership of and focus on the safeguarding agenda and an effective Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).</p> <p>Effective oversight of the quality of child protection practice.</p> <p>Strong and effective multi-agency arrangements to track and monitor missing children.</p> <p>Secure arrangements for the safe recruitment and vetting of staff in local authority services and schools.</p>	<p>High numbers of children subject to a child protection plan.</p> <p>Negative impact of high turnover of social workers and use of agency staff upon the timeliness and continuity of support to some children and their families.</p>

16. The partnership gives high priority to providing a range of excellent child-centred early intervention services so that needs are addressed before problems become intractable. A comprehensive strategy for early intervention and prevention, strong and productive partnerships, including with voluntary and independent providers and well co-ordinated action from integrated multi-

agency teams, support children, young people and families well. The TAC, effective use of the CAF across agencies, and the role of the lead professional are securely established. More than 1,600 assessments were completed over the past 18 months which demonstrates the increasing engagement with vulnerable families and prompt identification of need. This has resulted in fewer separate assessments, reduced inappropriate referrals to specialist services and enabled timely access and smooth transition to specialist provision.

17. Children and young people are supported well in developing socially and emotionally. These aspects of learning are implemented well in schools. A range of flexible and responsive family support services include specialist outreach work for minority communities and provide well-targeted casework and home-based support. These services take good account of the views of young people and families. Successful parenting programmes provide strong support for parents and improve outcomes for children and young people. Numerous mentoring and peer mentoring projects raise aspirations and encourage access to a broad range of accredited learning opportunities. Good progress in the roll-out of children's centres has increased access for vulnerable families to high-quality day care and a good range of support services. The contribution of Job Centre Plus promotes good access to benefits and routes to employment. Extended services in and out of school make an increasing contribution to prevention. Young carers are supported well by a dedicated Crossroads project, which is highly regarded by the young people themselves.

18. Services work well together to provide children and young people with a safe environment, including in schools and early years settings. The level of road traffic accidents has reduced and already exceeds the target set for 2010, with local services providing good support to schools. The safety and well-being of children is strongly promoted through a comprehensive parenting handbook. Children and parents affected by domestic violence are identified early and supported well by services working in partnership. This has been further strengthened by the launch of a new domestic violence strategy earlier this year.

19. Most children and young people believe that schools deal with bullying well. Clear policies, advice and guidance are provided on the prevention of bullying, with good targeted action taken by schools and the local authority. Multi-agency teams employ a wide range of measures that include support for parents and very successful restorative approaches, such as from trained peer mediators. Effective action challenges and reduces discrimination and harassment, including for children who have a learning disability. Comprehensive guidance and an excellent analysis of the monitoring information from racist incident reports support schools and other providers to inform service improvement.

20. Children and young people missing from school and care settings are safeguarded well. Risks are minimised by comprehensive guidance, effective inter-agency networks and clear procedures, such as those for the removal of

pupils from school registers. When children are missing from education identification is prompt, follow-up is tenacious and reintegration is supported well. Services are successful in securing improved attendance in education through well-targeted measures, including work with specific communities, successful casework and court action. Suitable education is provided for children who do not attend school or may have been excluded and this provision is monitored effectively.

21. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well for children and young people in Lambeth. Effective partnership work achieved a very good, sustained reduction of 23% in the rate of teenage conceptions from 2003 to 2006, albeit from a very high base. This reduction is twice that achieved over the same period in similar authorities and is considerably greater than that achieved nationally. Good strategic focus, strong leadership and very good involvement of young people in aspects of the strategy have ensured that services continue to develop well; addressing a recommendation in the 2007 APA. Innovative practice includes targeted work with young women who have had a termination and a high profile publicity campaign developed by and for young people. However, the teenage pregnancy rate remains high and considerable further reduction will be required to meet government targets; this is a high priority for the partnership. Lambeth PCT has implemented a community-based model for the provision of sexual health services, with an emphasis on making these services friendly to young people. Good provision is increasingly targeted at groups of young people who are at risk, including services developed for Black young men and women from minority ethnic communities, for example an effective Chlamydia screening programme.

22. Substance misuse health promotion in schools is good and there is a wide range of targeted support to address substance misuse among vulnerable children and young people. These include services provided by the community and voluntary sector to meet the needs of minority ethnic communities and lesbian, gay and bisexual young people. Specialist substance misuse officers in the YOS and Children and Families Social Care Team provide an effective link between mainstream and specialist services. CAMHS services are good and have successfully maintained their focus on improving access and waiting times. There is an effective range of targeted CAMHS provision for vulnerable groups and good support is provided in universal services, including schools and children's centres.

23. Good effective action is being taken to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime committed by children and young people. A much improved YOS, strong partnership work and a broad range of innovative projects are reducing the rate of offending and re-offending among young people and increasing participation in education, employment or training for those who have offended.

24. The arrangements for agencies to collaborate in safeguarding children are good. The LSCB provides strong leadership and works well to ensure that effective actions are taken to safeguard children and young people.

Accountabilities and responsibilities are well understood by partner agencies. Quality assurance is effectively used to improve child protection processes. The multi-agency action plans arising from the two serious case reviews completed prior to September 2008 have been monitored well, and the lessons learnt have been very widely disseminated. First rate multi-agency training is provided for staff, which is well regarded.

25. Good effective systems are in place for managing referrals and assessments in social care duty teams, including identifying children at risk of harm. These are consistently applied and services are targeted well. Although referral rates of children in need are comparatively high, these lead to a high number of initial assessments and re-referrals are comparatively low. Performance on the timeliness of the completion of initial and core assessments improved in 2007–08, with 77% of initial assessments and 82% of core assessments completed on time, which is good. Some recent improvement in the variation in completing assessments within timescales between social care teams has been achieved through improved monitoring by managers, increased managerial capacity and better staffed social work teams. High turnover of social workers has affected the timely follow through of care plans in some cases, but in the main good managerial oversight has minimised the negative impact. The use of agency social workers in social care teams, although reducing, remains too high. Private fostering arrangements are identified and responded to promptly and there are good procedures in place for monitoring and support.

26. Good, coordinated, multi-agency support is provided to children and young people considered to be at risk of significant harm. The number of children who are the subject of a child protection plan is comparatively high. An independent audit has revealed that it is likely that more cases could be dealt with safely as child in need cases. A new procedure has been created to address this issue but it is too early to determine the impact. All children and young people on the child protection register are reviewed within the required timescales and are allocated to qualified social workers who are well trained and supported to understand and meet their needs. Quality assurance arrangements are effective; cases are regularly monitored through good supervision and case file audits and the rigorous, independent chairing of child protection conferences. Re-registration and de-registration rates are good. Children and families are supported well to make a positive contribution at case conferences.

27. Secure arrangements are in place to support safe recruitment across the partnership. Criminal Records Bureau and other staff vetting checks are carried out rigorously by the local authority, and schools' procedures are robustly monitored. Clear procedures and systems are in place for managing allegations against staff. There are sound multi-agency arrangements for the management of offenders who present a risk to children and others in the community.

Looked after children and young people

Inadequate ☐Adequate ☐Good ☒Outstanding ☐

28. The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for looked after children and young people is good.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Effective partnership and targeted prevention contributing to a reduction in the numbers of children in the care system.</p> <p>High quality foster placements.</p> <p>Effective services, including provision from CAMHS, that also reach children placed outside of the borough.</p> <p>Good quality provision and improved attendance have contributed to good educational progress, a significant rise in standards at Key Stage 4 and a closing of the attainment gap.</p> <p>Outstanding corporate parenting arrangements.</p> <p>Very good involvement of young people in service design and delivery.</p> <p>Support for care leavers is good and they are helped to achieve well.</p>	<p>Insufficient numbers of children adopted or made subject of special guardianship orders.</p> <p>Too many changes of social worker have contributed to some care plans not being effectively progressed.</p>

29. Effective partnership working supports children and young people to remain with their families and to prevent, whenever possible, the need for them to become looked after. Timely, well-coordinated, targeted services for families in crisis include good therapeutic CAMHS intervention through the Multi-Agency Rapid Response Team and mentoring support for young people. The use of family group conferencing has been variable and insufficient across the social care teams, although recommissioning of the service has led to some recent improvement. The partnership has prioritised reducing the number of looked after children and young people and this is reducing steadily, although it remains relatively high.

30. Services for most children and young people who become looked after are good. Effective quality assurance processes, including good management oversight and regular supervision of social workers, ensure good support for children in care and care leavers. The percentage of care plans that were reviewed on time improved significantly in 2007–08 and is above the national average at 96%. Following a decrease last year in the number of looked after children who contribute to their reviews, the numbers have improved to 92% in 2007–08 in line with the national average. All children in care are allocated to social workers who are well trained and supported to understand and meet their needs. Too many changes of social worker for some looked after children have resulted in delays in progressing care plans, although good management arrangements, including effective input from Independent Reviewing Officers have in the main minimised the impact. Children and young people who contributed their views to this review felt well supported by their foster carers and social workers.

31. Retaining the stability of placements is a high priority for the council. Short-term stability is very good and performance in relation to long-term stability is just below that of statistical neighbours. The in-house fostering service provides high quality placements; a recent regulatory inspection judged the service to be at least good in all aspects. The authority recognises that there are insufficient foster carers locally and it is heavily reliant on independent fostering agencies, but robust commissioning, with input from care leavers, and good review arrangements ensure that purchased placements are also of high quality. A shortage of specialist foster carers for children with complex disabilities is being tackled through a successful recruitment campaign. Although 70% of children are placed outside the borough, they are mainly in neighbouring boroughs and few newly looked after children are placed a long way from their homes. Children placed outside the borough have good access to services, for example CAMHS and educational support. Effective support for foster carers includes excellent training opportunities and particularly good provision in the early years, for example through the Wriggle and Roar play and learn group which promotes the development of children's communication skills and resilience. A good number of children are fostered with relatives or friends and the number of looked after children in residential care has reduced steadily over the past few years. In 2007–08, this has fallen to 13%, which is better than similar authorities and the national average, addressing a recommendation from the 2007 APA.

32. Robust action has been taken to improve performance in relation to adoption, addressing another recommendation from the 2007 APA. The proportion of looked after children adopted or made subject to special guardianship orders improved in 2007–08 to 6% from 4% the previous year, although this remains below similar authorities and the national average. Local data suggests further good progress this year. Too few children are adopted within 12 months of the decision that this is in their best interests. The recent adoption inspection in July 2008 judged the service to be good, with significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is a skilled, well-prepared

and robust adoption panel, effectively chaired and well supported by an independent expert advisor. There have been some good initiatives to address long-standing issues, for example increasingly successful family finding for older children and those with complex needs. The service has a very good focus on addressing needs arising from children's ethnicity and culture.

33. Good attention is paid to the health needs of looked after children and young people. The number of children and young people who receive health assessments and dental checks is in line with comparable authorities and national figures. A recent regulatory inspection of the fostering service judged it to be excellent in meeting children's health needs. The partnership recognises that looked after children and young people are over-represented in teenage pregnancy rates. This is being addressed through well-coordinated support for sexual health and relationships provided by school nurses, designated nurses, drop-in sessions and pastoral care in schools. Looked after children have appropriate access to good quality CAMHS provision. Foster carers receive effective support from CAMHS, which promotes placement stability.

34. Looked after children receive good support to enjoy and achieve. Education services for looked after children, which include a designated multi-agency team, are of good quality. They are effective in securing education and training placements that reflect particular needs and they provide good support for designated teachers. Educational achievement, attendance and leisure experiences, including those for the two thirds of looked after children educated outside the borough, are monitored very closely and celebrated well. Good quality provision and improved attendance have contributed to good educational progress, a significant rise in standards at Key Stage 4 and a closing of the attainment gap. In 2007, results at Key Stage 2 were broadly in line with the average for looked after children, having been well below this the previous year.

35. All looked after children have good quality up-to-date personal education plans that fully reflect the comprehensive guidance and contain clear targets and outcomes, show good involvement of young people and are effective in securing good educational progress. Supplementary support, such as additional tuition and mentoring prior to transfer to secondary schools, has contributed to smooth transition and improved attainment. Targeted promotion and leisure passes for looked after children and care leavers secure good participation in recreational activities and develop their individual interests well.

36. Robust systems improve school attendance and provide good support to carers. Few young people have less than 90% attendance and, at 5% in 2007–08, unvalidated data for those missing school for more than 25 days shows a significant improvement. No looked after child was permanently excluded from school in 2007–08 and fixed-term exclusions are low. Looked after children who offend, including those placed outside the borough, are well supported by effective multi-agency work such as that between the YOS and social care

services. The proportion of looked children with final warnings, reprimands and convictions is well below similar authorities and the national average.

37. There are outstanding corporate parenting arrangements, led by the Corporate Parenting Board. The council and its partners listen and respond very well to the views of children and young people, for example through quarterly meetings between the council's chief executive and representatives of Lambeth's looked after children and young people. There are good arrangements for advocacy, including for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a high level of participation in good consultation arrangements, including for very young children, that ensure that children and young people make an effective contribution to service development and decision-making. Young people participate in staff recruitment, commissioning and the review of placement providers and act as peer inspectors, for example in relation to housing provision for care leavers. An independence training programme and award winning website have been developed by young people for young people. Elected members and other council departments are engaged well in improving life chances for looked after children and young people, for example through the development of work opportunities.

38. Support for care leavers is good. They all have an allocated social worker and all eligible young people have a personal adviser and pathway plan. Plans are of good quality and accurately reflect the young people's needs. A good range of opportunities and activities are available to care leavers which contribute well to their social and emotional development. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people receive good quality services which are well integrated within mainstream provision. Care leavers have good access to health services including good quality services to address their mental health needs.

39. Looked after young people and care leavers are strongly supported to participate in learning post-16 and receive good financial provision for higher education. At 78% in 2008, a significantly higher than average number, continued in full-time education at 16 years. Numbers of care leavers aged 19 who are in education, employment or training show improvement, but at 61% in 2007–08, figures are below average. Nevertheless, numbers currently attending university are high and 26 have graduated to date. Access to computers to support learning is a concern to some young people. Appropriate protocols enable fair and equitable access to independent housing and care leavers are deemed priority cases. Good quality advice and support to care leavers ensures that they are aware of their entitlements.

Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Inadequate ☐ Adequate ☐ Good ☒ Outstanding ☐

40. **The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>A comprehensive inclusion strategy, coherent policies and procedures and a strong commitment to inclusion are having a positive impact.</p> <p>Good arrangements for securing the views of young people, parents and carers.</p> <p>Effective multi-agency working and good information sharing secures good provision and continuity of care.</p> <p>Very effective use of the CAF and TAC has improved outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>Children and young people make good educational progress.</p> <p>Excellent analysis and use of educational data.</p> <p>Outstanding contribution from Connexions to good transition arrangements.</p>	<p>Delays in completing initial and core assessments leading to delays in accessing support services, including direct payments for some families.</p> <p>Relatively higher rates of exclusion for pupils at school action plus and with statements.</p>

41. A comprehensive inclusion strategy, coherent policies and procedures, strong commitment to inclusion and effective multi-agency partnerships underpin the delivery of services for children and young people and their families. Very effective use of the CAF and TAC has streamlined assessment, decreased time taken for referrals and secured prompt multi-agency intervention. Multi-agency support for individuals is mostly well coordinated and the lead professional role is being implemented well.

42. Securing good communication with parents is a high priority for the partnership. Their views are taken very seriously and used well to influence policy and strategy. Parents and carers are provided with a range of useful information and they receive good support to contribute to assessment of educational need. Good arrangements ensure the views and wishes of children and young people are considered in all decisions involving their care, education and health provision. They receive good support to report concerns, including good provision of independent advocacy, although procedures for accessing these services are not always clear. Consultation with children and young people on the design and development of specialist services is widespread and inclusion in strategic decision-making is developing.

43. The health needs of children and young people are addressed well. Clinical provision is accessible and increasingly well coordinated. Children with learning disabilities and complex needs are assessed quickly and receive prompt treatment. Recently integrated health teams are ensuring well-coordinated referral and care pathways, providing clearly defined and targeted specialist services and improving effectiveness, such as through increasing the expertise of learning assistants in special schools to meet health needs. Special schools are well equipped to provide health interventions and clinics take place within schools. There is good access to appropriate CAMHS.

44. Effective multi-agency working and good information sharing between professionals and with carers safeguards children and young people well. Carers are offered assessments of their needs. For a minority of families with disabled children, the time taken to complete initial and core assessments is too long, leading to delays in accessing support services including direct payments. These issues are being addressed well by the partnership. The number of families receiving direct payments, although currently relatively low, is increasing. There is a good range of community-based provision for short breaks. Good arrangements are in place to implement the government's 'Aiming Higher for Disabled Children' programme to further improve sufficiency and choice. Access to suitable housing causes difficulties for a small number of families who have children with disabilities.

45. Improving attainment is a high priority and pupils in mainstream schools, special schools and alternative provision receive good support to enjoy and achieve. Children and young people make good educational progress overall. Achievement, including for pupils placed outside the borough, is tracked systematically. Analysis of attainment, including small step measures of progress such as P scale data, is excellent. Benchmarking of P scales is underway. In 2007, results for pupils with special educational needs at Key Stages 2 and 3 were above national results for this group and the gap between pupils with and without special educational needs closed. At Key Stage 4, the gap between pupils with and without special educational needs remained broadly in line with the national difference in 2007.

46. Young children with complex needs have access to appropriate early years settings and childcare places, where multi-agency training has enhanced expertise. For children and young people at school action and school action plus, individual education plans generally show clear targets and outcomes and secure good progress.

47. Clear criteria for statutory assessment are understood well and applied consistently. Statements of special educational need are of good quality, produced speedily and secure good provision. At 3.3% in 2007, numbers remain stable and broadly average. A dedicated officer has strengthened conciliation and halved the number of appeals over the past two years through significantly improved communication with parents. Educational placements are carefully considered and supported well. Annual reviews are thorough and show good age-appropriate involvement of children and young people, such as an excellent communication passport for a young person with complex disabilities. Almost all reviews are attended by monitoring officers who secure prompt amendments as necessary. Rigorous monitoring ensures appropriate provision for children with statements who are educated at home. A strong commitment to inclusion shows increasing numbers of children and young people with statements in mainstream schools. At 57% in 2007, figures were above the average for similar authorities and nationally. Relatively high numbers of pupils with statements are placed in non-maintained special schools due to requirements for intensive specialised settings. Plans are in hand to increase in-borough provision for hearing impairment and autism through Building Schools for the Future in secondary schools and new autism units in primary schools.

48. Specialist services for education are of good quality. Multi-agency teams are effective in meeting needs, and case tracking shows examples of outstanding provision for children and young people who have statements of special educational need. Effective support to schools, pupils and families has contributed to improved achievement. This includes good outreach work from special schools and pupil referral units and good provision for training, which have strengthened the capacity of mainstream schools to manage particular needs, such as those associated with autism and challenging behaviour. Provision for speech and language therapy, although of very high quality, is insufficient to meet demand in some mainstream schools. Alternative models for provision are addressing this. Services to support children and young people with severe autism and particularly challenging behaviour at home and at school are developing well in line with a comprehensive 10-year strategy.

49. Inspection shows good behaviour in mainstream and special schools. Support services are of good quality. Exclusion rates for pupils at school action plus and with statements of special educational need in mainstream schools are relatively high but robust monitoring has established that good preventative action is taken. In special schools, unvalidated data for 2008 shows a dramatic reduction in the number of fixed-term exclusions, although this remains relatively high. Attendance of young people with special educational needs in

secondary schools improved in 2008, but absence rose by 3% for pupils at school action plus in primary schools.

50. The draft home-to-school transport policy contains detailed eligibility criteria for travel assistance and takes good account of safeguarding and the developing independence of young people. Good use is made of data from the disability register, for example in promptly securing an appropriate school place for all children and young people on the register in September 2008. All disabled children and young people on the register have a subsidised leisure card. A very good range of inclusive and specialist out-of-school and leisure activities include targeted activities in children's centres and after school provision, open play spaces, holiday play schemes and excellent specialist play provision.

51. Good communication between professionals, well-informed by the views of young people, ensures good continuity of educational provision and smooth transition between phases. At post-16, a significant improvement in transition planning, effective use of CAF and outstanding support from the Connexions service contribute to continuity in learning. The quality of individual transition plans is assured well, but there has yet to be a collective evaluation. Strong partnership working between children's and adult's social care services contribute to well-coordinated transition into adulthood for young people who meet the eligibility criteria. The protocol for transition from child to adult health services is being revised to address some issues in transfer.

52. Young people receive good support to achieve well in adult life. Inspections of special schools show very good preparation for independence. Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at Lambeth College, where achievement and progression rates are high, was recently judged good. The college is fully accessible to wheelchair users and has strong links with special schools. Vocational provision includes training in painting and decorating, retail, business administration, information technology and catering; there are also opportunities to undertake work-based learning in gardening through a specialist provider. A wide range of activities, including work in a college café and shop, and residential and other trips, help learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to acquire employability skills and to develop independent living skills.

53. Destinations at post-16 are monitored effectively, leading to a relatively low proportion of young people whose economic or educational status is unknown. The proportion of young people who fail to participate in education, employment or training is below the inner London average and is showing a downward trend. Suitable information and support is provided on benefit entitlement.

Other issues identified for further investigation

The impact of the partners' strategy on improving provision of CAMHS

54. The impact of the partners' strategy on improving provision of CAMHS is good.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Effective service redesign based on sound needs assessment leading to strong focus on early intervention.</p> <p>Successful action taken to reduce waiting lists.</p> <p>Good multi-agency working including the use of CAF and the TAC.</p> <p>Effective targeted services for vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Good use of learning from serious case reviews and untoward incidents in service development.</p>	<p>No explicit plan to evaluate the impact of new provision for children from refugee and asylum-seeker families and unaccompanied minors.</p>

55. Joint strategic commissioning of services is well established and grounded in robust needs assessment. There is excellent access to most specialist CAMHS services and much improved waiting times for others. At the same time the focus on prevention, early intervention and on multi-agency working has been strengthened. Good progress has been made on the recommissioning of substance misuse treatment services.

56. The 2007 APA letter recognised that progress towards establishing a comprehensive CAMHS strategy was good and identified continued improvement in access to CAMHS as an area for development. Since then, there has been significant service redesign and investment in initiatives to reduce waiting lists. Currently, no children and young people wait for more than 11 weeks for services from the adolescent, substance misuse, YOS, looked after children, and paediatric liaison CAMHS teams. Access to tier 4 services is good. The main provider of these services is the local mental health trust; however, placements are also used appropriately within the wider NHS and the private sector to meet needs. The commissioning arrangements for these placements are sound.

57. The neurodisability team was established earlier this year, enhancing services by bringing together two services with long waiting lists for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that were previously provided by the

Special Needs and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Team. Joint assessment, more and better targeted services and integrated care pathways are improving the timeliness of interventions and supporting the best use of clinical expertise. For example, PCT-led changes have resulted in the overall waiting time for children with autism being reduced from two years to six months and all current cases of children with ADHD have recently been reviewed and updated care plans put in place. The partnership aim to clear the waiting list for the neurodisability service by the end of the financial year.

58. Much work has been done to reduce waiting times for the children's team and the waiting list for treatment has been largely cleared over the last six to 12 months. The intention is to use the capacity this releases, together with an additional locum post, to focus on further reducing waiting times.

59. Specialist mental health services for children from refugee and asylum-seeker families have also been redesigned. The new arrangements are not well understood by partners and there are no explicit plans to evaluate the impact of this new provision.

60. Provision of age appropriate services has been improved by realigning specialist CAMHS with school age populations. The children's team, which works with children aged up to 11 years, is the first CAMHS provision nationally to be awarded Department of Health *You're Welcome* recommendation, demonstrating significant achievement in making the service child-friendly.

61. As part of the redesign, an early intervention service has been created which is providing an accessible community-based service through collaboration with other agencies such as schools and children's centres. It provides prompt early interventions to children with mental health problems and their families, aimed at preventing long-term and serious mental ill health and behavioural problems in children and adolescents in the future. However, the service is currently seeing more children and young people than it is resourced for and managers are aware of early signs that a waiting list is beginning to develop.

62. The early intervention CAMHS practitioners are well engaged with the CAF and TACs, and the training, consultation and advice provided by these staff is highly effective. Parents and carers and other professionals are increasingly enabled to help provide therapeutic input. A good initiative will see early intervention CAMHS practitioners joining the Early Support Programme in autumn 2008. The Early Support Programme brings together staff from different agencies, including the community and voluntary sector, to work with families with children with disabilities aged under five. The Autism and Complex Needs Intervention Team develops child-centred behavioural support plans that can be implemented at home and in school. It has improved transition from primary to secondary school for these children and is having a positive effect overall on reducing fixed-term exclusions.

63. There is effective co-location of CAMHS practitioners in targeted and specialist multi-agency services. For example, CAMHS practitioners co-located in the YOS contribute well to good multi-agency planning and support that reduces the risk of harm to young people and to others. There is good access to a dedicated CAMHS team for looked after children that is co-located in the Children and Young People's Service, and this has been effective in preventing placement breakdown. CAMHS practitioners within the acute trust's Children's Psychological Medicines Department provide comprehensive and timely mental health support to children and young people coming to terms with their physical illness or where there are mental health problems such as deliberate self-harm or severe mental illness.

64. Important service developments demonstrate the very good way in which the service uses learning from serious case reviews and untoward incidents to develop provision and strengthen safeguarding for children and young people. A central referral panel is leading to greater consistency in the application of referral criteria as well as preventing children and young people becoming lost between different CAMHS services. Good progress has been made on a referral pathway between the adolescent team and adult early onset service for young people experiencing psychosis.

65. The range of specialist treatment services for young people misusing drugs and alcohol is good and includes services provided by the CAMHS Adolescent Team. The proportion of those in substance misuse treatment who are aged under 18 is improving. The need to raise the profile of substance misuse treatment across universal services and to strengthen funding and assessment processes for residential support where it is required is recognised, and this year the substance misuse commissioning function is being integrated into the Children and Young People's Service. Assessment of need is currently informing the development of a young people's substance misuse strategy, with recommissioned treatment services planned for April 2009.

66. The commissioning strategic partnership provides good leadership. It has demonstrated a strong commitment to resourcing the CAMHS strategy and maintains accountability for implementation, particularly around access and waiting times. A robust performance monitoring framework is being developed and workforce planning is underway. Children and young people and their families were very well involved in the development of the CAMHS commissioning strategy. A consultative group is being set up to provide further service user involvement in the continuing development and implementation of the strategy.

Effectiveness of inter-agency cooperation in tackling youth crime and behaviour

67. **The effectiveness of inter-agency cooperation in tackling youth crime and behaviour is good. There are some outstanding features.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Outstanding partnership work, strong leadership and comprehensive, inter-related strategies to reduce crime and improve behaviour.</p> <p>Good reduction in the number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Improved and effective YOS.</p> <p>Broad range of effective innovative projects.</p> <p>Large numbers of young people benefiting from successful and well established preventative work providing stimulating activities.</p> <p>Well-established alliances with neighbouring boroughs to reduce gang activity and serious violent crime.</p>	<p>High levels of concern about youth crime within the local community.</p> <p>The disproportionate number of Black young men involved in crime as perpetrators and victims.</p>

68. The council and its partners have rightly identified crime, and the fear of crime, as a key priority for action. A commission established to investigate the problem led to the Young and Safe strategic action plan 2008–13; a comprehensive strategy with very good links to other work such as the Sustainable Community Strategy. It adopts a holistic approach towards crime prevention, recognising the importance of underlying features often associated with crime and poor behaviour, such as worklessness and deprivation. Preventing young people from drifting into crime, particularly young Black boys, is identified as a key priority in the CYPP and high quality work is targeted at this group. The council has resourced this well by committing an additional £1.7 million over the next three years to support the work of the Young and Safe action plan and to provide more effective youth support services.

69. Lambeth is a high crime area, particularly for serious violent crime by young people. The partnership recognises that a disproportionate number of young Black males are involved in crime, both as perpetrators and as victims. The fear of crime among the local community is also a strong factor, with over half of residents surveyed listing crime as their major concern. Strong leadership at all levels and among a broad range of partners is having a positive impact. The overall crime rate in Lambeth has decreased steadily for the past six years. The number of young people entering the criminal justice system fell by over 20% in 2007, a higher rate of reduction than seen nationally. Targets to reduce re-offending were also met in 2007. This performance reflects the

significant improvement in the YOS and places the service in the top 30% nationally.

70. A key component of this success is the breadth and strength of partnership work, which is outstanding. Close links and good relationships are maintained between all statutory agencies, schools, colleges and a wide range of voluntary and community organisations. A number of innovative projects combat gun and knife crime and raise awareness of the danger of joining gangs. Staff deliver their message in a credible way, often through high quality workshops that challenge young people to question their choice of lifestyle and the use of drugs and criminal activity. Rigorous evaluation of projects demonstrates their effectiveness in reducing crime and improving behaviour.

71. Senior leaders in the council and Lambeth police have built a strong working partnership. A well-established alliance with neighbouring boroughs aims to reduce gang activity and serious violent crime and a significant fall in firearm offences has been recorded this year. Successful and well-established summer projects, some involving Safer School and Safer Neighbourhoods police officers, engage a large number of young people in stimulating activities that help to prevent anti-social behaviour and improve relationships with the police.

72. Targeted youth work engages those young people unlikely to participate in universal youth provision. Many front line youth support staff are well trained in the use of the CAF and how to deal with issues that are indicators of risk such as mental health, drugs misuse, domestic violence and dyslexia. A broad coalition of partners from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors have comprehensive systems for the referral of young people at risk of offending or harm. Workers fully understand these procedures and information and intelligence is collated well and shared appropriately.

73. Clearly defined preventative work is targeted at crime hotspots and individuals. Around 120 young people identified as at risk of offending are referred to the Youth Inclusion Support Panel which tightly monitors and works to improve their behaviour. The TAC, highly effective multi-agency teams of relevant professionals, works with children and young people with identified additional needs and their families. This successful approach has led to many improvements, for example in school attendance and behaviour.

74. The X-it programme is an example of a high quality and innovative project that has reduced offending among the 120 young people who have so far participated in the programme. Young people are recruited after an assessment of their risk of offending and gang behaviour. The programme includes group work, a residential course and leadership training and some young people are trained to work on future projects. The LiFE project involves fire service officers working with young boys aged 13 to 16 who are identified as at risk of exclusion from school or becoming involved in criminal activity. The participants spend five days working alongside the officers at a working fire station and the

programme has led to an improvement in self-image, attitude, behaviour and better engagement with education among the 150 participants.

75. A successful restorative justice scheme utilises peer mediators who work in a large number of primary and secondary schools. The excellent 198 contemporary arts and learning reparation project develops arts and business skills in young people who have offended. Many young people involved have progressed to college or found employment using the skills they have gained.

76. The importance of community cohesion is clearly recognised by the partnership. Good work is taking place within neighbourhoods to meet the cohesion agenda, often in conjunction with some Christian and Islamic faith groups.

77. The partnership strongly acknowledges the links between poor levels of educational attainment and worklessness and crime. Strategies are having an impact, with sustained improvements at Key Stage 4; unvalidated GCSE results for 2008 show this improvement trend is being accelerated. While achievement of Level 2 and 3 qualifications by age 19 are still below national averages, they exceed those of similar authorities at Level 2 and at both levels the gap with national rates is closing. Success rates at Lambeth College have risen consistently over the last three years and learners are well prepared for work, acquiring good skills in literacy and numeracy. The proportion of young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment or training is above the national average, but has reduced faster than in similar authorities and nationally.

78. Inspection results show good behaviour in schools. Well-targeted intervention, good multi-agency work and much improved provision for alternative education has been highly successful in reducing fixed-term exclusion in secondary and special schools, but has not improved the rates of permanent exclusion from secondary schools. School attendance rates have improved from below average to around the national rate.

79. In common with other inner city areas, the small proportion of Lambeth's young people who are involved in serious violent crime and gangs is causing much concern. However, the partnership is clear on how to tackle the problem and the direction of travel is positive.

Service Management



Capacity to improve

Inadequate ☐Adequate ☐Good ☒Outstanding ☐

80. The management of services for children and young people is good. Capacity to improve further is good.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Excellent partnerships based on widely shared ambitions which are aligned with wider corporate aspirations.</p> <p>Prioritising the needs of the area's many diverse communities in service planning and delivery.</p> <p>The coherently planned move to preventive services supported by redirected resources.</p> <p>Extensive engagement with children and young people that influences strategic planning and service delivery well.</p> <p>Well-developed joint commissioning.</p>	<p>Some gaps in the setting of specified targets, milestones and responsibilities in strategies and plans.</p> <p>Staffing shortages in some key posts.</p>

81. These judgements take into account all children's services provided by the council and its partners, as well as the evidence gathered for the specific investigations in this joint area review. Clear ambitions and shared priorities underpin the excellent partnerships and focused leadership that have secured improvements in many services. The needs of the area's many diverse communities are prioritised and children and young people are extensively involved in service planning and delivery. Most of the resources needed to deliver plans are in place, although there are shortages of staff in some key posts. Performance management is generally good.

82. Ambition for children and young people in Lambeth is excellent. The CYPP contains clear objectives which are both realistic and challenging and reflect local and national priorities. Ambitions for children and young people are also explicit in corporate plans and strategies, such as the sustainable community strategy, the corporate strategy and the local area agreement, and are reflected in individual agency plans. Together these comprise a coherent set of strategies and plans that are well understood and shared by partners and staff.

83. Ambitions are based on a thorough needs analysis and effective consultation with children and young people, parents and carers and other stakeholders. Over 2,300 children and young people, including seldom heard groups and those under five, were consulted in reviewing the CYPP. This supplemented intelligence from other recent consultations and helped to identify tackling bullying, anti-social behaviour and reducing crime as major priorities. Parents and carers were consulted through a regular and well attended forum.

84. Prioritisation by partners is good. An up-to-date needs analysis, wide consultation and systematic assessment inform the revision of priorities in the annual review of the CYPP. Rich data is very well analysed and used to inform planning and service delivery. This has resulted in an increased focus on obesity and immunisation.

85. There have been excellent developments in the move to preventative services, with coherent plans supported by shifts in resources, underpinned by medium-term financial planning in partner agencies. High priority is given to providing a range of child-centred preventative services with well-coordinated action from integrated multi-agency teams. Good use of the CAF enables the provision of well-coordinated and effective support for vulnerable children, young people and their families. Good progress in the roll-out of children's centres and successful input with early education and childcare providers has increased accessible day care for vulnerable families and resulted in substantial improvement in the quality of childcare, including for children with disabilities. Good support for learning in the Foundation Stage has significantly improved outcomes addressing an area for development in the 2007 APA.

86. The partnership's strong commitment to equality and diversity is evident in plans and service delivery. Improvements in outcomes include narrowing the achievement gap for specific groups, a key CYPP priority. Engagement with the Portuguese speaking community and the appointment of a Portuguese achievement consultant has contributed to closing achievement gaps significantly at all ages. The provision of role models and learning mentors has contributed to improvement in the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils at ages 11, 14 and 16. High quality targeted work is in place to reduce offending among Black young men.

87. A performance schedule is used well to deliver priorities, outlining lead roles and responsibilities and setting targets and timescales for completion. This is carried through into partners' service plans. However, some gaps in setting success criteria and milestones hamper the measurement of the impact of success. Targets in the CYPP are not sufficiently specific, relying on sharper definition in supporting plans and a limited range of performance indicators. Some supporting plans are insufficiently focused. The play strategy has few outcome targets, concentrating on improving processes, while in the children's services plan the aim to continue to ensure good support arrangements for care

leavers is not quantified. While partners have the resources to deliver priorities, these are not specified in the CYPP.

88. The overall capacity of children's services is good. Children's trust arrangements are productive and are successfully delivering improvements for children and young people. Excellent leadership, based on trust and mutual respect, contributes to highly effective partnership working and enables constructive debate, active challenge and effective decision-making. The Executive Director for Children and Young People is highly regarded by partners and staff. Lead councillors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and demonstrate strong commitment to children and young people; excellent corporate parenting is an example of this.

89. Statutory partners have ensured substantial involvement of the voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCFS) in planning and delivering services. The VCFS is represented on the partnership board. The change from grant funding to commissioned services has been handled well, the VCFS has been well supported in preparing for the new regime and capacity has been enhanced. The VCFS sector reported a sense of true partnership where its contribution is clearly valued.

90. Services are supported effectively through medium-term financial planning. Partners have the financial capacity to deliver the priorities. Joint commissioning is well-developed, based on detailed needs analyses, a commissioning cycle and pooled or aligned budgets. Effectively recommissioned services with independent fostering agencies, family support for children with disabilities and semi-independent living for care leavers have resulted in savings of over £600,000 per year. Value-for-money at the council is good and fully integrated into the service improvement planning process, for example robust gate-keeping and monitoring of placements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were commended by the council's external auditors.

91. Recruitment and retention difficulties in key posts, mainly social workers and speech and language therapists, have restricted access to and, in some cases, quality of services. Effective action is beginning to overcome this. Staff retention packages and sponsorship of qualifying training have reduced dependence on agency social workers. Partners learn from each other, for example the PCT is refining its recruitment and retention practices based on the council's experience. Multi-agency training, such as for CAF, is widely taken up. Individual agency workforce planning is effectively addressing future needs, such as succession planning for head teachers. Work has started on extending this to joint workforce planning in the partnership but this is not yet fully developed. It currently focuses primarily on joint training plans.

92. Performance management is good. The partnership has a robust performance management framework that contributes well to service improvement. Responsibility for managing performance and, in particular tackling under performance, is clear. Managers at all levels analyse performance continuously and propose remedial action which is overseen and approved by the partnership executive and board. Board members actively interrogate data and direct improvement. For example, in considering young people not in education, employment or training, the board agreed greater coordination among Connexions, the Learning and Skills Council and children's centres to ensure a more integrated approach. The children and young people's scrutiny sub committee is effective. A scrutiny review of services for children with special educational needs contributed to improvements in consultation with parents and better quality statements of special educational need. Good performance management in individual agencies and settings is driving improvement in services, such as the increase in the uptake of infant immunisation. However, in some places performance management is less robust, for example in the untimely completion of annual appraisals and imprecise data on the use of agency staff in the council's children and young people's service.

93. The council collates regular, robust data on behalf of the partnership so progress against targets and comparisons with other areas can be considered. Individual agencies consider financial data alongside performance information, but the partnership only reviews performance information. This results in it not having a collective overview of the availability of financial resources to deliver its priorities.

94. Young people contribute very well to service review. They have taken part in tender evaluations for social care recommissioning and residential family assessments. Complaints and representations are used well to improve services. Care leavers' complaints led to a work placement scheme which currently employs 10 care leavers, and improved information for care leavers, including an award winning website developed by them. Young people contribute fully to decision-making in some youth centres through their participation in the centre's management board.

95. Capacity to improve is good. There is a sustained record of improvement in many services, such as educational attainment at all ages. However, in some services it is too early to see evidence of sustained impact. Sound systems and structures are in place to facilitate improvement although performance and resource information are not fully integrated. The area's strong leadership has the capacity to build on past improvements within a partnership that is mature and uses self-evaluation well as a basis for continuous improvement.

Annex A

MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

The full annual performance assessment for 2008, which was published on 17 December 2008, can be found at:

[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_providers/la_download/\(id\)/4673/\(as\)/APA/a_pa_2008_208.pdf](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_providers/la_download/(id)/4673/(as)/APA/a_pa_2008_208.pdf)

Annex B

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT ACHIEVEMENT - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE¹

1. Outcomes for children and young people in Lambeth are at least satisfactory and nearly all are improving. Health outcomes are mostly good, for example the percentage of women who smoke during pregnancy is below the national average and the infant mortality rate has reduced well and is in line with similar authorities. Although reducing, teenage conception rates remain very high. Nearly all safeguarding outcomes are similar to, or better than, comparators. Children make good progress in school. Standards have improved rapidly and attainment is broadly in line with the national average at Key Stage 4. Numbers of children and young people who are involved in crime, both as perpetrators and victims, are reducing well overall but remain high. The proportion of young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment or training is above the national average, but has reduced faster than in similar authorities and nationally. While levels of achievement at Levels 2 and 3 at 19 years are improving well, they are below the national average, as are levels of successful and timely completion of work-based learning and apprenticeships.

2. This inspection concurs with the 2007 APA judgements in that the management of services for children and young people and the capacity of council services to improve are good and that the council delivers a good level of children's services overall. Outstanding multi-agency partnerships based on excellent shared ambition prioritise clearly the needs of children and young people well, including those from many diverse communities. Capacity to respond to Lambeth's many challenges is good despite difficulties in staffing some key posts. Performance management is also good across the partnership, although hindered at times by targets and milestones that are not always sufficiently specific. A coherently planned shift to early intervention and preventive services supported by redirected resources has resulted in highly effective provision, including use of the CAF and TAC.

3. The 2007 APA judged the combined work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people as adequate. Significant progress has been achieved since in the two identified areas of weakness: access to CAMHS has improved with a good focus on prevention, early intervention, multi-agency working and addressing waiting times; and effective partnership work and innovative provision has achieved a very good, sustained reduction of 23% in the rate of teenage conceptions from 2003 to 2006, although considerable further reduction is needed to meet government targets. Good progress is being made in achieving Healthy Schools status. The health needs of children

¹ Judgements contained in the corporate assessment of children's services are based on a combination of the outcomes of the joint area review and the latest published annual performance assessment (APA 2007) available at the time of the inspection.

who are looked after and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met well.

4. This inspection concurs with the 2007 APA judgement that children and young people appear safe and arrangements to ensure this are good. An effective LSCB provides strong leadership and a good multi-agency focus. Effective systems identify and support children in need and child protection processes are sound with good quality assurance. Shortages of social work staff affect the timeliness and continuity of support for some families and some children who are looked after. Further improvement is needed in the numbers of children achieving timely permanency through adoption or special guardianship orders. Arrangements for identifying children who are missing and the safe recruitment of staff are secure.

5. The 2007 APA judged the impact of all local services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and to achieve well as good. Despite the challenges of high pupil mobility, the partnership is working successfully with schools to raise standards and to further close the gap in attainment for children and young people from vulnerable groups, including looked after children. Good provision is made for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, exclusions for this group of pupils and others remain too high. Effective support for learning in the Foundation Stage has significantly improved outcomes.

6. The 2007 APA judged the impact of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society as good. Good progress has been made in addressing the identified area of weakness, in that outstanding partnership work, effective and inter-related multi-agency strategies, an effective YOS and a broad range of innovative projects are reducing the rate of offending among young people and improving behaviour, although the proportion of young people entering the criminal justice system who are Black remains high. Corporate parenting arrangements are outstanding. Extensive engagement with children and young people, including those from vulnerable groups, strongly influences strategic planning and service delivery.

7. The 2007 APA judged the impact of all local services in helping children and young people to achieve economic well-being as good. Tackling worklessness for all age groups is a priority for the partnership. Continuing good progress is being made in improving attainment post-16 and reducing the overall number of young people who are not in education, employment or training, with some particularly successful initiatives for vulnerable groups including teenage mothers, care leavers and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Homelessness for young people is mostly tackled well. Transition arrangements for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have improved significantly and are generally good.

Annex C

SUMMARY OF JOINT AREA REVIEW AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

1. This joint area review was conducted using the arrangements required under Section 20 of the Children Act 2004. It was carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of inspectors from Ofsted, the Healthcare Commission and the Audit Commission. The review was undertaken according to the requirements of the *Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services*.
2. The review was linked to the contemporaneous corporate assessment of the local council by the Audit Commission and these findings plus aspects of the most recent Annual Performance Assessment are represented in the relevant part of the corporate assessment report.
3. This review describes the outcomes achieved by children and young people growing up in Lambeth and evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. Together with the Annual Performance Assessment of Children's Services, joint area reviews focus on the extent to which children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and are well prepared to secure economic well-being. This review explores these issues by focussing on children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, children who are looked after and children at risk or requiring safeguarding and a few additional investigations. It evaluates the collective contribution made by all relevant children's services to outcomes for these children and young people.
4. The review took place in two stages consisting of an analysis stage (where recorded evidence was scrutinised) and a two week fieldwork stage (where inspectors met children and young people and those who deliver services for them).