

Appendix 2: Progress Update on Recommendations from the Young Inspectors Report 2023

The Young Inspectors Report 2023 (My meetings – children and families experience of social care meetings) made eight recommendations for service improvement. A summary of actions implemented in response to the Young Inspectors recommendations can be found in the table below.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOMES
1. Embed a culture of supporting children and families to attend meetings and enable participation in shared decision making.	<p>99 % of children have participated in their children looked after review meetings in the year 2023/24.</p> <p>This has remained stable compared to the previous year (99%).</p> <p>There has been a change to Children Looked After (CLA) reports on MOSAIC system to include recording of children’s attendance and contribution to the CLA meetings. MOSAIC is Camden’s case management recording system for Children’s and Adult social work services and Early Help. The system incorporates embedded forms and workflow steps which are based on statutory social work processes and forms.</p> <p>Parent advocacy referral form has been developed to make the process more accessible for social workers and for parents to receive the support. The work is on the way to include the referral form on the MOSAIC pathway.</p> <p>Mind of My Own app has been implemented in September 2024 to support children and young people to provide their views on their plans and meetings where key decisions are made. It is hoped that this tool will increase young people involvement in decision making by sharing their views.</p> <p>The app and resource allow them to send feedback directly to their social worker, at any time. They can complete forms on up-coming meetings, provide their views and feelings, who they want to be in attendance, if they wish to attend and how they will be receive feedback after the meeting on decisions made.</p>

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	<p>There is also a form for them to feedback after the meeting and include if they felt their wishes and feelings were heard or considered and what they want to change going forward. The key element is to ensure they feel involved and included in the process throughout and in decision-making forums, where their voice is recorded.</p> <p>Family Group Conferences model is well established and principles of supporting families to make plans in collaboration with their friends and family are embedded in the service. This service is offered throughout Children’s Safeguarding and Family Help and is routinely used in Early Help, Youth Services, Child in Need, Child Protection and Children Looked After work. Camden’s Policy states that all families subject to Child Protection plans or at risk of legal proceedings must be offered a Family Group Conference.</p> <p>The Quality Assurance Service audit form has been reviewed and an important update includes: the section dedicated to feedback from children and young people has now been moved to the top of the form. This change reflects our commitment to prioritizing their input as a key focus area in the assessment process.</p> <p>Learning from the audits informs forums such as the leaders and practitioners’ sessions and the Quality Assurance Board.</p>
<p>2. Children and families are better prepared so they understand the purpose of the meeting and are involved in the planning.</p>	<p>Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) guides for children and parents are included with invite letters sent to families for Child Protection (CP) Conferences. Child protection conference guide for parents, Children’s guide to child protection in Camden.</p> <p>Camden practice guidance for all social workers states that they must prepare children for Child Protection conferences, Child in Need meetings and CLA reviews by taking their wishes and feelings in advance, making a decision along with the child and family about their attendance at the meeting and what format this should be in, as well as sharing their report with the child beforehand in an age-appropriate manner.</p>

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	<p>The Children looked after service is working to replicate child protection processes regarding the administration of CLA reviews to ensure that Social Workers complete their reports in advance of the meeting and that information is appropriately shared with children beforehand. Alerts system has been implemented to remind social workers to send their reports to the Independent Reviewing Officer and to the family prior to the meeting. This continues to be an area for further development, which is reflected by a significant increase in the number of IRO alerts on Mosaic related to late or incomplete reports.</p>
	<p>Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Officers record their contact with children, young people and parents within MOSAIC episodes. There has been an increase in the recording of their IRO/CPO contacts since the Young Inspectors' findings and these help to capture children's views and feelings.</p>
	<p>Advocacy for children services, including an agreed referral pathway, is already in place with Action for Children. This started in August 2024 and is still being rolled out across the service, but the aim is for this to be a consistent offer across children's services.</p> <p>There is an existing parent peer advocacy offer for parents at the Child Protection stage of involvement with Children's Safeguarding and Family Help. This is being reviewed with a view to ensure this is offered more consistently and that there are sufficient advocates for all parents who want this service.</p>
<p>3. Child Protection Conferences and Children Looked After Reviews are less intimidating for children and parents, and more supportive.</p>	<p>There has been good practice to support young people of appropriate age (13+) to take part in the child protection reviews. We encourage young people to use the new app Mind of My Own with the support of the social worker. Also, young people are invited to present their wishes by writing a letter to the Child Protection Officer chair if they do not wish to attend the meeting.</p>

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	<p>Children who are looked after are given a choice of who they would like to attend at the review meetings, and this is strongly advocated for by Independent Reviewing Officers and Social Workers.</p> <p>Their choice has been recorded on MOSAIC since the new form was introduced earlier in 2024 - this specifically asks what the child's wishes and feelings were regarding how they wanted their review set up.</p>
<p>4. Providing timely reports to the family and professional network to enable a better understanding of the support for the family.</p>	<p>Regular supervision supports social workers to prepare and complete reports in advance of meetings.</p> <p>The new role of service co-ordinator includes reminders to social workers to complete reports two weeks in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Independent Reviewing Officers consistently work to ensure that the reports are completed within the statutory timescales.</p> <p>Over the past six months, the percentage of families receiving child protection reports from social workers at least two days in advance of the conference has ranged from 86% to 100%. Steps need to be taken to achieve this standard in children looked after reports.</p> <p>There has been an increase in the use of alerts system to ensure that the reports are completed within timescales.</p>
<p>5. Support and good communication with children and families after the meeting to ensure they understand the plan, and have an opportunity to</p>	<p>Child Protection Officers and Independent Reviewing Officers continue to meet young people and parents prior and after conferences and children looked after reviews.</p> <p>There has been an increase in Independent Reviewing Officers recording of these contacts on MOSAIC.</p>

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<p>reflect and comment on the decision/recommendations.</p>	<p>Many IROs write their reports to young people in a format of a therapeutic letter which draws on use of systemic practices, writing directly to young person in the age-appropriate language. Every effort is made to reduce jargon in letter for parents. As part of relational practice, IRO meet with parents outside of the review process to allow them to express themselves further.</p>
<p>6. Reports and plans are simplified and easy for children, young people and parents to understand.</p>	<p>In November 2024 compulsory practice focus sessions for all social workers and managers have taken place with emphasis on the use of meaning of language, both verbal and written, in communication with children and families. This has provided an improved framework and understanding for practitioners about how to write on children's files.</p> <p>Accessible language for young and families is an integral part of the new relational practice model in social work. Children's participation has been included as a core model in the new relational practice framework which is planned to be launched in 2025 following a series of listening events with colleagues to hear their feedback.</p>
<p>7. Promote meaningful participation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people by ensuring reports and plans are provided in a more creative way and are easy to understand.</p>	<p>Currently a Social Worker and Personal Advisor meets a young person to complete the pathway plan prior to the pathway review meeting. This will be with an interpreter of their preferred language if required. The Social Workers and Personal Advisors will review this report again during the meeting with a further interpreter to confirm the young person continues to agree with the proposed plan.</p> <p>Mind of My Own app has been implemented in September 2024 to increase young people involvement in decision making by sharing their views. The app has a facility to provide translation in over 100 languages.</p>

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	<p>Participation session completed with a group of unaccompanied young people who discussed their experience of engaging with their pathway review meetings and what they felt could improve this process. Information and welcome packs to be created to support young people understanding an overview of what they can expect while in our care, these remain underway and will be completed in January 2025.</p>
<p>8. Training for Social Workers on best practice around planning and supporting children and families to participate in meetings.</p>	<p>Commissioned core training in December 2024 to include best practice in supporting children and families to participate in meetings. Training programme to be implemented in 2025.</p> <p>Best practice briefing to be developed and shared with team managers/ social work teams supported by the Participation Service in March 2025.</p>